



MRU
CAMPS

2023

**IMPACT
REPORT**



INTRODUCTION

Our Story

Mount Royal University (MRU) has provided high-quality summer programming for children ages 4 through 15 since 1990, starting out as a small program with approximately 300 campers and 20 staff in its first year. MRU Camps has since grown to become one of the largest summer camp operations in the City of Calgary with 1855 campers comprising 2804 registrations and 63 seasonal staff members in July and August 2023.

Guided by the Vision of Providing Extraordinary Programming for Children and Youth That Will Last a Lifetime; and the Mission of Turning Ordinary into Extraordinary. We Engage Children and Youth in Lifelong Learning While Providing a Fun, Safe, and Inclusive Environment. MRU Camps is driven by the following Guiding Principles:

- We **lead** through example and are accountable for our actions.
- We **communicate** honestly, openly, and consistently.
- We **strive** to provide inclusive programming and acknowledge diversity.
- We **nurture** a love of learning that will last a lifetime.
- We **aim** for academic growth in all subject areas.
- We **prepare** campers for leadership and service in society.
- We **respond** to challenges and use innovative ways to better serve our community.



MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERS

To our community of supporters,

As MRU Camps embark on another year of community service and social impact, we want to reflect on the past year and of course thank all of the supporters who have helped MRU Camps remain a critical part of developing the next generation of citizens and leaders.

2023 was a year of growth for our program. This year we offered 31 unique learning opportunities and engaged over 1800 children and youth. We focused on supporting and building our internal capacity to ensure programming continued to positively impact our internal and external communities. Our dedicated full-time and seasonal staff rose to the challenge to create an inclusive environment and learning opportunities for our campers to grow, discover, and reach their full potential.

MRU Camps take pride in an employee-centric work culture with integrated professional development, leadership, training, and mentorship opportunities to nurture being part of a community that learns, thrives, and leads together. Each year we strive to increase the quality and impact of our work. We focus on concepts like social connection, community impact, and inclusion to keep our vision of *Providing Extraordinary Programming for Children and Youth That Will Last a Lifetime* at the forefront of everything we do, and we are excited to continue this work in 2024.

As we close the chapter on 2023 and our 33rd anniversary as a local out of school education program provider, MRU Camps aims to deepen our community connection and expand our reach and be an impactful force for good in Calgary and beyond. On behalf of the MRU Camps team, we would like to thank all those who supported and participated in MRU Camps in 2023. We could not deliver on our promise of making the world a better place without your generous support and commitment to make our community an inclusive space for everyone. We look forward to the upcoming year.

smiles,

Jason Unsworth & Owini Dixon



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BREAKING IT DOWN

Key Statistics

MRU Camps returned for another fun-filled summer following an 8-month off-season of extensive planning and preparation by the youth programming team. MRU Camps continued to build on the lessons, challenges, and successes of the past, with careful consideration given to the future advancement of the program.



31 Unique Programs

MRU Camps has developed curriculum for a range of subjects focusing on Early Learning & Elementary Education, Creative & STEM Education, and Sports & Outdoor Education.



91 Sessions Offered

Over the span of 8-weeks in July and August. MRU Camps offers sessions for Pre K-K (4-5yrs), Grades 1-3 (5-9yrs), Grades 4-6 (9-12yrs), and Grades 7-9 (12-15yrs).



69 Bursaries Awarded

Through the generous support of local organizations, MRU Camps provided \$27,000 worth of complimentary registrations to families experiencing financial hardships, amounting to 69 total registrations.



65 Campers with Known Disabilities

MRU Camps strives to provide inclusive programming and acknowledge diversity by welcoming and supporting children with disabilities.



2804 Registrations

MRU Camps surpassed its original goal of 1840 registrations by 52%, meaning the program averaged 350 campers per week.



1855 Campers Served

Those 2804 total registrations comprised of 1855 campers, as many returned to experience the variety of programs MRU Camps offered each week.



1401 Families Served

In total, parents and guardians from 1401 families chose MRU Camps as their trusted childcare provider this summer.

