



JOHN AUSTIN  
CHELEY FOUNDATION

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# CAPSTONE MENTOR GUIDE



Dear Capstone Mentors,

Welcome to the Capstone Program. We are so excited that you will be participating this year! We believe that service to others is a natural extension to the values and ideals learned at camp.

Through the Capstone Program, older campers are given the opportunity to extend the care and concern they experienced at camp to their own communities. During the school year, campers work with their mentor to design, plan, implement, and evaluate a local service project.

The creativity, flexibility, and ingenuity of our mentors and campers has been fantastic! They have found significant ways to be of service while navigating the ever changing landscape of healthy best practices.

Last year's projects included a book drive for a women's shelter, growing fruits and vegetables for a food shelf, a neighborhood trash clean up, assembling care packages for a homeless shelter, collecting cleaning products for a food pantry, and teaching music to preschool children.

The Capstone Program continues to extend and enhance the personal growth and the service to others which are part of the camp experience. We are excited to see what your Capstone Camper creates and how it benefits their community.

As always, the Capstone Coaches and I are here to support you in the Capstone Program in any way we can. We look forward to another summer of significance in 2023!

*Kristen Peterka*

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## **Table of Contents**

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Program Information</b>                               | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>                        | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Principles of Reflection</b>                          | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Service Project Outline</b>                           | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Service Project Timeline</b>                          | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Service Project Implementation Guide</b>              | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Resources</b>   | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Appendix: Sample Follow up Email to Camper/Family</b> | <b>14</b> |

# **ATS CAPSTONE CAMBERSHIP PROGRAM**

## **WHAT IS THE CAPSTONE CAMBERSHIP PROGRAM?**

The Capstone Campership Program gives the 15 year old returning ATS camper the opportunity to give back and grow. Experienced campers have received the benefit of camperships to high end summer camps where they have had life changing experiences. ATS believes they have much to offer their camp and home community. The Capstone Program Guide walks the camper through planning, implementing, reflecting on, and reporting on a school year service project in their local community. Lessons learned become the foundation for leadership training the following summer at camp.

## **WHAT SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD BE MADE THROUGHOUT THE CAPSTONE PROGRAM?**

When deciding upon a Capstone Service Project please take notice of all relevant guidelines relating to COVID-19 and pay attention to ensure you and your camper's health and safety as well as that of any people the project is intended to serve. A Thousand Summers does not endorse Capstone Service Projects that breach current health and safety guidelines.

## **WHAT CAMP FUNDING DOES THE CAPSTONE CAMBERSHIP OFFER?**

Capstone Camperships offer the same camp funding support as previous camperships per family qualifications.

## **WHO SHOULD APPLY?**

The Capstone Campership Program is for the returning ATS Applicant who will be 15 years old at the time of camp session. *Participation is not mandatory but is highly encouraged.*

## **WHEN ARE CAPSTONE CAMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE?**

Capstone Campership Applications are due no later than October 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **WHY PARTICIPATE IN THE CAPSTONE PROGRAM?**

- Capstone Program service projects strengthen the camper's community and provide an opportunity to give back
- Capstone Program service projects promote personal growth and civic responsibility
- Capstone Program service projects give campers professional experience and an opportunity to test out a potential career
- Capstone Program service hours accrued may count towards school community service requirements
- ATS shares Capstone Camper Program outcomes and accomplishments with the camper's Associate Camp to enhance leadership program applications (CILT/CIT/JC/Pathfinding, etc.).

## **WHAT IS THE CAMPER'S ROLE?**

The Capstone camper, with the guidance of their Mentor, will:

- Complete the Capstone Program Guide
- Implement a service project in the camper's home community
- Create a digital presentation of the service project.

## **WHAT IS THE MENTOR'S ROLE?**

The ATS Mentor will support the Capstone camper with the following, as needed:

- Service project development
- Service project implementation
- Reflection
- Service project digital presentation production
- All Mentor contact with the Capstone Camper (email, phone and video calls, text or in person) will be conducted with at least one Parent/Guardian present.

