

Highlights from the ACA 2007 Compensation and Benefits Survey

As part of a continuing effort to conduct signature research in the area of camp business operations, the American Camp Association (ACA) sponsored a survey, in cooperation with Readex Research, to profile the salaries, compensation, and benefits received by key personnel at ACA-accredited and affiliated camps. A total of 1,797 camp owners and operators were randomly selected based on stratified sampling to represent the almost 2,700 camps affiliated with the American Camp Association. Information was gathered from 938 camps (response rate of 52%) to produce the most comprehensive study of salaries for camp personnel available to the industry.

The 2007 Compensation and Benefits Survey (also known as the Salary Study) reports the current salaries of full-time and seasonal camp employees as stratified by: (a) day and resident operations; (b) type of camp sponsorship; (c) geographic region of the USA; (d) benefits provided to year-round and seasonal staff and their cash value; (e) director salaries segmented by tenure in position, education, age, and gender; and (f) expected salary increases for 2007.

Day Camp Report Highlights*

- The highest proportions of day camps are affiliated with independent nonprofits (36%) and agencies (25%).
- The typical (median) day camp director is a thirty-six-year-old, white, female, with a bachelor's degree. However, there is quite a bit of variation among this population based on each of the demographic attributes.
- The typical (median) day camp director has held his/her current position for five years and long-term tenures are rare.
- Seventy-nine percent of day camps that currently employ a camp director indicated that their camp directors are employed on a year-round basis. For these day camps, the median annual camp director salary (before taxes and deductions) was \$38,300.
- Fifty-four percent of day camps that currently employ a full-time camp director indicated that the director's salary increased compared to one year ago. The median change in salary was +3%.
- Health insurance benefits, retirement contributions, and professional development are received by a majority of day camp directors. Compensation for meals, housing, and utilities is rare.
- The top five most common paid full-time seasonal positions were: counselor (71%), head/lead counselor (58%), assistant camp director (51%), summer camp director (39%), and program director (37%).

Resident Camp Report Highlights*

- The nature of the ownership/sponsorship of residential camps is varied with relatively even distribution across four categories: independent nonprofits (28%); agencies (26%); religious organizations (24%); and independent-for-profit operations (19%).
- The typical (median) residential camp director is a forty-three-year-old, white, male, with a bachelor's degree. However, there is quite a bit of variation among this population based on each of the demographic attributes.
- The typical (median) residential camp director has held his/her current position for seven years. Thirty-six percent have relatively longer tenures of ten years or more.
- Seventy-eight percent of residential camps that currently employ a camp director indicated that their camp directors are employed on a year-round, full-time basis. For these residential camps the median annual camp director salary (before taxes and deductions) was \$43,000.
- Fifty-nine percent of residential camps that currently employ a camp director indicated that the director's salary increased compared to one year ago. The median change in salary was +3%.
- Health insurance benefits, retirement contributions, and professional development are received by more than half of residential camp directors. Receipt of bonuses, incentive pay, and profit-sharing is rare.
- The top five most common paid full-time seasonal positions were: counselor (79%); nurse (67%); food service director/head cook (67%); waterfront director (67%); and head/lead counselor (61%).

* For detailed information about the day and resident camp reports, including easy-to-read tables and charts for each survey area, go to www.ACAcamps.org/research/salary_study.php. These reports are available for purchase through Healthy Learning.