

Camp Okahahwis Scholarship Fund History

Camp Okahahwis, said to be the oldest camp in the south, was founded in 1918 at Wilson Springs, Virginia in Goshen pass on the North River. From this original site the camp was relocated across the river in Rockbridge Baths, Virginia until it closed in 1966. During its nearly 50-year history, Camp Okahahwis was beloved by hundreds of campers.

Today, campers scattered over the world continue to hold a remarkable love for the place and the ideas which Ellie Frayser Chesterman, “Mrs. Chess” as she was known to the campers and counselors alike, instilled in all who came in contact with her and the camp. Mrs. Chess owned and directed Camp Okahahwis from the start in 1918 until it was bought in 1953 by Janet Johnson Stern, “J.J.” Stern directed the camp until its closing in 1966.

The activities of Camp Okahahwis were many and varied to meet the interests and desires of all the campers. The counselors were hand picked by Mrs. Chess and were most often former campers. Among the activities were swimming (in the river and later the pool); horseback riding; basketball; tennis; archery; arts and crafts; drama; dance; song contests and hiking. There were overnight treks up Jump Mountain and a long climb to Castle Rock. There were also ongoing competitions held between cabins. The counselors and the Orange and Black teams competed in every facet of camp life showing spirit and fairness in every way. Each August, the season was ended by an eagerly awaited final banquet where the announcement of the winning team was made. This was also when the camp’s Honor Girls were announced with the highest honor given to the girl chosen as “Camp Spirit” – the camper who exemplified the Spirit of Camp Okahahwis.

In 2001, the alumnae of Camp Okahahwis established a scholarship to acknowledge and perpetuate the values of their camping experience. The Camp Okahahwis Scholarship Fund, a component fund of The Community Foundation *Serving Richmond and Central Virginia*, is a memorial to their camp and provides partial camping scholarships to qualified young women who wish to attend camps selected by the Camp Okahahwis Scholarship Committee.

The “scholarship” camps are chosen annually based on their history of promoting the values that were inherent in the Camp Okahahwis experience. Participating camps are expected to foster an environment where campers live together under the ideals of fair play and good sportsmanship, where every person is a contributor, and where a love of nature and of God is encouraged. Sport specific camps are not eligible.

Camp Okahahwis 2012 Scholarship Application

Deadline: Thursday, March 15, 2012

To apply for the Camp Okahahwis Scholarship, an enrolled camper is required to complete the attached information sheet and to write a letter expressing why she wants to attend camp.

The camper's parents or guardians are also required to provide a letter (no more than one page please) confirming the child's desire to attend camp, asserting her ability to make friends and describing the aspects of the child's character that relate to her ability to work with others in a spirit of fairness and helpfulness.

A Note to Parents: In your letter, you may wish to include information on whether your child is a legacy camper, has financial need, or has a special reason for attending camp. Please note that none of this information is required to receive scholarship support, but may helpful to the Scholarship Committee's review process.

Although the exact award levels do change from year to year, the Camp Okahahwis scholarship does not provide for the full cost of camp tuition.

All applications are due on or before March 15, 2011 to:

Ms. Lisa O'Mara
The Community Foundation, Inc.
7501 Boulders View Drive
Suite 110
Richmond, Virginia 23225

You may forward your application by email or fax if that is more convenient to: lpomara@tcfrichmond.org or 804-330-5992 (fax). An email will be sent to the camper's parent or guardian to confirm receipt of the application.

The Scholarship Committee will review the applications and will award one or more scholarships by the first week of May. The scholarship recipient and their parents or guardians will be notified by letter from The Community Foundation. **Each scholarship will be made payable directly to the scholarship recipient's camp in the name of the camper.**

The Camp Okahahwis Scholarship is a component fund of The Community Foundation *Serving Richmond and Central Virginia*. You may direct questions about the scholarship to Lisa O'Mara at The Community Foundation at 804-330-7400 (extension 122) or by e-mail at: lpomara@tcfrichmond.org.

**Camp Okahahwis 2012 Scholarship
Applicant Information Sheet**

Camper's full name: _____

Camper's nickname (goes by): _____

Camper's age: _____

Names of Parents/Legal Guardians: _____

Home mailing address: _____

Best telephone number: (will only be used to notify winners)

Best email address for parents/legal guardians: (will only be used in regard to this scholarship & to confirm application receipt)

Name of Camp you plan to attend: _____

The length of the Camp session and dates that you plan to attend:

Will this be your first summer at this camp? ____ Yes ____ No

If no, how many years have you attended this camp? _____

Please complete and include this sheet with your scholarship application letters.