



# Funds Distribution Report

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**Recipient Organization:**  
**Woodland Park Zoo**

**Address:**  
5500 Phinney Ave N  
Seattle, WA 98103

**Contact:**  
(206) 548-2500  
<https://zoo.org>

**Organization's General Goals:**

Founded in 1899, Woodland Park Zoo has sparked delight, discovery and unforgettable memories for generations of Northwest families. People who experience the wonders of the natural world are inspired to protect it. That's why every year we lead more than 1 million people on a journey that inspires a lifelong love of animals, makes science come alive, and gives people the tools to take conservation action.

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<b>Date of Award:</b>	<b>Level:</b>
2025 Q1	\$2,501 to \$5,000

For more information, please read the attached report from Woodland Park Zoo.

8802 27th Ave NE  
Tulalip, WA 98271  
**TulalipCares.org**



**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Woodland Park Zoo ([www.zoo.org](http://www.zoo.org)) is committed to reducing financial, physical and other barriers for families in our broader community and increasing connections to nature, animals and the outdoors for all children. Our summer camp program is one of the most popular experiences we offer, but many local families face financial, accessibility or other barriers to enrolling their children in camp. For the 2025 camp season, **with the support of generous funders including Tulalip Tribes Charitable Contributions, Woodland Park Zoo awarded \$65,448 in full and partial scholarships that enabled 146 campers to attend summer camp. In addition, we hired two Camp Inclusion Specialists to foster an accessible and inclusive environment among the 1,347 children who attended camp.**

**PROGRAM DETAILS**

Camp Scholarships

For the 2025 camp season, **we awarded \$65,448 in full and partial scholarships to 146 children, exceeding our \$55,000 goal.** Approximately 11% of campers received a scholarship. Table 1 below outlines the number of scholarships awarded at each tier. Families were able to select their scholarship tier based on their own determination of their financial need. Although the number of children receiving scholarships was slightly less than in 2024 (157), the average size of the scholarship increased in 2025 (\$448.27 vs. \$410.83 in 2024).

Scholarship Tier	Number of Scholarships
20% off camp fee	6
20% off camp fee plus extended care <sup>1</sup>	2
40% off camp fee	7
40% off camp fee plus extended care	7
60% off camp fee	16
60% off camp fee plus extended care	4
80% off camp fee	28
80% off camp fee plus extended care	21
100% off camp fee	30
100% off camp fee plus extended care	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>

*Table 1. Distribution of scholarships awarded for 2025 summer camps.*

<sup>1</sup> Core camp hours are 9:00 am – 3:00 pm; extended care options allow parents to drop off their child(ren) at 8:00 am and have until 5:30 pm to pick them up. Extended care is available as an extra fee but families can include extended care with fees fully waived within their scholarship request.

Evaluation data from the Camp Caregiver survey, which is sent to caregivers at the end of the camper's experience, suggest that scholarship information is easy to find and that caregivers value the availability of scholarships. Of those who indicated on the survey that they had received scholarships (66), 19 responded that the ease of finding information about scholarships was "outstanding," 19 responded "excellent," 17 responded "good," 10 responded "fair," and one selected "poor". In addition, when asked in the survey if there was anything else they would like to share, some caregivers took the opportunity to comment on camp scholarships, such as:

- "I am so grateful for the scholarships that gave my grandsons this opportunity to go to zoo camp. Thanks!"
- "I so adore the staff and am grateful for the scholarships and waiting list process."
- "Loved it! Thanks for making a fun week for him. **We are so grateful for the scholarship- we couldn't have done it without one and it was so good for him.**"



#### Camp Inclusion Specialists

This year, **we hired two experienced and talented Camp Inclusion Specialists to advance inclusion in camps** through a comprehensive approach of working with campers, caregivers and camp staff. Meghan Weber has a BA in Education, Communities, Organizations & Law, Societies and Justice with a minor in Disability Studies from the University of Washington. She joined Woodland Park Zoo from the University of Washington's Disability Resources for Students Office. Avery Arvila came to the zoo from the Kennedy School in Boston, a specialty school in a hospital for children with severe and combined disabilities. She has experience in outdoor education and was excited to connect campers with disabilities to the zoo's educational experience.

Prior to the first week of camp, Meghan and Avery led a training that introduced camp instructors to key topics in inclusion and prepared them to support their campers. The training covered topics such as the basics of disability, inclusion, and Universal Design for Learning; recommended and available accommodations; and how the Camp Inclusion Specialists would support inclusion in camp by working with instructors, caregivers, and campers. Following the training, **76% of camp staff rated the training**

as **“very” or “extremely” effective** in providing them with strategies to support an inclusive experience for campers (the remaining 24% all rated it as “somewhat” effective).

Four weeks into the camp season, Meghan and Avery led an additional in-service training for camp instructors, allowing the instructors to deepen their understanding of inclusion strategies based on their camp experiences to date. During the training, the Inclusion Specialists worked with instructors to understand what inclusion resources and strategies were working well and where instructors needed additional support. For example, many instructors felt they were successfully including individual campers, but wanted to learn more about how to achieve full group inclusion if multiple campers in a group had accommodations that might be at odds, such as a child who benefitted from extra quiet time and low sensory engagement in the same group with a child who engaged in verbal self-stimulation as a coping strategy.

During camp sessions, Meghan and Avery worked directly with campers who would benefit from extra support. In many cases, they worked to enact an accommodation plan developed through pre-camp conversations with caregivers, such as by facilitating pre-planned breaks or providing sensory support items like fidgets and headphones. In other cases, they stepped in on an as-needed basis to help in circumstances beyond what the camp instructor can manage alone. They were able to work as a team to discuss and respond to needs that arose, and, as a pair, had the option to safely separate campers from high-sensory situations while ensuring adequate adult coverage for the camp group.

