



**OUTWARD
BOUND**



Scholarship Student Handbook

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Contact Information:

Jerry Townsend
Outward Bound Coordinator
Clark Sports Center
Cooperstown, NY 13326
607.547.2800





Welcome to Outward Bound

About Outward Bound

For over 45 years, Outward Bound has offered wilderness expeditions across the United States. Hundreds of these courses are available year-round and range in length from four days to three months. Outward Bound courses emphasize personal growth, responsibility, teamwork, confidence, compassion, and environmental and community stewardship.

The Outward Bound Mission

To inspire character development and self-discovery in people of all ages and walks of life through challenge and adventure, and to impel them to achieve more than they every thought possible, to show compassion for others and actively engage in creating a better world.

Our Educational Framework

Outward Bound teaches to and works by these *values*:

- **Compassion:** demonstrating concern and acting with respect and generosity in service to others
- **Integrity:** acting with honesty, being accountable for your decisions and actions
- **Excellence:** being your best, pursuing craftsmanship in actions, and living a healthy and balanced life
- **Inclusion and diversity:** valuing and working to create communities that support and respect differences

Our *principles* for designing and delivering courses are:

- **Learning through Experience**
- **Challenge and Adventure**
- **Supportive Environment**

The common *outcomes* from our programs are:

- **Character Development:** increased self-confidence and self-actualization, demonstrating compassion toward others, and living a healthy and balanced life
- **Leadership:** better communication, goal setting, resolving conflicts more effectively
- **Service:** demonstrating social and environmental responsibility

The Outward Bound Scholarship Program

Our Scholarship Program is guided by a single principle; every person should be given the opportunity to experience adventure and challenge, develop character and compassion, and learn social and environmental responsibility, regardless of financial ability. Outward Bound has established several full-tuition scholarships, available through involvement with partnering organizations, to make available the benefits of Outward Bound to a more diverse constituency.



The Outward Bound Experience

The wilderness classroom offers lessons that simply can't be contained in four walls. It is a unique and powerful opportunity to learn by experience. The Outward Bound curriculum emphasizes outdoor skills, leadership and personal development. But what can you actually expect "on course?"

THE EXPEDITION

From start to finish, you're on an expedition, traveling through breathtaking wilderness during the day and camping in a new location each night. The great outdoors becomes your home, your playground and companion 24/7. You'll learn to decipher a topographic map and read a compass to navigate through wilderness areas. Instructors lead the activities at first, but gradually they turn responsibility over to the group. You and your team will realize the success of your own decisions and learn from your mistakes. You're involved in every aspect of the expedition, from choosing the day's route to cooking dinner over a camp stove. You may captain a boat, lead an ascent, or navigate your group over difficult terrain. Courses designated as multi-expedition will contain two or more expeditions in a single experience, while courses designated as single expeditions will focus primarily on one activity.

THE CHALLENGE

Challenge is fundamental to Outward Bound. Physical challenges, like tough climbs, whitewater days, or participating on a high ropes course and mental challenges, like working in a group, stretch comfort zones and open new possibilities. Most courses culminate in a personal challenge event – a run or paddle of sufficient length to test your newfound endurance and fitness. This is not a race or competition, but an opportunity to set new, higher goals for yourself and to celebrate your accomplishments.

THE SOLO

Most of our courses offer time for reflection called "solo." This important, enriching time is a chance to relax and think about what you've done so far on course, where you've been in life and where you want to head. Taking time to consider yourself, your surroundings and accomplishments is a unique opportunity to gain inner strength and knowledge. The Outward Bound solo takes you away from the distractions of life and people, and opens the door to inspiration for your future. Depending on the length of your course, solo may last for just a few hours or up to three days. You'll have your own campsite with shelter, food and water, and your instructors will check in to see how you are doing.

THE SERVICE COMMITMENT

Your Outward Bound course builds an ethic of service through compassion for yourself, others and the environment. The service ethic is a personal attitude reflected in simple practices, from Leave No Trace techniques to extending a hand to help a course mate. Many courses also include a formal service project allowing your group to give back to the community by helping someone in need, maintaining trails or restoring a campsite.

THE FINAL EXPEDITION

As your course progresses, your instructors gradually transfer responsibility for the leadership of the expedition to you and your group. These structured increases in responsibility build on the skills you've learned on course and provide genuine opportunities for accomplishment and independence. The amount of independence will vary based on many factors including the amount of time spent on course and the level of challenge or risk at a particular point of the course. The final expedition is designed to be the culmination of the learning that has occurred on course. Working as a team, with little or no direct intervention from instructors, you and your team will navigate your route, coordinate your responsibilities and make decisions. In some cases, depending on age, skill, course length, and other factors, instructors may not be present, though instead use pre-arranged check-ins to monitor group progress. Not all students will achieve this level of independence and may not have a final expedition.

