

We've finished the capital campaign!

Praises are ringing from the mountain tops as we've completed another amazing summer and fall of ministry here at Ridge Haven! Just this summer alone the Lord brought more than 4,400 people to camp, and we've had another record number of visitors this fall. For seven straight years the Lord has grown our ministry, and is using Ridge Haven as a place to bring people closer to Himself.

Thanks to the completion of our \$2.8 million capital campaign, we will be able to continue growing and hosting even more guests this upcoming year. Funds raised during the two-year campaign allowed us to expand lodging and activity areas to accommodate more campers this past summer, and now with the completion of the campaign shovels are striking the ground to build a new dining hall.



Due to explosive growth, we launched the capital campaign in 2014, trusting the Lord to provide the funding needed to expand our infrastructure, as the camp was bursting at the seams. The generosity of many during this campaign not only allowed us to expand our facilities, but is allowing Ridge Haven to offer increased scholarship opportunities in hopes that even more lives will be transformed by the gospel.

"The growth I have witnessed in the nearly five years of serving on the Ridge Haven staff is as incredible as it is humbling," said Jessie Fleming, operation and ministry director at Ridge Haven. "And now, we hope you will join us as we rejoice in the encouragement of completing our capital campaign."

During the final push of the campaign we raised funds to build the new dining hall, which is desperately needed to keep up with the growth we've experienced in the past seven years. The new state-of-the-art facility will be named The Jim and Judy Jolly Dining Hall, and is designed to serve up to 450 people in the family-style dining room. The current dining hall was built to serve between just 60 and 100 people, but we were using it to serve about 400.



Anyone who has spent time at Ridge Haven knows and appreciates our chef Jennifer Huskey, who has been cooking the camp's meals for 13 years.

"I cannot wait for Ridge Haven to be able to serve many more meals in the new dining hall," Jennifer said. "Meals are a favorite activity here at camp and we are all excited to share this experience with more guests."

Along with the dining hall, the capital campaign also allowed Ridge Haven to fund:

- Thirteen new tree-house cabins, providing housing for an additional 72 campers a week. Most of these open air cabins are built off the ground on stilts and have large porches. The cabins are placed in three separate locations around camp and have quickly become the most sought after lodging by summer campers.



•A new South Rec Complex has also been developed and it's large field for camp games, basketball and sand volleyball courts, gaga pit and obstacle course were well-used this summer and throughout the fall. Ridge Haven has found this is the perfect place for play, but is also a place where guests string up a hammock and chat with friends and counselors, or sit with their feet in the creek or around a fire pit.

- Increased scholarships for campers and interns, ensuring that no one is turned away from camps, retreats or conferences based on demonstrated financial need. Ridge Haven has not raised the average cost of camp in seven years, and scholarships allow us to bring kids and families to camp that wouldn't have the experience otherwise, and also provides us with the opportunity to bring 100 inner-city children to camp for free each summer. Money from the campaign also allows us to grow the Camp Summer Internship program designed for high school students. These teenagers come and serve at camp for weeks during the summer, while also being mentored by our summer staff.



- Lake Morse was also expanded due to the campaign, and can now hold many more guests. The lake is the hallmark of Ridge Haven's summer fun, and now includes a jumping platform, four new docks, picnic areas and platforms, plus the canoes, paddle boards, rope swing and slide that were already popular.
- The new Celebration Lodge is a 6,000 square-foot luxury lodge with a stunning view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. This lodge is used by many adult groups as retreat accommodations.

Andrew Breed started coming to Ridge Haven with his family as a child and it seems like he never left. He has been a camper and counselor at Ridge Haven and is now on full-time staff. In each of these capacities, Andrew said he has been able to benefit from and participate in Ridge Haven's ministry.

As a counselor Breed was trained to talk about the gospel one-on-one with each of the kids in his cabin, and said he now finds joy knowing Ridge Haven continues to put an emphasis on sharing the gospel individually with every camper.

“These new facilities allow us to bring in more kids and have more fun without sacrificing our ability to share the gospel with everyone,” Andrew said. “And for all of us, that’s what this place is all about.”

From each of us at Ridge Haven -- thank you! The Lord has yet again shown his faithfulness, and we are humbled by everyone who has generously supported our ministry. Please come by and see us and the construction underway. And of course, once our new dining hall is complete next year, we hope to serve you a meal!

Blessings to you and your family,

The Ridge Haven Team

