



Creating Change Through Collaboration

The countdown to camp is on! We feel so fortunate to work with our thirteen associate camps. All of these camps provide outstanding outdoor adventure and youth development programming. They are steeped in history and tradition and are the best of the best.

We could go on and on about the life-changing experiences our associate camps offer for our ATS campers, but in this article we want to focus on the collaboration of ATS and the camps and feature the camps' opinion about us. We have worked tirelessly over the last few years to extend our programming options and to consider what else we could do to better serve not only our ATS campers and their families, but also our associate camps. We believe that we provide an important service for our camps, but we wanted to hear from them directly about the value we provide.

"It is clear that by working together, we can accomplish more. With this in mind, we seek out associations that create synergy by fueling our impact and returning significant value to our partners."

—Tim Lucas, ATS Executive Director





We reached out to four of our camps who are long-time partners but who also have been involved with our Camp Fellowship Program. They have a unique perspective to share about the progression of ATS and the development of the young people we serve.

Overall, these camps feel that ATS is highly professional and well-organized and does a great job identifying, vetting, and preparing campers for what is often a new experience. The camp directors believe that our mentors help facilitate a smooth experience in terms of filling out forms, packing for camp, and getting the kids ready for a great experience. The pre-camp preparation that our mentors assist with allows our campers to maximize their experience. Clay Colvig of Colvig Silver Camps shared that “The intention with which ATS attempts to address every minor challenge that might get in the way of a positive experience is exemplary.”

The camp directors also saw a real benefit in partnering with ATS in terms of their camper population and community. Kenley Perry of Camp Kawanee for Boys shared with us that “Partnering

“ATS makes camp possible for those who don’t have the means, and it gives the whole community a broader cross-section of life. In our opinion, while there are wide-ranging cultural differences in our country, it’s the economic differences that are at the core of our challenges. Our partnership with ATS addresses that disparity in a most significant way.”

—Clay Colvig, Owner and Executive Director of Colvig Silver Camps

with ATS brings socio-economic diversity to our camper population. ATS finds campers who fit well into our program and philosophy. It’s a great match and enhances our camp community.”

Brooke Cheley of Cheley Colorado Camps agrees and believes that “It [ATS] is the perfect solution to adding diversity to your campers and staff. It is such a gift to be able to get campers from different backgrounds to camp and then to work together to support them through the whole process.”

The directors spoke highly of our Camp Fellowship Program as well. We are entering year three of this program that identifies and supports ATS Campership Program alums who want to return to camp as counselors. ATS Fellows go through the same staff development as other counselors and receive the same paycheck but receive additional training from us and take on additional responsibilities to support current ATS campers in exchange for an extra stipend and references from our organization.

Tim Downey of Camp Kooch-i-ching has worked with several of our ATS Fellows and recognizes the potential value of the stipend we provide. He mentioned that “The ATS Fellowship Program has been very successful for us. It helped us retain two really great staff people who wouldn’t have been able to work at camp otherwise for financial reasons.”

Many of our Campership Program alums face daunting economic challenges that can prevent them from applying to be camp counselors because the job doesn’t pay enough to sustain them. The additional stipend helps fill that gap and makes it possible for these amazing young adults to return to camp where they can develop as leaders and outdoor professionals and give back to the community they have grown to love.

According to our camp directors, Fellows bring great value to our partner camps because they have been to camp and understand the camp values, traditions, and goals. They are very dedicated to the mission and serve as wonderful role models for younger ATS campers as well as the entire camp community. Kenley Perry shared that “The Fellows have a unique



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—Brooke Cheley, Owner and Director of Cheley Colorado Camps



perspective and are in the best position to advocate for ATS campers. Fellows take a keen interest in ensuring ATS campers have a successful summer.”

Brooke Cheley stated that she “would absolutely recommend the Camp Fellowship Program to other camps. I think as an industry we sit here and ruminate on how to add diversity to our camp population. It starts with who is on our staff.”

To summarize, our associate camps believe that ATS specializes in finding and preparing well-deserving kids for camp and helps them in their efforts to recruit diverse campers and staff members. The camps are unable to do all of this on their own and they value our efforts and resources to aid them in this important initiative. They believe that ATS has made a positive impact on their camp communities, and they are eager to continue collaborating to create positive change in the lives of young people. 🙌

A New Associate Camp Partnership

We are sending our first campers to our newest associate camp in the summer of 2025! With the addition of Wohelo Camps, we now have thirteen high-quality summer camps that we can offer to our campership recipients.

Wohelo Camps were founded in 1907 by Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick and his wife Charlotte Vetter Gulick. Both were innovators and leaders in physical education for young people. They believed that girls should be afforded the same or similar physical opportunities as boys, and so in 1907 they bought property on Sebago Lake in Maine where they founded Wohelo—a summer camp for girls. A year later they developed Camp Fire for Girls, now known as Camp Fire. Today, Camp Wohelo is run by Luther and Charlotte’s great-grandchildren.

