

**Amie Hutchison**  
Executive Director

January 2021

**Stuart Rich**  
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Tenants Harbor

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**Susan Grover**  
Thomaston

**Makaila Hickey**  
Alumna  
Rockland

**Bryson Cowan King**  
Alumna  
Roslindale, MA

**Suzanne Luzius**  
Tenants Harbor

**Dee Megna**  
Spruce Head

**Fletcher McNaboe**  
Rockland

**Leah Nickerson**  
Rockland

**Ryker Weaver**  
Trekking Student  
Rockland

Dear 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Student and Parents/Guardians,

The school year is quickly flying by which means we are getting closer to kicking off our 7<sup>th</sup> grade Program in early spring! 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 7<sup>th</sup> grade and ends at high school graduation.

Enclosed, you will find information about Trekkers and the application process. Additionally, we will be hosting a **community meeting** via **zoom** on ***February 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm***. Though it is not a requirement to attend the community meeting in order to apply, we encourage families seeking more information to log in, as we will be providing details and answering questions there! *In order to attend the community meeting, go to the trekkers website at the time listed above to log in.*

If you are interested in participating in the program, please complete the entire application (found on pages 5-6 of the enclosed packet) and return it to:

**TREKKERS**  
325 Old County Road  
Rockland, ME 04841

**APPLICATION DROP OFF PROCEDURES & DEADLINE:**

- Applications must be dropped off at the Trekkers office on or before March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021. *If dropping off before or after office hours, please put application in our drop box located just outside our front door.*
- If sending by mail, applications must be postmarked by March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- Please do not drop off applications with teachers or other school staff

Trekkers will contact you by email on ***March 15<sup>th</sup>*** 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,

The Trekkers Team

PS: You can download additional copies of the application by visiting our web site at [www.trekkers.org](http://www.trekkers.org).

# TREKKERS INFORMATIONAL PACKET 2021

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 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. With the expansion of a year-round program implemented in 1999, Trekkers began to offer programs to local students from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> 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?

This year, Trekkers has 40 openings for seventh graders. All 7<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to attend our Community Meeting at the start of the year. If after learning about the Trekkers program a student is interested in participating, they will be required to submit an application by the **deadline listed above** to become eligible. If a student cannot attend the informational meeting, they may pick up an application at the Trekkers office or download online. Families must also contact program staff to reschedule a time to learn about the information covered at the Community Meeting. If Trekkers receives more than 40 applications by the deadline, Trekkers will implement a lottery system to select the students. The lottery will be designed to produce a *diverse & balanced* group of 40 students (30 from RSU 13 and 10 from St. George MSU).

**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. If a student gets the application in after the deadline, they 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 their eligibility. All families will be notified of the lottery results by email. 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 and divide them evenly into two separate cohorts. Each cohort will then have its own separate program/expedition throughout the duration of their school experience. A letter will be sent in March sharing with students which of the two cohorts 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 cohorts of 20. From time to time opportunities may be offered to all 40 students, but more often than not these two cohorts will operate independently from one another with 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 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. If a student is accepted into Trekkers and chooses to opt-out of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade program, they will be put at the bottom of the waiting list.

\*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. If a student moves out of the six towns, Trekkers will go to the waiting list. The student will continue in the program until they are taking the place of another student on the waiting list who *does* live in one of the six towns that Trekkers serves.

## HOW DOES THE TREKKERS WAITING LIST WORK?

When the number of active participants in a program drops below 17, Trekkers will have the option of bringing a student in from the waiting list based on our goals of maintaining healthy and safe group dynamics.

## 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 dues as low as possible.

## HOW MUCH DOES TREKKERS COST?

Program dues are estimated based on this year's programs and are subject to change. The following are the estimated program dues for 2020-2021:

7th Grade Teen Trekkers	\$80
8th Grade Advanced Trekkers	\$605
9th Grade Urban Expedition	\$605
10th Grade Cross America	\$605
11th Grade College/Career Exploration	\$605
12th Grade Rites of Passage	\$605
From the 'Hood to the Woods	\$125

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE, FUNDRAISING & SCHOLARSHIP

**For the 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade programs:** We will set up online monthly payments for an 11 month (October to August) payment schedule based on the dues amount (see above). Once the 11 months are completed, we will stop the auto payments or you may contact us to continue the payments for the next year's program dues. If the student participates in a fundraiser and receives credits, we will adjust the payment time frame and/or the monthly amount.

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.** Trekkers also has a scholarship fund to help assure that every student can participate despite possible financial hardship.

If you have questions regarding program dues or would like to receive a copy of our fundraising policy or scholarship application, please contact program staff at 594-5095.

## WHO RUNS THE TREKKERS ORGANIZATION?

### STAFF:

**Amie Hutchison** - Executive Director  
**Kate Elmes** - Director of Development  
**Tess Valdepenas** - Communications & Impact Manger  
**Emma Beaudry** - Administrative Coordinator  
**Jamie Camber** - Finance Assistant  
**Brandon Caron** - Program Director  
**Katlyn Rich** - Program Manager  
**Taylor "TJ" Jackson** - Program Manager  
**Kaleb Robinson** - Program Manager  
**Tallie Foster** - AmeriCorps Intern  
**Mitchell Del Frate** - AmeriCorps Intern

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

**Stu Rich** - President  
**Kathleen Meil** - Vice President  
**Jack Carpenter** - Co- Founder  
**Doug Erickson** - Treasurer  
**Alyssa Landrith** - Secretary  
**Matthew Graham**  
**Makaila Hickey**  
**Bryson Cowan King**  
**Suzanne Luzuis**  
**Dee Megna**  
**Fletcher McNaboe**  
**Leah Nickerson**  
**Ryker Weaver**

### VOLUNTEERS:

Over 100 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.

## 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 website at [www.trekkers.org](http://www.trekkers.org). If you still have questions, please call Brandon Caron at 594-5095 or e-mail at [brandon@trekkers.org](mailto:brandon@trekkers.org)



# 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Application

Applications must be hand delivered or postmarked by ***Monday March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021.*** Trekkers will contact you by email on March 15<sup>th</sup> about the outcome of the lottery selection process. If you do not have an email address, you will receive a phone call.

Please fill out the entire application and return to:

TREKKERS  
325 Old County Road  
Rockland, ME 04841

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender Identity: \_\_\_\_\_

What School Do You Attend? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Adult T-shirt size (circle one): S M L XL

Parent(s)/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent(s) Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Please have the student who is applying to Trekkers answer the following questions in the spaces provided below:*

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?

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 26-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 Town CSD, 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.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student

*If you have any questions about the application process, please call Program Director, Brandon Caron at 594-5095 or [brandon@trekkers.org](mailto:brandon@trekkers.org). Thanks so much!*