



## Launching a New Leadership Program

Every spring, the excitement builds as we get closer to the start of the camp season. This spring, we are even more excited than usual as A Thousand Summers (ATS) is launching a new leadership program. The Camp Fellowship Program is a leadership and career development program designed for our alumni campers, centered on employment at summer camp.

We are thrilled to announce that currently we have three ATS alums participating in the inaugural year of the Camp Fellowship Program: Silas (Camp Kooch-i-ching) and Jade and Easton (Colvig Silver Camps). One or two additional alums may join the program in the next few weeks.

The Camp Fellowship Program prepares participants for the responsibilities of working at summer camp and also provides mentorship opportunities that foster meaningful relationships with the younger participants of our ATS Campership and Compass Programs.

The program develops critical thinking, problem-solving, interpersonal, and leadership skills that are highly coveted and transferrable to other educational and professional settings. At the end of the summer, each participant will receive a written evaluation and summary of the fellowship along with professionally focused letters of recommendation from both ATS and their camp.



*“A summer working at camp will support my personal development by allowing me to experience the outdoors to its maximum potential, furthering my goals of being in a wilderness career.”*

**– Silas, Camp Kooch-i-ching**



*Silas navigating challenging waters*

## Why is the Camp Fellowship Program Important?

ATS campers who age out of the Campership Program desire a continuing connection to camp and the leadership development that it can provide. However, there are barriers that may prevent them from furthering their leadership development as camp counselors. One of the most common barriers reported is the financial limitation that a summer camp counselor salary provides.

The ATS Camp Fellowship Program includes a stipend that reflects the participants' additional responsibilities required both before and during



*"I think the Fellowship program is a wonderful idea for both the campers and staff involved. This is the exact type of support system I would have loved as a camper, and I'm super excited to be a part of its creation." – Easton, Colvig Silver Camps*

employment at summer camp. The stipend may also include paid travel to and from camp. When added to the compensation received from the camp, this stipend removes the financial barriers that may exist when considering a position working at summer camp by providing combined earnings that are competitive with other opportunities.

*"We would like to have more representation on our staff so our campers of color can see themselves in staff roles in the future as well as create a more diverse staff that can provide broader perspectives and experiences for our camp community as a whole."*

*– Ariella Rogge, Director, Sanborn Western Camps*

A survey of directors of our Associate Camps clearly identified strong interest in a program that will support the continued development of former ATS campers and help to remove the main barriers that prevent them from considering working as summer camp counselors.

Every one of our Associate Camps is striving to create more diversity within their camp community. Their ideal staff recruit is a former camper from a socio-economically and/or racially diverse background. Camps recognize the financial barrier to engaging this population. Camps also experience challenges accessing and connecting with this population from the non-camper community, largely because it can be unappealing for prospects to work in a community where they do not see themselves widely represented.

The Camp Fellowship Program is designed to help our Associate Camps overcome both of these



challenges by providing additional financial support for candidates and greater access to a diverse population of candidates who have been to camp and understand its significance.

By increasing staff diversity, our camps will also be able to provide greater connection and support for their campers who come from diverse backgrounds—a group they are seeking to expand. As JR Verkamp, the Director of Camp Kooch-i-ching says, “Great staff diversity will create a better camper experience and attract a more diverse camper base.”

### *How Does the Camp Fellowship Program Benefit ATS?*

The addition of the Camp Fellowship Program is another step in realizing our expanded programs vision and our evolution as a youth development organization. We seek to develop related and meaningful programs to complement the growth that comes from the summer camp experience. By building our own internal youth development programming, we are serving our kids more effectively, strengthening our overall organizational impact, and increasing our value to current and prospective new Associate Camps.

We are sending our kids to camp more prepared than ever before and helping our camps as they aspire to increase diversity within their camp communities. We are also helping our camps address staffing challenges by providing knowledgeable and motivated candidates who know firsthand the power of camp and how it can change lives.

