

December 2016

Dear Student and Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your interest in the Trekkers program. Trekkers is an outdoor-based mentoring program that connects young people with caring adults through expeditionary learning, community service and adventure-based education. Our unique model follows students over a six-year period that starts in the 7th grade and ends at high school graduation.

Enclosed, you will find information about Trekkers and the application process. If you are interested in participating in the program, please complete the entire application (found on pages 6-7 of the enclosed packet) and return it to:

TREKKERS
41 Buttermilk Drive
Thomaston, ME 04861

APPLICATION DROP OFF PROCEDURES & DEADLINE:

- Applications must be dropped off at the Trekkers office on or before February 13, 2017. *If dropping off before or after office hours, please put application in our drop box located between the door to the building and the door to our office.*
- If sending by mail, applications must be postmarked by February 13, 2017 at 5pm.
- Please do not drop off applications with teachers or other school staff.

Trekkers will contact you by email on February 17th about the outcome of the lottery selection process (an explanation regarding the selection process can be found on page 2 of the packet). Of course, if your family does not have an email address, you will receive a phone call.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to call me at 594-5095.

Sincerely,

Alaina Ennamorati
Senior Manager of Programs

PS: You can download additional copies of the application by visiting our web site at www.trekkers.org and scrolling down to the bottom right of our homepage.

TREKKERS INFORMATIONAL PACKET 2017

The following information is provided to acquaint you with Trekkers by answering some of the most frequently asked questions about the program.

WHAT IS TREKKERS?

Trekkers is a non-profit, outdoor-based mentoring program aimed at connecting young people with caring adults through expeditionary learning, community service and adventure-based education. With community adult volunteers working throughout the year, Trekkers provides a myriad of educational, experiential, and cross-cultural opportunities for young people, with an emphasis on relationship building and an appreciation of the earth as “educator.”

WHEN WAS TREKKERS STARTED AND WHO DOES IT SERVE?

Trekkers began in 1994 as a volunteer community initiative for students attending Thomaston Grammar School. In 1996, students from St. George School were included. During the first five years, Trekkers primarily worked with 7th and 8th grade students. With the expansion of a year-round program implemented in 1999, Trekkers began to offer programs to local students from 7th to 12th grade living year-round in the communities of Cushing, St. George, and Thomaston. In 2010, the three communities Trekkers served were consolidated with Rockland, Owls Head, and South Thomaston to form a new regional school district. In the spring of 2011, Trekkers started its expansion process and now offers its unique model of relationship-building to all six communities.

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SEVENTH GRADE TREKKERS PROGRAM IN 2017?

This year, Trekkers has 40 openings for seventh graders. All seventh graders are invited to attend an informational student/parent or guardian meeting at the beginning of each new year. If after learning about the Trekkers program a student is interested in participating, he or she will be required to submit an application by **February 13th** to become eligible. If a student cannot attend the informational meeting, he or she may call and request an application. If Trekkers receives more than 40 applications by **February 13th**, Trekkers will implement a lottery system to select the students. The lottery will be designed to produce a *gender and school balanced* group of 40 students. Our goal would be 15 girls/15 boys from Oceanside Middle School and 5 girls/ 5 boys from St. George School.

Please note: If a lottery system for the selection of students is required, those students not among the first 40 selected will be put on a waiting list in the order their names are drawn by gender. If a student gets the application in after the February 13th deadline, he or she will not be eligible for the lottery, but will be put on the bottom of the waiting list in order according to the date the application was postmarked. The content of a student’s application will not determine his or her eligibility. All families will be notified of the lottery results by email on **February 17th 2017**. If your family does not have an email address, you will receive a phone call explaining the results and next steps.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After 40 students have been accepted into the program from this class, Trekkers will take these 40 students’ names and divide them evenly into two separate teams based on a school and gender balance. Each team will then have its own separate program/expedition throughout the duration of their school experience. A letter will be sent at the beginning of March sharing with students which of the two teams they are on.

WHAT IF I WANT TO SWITCH TO ANOTHER GROUP?

As mentioned, the 40 students accepted into the program will be split into two groups of 20. From time to time opportunities may be offered to all 40 students, but more often than not these two groups will operate independently from one another; each with their own assigned Program Manager, as well as their own meeting and expedition schedules for the entire six years. Requests to change teams will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Our intent is not to be inflexible, but to help students make and value commitment. We want students to learn crucial coping skills by teaching them how to constructively address and work through the inevitable challenges which may arise over their six years in the program.

ARE STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE 7th GRADE PROGRAM IN 2017 ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE TREKKERS PROGRAMS?

Eligible* students who *complete* the Teen Trekkers program in 7th grade will be invited to participate in every program offered to their Trekkers class for their remaining years in middle school and high school, as long as they are enrolled in some kind of formal education.

*Students must continue to live in one of the six towns (Cushing, South Thomaston, Owls Head, Rockland, St. George and Thomaston) in order to maintain eligibility for Trekkers programs.

WHEN DOES THE TREKKERS WAITING LIST GET ACTIVATED?