## **WHAT IS THE CAPSTONE PARENT/GUARDIAN ROLE?**

The Capstone Parent/Guardian understands:

- The Capstone Service Project is camper focused - the CAMPER is to do the work, not the parent.
- Parent/Guardian will be on all phone or video calls
- Parent/Guardian will be copied on all email, texts, etc.
- Parent/Guardian will always be present for in person meetings
- Contact ATS Campership office with extenuating circumstances

## **WHAT IS THE CAPSTONE COACH'S ROLE?**

Since the Mentor's role is much larger during the Capstone year, a Capstone Coach will provide support:

- Contact Mentor in fall to establish relationship
- Support Mentor through all aspects of the Capstone Project
- Serve as a point of contact for Mentor for all Capstone questions, concerns, etc.

Capstone Coaches are available to help in a wide variety of ways. Some examples:

- Provide unique ways to entice your camper into completing their weekly Reflections.
- Caper procrastinating? Get techniques to break that procrastination spell.
- If your camper's first or second idea falls through, get strategies to generate a new idea.
- Are the holidays a challenge for scheduling? Get proven strategies to work around family celebrations.
- Is your camper's project too big? Or too small? Get help defining a project that is just the right size.

## **PRINCIPLES OF REFLECTION**

A key piece of the Capstone Service Project is requiring the Capstone camper to regularly reflect on the process of creating and implementing their ideas through weekly prompts given by their mentors.

- Reflections serve as a record of work completed, challenges overcome, personal characteristics that were identified as helpful or a deterrent to progress, etc. They may also evaluate if project planning and implementation are on track.
- Guided reflection is best for teenagers, therefore, questions/prompts are provided to which campers respond. Mentors are welcome to create additional prompts that address specific interests or needs of the camper.
- Getting kids to complete reflections may be a challenge! Adapt the format as needed to get desired responses. For example, share a Google doc, set up a blog, verbally ask the question and take notes on the camper's response, start a text stream where the mentor sends prompts and the camper responds or send pictures of written responses to Mentor, etc.
- Reflections will serve as a resource when preparing final presentation

## **CAPSTONE SERVICE PROJECT OUTLINE**

- Section I: Weekly Reflection Guidelines & Prompts
- Section II: Project Development
- Section III: Project Description, Purpose & Learning Objectives
- Section IV: Project Plan
- Section V: Project Calendar
- Section VI: Self Evaluation
- Section VII: Project Final Presentation

## CAPSTONE SERVICE PROJECT TIMELINE

*\*Adjust meeting dates to accommodate or utilize Winter Break and Spring Break, to complete the project by due date. These are suggested dates to pace the project. Items can be completed sooner than listed.*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Third week in November                      | Capstone Coach will contact Mentor                   |
|   | ATS office will email Capstone materials             |
| <b>December 1st, 5:30 pm MST</b>            | <b>Capstone Mentor Call #1</b>                       |
| First week in December                      | Mentor contacts Camper/Parent to set up Mtg#1        |
| Second week in December                     | Camper/Parent & Mentor Meeting #1                    |
| Third week in December                      | Camper/Parent & Mentor Meeting #2                    |
| <i>Late December – Early January</i>        | <i>Winter Break</i>                                  |
| <b>January 19<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 pm MST</b> | <b>Capstone Mentor Call #2</b>                       |
| Third week in January                       | Camper/Parent & Mentor Meeting #3                    |
| Fourth week in January                      | Camper/Parent & Mentor Meeting #4                    |
| <b>FEBRUARY 1st</b>                         | <b>PROJECT START BY DATE</b> (if project is ongoing) |
| <b>March 2nd, 5:30 pm MST</b>               | <b>Capstone Mentor Call #3</b>                       |
| February-March                              | Ongoing weekly/biweekly Meetings                     |
| <b>MARCH 15<sup>th</sup></b>                | <b>PROJECT COMPLETION DATE</b>                       |
| <i>One week in March or April</i>           | <i>Spring Break</i>                                  |
| Third week in March                         | Camper/Parent & Mentor Meeting #5                    |
| Fourth week in March                        | Camper/Parent & Mentor Meeting #6                    |
| First week in April                         | Camper/Parent & Mentor Meeting #7                    |
| <b>APRIL 15<sup>th</sup></b>                | <b>PRESENTATION &amp; PROGRAM GUIDE DUE TO ATS</b>   |
| <b>April 23rd, 1:00 pm MDT</b>              | <b>Capstone Open House</b>                           |

