

“Best practices” for Camp Coordinators concerning Conference Camperships

Unraveling the mystery of Conference Camperships!

Who funds the "Conference Camperships"?

In some ways "Conference Camperships" is a misnomer because there is no money that comes to Camp & Retreat Ministries from local churches through apportionments. (There used to be an apportioned pool of \$10,000 that we could draw on, but no longer). SO, now Camp & Retreat Ministries has to raise through donations all the money that we offer as campership assistance. Generally the Executive Director, Lisa Jean Hoefner, does that by speaking in churches or with individuals about needs of families requesting our help. She also researches and applies for grants for our specialized ministries like Creation Vacation and Strength for the Journey where we know the campership needs are great every year.

We have tried to make it easy for people to add contributions to the "Joy Fund" (our general campership fund) to their registrations and to donate online. We send out an annual appeal letter and newsletters with return envelopes for people to use to send in gifts. We also have been encouraging people to consider being sustaining donors by signing up for monthly contributions from their bank acct or credit card. We have 23 such supporters! We've been fortunate to have good response with many people selecting to designate their giving to "where needed most."

How does the Camp & Retreat Office staff handle requests?

The way we handle families in need now is by offering two pricing options for many children and youth events. On each camp's description page there are two different camp prices. You get to choose the one that best fits your family's ability to pay.

1. Lowest subsidized rate: The lowest price is a subsidized rate; donors to the Joy Fund allow Camp & Retreat Ministry to offer this rate. This covers only the basics: food costs, kitchen and maintenance staff, program supplies, and training, food and lodging for the volunteer leaders.
2. The true cost of camp: This is closest to the true overall cost of an individual's participation at camp. This includes the costs of the subsidized rate plus things like insurance, utilities, replacement of equipment, and facility upgrades.

How does the Camp & Retreat Office staff determine need?

Conference campership funds are generally reserved for children and families who qualify for free/reduced meals at schools. This is the least intrusive way of assessing basic financial need in families. There are also other circumstances that cause sudden or temporary financial stress in families. Those you'll have to alert us to. We want to help campers get to camp who would otherwise be unable to attend. Helping as many campers as possible means stretching the funds to go as far as possible.

What happens when the money runs out?

We want to keep our policy of never turning someone away because of lack of financial resources so when we run out of actual dollars to support the camps, the camps (i.e. Magruder, Suttle, Sawtooth) must take it as a loss of income and make up for it by cutting expenses in the all the ways we're used to these days – cutting employees, cutting services, cutting maintenance. So far, we're holding up fairly well in being able to include everyone! Thanks for your assistance in all of these efforts.

Contacts:

To answer general questions and/or request campership assistance:
Call **Geneva Cook 503-802-9213**

To find out more about donating to the Campership Fund (the Joy Fund)
Call **Eric Conklin 503-802-9212**