This new internal programming is also helping ATS enhance its fundability. One of our long-time donors, the L&M Charitable Foundation, Inc., is so excited about the potential of the Camp Fellowship Program that they have committed to fund the first year of the program in its entirety in addition to their annual contribution that supports camperships. We are so grateful for their support!



*“A summer working at camp will allow me to return the kind of support I received as a camper, which shaped my values as an adult. As a kid, the mentors, teachers and counselors in my life gave me the guidance and affirmation I needed to see beyond the challenges I was facing and be hopeful about a more stable, happy future. My reasoning for becoming a counselor is very personal. It feels like an act of service that I am being called to complete. I know that I can make a positive change in campers’ lives.” – Jade, Colvig Silver Camps*

The Camp Fellowship Program is a “win” for our alums, our Associate Camps, and ATS. We know that our inaugural Fellows will be positive additions to their respective camp staffs and tremendous role models for younger campers. We look forward to the growth of this exciting new program.

**To learn more about the ATS Camp Fellowship Program, scan the QR code.**



# A Valuable New Associate Camp Partnership

We are sending our first campers to our two newest Associate Camps in the summer of 2023! With the addition of Camps Kieve and Wavus, we now have eleven high-quality summer camps that we can offer to our campership recipients.

Camp Kieve for Boys and Wavus Camp for Girls are located on Damariscotta Lake in mid-coastal Maine. The camps focus on extended wilderness trips and emphasize character development and leadership, as all of our other Associate Camps do. Founded in the 1920s, they are very well established and highly regarded summer camps that fit our mold perfectly.

Kieve enrolls approximately 600 boys and Wavus enrolls approximately 550 girls, ages eight to 17, across two summer sessions. Their series of wilderness tripping adventures increase in length and rigor as the campers grow older. The youngest

campers begin with a one-night trip and the oldest campers embark on a 22-day hike along the last 200 miles of the Appalachian Trail—an experience they call ‘Maine Trails.’ Maine Trails is the pathway for campers to grow into counselors and then, for some, educators at The Leadership School—a unique professional launching pad in service to local schools.



Campers at Kieve and Wavus return year after year to acquire skills, knowledge, and push their comfort zones under the gentle guidance of strong staff role models. As the Executive Director of Kieve Wavus Education (KWE), Sam Kennedy, explains, “The result is that generations of kids discover grit, confidence, and compassion within themselves and



*“KWE is committed not only to dedicating our own financial resources to enroll campers from A Thousand Summers tuition-free throughout the span of their entire camp career but also to providing transformative experiences, professional opportunities, and lifelong friendship and mentorship. By supporting each camper throughout their adolescence into young adulthood, we will ensure that the greatest development outcomes are achieved.” – Sam Kennedy, Executive Director, Kieve Wavus Education, Inc. (KWE)*



take that potential with them as they become more independent contributors to the world.”

KWE values diversity in every form and is driven to make its camp programs accessible to underserved populations, specifically focusing on growing more racially and socioeconomically diverse. They are striving to reach new communities so their camp programs better reflect our world and enrich every participant’s experience. KWE recognizes the important role A Thousand Summers can play in helping them achieve this goal.

By partnering together, A Thousand Summers will help KWE identify campers from more diverse populations, mentor them in preparation for their camp experience, and ensure that they have the proper equipment to be fully engaged in all camp activities from the moment they arrive at camp. In turn, KWE can help A Thousand Summers expand its impact and provide summer camp opportunities for more campers from underserved backgrounds, as they will welcome our A Thousand Summers campers *at no cost to our organization*.

Sam Kennedy believes that “A Thousand Summers’ expertise in recruitment, mentorship, and community building will be an incredible asset to KWE. We will learn how to better meet new communities where they are, guide them through the camp experience, and expand so that everyone in the community is lifted up by a sense of belonging—better serving all campers and their families so they are positioned for the greatest fulfillment in and beyond camp.”