If the number of students participating in a program drops below 20, Trekkers will have full discretion whether or not to invite a student off of the waiting list based on our goals to support gender-balance and healthy/safe group dynamics across all of our classes. If/when the waiting list is activated, Trekkers will determine who will be invited based on the next person on the waiting list who will best support a gender balance in that group. If Trekkers finds that there are no more students left on the waiting list that match the gender needed in order to create a gender balance, Trekkers will simply invite the next person on the waiting list regardless of gender. For example, if a girl happens to drop out of Trekkers, Trekkers will first look to see what the gender makeup of the group is that the girl dropped out of and if it's determined that there are more girls than boys in that group, than a boy from the waiting list will be added. If a boy is not available, Trekkers will invite the next girl on the waiting list.

WHO FUNDS TREKKERS?

Trekkers is supported financially through contributions from individuals, local businesses, churches, municipalities, state and federal grants, private foundations, and corporations. Trekkers seeks donations to help offset the cost of the programs that Trekkers offers, which helps us keep student fees as low as possible.

The following are the estimated Program Dues for 2016/17:

Estimated Program Dues*

7th Grade Teen Trekkers	\$80	11th Grade College/Career Exploration	\$710
8th Grade Advanced Trekkers	\$710	12th Grade Rites of Passage	\$710
9th Grade Ride Through History	\$710	From the 'Hood to the Woods	\$100
10th Grade Cross America	\$710		

*Dues are estimated based on this year's programs and are subject to change. Trekkers has a scholarship fund to help assure that every student can participate despite possible financial hardship.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE & FUNDRAISING

For the 8th-12th grade programs: 50% of program dues (currently \$355) is to be paid by November 15th of each year. The remaining balance will be due immediately before the expedition.

In order to make our programs accessible and affordable, Trekkers has established a fundraising system for students to raise half of their annual program dues. **Trekkers offers three optional fundraising events for students each year.** If you have questions regarding fundraising or would like to receive a copy of our fundraising policy, please contact Alaina Ennamorati by contacting 594-5095 or email alaina@trekkers.org.

WHO RUNS THE TREKKERS ORGANIZATION?

VOLUNTEERS

Over 160 adult and peer mentors in and around the Midcoast area volunteer with Trekkers throughout the year. They help facilitate outdoor and educational experiences, spend time one-to-one with students and provide much needed technical support to the program. The success of the Trekkers program is dependent in part upon a very high adult-to-youth ratio in all the programs Trekkers offers. Caring adult and peer mentors are essential to our efforts in bringing forth positive change within the lives of young people.

TREKKERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Trekkers class of 2017, 2018, 2019

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Trekkers Class of 2018, 2019, 2020

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WANT MORE INFORMATION? – VISIT TREKKERS ONLINE!!

To read detailed program offerings, see examples about past Trekkers trips or just learn more about the organization in general, please visit our web site at www.trekkers.org. If you still have questions, please call Alaina Ennamorati, Senior Manager of Programs, at 594-5095 or e-mail her at alaina@trekkers.org.

TREKKERS Application

Date _____

Please fill out the entire application and return to:

TREKKERS – 41 Buttermilk Drive, Thomaston, ME 04861

Applications must be hand delivered or postmarked by **Tuesday, February 13, 2017.**
Trekksers will contact you by email on February 17th about the outcome of the lottery selection process. If you do not have an email address, you will receive a phone call.

Student Name: _____ Gender (circle one): M OR F

Date of Birth: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian name: _____

Your Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

What School Do You Attend? _____

Home Phone #: _____ Parent(s) Cell: _____

Parent E-mail: _____ Student Cell: _____

Please answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. Explain why you are interested in participating in the Trekkers program.

2. What do you hope to gain personally from participating in the Trekkers program?

(OVER)

3. Please describe one of your favorite memories in the outdoors.

Trekkers Agreement

Trekkers Partnership with the Schools: Trekkers has worked as a liaison between the schools and the families of Trekkers students throughout its 22-year existence as an organization. It is our goal to communicate with and receive communication from the schools as a way to provide extra support for your son or daughter during possibly difficult academic and/or behavioral times. This way Trekkers can meet with the schools, students and families to help rectify the situation in a timely manner. With this in mind, please sign below to grant Trekkers permission to check in with the teachers, principals and the guidance department staff of RSU #13, MSAD #40, Camden Hills Regional High School/Five TownCSD, Lincoln Academy and/or St. George Municipal School Unit on behalf of your son or daughter if and when academic, behavioral, and/or emotional needs arise.

Trekkers Chemical Free Policy: I/we agree to abide by the **Chemical Free Policy** of Trekkers while participating on any programs, including all planning meetings and expeditions. This means that I will not use and/or take any drugs, alcohol, or tobacco of any kind in a program or on an expedition. I also agree to not come into any programs under the influence of any drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. If I am found with or under the influence of the above-mentioned substances, I understand that there will be consequences to my actions, including the possibility of me being sent home at the parent/guardian's expense and/or not being invited to participate in future Trekkers activities.

Trekkers Photo/Video Release Policy: We hereby allow Trekkers to use photographs, videos or images of me/my child for appropriate promotional materials.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Parent/Guardian

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Student

If you have any questions about the application process, please call Senior Manager of Programs, Alaina Ennamorati at 594-5095 or alaina@trekkers.org. Thanks so much!