By **April 15th**, the Capstone Camper will submit the following documents to the ATS Campership office:

- Written responses to Reflections in section I of the Capstone Program Guide (submit a hard copy or pdf document).
- Written responses to sections II, III, IV, and VI from the Capstone Program Guide.
- Written or digital copy of your working calendar used to track your project in section V.
- Final Presentation (upload to dropbox, email presentation link or copy on cd or thumb drive)

# CAPSTONE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

CAPSTONE COACH WILL CONTACT MENTOR by third week in November

Capstone Coach will contact Mentor to:

- Verify Capstone camper materials received from ATS office
- Direct Mentor to [Capstone Mentor Guide](#) (this document) and [Capstone Program Guide](#) on ATS website Resources page. The Capstone Program Guide is a step-by-step guide to project planning.
- Answer questions and address concerns
- Make plans for weekly, monthly, or as needed check in times
- Invite to Capstone Mentor Calls

## CAPSTONE MENTOR CALL #1 - December 1st, 5:30 pm MST

Meeting with Capstone Coaches and Capstone Mentors to:

- Provide an overview of the Capstone Program
- Discuss the Capstone Program Guide
- Demonstrate Program Implementation
- Q&A

CAPSTONE MENTOR CONTACT CAMPER/FAMILY by first week in December

Mentor contact Camper and Family to set up Capstone Service Project Planning Meeting #1

- Verify Capstone camper materials received from ATS office
- Direct Camper/Family to [Capstone Program Guide](#) on ATS website (email or print and distribute to Camper/Family as needed). On the Resources Page scroll to the Capstone Program section.
- Ask Camper and Parent to read entire Capstone Program Guide document BEFORE you meet for Meeting #1
- Plan for approximately one hour meeting timeframe

SERVICE PROJECT PLANNING MEETING #1 by second week in December

Using the Capstone Program Guide:

- Discuss the Capstone Program safety - adhere to local COVID health and safety guidelines
- Discuss the Capstone Program purpose
- Define Camper, Parent and Mentor roles
  - One Parent/Guardian will be copied on all email or text and present for any phone call or meeting with you or anyone at the service project site throughout the camper's planning and implementation of their project. *Contact ATS Campership office with extenuating circumstances.*
  - Service Project is *camper focused* – the CAMPER does the work, not the Parent or Mentor.
- Review what is due, when it is due and where it is to be sent.



- Discuss HOW and WHEN you will meet with the Camper/Parent.
  - Assess Camper/Parent access to the internet, email and/or phone. Suggest alternative email access at library or school, if needed.
  - Make a plan for HOW to communicate (Example: phone call, email, text, etc.)
  - Make a plan for WHEN to meet (Example: meet in the library after school on Tuesdays, call every Tuesday night at 4p, email by end of day on Thursday, etc.)
  
- Discuss Capstone Program Guide Section I: Weekly Reflections
  - Introduce weekly reflections and stress their importance.
  - Make a plan for HOW you want Reflection Responses sent to you (Example: share a GoogleDoc, start a blog, email, write on a paper copy then text a picture to Mentor, etc.).
  - Set due dates for each Reflection Prompt in the Capstone Program Guide.
  - Make a plan for keeping Reflection responses to anticipate submitting to ATS at the end of the project.
  