We look forward to a strong mission-aligned partnership with KWE as we collaborate to achieve our common goals: increasing diversity within the camp community and changing kids’ lives through transformative summer camp experiences.

If you would like to learn more about Kieve and Wavus, please visit their website at [www.kwe.org](http://www.kwe.org).

## New Additions to the A Thousand Summers Team

A Thousand Summers has recently added two new and very talented part-time members to our staff team to help support our growing organization.



**Victoria Norton** is our new Development Officer and will assist Alyssa Street with the expansion of the organization’s fundraising and development operations.



**Kristen Peterka** will support Karen Smith in the role of Programs Coordinator where she will focus on the management of applications and the planning, training, and teaching of our programs.

# Blazing the Trail for Future Leaders

A Thousand Summers has many different options for donors to lead the way for future generations of campers. Gifts made to A Thousand Summers can be designated for use wherever the need is greatest or aligned with areas that support our donors' interests.

Whether leaving a legacy through a planned gift, making an annual gift, or committing to a recurring donation, investing in the lives of the young people we serve makes a positive difference.

The Trailblazer Program is a perfect opportunity for donors interested in making a monthly, quarterly or semi-annual donation. Just \$25 a month will provide a camper with the equipment they need to hit the trail running and also help fund their camp store account.

## Questions?

Contact us at [giving@athousandsummers.org](mailto:giving@athousandsummers.org) or by phone 720.981.2532, ext. 100.



*"Every year I've been at camp I've made new friends and forged relationships that mean the world to me. I'm excited about going back to camp because I'll get to see those same friends and continue to make new memories with them. I'm excited to be able to breathe the clean mountain air and exist within nature without any other responsibilities plaguing my mind. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to go to camp and exercise my confidence in such a safe space. I've learned so much about myself and the world around me. Camp has truly molded me into the person I am today."*  
– Karuna, Cheley Colorado Camps



## Lighting the Way

Partner with us and help light the way for a child to learn leadership skills at camp this summer:



**\$150,000 Endowed Campership**  
Deliver the summer camp experience for one camper per year in perpetuity



**\$50,000 Power of Ten**  
This generous sponsorship level makes it possible for ten campers to attend camp for one summer



**\$25,000 Adopt a Camper**  
A one-on-one relationship between the sponsor and a camper for his/her entire camp career



**\$10,000 Double Campership**  
Your generosity will fund two campers for a summer



**\$5,000 Full Campership**  
The summer of a lifetime for one lucky camper



**\$2,500 Half Campership**  
Your funding will pay half the expenses for one summer camper



**\$1,000 Young Explorer**  
Provide an introductory camp experience for a young camper



**\$500 Transporter**  
Provide travel expenses for one camper



**\$250 Outfitter**  
Provide equipment for one camper



**\$100 Piggy Banker**  
Fund a camper's bank account during his/her stay

## Double Your Impact

Do you know if the company you work for will match your contributions to a nonprofit? Find out if you can double the impact of your gift by visiting [www.athousandsummers.org/match](http://www.athousandsummers.org/match).



## Leave A Legacy

Many of our donors have committed to support our campers through a gift to the John Austin Cheley Foundation (FEIN #48-1077337) in their wills or estate plans. Some have even named the Foundation as a beneficiary of their life insurance policy or retirement fund. If you are interested in leaving an impactful gift in your will or naming the Foundation as a beneficiary, please contact Alyssa Street at 720.981.2532 or at [alysa.street@athousandsummers.org](mailto:alysa.street@athousandsummers.org).



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# SAVE THE DATE!

We are excited to announce that a new quarterly educational webinar series is coming soon. Scan the QR code for more information and for upcoming event dates. We hope you will join us!



*Would you like more information on how you can help a child learn and grow through transformative summer camp experiences? Visit our website at [www.athousandsummers.org/donate](http://www.athousandsummers.org/donate) or call us at 720.981.2532.*