

Trekkers Informational Packet 2023

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 youth mentoring organization. Its programs are rooted in outdoor and travel experiences, and includes expeditionary learning, community service, cross-cultural opportunities and adventure-based education. Teams include caring adult volunteers from the community, connecting students to mentors, role models, and guides through their middle and high school years.

When was it started? Who does it serve?

Trekkers first began in 1994 for middle school students attending Thomaston Grammar School. Over time and after seeing the positive impact the program has on students, the service area expanded to include Rockland, Thomaston, South Thomaston, St George, Cushing, and Owls Head. Through a unique combination of long-term mentoring and experiential education, the program has shown to help students build social-emotional skills, lasting connections, and an inner compass for identifying their own strengths, challenges, life goals, and strategies. Trekkers has operated for over 25 years and has Trekkers alum, Brandon Caron, as Program Director.

What is the application process?

This year, Trekkers has 20 openings for seventh graders. 7th grade applicants are invited to attend our Community Meeting. If a student cannot attend the Community Meeting, they may pick up an application at the Trekkers office or email to request it. Families must also contact Trekkers to schedule a time to learn about the program.

Students interested in joining must submit an application by March 3rd 2023.

If Trekkers receives more than 20 applications by the deadline, a lottery system will be used to select the students. The lottery is designed to produce a **diverse & balanced** group of 20 students.

***Note:** If a lottery is required, students who were not selected will be put on a waiting list in the order their names are drawn. If a student applies after the deadline, they will be put at the bottom of the waiting list in order the date the application was postmarked. 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.

Are students automatically enrolled again after each grade?

Eligible* students who **complete** the 7th grade program will be invited to participate the next year as long as they are enrolled in some kind of formal education. Once invited back, **families must re-enroll at the beginning of each school year.** If a student is accepted into Trekkers and chooses to opt-out of the 7th grade program, they will be put at the bottom of the waiting list.

***Note:** Students must continue to live in one of the six towns (Cushing, South Thomaston, Owls Head, Rockland, St. George or Thomaston) to maintain eligibility. (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.)

How does the waiting list work?

If the number of students on a team 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?

Student dues account for less than 30% of the cost to run Trekkers. To maintain the quality and quantity of programming, Trekkers is supported financially by individual contributions, local businesses, churches, municipalities, state and federal grants, private foundations, and corporations. Trekkers seeks donations to help offset the cost of the programs, helping us keep student dues as low as possible.

How much does the program cost?

Program dues are estimated based on this year's programs and are subject to change. The following are the estimated program dues for 2022-2023:

7th Grade Acadia Adventure	\$100
8th Grade Northeast Traverse	\$605
9th Grade Urban Expedition	\$605
10th Grade Cross America	\$605
11th Grade True North	\$605
12th Grade Rites of Passage	\$605
From the 'Hood to the Woods (Optional, 10-12 th Grade)	\$125

Payment schedule, fundraising, and scholarships

8th-12th grade programs: Each August before the school year starts, families will be asked to re-enroll in Trekkers for the year. At that time, the following will be due: Program Agreement, Scholarships or Payments Set Up (online monthly payments are on an 11-month schedule, adjusted if fundraising credits are earned – see below). Once enrolled, medical forms and waivers will be due before any travel can take place.

To make programs accessible and affordable, families can participate in fundraisers to raise half of their annual program dues. **Trekkers offers three optional fundraising events each year.** There is also a scholarship fund to help assure that any student can participate, despite financial hardship.

If you have questions or would like more information about any of the above, please contact Program staff at 594-5095.

Gender Policy

Gender identity is a core aspect of personal identity, and Trekkers bases its policies on the knowledge that only an individual determines their gender identity. Trekkers staff will recognize each individual's gender identity, which may not be the identity that is known or supported by everyone in an individual's life.

Trekkers understands and respects that individuals may choose to use different names and pronouns with different groups of people. Trekkers will make every attempt to support these requests (for example, one set of pronouns

within a cohort setting and a different set for communication with family). Trekkers recognizes that gender identity is not always static and how a person identifies and the pronouns that correspond to their identification may change over time.

Individuals will have access to facilities that correspond to their gender identity. Any individual who is uncomfortable using a shared gender-segregated facility, regardless of the reason, shall, upon request, be provided with a safe and non-stigmatizing alternative. To access alternative accommodations, an individual will need to make a request. Transgender or gender nonconforming individuals will not be required to use separate spaces against their wishes. No one will be required to use gender-segregated facilities that are inconsistent with their gender identity.

Who runs the organization?

STAFF:

Amie Hutchison – Executive Director
Kate Elmes – Director of Development
Tess Valdepeñas – Communications & Impact Manger
Diane Sternberg – Training Director
Emma Beaudry – Administrative Coordinator
Jamie Camber – Finance Assistant
Brandon Caron* – Program Director
Katlyn Rich – Program Manager
TJ Morris - Program Manager
Kaleb Robinson* – Program Manager
Ryker Weaver* – AmeriCorps Intern
Mitchell Del Frate* – AmeriCorps Intern
Myla Ferland* – AmeriCorps Intern

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Kathleen Meil – President
Matthew Graham – Vice Chair
Eric Waters** – Treasurer
Alyssa Landrith* – Secretary
Makaila Hickey*
Bryson Cowan King*
Suzanne Luzuis
Leah Chamberlin
Fletcher Smith McNaboe
Laura Miller**
Evelyn Isom
Adeline McPhail – Student Member
Kaylee Chiamonte – Student Member

**Alumni of Trekkers.*

*** Parent/Guardian of Trekkers Student or Alumni.*

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 us at www.trekkers.org.

To read about our program or learn more about the organization, please visit our website at www.trekkers.org. If you have questions, please call Brandon Caron at 594-5095 or email brandon@trekkers.org.



7th Grade Application

Applications must be hand delivered or postmarked by **Friday, March 3rd, 2023**. Trekkers will contact you by email on March 15th 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: _____

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 Trekkers.

(OVER)

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

3. Please describe a favorite memory 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. Thanks so much!