Bursary Testimonial

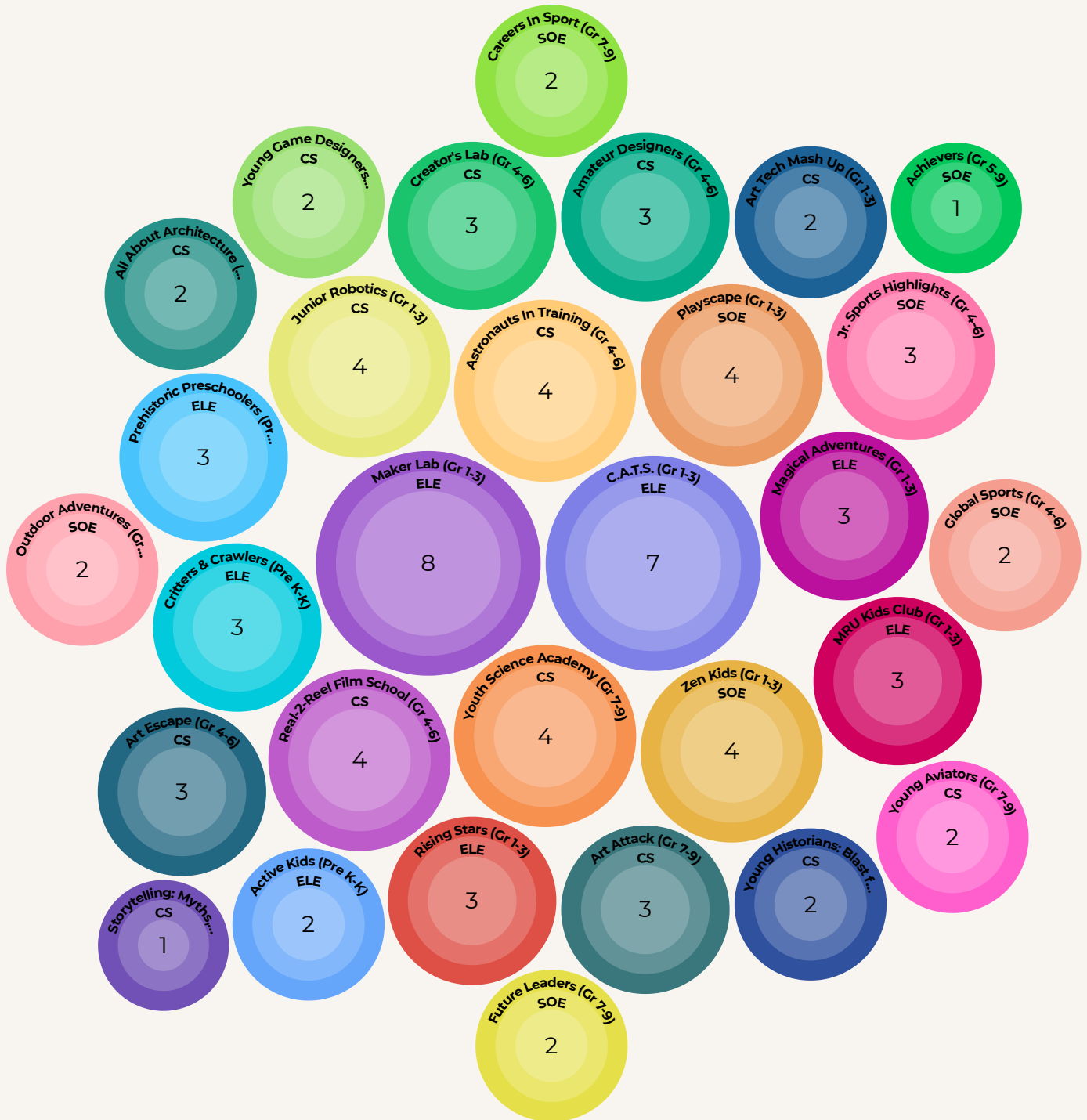
We would like to thank Mount Royal University, its generous donors, and the summer camp staff and volunteers for granting [my daughter] a bursary for All About Architecture and making the camp so amazing. Without the bursary, she would not have had this opportunity and we are so grateful.

- Lorna G.

MRU CAMPS OFFERINGS

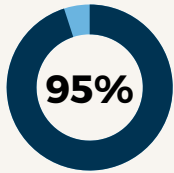
Programs & Sessions

MRU Camps offered a total of 31 unique programs across 91 sessions of camp in 2023. Programs are categorized by foci into Early Learning Education (ELE), Creative & STEM Education (CS), and Sports & Outdoor Education (SOE).

