



New Angel Charity for Children Scholarship provides free overnight field trips to Camp Cooper for 940 students at Title 1 schools

Grant will pay program fees for any Title 1, K–8 student in Southern Arizona during the 2019–2020 school year

Key Points

- The new **Angel Charity for Children Scholarship** program will allow Southern Arizona schools serving low-income communities to bring classes to Camp Cooper for overnight educational experiences with zero program fees.
- The scholarship is funded by a \$10,000 grant awarded in February 2019.
- The investment will support environmental education and experiences for nearly 1,000 kids in grades K through 8 during the 2019–2020 school year.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUCSON, Ariz. – March 4, 2019 – Angel Charity for Children, Inc., has created a scholarship grant of \$10,000 to allow 940 Southern Arizona children from low-income communities to visit Camp Cooper for overnight educational field trips with no program fees during the 2019–2020 year.

Camp Cooper is the flagship program of the Cooper Center for Environmental Learning, a partner initiative of the University of Arizona (UA) College of Education and Tucson Unified School District (TUSD).

The “Angel Charity for Children Scholarship” will be used to bring K–8 students from Title 1 schools in TUSD or any Southern Arizona school district to the camp, located in the desert of the Tucson Mountains west of downtown Tucson. There, surrounded by

the Sonoran Desert, students will learn key ecological concepts and build emotional connections to nature through evidence-based activities and curriculum.

The work is primarily funded through grassroots donations, grants and gifts made through the Arizona charitable tax credit program. These funds have, in recent years, covered roughly 75 percent of what it costs the camp for each overnight classroom visit. This newly established Angel Charity for Children Scholarship will fully cover the remaining 25 percent for 940 students, effectively closing the funding gap for Title 1 schools. By fully covering visitation costs, the scholarship grant allows these schools to use scarce resources for other needs, such as bus transportation to and from camp.

“We are so impressed with the invaluable experiences and life skills that at-risk children will receive through Camp Cooper,” said Paige Cogdall, 2019 Angel Charity General Chair. “We are pleased to provide a grant this year for Camp Cooper as part of Angel Charity’s mission to improve the quality of life for children in Pima County.”

Full-Circle, Life-Changing Experiences

Cooper Center director Colin Waite said overnight experiences are ideal for students. “Our overnight program provides each child with a once-in-a-lifetime experience that can really change the way they see the world. They’re immersed in the wonders of our Sonoran Desert. For many of these kids, it’s their first chance to learn about the environment firsthand, and they leave Camp Cooper inspired to live more sustainably on the Earth.”

Local teacher Jennifer Ryan can attest to that impact, and did so as part of the Cooper Center’s request for support from Angel Charity. Ryan told the grant selection committee how her own overnight experiences at Camp Cooper as a child helped ignite a love of nature and fascination with the environment.

Ryan went on to become involved in ecology education, activism and outreach at Cornell University, eventually becoming a science teacher and Science Olympiad coach. She noted that as a minority student in a low-income community, her school was only able to visit Camp Cooper because of donors and grants. Today Ryan teaches at TUSD’s Mansfeld Middle School, a Title 1 school for which Camp Cooper trips are also subsidized by philanthropic support.

“All of this began because of Camp Cooper,” Ryan said. “My love of the Sonoran Desert, our planet, and stewardship was fostered over my years spent during those overnight trips to Cooper and the education the staff and my teachers provided there.”

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About the Cooper Center for Environmental Learning

The Cooper Center for Environmental Learning is an outreach project of the University of Arizona College of Education and focused on educating and inspiring people of all ages to live more lightly on the Earth through UA campus outreach, community events, teacher professional development, future teacher training, research and its flagship initiative, Camp Cooper, a “living classroom” in Tucson’s desert foothills, run in partnership with Tucson Unified School District (TUSD). Each year, thousands of kids visit Camp Cooper for hands-on, outdoor lessons and activities designed to inspire youth to care about the environment by revealing the science and wonder of nature. Operating since 1964 and today funded almost entirely by grassroots donors and private grants, the Camp now often hosts the grandkids of its earliest students, welcoming a third generation to its 130,000 alumni around the world.

Video: <https://vimeo.com/269925981/c1a40e1701>

Website: <http://coopercenter.arizona.edu>

About Angel Charity for Children

Angel Charity for Children, Inc., is an organization of dedicated women and men who believe that together with many generous donors in the community, they can make a difference in the lives of the children in Pima County. Since 1983, Angel Charity has raised over \$26 million to fund more than 70 different local children’s organizations. These dollars have been used to construct new buildings, renovate and expand old ones, fund scientific research, retire mortgages and support much-needed programs. More than 1 million children have benefited from the services that Angel Charity and its donors have funded over the years.

Website: <https://www.angelcharity.org/>

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