In addition to training, the Camp Inclusion Specialists are responsible for developing and refining resources that help to better understand campers’ needs and support those needs during their camp experiences. Meghan and Avery improved caregiver communication templates to elicit more specific, usable information prior to camp that would help camp staff plan for medical, allergy, and neurodivergence/learning accommodations. To assist families in making more informed decisions about whether zoo camp would be a positive experience for their child, this year the registration process included two new resources: an inclusion-specific FAQ webpage and a camp-specific Social Story. Social Stories are pictorial narratives that describe a situation, skill or concept in terms of relevant social cues, perspectives, and common responses, typically used by people with autism. The FAQs and Social Story helped prime caregivers and campers for what the camp experience involves and the types of accommodations that are most feasible, which helped to more clearly set expectations



and provide examples of the zoo camp experience. From this foundation provided to all camp registrants, the Inclusion Specialists were able to work with caregivers to craft customized plans that supplemented and extended the core inclusion practices embedded throughout camp operations and activities.

Meghen and Avery also **created a new, comprehensive resource to foster inclusion in our camp program: the Inclusion Binder**. This robust resource contains various types of accommodation strategies, worksheets, tools and language supports for Camp Instructors to explore and access on demand. Examples of resources include worksheets of breathing exercises, animal-themed feelings charts for different age groups, strategies for setting clear expectations and routines, and physical tools such as noise-cancelling headphones and fidgets. The Inclusion Binders are available as physical resources at the two main hubs for camp staff on zoo grounds as well as online in the camp team's files; the Inclusion Specialists are also always available on radio and frequently run inclusion tools to groups across zoo grounds as needed. The binders and associated resources have proven to be valuable resources to foster inclusion, **utilized nearly daily across camp age groups**.



*Campers learn about animal health and care from zoo veterinarian Dr. Tim*

### Program Assessment

All registering families, including those requesting scholarships, were asked to complete an optional demographic form when registering their camper(s). 120 camp scholarship recipient families completed the demographic questions. Of those, 22% reported a household income of less than \$25,000; 36% reported a household income of \$25,000-\$74,999, and 19% reported a household income of \$75,000-\$99,999. 8% did not provide income data or did not complete the

form. In Seattle, the median household income is \$118,745<sup>2</sup> and a Seattle-area family of four with household earnings under \$121,150 is considered low-income according to the Seattle Housing Authority.

Data also show that scholarship recipients are culturally and racially diverse, and come from neighborhoods around the region:

- 29% of scholarship recipients speak a language other than English at home, compared to 16% for other campers.
- Of scholarship recipients, 39% identify as White; 15% identify as Asian (Indian/Southeast Asian) or Asian American; 9% identify as African, African American or Black; 14% identify as Latino/a/x, Hispanic or Spanish origin; 0% identify as Native American, American Indian or Alaska Native; 1% identify as Middle Eastern, Arab, or Arab American; 21% identify as two or more races/ethnicities; and 11% chose not to respond. In comparison, of campers who did not receive scholarships, 70% identify as White.
- Scholarship recipients represent 49 zip codes across the region.

In 2024, the demographic form asked whether the camper or anyone in their household had a disability. In 2025, in our ongoing effort to be as inclusive as possible, we decided not to collect disability data through the demographic form because we didn't want caregivers to think they needed a formal diagnosis to request accommodations for their child.

Data from completed Camp Caregiver Surveys show that the Camp Inclusion Specialists were instrumental in fostering inclusion for campers. In response to the question, "How well do you think the zoo's camp created an inclusive experience for your child(ren)?" 34% of caregivers selected "outstanding," 43% "excellent," 21% "good", 1% "fair," and 1% "poor." Of the 29 caregivers who selected on this survey that their camper had medical or behavioral support needs, 48% selected that communication with the camp team about accommodations for those needs was "outstanding" (21% selected "excellent," 24% selected "good," and 7% selected "fair"). In response to the question "How effective were the provided accommodations or support in helping your camper(s) have a positive experience?," 48% of this same group of caregivers selected "outstanding," 24% selected "excellent," 21% selected "good," and 7% selected "fair." When asked to share any feedback related to supporting their campers' needs, caregivers shared the following:

- **"I am so glad that I was asked about**



<sup>2</sup> Median household income data is from 2024, the latest year for which data is available from the American Community Survey.

**behavior supports ahead of time and that a plan for success was in place before camp started.** My camper had a great experience and so did I as a parent.”

- “My son has a leg injury and he was able to keep participating because they offered a wheelchair accommodation. This kept him at camp and participating.”
- “Thank you for all the support to make it a special week and for spending the time with us to ensure [camper name] was successful at camp. This is the first camp that we have had success with, so very proud of our boy!”
- “The intervention specialists are amazing and helped my daughter have a great time. I really appreciate their efforts and ability to continue working with her even after hard days.”
- “I appreciated that the accessibility coordinators were on staff and reached out ahead of camp to discuss some notes I had made at registration about my camper. **I really felt the care and commitment around making camp a good experience for all students.**”

## **THANK YOU!**

We are so grateful for the generous grant from the Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund for your support of our Camp Access and Inclusion initiatives. Your grant award helped make it possible for children from families with financial need and those who have disabilities, medical conditions or who are neurodivergent to participate in the summer camp experience and reap its academic and social-emotional benefits. We look forward to continued partnership. For any questions on this report, please contact Anna Johnson, Grant Writer, at [anna.johnson@zoo.org](mailto:anna.johnson@zoo.org).