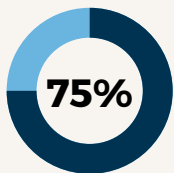


MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

Staff Satisfaction Survey

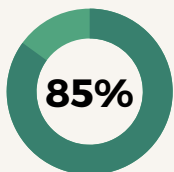


Rated their **overall experience** working for MRU Camps as **very good or excellent**.

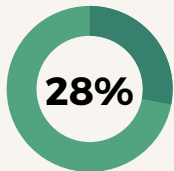


Agreed or strongly agreed that the curriculum was straightforward and easy to follow, indicating room for improvement in terms of training and lesson plan development.

Parent Survey

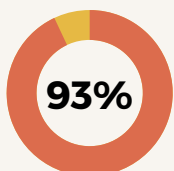


Agreed or strongly agreed that their child had a **fun and positive experience**, and that their **overall interactions** with Instructors and Leaders **were positive**.

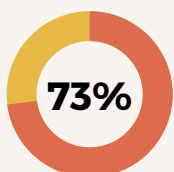


Would like to see **more skill and knowledge development** in MRU Camps programs.

Camper Survey



Agreed or strongly agreed that they **liked their Instructors and Leaders**.

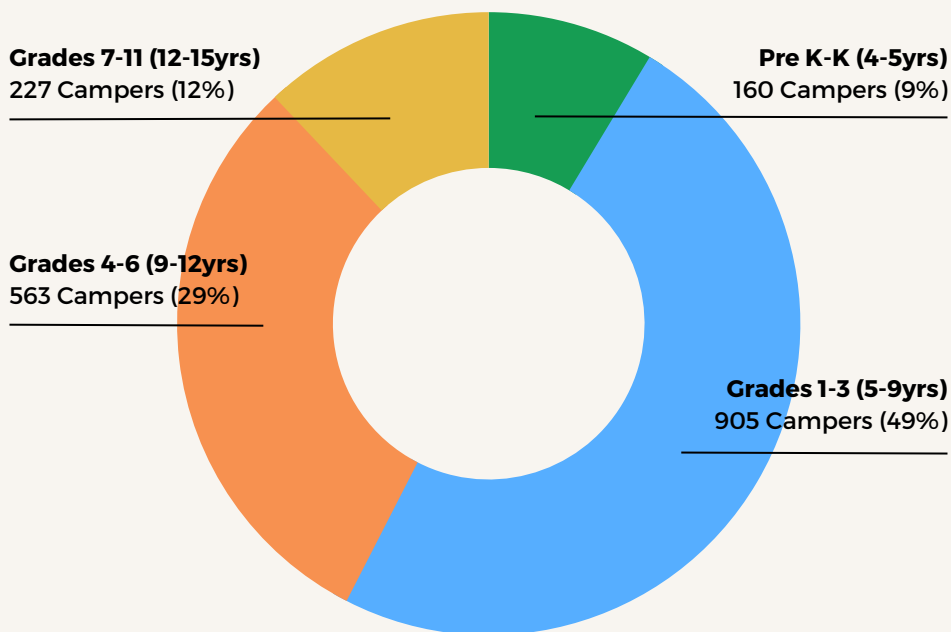


Learned at least a new skill or interest during their time at MRU Camps, indicating more opportunities for skill and/or interest-based learning.

BY THE NUMBERS

A Historic Year

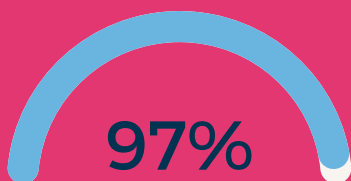
In 2023, a total of 1855 children (ages 4 to 15) registered across all sessions of camp bringing the total number of registrations to 2804; surpassing the department's original goal of 1840 registrations (or an 80% fill rate). This marked the youth programming department's highest summer camp enrollment since 2009.



+45%
Year-over-year registration.



MRU Camps' bursary program raised just over **\$38,000**, which allowed for 65 campers to attend 69 total sessions; some returning for a second week. The bursary program is made possible through generous donations from various local organizations and supporters. This year's main campaign for fundraising was run through the Shaw Charity Classic Birdies for Kids program which matches donations by Shaw for camps around the city.