- Discuss Capstone Program Guide Section II: Project Requirements and Development
  - Read through the camper's Capstone Project Proposal responses from the camper application (provided to you by the ATS office).
  - Talk through the Capstone Program Guide Section II questions.
  - If Camper needs adjustment or redirection with project idea development, discuss:
    - What are you interested in? What are you passionate about?
    - What issue would you like to address, solve?
    - Is the project a right fit for you? How could you challenge yourself?
    - Will the project be an ongoing project (4-6 weeks) or a 1 or 2 day culminating event that Camper will organize?
    - Direct them to Project Ideas in Capstone Program Guide Appendix, if needed
  
- Assign the Camper to complete the following and submit to you BEFORE next meeting:
  - Complete questions in Section II
  - Reflection Prompt #1 and #2
  
- Send follow up email to Camper/Family summarizing what you discussed, what is due, when it is due, and when you will meet next (See Sample Follow Up Email in Appendix)

#### SERVICE PROJECT PLANNING MEETING #2 by third week in December

- Review Assigned Items
  - Discuss Camper responses to Capstone Program Guide Section II
  - Suggest edits or approve as final
  - Discuss Reflection Response
  
- Talk through Capstone Program Guide Section III
- Assign the Camper to complete the following and submit to you BEFORE next meeting:
  - Complete questions in Section III
  - Reflection Prompt #3 and #4
  
- Send follow up email summarizing what you discussed, what is due, when it is due, and when you will meet next

## **CAPSTONE MENTOR CALL #2 - January 19<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 pm MST**

Meeting with Capstone Coaches and Capstone Mentors to:

- Discuss project planning progress
- Challenges and Successes
- Q&A

## **SERVICE PROJECT PLANNING MEETING #3 by third week in January**

- Review Assigned Items
  - Discuss Camper responses to the Capstone Program Guide Section III
  - Suggest edits or approve as final.
  - Discuss Reflection Response
- Talk through Capstone Program Guide Section IV & V
- Assign the Camper to complete the following and submit to you BEFORE next meeting:
  - Complete questions in Section IV & V
  - Reflection Prompt #5 and #6
- Send follow up email summarizing what you discussed, what is due, when it is due, and when you will meet next

## **SERVICE PROJECT PLANNING MEETING #4 by fourth week in January**

- Review Assigned Items
  - Discuss Camper responses to the Capstone Program Guide Section IV & V
  - Suggest edits or approve as final.
  - Discuss Reflection Response
- Discuss project specific tasks as needed
- Plan ongoing Weekly or Biweekly Camper/Parent Meetings as needed
- Assign Reflection Prompts # 7-14 (one each week)
- Send follow up email summarizing what you discussed, what is due, when it is due, and when you will meet next

## **PROJECT START DATE by February 1st**

Ongoing projects must be started by this date.

## **CAPSTONE MENTOR CALL #3 - March 2nd, 5:30 pm MST**

Meeting with Capstone Coaches and Capstone Mentors to:

- Discuss project implementation
- Challenges and Successes
- Presentation Expectations and Progress
- Q&A

## **ONGOING WEEKLY OR BIWEEKLY CAMPER/PARENT MEETINGS - February-March, as needed**

- Discuss progression of project
- On track? Celebrate and talk through next steps!
- Off track? Redirect, troubleshoot issues, and encourage adjustments.
- Regularly review Capstone Program Guide for completion, areas to update or adjust, planning to add, expectations to alter, events to add to calendar, volunteer work logged, etc.

- Continue to assign weekly Reflection Prompts # 7-14 (one each week)
- Check in with Capstone Coach with issues, nonparticipation, successes, etc.
- AFTER PROJECT IS COMPLETE - Assign Capstone Program Guide Section VI: Self Evaluation to be completed by Meeting #5

**SERVICE PROJECT COMPLETION DATE - March 15th**

All projects, ongoing or culminating event(s), must be completed by this date.

