

WELCOME TO A THOUSAND SUMMERS

JOHN AUSTIN CHELEY FOUNDATION



ABOUT US

We were founded in 1989 to honor the memory of John Austin (Jack) Cheley and to fulfill his dream of making a summer camp experience available to youth who could not otherwise afford it.

Since that time, we have expanded our partnerships and our impact, providing ever-increasing numbers of transformative summer camp experiences for young people, but also adding programs that enhance the growth and development achieved while at camp.

Our programs are intentionally designed to provide the greatest support and preparation possible for our campers, but also to offer additional community service, leadership, and career-building opportunities for campers as they move through and eventually age out of our Campership Program.

Keep reading to learn more about our programs and how they work together to provide long-term impact for the kids we serve!

A NEWSLETTER FOR NEW SUPPORTERS

Welcome to A Thousand Summers, and thank you for your support! By choosing to partner with A Thousand Summers, you are truly making a difference by providing life-changing opportunities for the young people with whom we work.

Our organization has been committed to the growth and development of a diverse population of campers for over 36 years. Since 1989, we have awarded more than 1,890 camperships at a value of over \$11.1 million – all thanks to powerful partnerships with generous individuals just like you.



The mission of A Thousand Summers is to change kids' lives through transformative summer camp experiences.

THE CAMPERSHIP PROGRAM

A Thousand Summers firmly believes that extended-stay wilderness summer camp programs play a critical role in youth development, strengthening and reinforcing learning, and allowing children to thrive. These types of highly impactful enrichment experiences are financially out of reach for the families we serve.

We work to remove the barriers and make broadly accessible the significant growth that camp provides. Included in that commitment is dedicated mentoring to support and prepare each camper and their family to extract the greatest benefit from the camp experience.

Each summer we send kids ranging in age from 10-17 who are from underserved backgrounds to carefully selected, high-quality camps. We commit to offering this multi-week program over multiple summers to expose the kids we serve to progressively more challenging

outdoor experiences, to deepen their connection to nature, and to maximize their social and emotional growth.

Camp is about fun and friends, but it also provides a safe and supportive environment that encourages kids to try new activities and push themselves beyond their comfort zones. They engage in rigorous outdoor adventures, often having to work together to overcome challenges and achieve success. They develop confidence, resilience, and grit and discover their own strengths while celebrating the strengths of others.

Our work is about much more than just providing financial assistance. We know that by breaking down barriers to the camp experience for the youth we serve, we are giving them a gift that has the power to shape the trajectory of their lives.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

“My confidence has increased exponentially because of my time at camp. By successfully making it through difficult situations (such as making friends or doing a very long hike) my self-esteem was boosted, and I feel confident and prepared to face more challenges in the future.”

–Isabel



THE COMPASS PROGRAM

The Compass Program is a virtual social and emotional learning program organized by age that is designed to help kids know what to expect at camp and how to react to new social situations. It features lessons on belonging, empathy, self-awareness, and camp readiness and focuses on some camp-related themes like coping with homesickness and living in tight quarters with diverse friends.

The Compass Program gives kids a head start in preparation and personal growth before they arrive at camp and then builds upon what they learned at camp as they participate in Compass the following year.

As our campers participate in the Compass Program each year, they learn more about themselves and others and discover how to navigate their lives with a sense of belonging and purpose.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?



“The Compass Program helps prepare campers for the social/emotional implications of camp. Discussing these topics in a group setting with other campers who have shared similar experiences creates a form of collective understanding and helps campers come out of their shell.”

—Gillian Nyland, ATS Programs Director

THE CAPSTONE PROGRAM



The Capstone Program invites older campership recipients, with their Mentor's support, to design and lead a service project in their community during the school year. Campers maximize the impact of the personal growth attained through their camp experiences to make a difference and further develop leadership skills that can serve them and their communities now and in the future.

Capstone Program service project outcomes are shared with our camps to enhance campers' leadership program applications, whether it be for Camper in Leadership Training, Junior/Assistant Counselor, or Pathfinding programs. Capstone Program service hours accrued may also count towards school community service requirements.

A Thousand Summers is committed to empowering the young people we serve to be agents of change and create opportunities to do good in their communities.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

"I loved the meetings and having a mentor and doing something to help out my community. It also improved my confidence and I feel I could do this again."
—Elizabeth

THE OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Outdoor Leadership Program fills the gap between when a camper ages out of the Campership Program and when as a young adult they can apply to work as a camp counselor. The program consists of a 2-week backpacking and river travel wilderness experience in Colorado and Utah led by a reputable outdoor adventure organization called Open Roads.

While on the trip, participants focus on leadership, team building, environmental education, service learning, and acquiring wilderness tripping certifications. These skills prepare participants to be effective camp counselors should they choose to apply to the Camp Fellowship Program or seek other opportunities in the outdoor industry.

The Outdoor Leadership Program offers our Campership Program alums the chance to transition into wilderness leaders while continuing to make camp and outdoor education more inclusive and equitable.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?



"I will take with me the leadership skills I'm learning. I plan on using this program as a stepping stone to becoming a camp counselor and working with young people to discover their passion for the outdoors. This program is the best course of action for me to do that."

—Jean

THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Camp Fellowship Program provides ongoing leadership opportunities for the young people we serve as they move beyond their camper years and are employed as camp counselors at our ATS associate camps. Fellows receive additional training and take on extra responsibilities to support current ATS campers in exchange for a stipend and references from ATS.

The Fellows serve as positive role models for campers and provide a sense of connection and belonging for our younger ATS campers as they get to know someone like them who has successfully navigated the camp experience.

Working at camp is a wonderful way to develop leadership and professional skills, gain experience in the outdoor industry, give back to a community, and help younger campers find their path as they begin their own camp journeys.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?



“If I hadn’t been involved in camp and the Fellowship Program, I wouldn’t have all the connections I do now. I wouldn’t be working where I am now. I wouldn’t know the people I do. It would be a completely different path of life.”

—Silas



JOHN AUSTIN CHELEY FOUNDATION

WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF CAMP

WHY I SUPPORT A THOUSAND SUMMERS

"I actively support A Thousand Summers because it seeks out pinnacle summer camp experiences in which youth learn important life lessons that naturally transfer into living a life of purpose, compassion, and promise."

—Priscilla Walker Engln,
supporter since 1996



WANT MORE INFORMATION?

For program information, [click here](#) or email programs@athousandsummers.org.

For development information, [click here](#) or email giving@athousandsummers.org.

For a list of staff and board members, [click here](#).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF A THOUSAND SUMMERS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE A LASTING AND POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE YOUNG PEOPLE WE SERVE.



KEEP IN TOUCH!

Give us a call: 720-981-2532

Visit our website: www.athousandsummers.org

1420 N. Ogden St. Suite 204, Denver, CO 80218