"Because of Outward Bound I feel that any challenge in the city is easier. You feel a great peace and pride that no one can really describe. I think I gained confidence, peace, knowledge about surviving, and memories that not even time can take away... I would like to describe more, but the only real way to find out is by going, taking the risks, and doing your best in every move you make. Be like a sponge; just absorb all the teachings of nature and then you will learn more about yourself."

- Jairo Rojas,
2003 Scholar



Scholarship Student Master Checklist

Before Your Outward Bound Course

- Read this entire packet completely and carefully!**
- Check your email, and read all course paperwork.** As soon as the Scholarship Committee has reviewed your initial Scholarship Application, you will receive an email with a link to your personalized my.outwardbound.org page where you can download your Outward Bound Application Packet and course information packet. These packets contain your clothing list, travel information, medical paperwork, releases, and other course specific information.
- Submit ALL medical paperwork within two weeks of receiving it.** Scholarship candidates who do not submit all paperwork marked "RETURN" in the Application Packet within two weeks could lose their scholarship and their spot on course. If you feel as though you may miss a deadline, please give us a call to discuss.
- Attend a Pre-Season Orientation if applicable (see your Application Instructions cover sheet to see if this applies to you).**
- Start getting prepared!!!** We cannot stress enough how important it is to prepare for your course, both physically and mentally. Read the information about training for your course sent with your Application Packet and "Attending Outward Bound" Packet, and come up with a training plan. Use the adult who nominated you for the scholarship to help create your plan. Read the page in this handbook called "Advice from Scholarship Alumni on Preparing for Course" for more information!
- Break in your boots!** From the moment that you get your boots, please wear them as much as possible.
- Understand the Ground Rules.** Outward Bound expects that all students will participate voluntarily, come prepared to put forth their best effort, try new activities, work as a part of a group, and follow instructions, especially where safety is concerned.
- Understand what Outward Bound is NOT.**
Students are expected to know and understand that Outward Bound is not:
 - A survival course: students will not learn to forage for food in the wilderness;
 - A summer camp: students will not be learning crafts, riding horses, or playing video games;
 - A boot camp: students will not be doing any type of paramilitary activities or be forced to participate;
 - A program where students are forced to stay against their will: students must choose to participate in a manner that is appropriate and respectful of the environment, themselves, and others.
- Think about Medical Insurance.** While most students do not need medical attention while on course, it is important to be prepared. If you already have insurance of your own or through your parents/ guardian, that plan should cover you while you are on course. Please check with your provider if you have concerns.
- Ask questions.** The organization/school that nominated you and Outward Bound are both here to support you as you embark on this adventure. Please call us anytime!

After your Outward Bound Course:

- Call within one week of returning home.** Call your contact within the Scholarship Program to discuss your course, how to remain involved, and your volunteer service project (if applicable). If you get voicemail, be sure to leave a message with the best times to reach you.
- Complete your post-course requirements:**
 - Post-Course paperwork.
 - Send photos!
 - Volunteer service (see your Application Instructions to see if your scholarship requires returning a Service Agreement to determine if this applies to you)
- Keep in Touch and Stay Involved!** We love to hear how you are doing and we want to let you know about opportunities for you! As a Scholarship Alumni, you are expected to assist future Scholarship students as they prepare for Outward Bound. Please let us know of address, email, and phone number changes through the year.



Advice from Scholarship Alumni on Preparing for Course

When asked the question, *“What would you want to tell other students next year before they head on course?”* most Scholarship Alumni stressed the importance of preparation, both physical and mental.

Physical Preparation

“I would tell other students that it is absolutely essential to be in shape. I could've done more to prepare myself in that sense.”

You will hear it a lot from Outward Bound staff, your mentor who nominated you for the Scholarship, and Alumni, but we **cannot stress enough the importance of putting in the effort to physically train before course**. Your training should include a 30-45 minute aerobic activity (like jogging, roller blading, or swimming) at least 4 times a week. Start now. Many students also stated that they wished they had walked around with a heavy backpack on (about 60 lbs) prior to their course to help them prepare for the challenges that lay ahead.

Mental Preparation

“I would tell other students to be prepared to be flexible in order to work with other students. I had thought Outward Bound was primarily a personal experience: stretching YOUR limits and finding out how far YOU can go. It turns out that the real challenges for me was working with others, not pushing myself. I wish I had been more aware of this.”

“I would tell them to be mentally prepared to be put in conditions outside their comfort zone and stretch their comfort zone as much as possible.”

Outward Bound will be challenging in ways beyond the physical demands. It can be hard working and living with the same small group of people for weeks at a time. You may discover mental challenges in the face of physical challenges; being asked to push yourself past your perceived limitations, or “comfort zones”. It is important to arrive at course start with an open mind and ready to face challenges while working with others in a team-oriented setting.

Have Fun!

“I didn't think the people would be as much fun as they were or that I would create the strong friendships that I did!”

“It was a lot more fun than I had anticipated. Originally I thought that it would be just a lot of hard work, which it was, but it was definitely a fun experience.”

