



July 30, 2020

Dear group liaisons,

**Thank you for your patience** as Sierra Service Project's staff diligently gathered information from 126 groups about their 2020 Summer Program volunteer fee decisions. Thank you for your partnership in ministry with SSP.

As a volunteer board of directors, we have worked to find a solution for fee credits that is **fair to all groups**. Many of us are group leaders ourselves, and we acknowledge the financial burden your group faces. We are also concerned with supporting our [partner communities](#) with whom we were not able to serve in person this summer, who have significant needs during the pandemic. All of this said, all 18 of SSP's [Board of Directors](#) have the **fiduciary responsibility** to sustain the work of SSP through our [45th year](#) so we can serve for many more together.

In May we approved an updated budget based on shifting our summer program from in-person to [online](#), including offering groups a range of credits that apply to the second payment (the portion each registered group paid March 1). Thanks to the approval of the Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loan funds, we were able to increase our range of credits for groups, up to 50% of the second payment. Since then, we have been approved to unrestrict \$28,000 from family foundation grants toward SSP's overall budget. Through approval from another foundation, we have separately reallocated \$24,000 of a restricted building materials fund for the [Navajo Nation](#) to more broadly **support our community partners** there. Hand washing stations, drinking water containers, hygiene supplies, PPE, and rainwater collection systems were purchased by request from our partners.

Since SSP's [town hall announcement](#) on May 4 of the shift from an in-person to online summer program, staff have reached out to group leaders to determine financial needs. One third of groups have been very generous, opting to either entirely donate their fee payments, or take a smaller percentage than the 50% of the second payment offered. There have been 13 groups who have requested credits or refunds beyond 50% of the second payment. With all of this information, as a board we were able to determine the best course of action regarding volunteer group fees.

**SSP's [Board of Directors](#) has determined that with 2020 Summer Program [volunteer fees](#) we will:**

- **Give groups up to the 50% credit of the second payment as requested** (valid through September 2022)
  - SSP doesn't have the capacity to provide any refunds of group fees
- **Donate \$10,000 amongst our [community partner organizations](#)** in Chiloquin, Smith River, Lake County, and San Diego (*in addition to the \$24,000 already spent for partners in the Navajo Nation*)
- **Divide the remaining funds evenly per person to all groups who made second payments**
  - This amounts to an additional \$35 per person

This offers **additional credit to all groups equally**, and allows SSP to use some of the generosity of our groups to support our partner communities we were not able to serve with this summer. SSP is now able to offer each group that made a second payment an **additional \$35 per person** (up to the amount submitted for the second payment) either as an additional credit, or with the option to donate back to SSP and choose how you want to allocate those funds. **For groups not interested in the additional credit, there are two categories where you can allocate these funds:**

- **General Funds:** leadership development, diversity/equity/inclusion training, vehicles, tools, etc.
- **Community Support:** funds for SSP's [partner communities](#) in addition to the \$34,000 already allocated

**Sierra Service Project**  
*Building faith and strengthening communities through service to others.*



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All 2020 summer program volunteer fee credits will be carried forward for use within two program years, which you may use toward participation in any type of SSP program through **September 2022**. SSP staff will be asking the primary group liaison to complete a [webform](#) by the end of August, indicating your preference of what you would like to do with the additional \$35 per person. After you complete the [webform](#), a final 2020 statement will be emailed to primary and secondary liaisons and a hard copy mailed to the church or group address. This statement will indicate the total credit your group has received and/or document your group's donation of fees to SSP. Eventually this statement will be reflected in our online registration system, [MySSP](#), as well. If we don't receive a submission for your group, we will assume no additional credit is being requested and those funds will be used toward general funds; a statement will be emailed and mailed to these groups in the beginning of September.

**SSP's Board of Directors unanimously voted on July 27 in approval of this plan.** As fiduciaries, we hold a delicate balance of SSP's financial position in tandem with our group relationships as partners in our work. This year we set a target to maintain an unrestricted deficit of \$20,000 (overall deficit of \$128,000). This operational loss reduces our cash reserve, but leaves SSP with sufficient funds to maintain operations moving forward. We do not take these decisions lightly and have taken time to analyze options and hear the voices of volunteer groups. To that end, if you have questions or concerns about our plan, we invite you to reach out to us directly as board members representing SSP.

#### Sierra Service Project's Board of Directors

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