**SERVICE PROJECT MEETING #5 by third week in March**

- Talk through the Capstone Program Guide Section VI: Self Evaluation responses
- Talk through the Capstone Program Guide Section VII: Project Final Presentation
- Point out that responses to the Capstone Program Guide Sections I-VI provide resources needed to meet presentation requirements.
- Discuss and plan for due date for Final Presentation
- Assign the Camper to complete the following and send to you via email before BEFORE next meeting:
  - Prepare Final Presentation ‘Rough Draft’
  - Finalize each section of the Capstone Program Guide including providing a copy of Reflection responses, electronic calendar pages, etc.
- Send follow up email summarizing what you discussed, what is due and when

**SERVICE PROJECT MEETING #6 by fourth week in March**

- Review Assigned Items
  - Review Final Presentation ‘Rough Draft’
  - Verify that all of the presentation requirements are represented in the presentation
  - Suggest edits or approve as final.
- Gather copies of items needed to submit with Final Presentation
  - Reflection Responses
  - Written responses to Capstone Program Guide Sections II, III, IV, and VI
- Assign the Camper to complete the following and send to you via email BEFORE next meeting:
  - Prepare Final Presentation ‘Final Draft’
  - Complete any incomplete Capstone Program Guide items and/or gather any missing items

**SERVICE PROJECT MEETING #7 by first week in April**

- Review Final Presentation ‘Final Draft’
- Organize Reflection Responses and Capstone Program Guide Sections II, III, IV, and VI including a copy of electronic calendar pages.
- Submit Final Presentation along with Reflection Responses and complete Capstone Program Guide to ATS office per guidelines in the Capstone Program Guide.
- Watch for confirmation from the ATS office that the Capstone Program Guide and Final Presentation were received and completed.

**CAPSTONE PRESENTATION, REFLECTIONS & PROGRAM GUIDE DUE DATE - April 15th**  
Capstone digital presentation and Capstone Program Guide (including Reflection Responses and calendar) are due to the ATS by this date.

**Capstone Open House - April 23rd, 1:00 pm MDT**

The Capstone Open House is an opportunity for the Capstone Coaches, Mentors, Campers and their families to get together remotely and celebrate the accomplishments of the year. Capstone Campers will be given 5 minutes to deliver their service project presentations and be given brief feedback. This will be a great opportunity for the campers to practice speaking to a group and give the audience an opportunity to understand the way they served in their communities and provide feedback. Campers are not required to present but are encouraged to participate.

### **CAPSTONE PROGRAM FOLLOW-UP**

ATS requests that the Capstone Mentor complete an evaluation of the service project. This document will be sent to you by the end of March.

ATS will forward camper's Final Presentation and highlights to Camper's Camp Director and will copy the Mentor and Coach.

ATS will feature Capstone Project Presentations on the ATS website and other social media.

## RESOURCES

1. Websites that may help generate ideas for service projects that can be done virtually or with social distancing.

Serve Your Community, Corporation for National and Community Service

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/serve>

Points of Light, Virtual Volunteer Opportunities

<https://www.pointsoflight.org/virtual-volunteering-opportunities/>

2. [Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership](#)

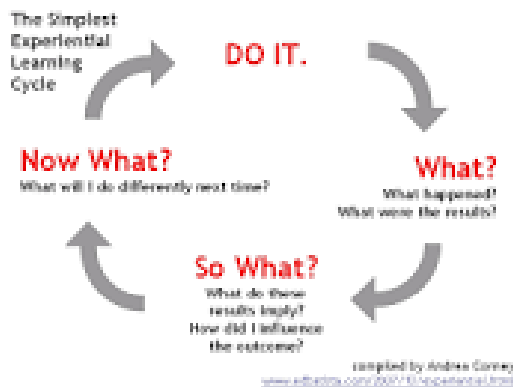
“The difference [between servant-first and leader-first] manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? *And*, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?”