“I would tell entering students to enjoy and live in every single moment, because the weeks roll by so very quickly that if you don't take in everything around you, you will be missing out!”

-Katherine S., Scholarship Recipient 2008



A Note to Parents/Guardians

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Outward Bound is educational, fun and inspiring. It is designed to be physically, emotionally and mentally challenging. At times, your son/daughter may experience feelings of hesitation or homesickness. It is partly through experiencing and overcoming challenges that students can really learn about themselves and others, as well as grow beyond their perceived limitations.

As a parent/guardian of a Scholarship Candidate, your encouragement in the months leading up to the course can be the key to your son/daughter's success while on course.

Your support in this process can begin now, by participating in the following:

- Please read through all paperwork carefully.
- Return the "Parent/Guardian Questionnaire".
- Attend a pre-season orientation event with your son/daughter (if applicable).
- Encourage and support your son/daughter's physical training program.
- Talk to your son/daughter about the experience they are about to have.
- Send mail to your son/daughter when they are on course.

We look forward to working with you to help you and your son/daughter make the most out of this opportunity. Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions!

Warm regards,

The Outward Bound Scholarship Team



Frequently Asked Questions about Outward Bound

Can I do it?

Yes, and you do not need to have any experience in the wilderness to complete an Outward Bound course. You do not need to be an athlete, but you definitely need to be in shape and physically active before you arrive! Most important is your attitude! Come prepared to meet new people, try new things, have fun and challenge yourself. You will make mistakes, but you will learn from them and go on to meet hard challenges, both individually and as a group.

Where will I sleep?

Outward Bound utilizes tarps as sleeping shelters for this course. Students on courses for ages 12-18 will be instructed and supervised to sleep in same sex shelters or locations. Staff does not sleep in the same shelters. However, please note that 16 -18 year olds on courses of 14 days or longer, who have demonstrated maturity and respect for the policies of Outward Bound, typically participate in a Final Expedition. Final Expedition is an activity where there is the possibility that students could travel and camp in mixed gender tenting groups, without staff supervision. Students on courses with a minimum age of 18 will establish their own sleeping arrangements with instructor facilitation.

What will I eat?

The menu is largely vegetarian, with lots of grains, pasta, cheese, beans and nuts. Meat is heavy and spoils easily, but we occasionally eat tuna and canned chicken. Our diets can have more fats and protein (depending on the season and the environment) than what you are accustomed to. To prepare, we suggest that you cut down on soft drinks, caffeine and junk food. Start eating well-balanced meals, drink plenty of water and commit to a training program.

Will I be able to take a shower?

Well, a shower as you know it, no.... but, while you could go days without a shower, a common misconception about the backcountry is that you have to be dirty all of the time. It is entirely possible to stay semi-clean while in the field, as long as you are willing to jump in the water when it presents itself, though there may not be opportunities to swim on all courses. Your instructors will demonstrate bathing options when appropriate and explain more about hygiene upon your arrival.

Do I need to bring any camping gear?

We supply you with all necessary equipment. You need bring only personal clothing and footwear (see clothing and boot information). If you already own some equipment and would prefer to use it for your course please check your clothing lists as to what is appropriate. If you bring your own equipment it will be inspected by your instructor at the beginning of your course. If it does not meet our standards you can store it in a secure location during your course. You will not be able to purchase supplies while on your course. All the equipment issued to you and your patrol must be returned. You and your group will be charged for any equipment that you lose or damage.

Can I bring a camera?

Please bring your camera if you want to record the events of your course. Because our courses are rigorous, you run the risk of losing or damaging your camera. This rarely happens, but we want to remind you that the possibility exists. You might want to consider purchasing a waterproof bag or box for your camera, film, batteries and memory cards. A zip lock bag works well too. We also might suggest disposable waterproof cameras.

What about I-Pods, MP3 players, Cell Phones, Personal Computers, CD Players?

You are more than welcome to travel to and from your course with this equipment. Once you arrive we will ask you to leave it all in your luggage as you are not allowed to take it on your course.

Can I receive mail or be contacted while on course?

On courses longer than seven days you can receive mail. The mail will be delivered to you at the end of the course. You may be able to send letters out during re-supply if your course has one. Your mailing address is indicated on the Course Detail information sheet. Please notify family and friends that you will be unable to communicate with them during your course and you should be called only in the event of an emergency, such as serious illness or death in the family.

What about the Solo - do I have to do it?

The concept of the solo makes most people a little nervous. But really, once its time for the solo, you'll be ready to have some time to yourself and you'll have plenty of sleep to catch up on and relaxing do to. There is also the opportunity to think about things going on back home in your life and time to journal.

What if I want to go home?

The Outward Bound Scholarship Program and the organization that nominated you expect that you will complete the course. We know the course is difficult and sometimes uncomfortable, but one of the goals of an Outward Bound course is to teach you how to overcome difficult and uncomfortable challenges in life without quitting. Many students experience moments of homesickness and doubt. Look to your team, your instructor, and yourself for the support you need to complete the course.