Like many of our other associate camps, a large part of the Wohelo experience is founded in over 100 years of tradition. Just as the camp leadership is in its fourth generation, many campers are also third and fourth generation and return to Wohelo year after year.

Wohelo offers a rustic, nature-focused environment, free from the conveniences and distractions of the modern world. Personal growth is at the heart of Wohelo, where hands-on experiences make learning fun and meaningful. From the moment campers arrive, they are welcomed into a community where everyone belongs. The name Wohelo stands for Work,

“We hope to enrich our camp community through ATS campers who bring diverse backgrounds and experiences. By welcoming more campers to Wohelo, we aim to create a dynamic environment where all campers learn from one another, build resilience, and develop essential life skills. We believe this collaboration will strengthen our camp’s culture of kindness, respect, and adventure, ensuring that every camper leaves with newfound confidence, cherished memories, and a sense of belonging.”

—Reed Rathgeber, Director of Sebago Wohelo



Health, and Love—principles that guide their mission to help campers develop lifelong skills and friendships.

The camp offers two age units—Little Wohelo is for campers ages 6-12 and Sebago Wohelo is for campers ages 12-16. Cabins sit adjacent to Sebago Lake, have no electricity, and campers spend the summer tech-free. Little Wohelo and Sebago Wohelo both operate predominantly 7-week sessions, but also offer campers the opportunity to attend for half sessions.



Wohelo campers have free choice most days to spend time doing whatever activity they would like. Activities are focused on skill levels and interests that are age-appropriate. Popular activities include sailing, canoeing, paddle boarding, swimming and diving, nature activities, tennis, and crafts. Wohelo's extended trip program includes overnight canoe trips and camping excursions.

Reed Rathgeber, the Director of Sebago Wohelo, shared that “Welcoming new campers from ATS is exciting, as we have the privilege of introducing them to the joy and magic of summer at Wohelo. We believe our mission and values align with ATS, and we share the goal of transforming kids’ lives through an unforgettable summer camp experience.”

Wohelo is seeking to increase diversity within their community and hopes by partnering with ATS that they will attract more campers from diverse backgrounds who want to return and become counselors so the diversity can grow in their camp staff as well. By specializing in the recruitment and mentoring of motivated kids from diverse socio-economic and racial/ethnic backgrounds, ATS can support the diversity goals that Wohelo is committed to and ensure that our campers are well prepared for the Wohelo experience.

This new relationship with Wohelo also supports the goals of ATS and our ambitions to expand our programming and serve more young people. We look forward to a mission-aligned partnership with Wohelo as we collaborate to increase diversity within the camp community and change kids’ lives through transformative summer camp experiences.

If you would like to learn more about Wohelo, please visit their website at www.wohelo.com.

Leave a Lasting Legacy

If you believe in the power of camp, consider leaving a lasting legacy with a planned gift through the John Austin Cheley Foundation (DBA: A Thousand Summers FEIN #48-1077337). Your generosity will provide important future support for our mission and will help us continue to change kids' lives through camp for years to come.

A great example of someone who left a lasting legacy through ATS is Katherine Gannett, a long-time volunteer and donor. She touched the lives of many young people while involved as a mentor and continues to make a positive impact on our organization even after her passing through a generous gift to ATS in her estate.



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 alyssa.street@athousandsummers.org.



Scan the QR code to find out how you can make a difference. You can also download our Free Will and Estate Planning Guide to help you through this important process.

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.



Give the Gift of Camp

Participating in a peer-to-peer fundraiser for ATS is about more than just raising money—it's about changing lives.

Setting up a peer-to-peer fundraising campaign is easy to do and is a great way to help us make a difference. Scan the QR code for more information and to set up your personal fundraising page.



"I am so grateful because camp has changed my life. It's a nice feeling to know that people do this out of the kindness of their hearts because they care about people they haven't even met. That is awesome."

— Leah

Change Lives Through Camp

Partner with us to help create positive change in the lives of young people.

\$25,000

1-on-1 relationship with the camper for their entire camp career

\$10,000

Fund two campers for a summer

\$5,000

The summer of a lifetime for one lucky camper

\$2,500

Fund half the expenses for one summer camper

\$1,000

Provide an introductory camp experience for a young camper

\$500

Provide travel expenses for one camper

\$250

Provide equipment for one camper

\$100

Fund a camper's bank account during his/her stay



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Farewell Karen!

Last October, we bid farewell to Karen, our long-time Program Director, who retired after 13 years with our organization.

Karen quickly forged a reputation for wonderful customer service based upon her caring and compassionate nature. She not only made a huge difference in the way we deliver our programs but also touched hundreds of lives along the way, having a lasting impact on us all.

On behalf of all those she came into contact with during her thirteen years of service, thank you, Karen, and best wishes for your retirement!

"A Thousand Summers has made an impact on hundreds of kids' lives. It has been a joy to walk beside them and their families as they prepare for their camp experience. Working with ATS volunteers, staff and donors to make all of this happen has given me thousands of memories I will cherish as I move into the next chapter of my life." —Karen Smith

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 or call us at 720.981.2532.