3. [A Natural and Experiential Cycle of Learning](#)

“Effective learning is seen when a person progresses through a cycle of four stages: of (1) having a concrete experience followed by (2) observation of and reflection on that experience which leads to (3) the formation of abstract concepts (analysis) and generalizations (conclusions) which are then (4) used to test hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences.

(<http://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>)”

4. [The Simplest Experiential Education Cycle](#) by Andrea Corney



- Do it. (step one, step two, etc.)
- What? What happened? What were the results?
- So what? What do these results imply? How did I influence the outcome?
- Now What? What will I do differently next time? How does this affect me? Or what in my own life is like what I experienced?

## APPENDIX

### Sample Email to Make Initial Contact with Capstone camper and parent.

\*Remember to direct conversation to the camper but copy each parent on all correspondence

Hello **Mechaela, Jennifer and Charles,**

Congratulations on Mechaela's acceptance for a Capstone Campership through A Thousand Summers (ATS)!

I am writing to begin the discussion about Mechaela's Service Project that is a requirement for the Capstone Campership. I will be supporting **Mechaela's** through her Service Project.

I would like to set a time to speak with you by phone to get the process moving forward. Would you be available for a phone call in the evening on **December 4th**? I will need to speak with **Mechaela** and at least one parent. If this is not enough notice, please suggest another day/evening and time that would work for a call during the next week.

Let me know what phone number would be the best for me to use to contact you.

Please download and read the [Capstone Program Guide](#) from A Thousand Summers' website at [www.athousandsummers.org](http://www.athousandsummers.org) on the Programs page under Resources. In our phone call, we will begin to discuss specific sections of the Capstone Program Guide. Please **read through all of the sections** to spark additional thoughts and questions that we can discuss in our call.

I am excited to work with **Mechaela** in this endeavor and look forward to your response to this email.

Have a great weekend.

## Sample follow-up email after initial Capstone phone call with Camper and Parent.

\*Remember to direct conversation to the camper but copy each parent on all correspondence

Dimitri,

It was good to talk with both you and your mom yesterday. I enjoyed hearing about the play you are in and can't wait to hear how opening night goes.

After each of our phone calls, I plan to send you a brief summary of what we talked about.

Last night we discussed:

### A. REFLECTION:

As a learning component, we talked about you writing me a Reflection response by Tuesday each week. You may find that you want to write more often than once a week and that would be great. Be sure and copy your parents on all of the emails that you send to me.

I'll look for at least **one Reflection email from you before Tuesday, Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>** on the following topic:

*Describe how you are progressing toward making the decisions about your service project and what gave you the idea to do this particular project.*

### B. SERVICE PROJECT

- We looked through the Capstone Program Guide.
- We discussed Section II: Project Requirements and reviewed the Capstone Project Proposal from your application.
- We talked about recruiting some of your soccer team to help with your clean up project including a sport gear donation drive to add more depth and challenge to your project
- Using these comments to complete Section III: Project Description

Assignment **Due: Tuesday, Jan. 19 by email.**

- **Finalize Section II: Project Description**
- **Complete Section III: Project Description** for our discussion next week.
- **Reflection email**

I look forward to our **next phone call meeting on Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm MST**. If you have questions before then, feel free to email me or call me at 720-981-2532 x.

Have a good week,

## Sample email to camper to explain Final Presentation

Dimitri,

Congratulations on your efforts at Harvest Prep. The time that you gave serving this group has bettered you and your community.

We have reached the final component in the Capstone Project. As we discussed last night, you are to prepare a final presentation as a summary of your project. Look at Section VII in the Capstone Program Guide for the requirements to include in your Project Final Presentation. Look back at your Reflection responses and Capstone Program Guide responses to complete the presentation requirements.

Next time we meet, plan to have your presentation in “Rough Draft” form. We will look through it, make sure that all of the requirements have been met and consider any needed revisions.

**Final Presentation** is Due to ATS by email on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this assignment.

I am so proud of you!

All the best,