Of total registration capacity reached in 2023.

OUR WHY

We want our children and youth to keep play close as they grow and weave it into their future. More importantly, we want our campers to find joy in everything we offer in order to spark curiosity outside of camp, becoming lifelong learners.

“...it was a great opportunity for me to be with you. The best thing about my camp is that we were working as a team, we were helping each other always, respecting each other, and caring for each other. But the best part was that I got so much new knowledge and I knew for sure that all of it will help me.

- Arystarkh B. (Camper)

“...they were bubbling with joy and excitement every day they spent at the camp. It has been such a delight for us, as their parents, to see my children truly happy, exploring new things, making friends, and cherishing every moment.

- Balytskyy Family

“I always wanted to go to space, so I am excited and happy to be in Astronauts in Training. I am very grateful for this opportunity. I wish it had more days of camp. I want to come back next year.

- Leshan Y. (Camper)

“Thank you for your kindness, generosity, and mission to impact and create transformative experiences for my daughters, and providing enormous relief as a parent during this summer.

- Torres Family



OUR PEOPLE

Staff Testimonials



Lauren A. (ELE Leader)

Critters & Crawlers, Prehistoric Preschoolers, and Active Kids

My time at MRU Camps was one of the most outstanding experiences I've had. Before starting, I felt nervous about moving to a new city and starting a new job halfway through the summer. Within the first hour of my time there, however, I quickly found that I had nothing to worry about. I was blown away by every staff member's kindness, inclusivity, warmth and mentorship. Instead of going home depleted after a nine-hour-long day with four and five-year-olds, I left campus feeling energized and excited to return! I could not possibly think of a better summer job.

Tyler N. (CS Instructor)

Youth Science Academy and Astronauts in Training

This was my first year at MRU camps, but the memories I made here will stay with me long after the summer ends. Being able to teach, inspire and excite campers of all ages was one of the most rewarding things I've done, and seeing the smiles the campers had each day made it all worthwhile for me. My fellow instructors and supervisors were amazingly helpful and made it easy to transition between tasks and handle my responsibilities. Overall I would strongly recommend MRU camps to anyone wanting to work or experience it as a camper.



Melyna B. (SOE Instructor)

Playscape, Zen Kids, and Fundamentals

MRU Camps fosters an environment for both staff and campers to reach their full potential! As a student teacher, the past two years at MRU Camps have provided me a space to let out my inner child while growing in my skills to lead youth. The smiles on the faces of campers and fellow instructors make showing up to work an effortless task, and I cannot recommend the programs enough!



OUR PEOPLE

Staff Testimonials

Carly G. (ELE Instructor)

Maker Lab

I am extremely grateful to have spent my last two summers working at MRU Camps. As a university student in education this job has allowed me to grow my confidence and skills working with a curriculum and colleague that have the same passion and drive to teach and inspire children. Although I would finish a days work tired, I always felt a sense of fulfillment and happiness knowing that I was working a job that made a difference to people. Even if it was just a funny conversation with a camper on the way to pool, a special drawing given at sign out, or the smiles from campers after completing an activity, every little moment at MRU Camps allowed me to grow my passion for education.



Jacqueline C. (CS Instructor)

Art Escape, Art Tech Mash Up, Art Attack

My time working at MRU Camps has allowed me to grow my skills in leadership as an instructor. As an Art Instructor I had the opportunity to share my passion and knowledge of the arts with children who were eager to learn and be engaged. MRU camps provided me with an opportunity to inspire the next generation of young artists which was incredibly rewarding. MRU camps is a lively environment and a very fun workplace!

Lance K. (SOE Leader)

Playscape, Zen Kids, and Fundamentals

This summer working at MRU Camps was a wonderful experience. Every day this summer it was amazing to come to work and see the faces of smiling kids and get to enjoy the day with them. Throughout the summer I have seen many areas of growth and learned so much. As I head into the third year of my education degree I can take these aspects from camp and utilize them in my school!





MOUNT ROYAL
UNIVERSITY
1910

Mount Royal University is located in the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina, and the Îyârhe Nakoda. The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation.

