

Wildlife Leadership Academy

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for your interest applying for the Wildlife Leadership Academy (WLA).

The goal of the WLA program is to give youth the knowledge and leadership tools to become conservation leaders in your community and beyond. Since its inception, WLA has offered a unique and life-changing experience for the youth of Pennsylvania. We look forward to seeing you application and providing you with the opportunity to become a part of this great program!

WLA is a cooperative initiative involving state agencies and conservation organizations and is coordinated and administered by the Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education (PICE). WLA brings the knowledge and expertise of Audubon PA, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Pennsylvania State University, Kutztown University, the Ruffed Grouse Society, Quality Deer Management Association, and the US Army Corps of Engineers directly to high school students.

For more information please go to: <http://www.PICEweb.org> – click on the youth programs link

Many more youth apply to the program than can be accepted - the top 20 applicants will be invited to participate for each field school. **We are looking for highly motivated 14-17 year-old students with an interest in wildlife, conservation, and the outdoors. Applicants will be selected based on several criteria: References, academic achievements and activities, non-academic achievements and activities, and a personal essay.**

General Information: *The application includes several parts that must be filled out completely. The entire application must be received no later than **APRIL 1** to be considered. Please be sure to include the following materials:*

- ✓ WLA Youth Application Form: includes contact information and applicant background. The signature box must be signed by you and your parent/guardians.
- ✓ Personal Essay: please see details below.
- ✓ Reference Forms: to be completed by three individuals not related to you.

APPLYING

Please be careful to fully complete your application. Print neatly in dark blue or black ink. Send all completed forms to:

**Attn: Michele Kittell
PA Institute for Conservation Education
Field Office: 206 Market St.
Lewisburg, PA 17837**

Participation in each program is limited to 20 students, ages 14-17. WLA is co-ed and we encourage both girls and boys to apply. Out-of-state students may apply, however preference is for in-state students.

We will accept applications for WLA anytime prior to the deadline of **April 1**. We will review applications and notify students of their acceptance by phone no later than 30 days before the start of the field school. Selected applicants will receive a packet with more information about the program and with additional forms to be returned, including a health history form and field school rules and policies. Those applicants not selected will be notified after all spots have been filled.

Once all openings are filled, we will place competitive applicants on a waiting list.

If offered the opportunity to participate in the field school, we ask that you *confirm and accept the position within three (3) days of notification*. You may contact the program coordinator by phone or email. If you do not accept the position within this period, we may offer the position to another candidate.

ESSAY

You are required to submit a Personal Essay with your application. In your essay, please respond to the following questions. Please do not to exceed two double spaced pages. *There are no correct or incorrect answers; we are interested in your writing ability and quality of thoughts.

- 🗣️ Why are you interested in becoming a part of the Wildlife Leadership Academy program?
- 🗣️ Why do you think community education is important for wildlife conservation?
- 🗣️ What are your personal strengths and how do you think they will help you at the Wildlife Leadership Academy?

REFERENCES

WLA requires that you submit **Three Reference Forms** (form included below) with your application. The reference form should be completed an adult who knows you well but is not a relative such as an employer, teacher, youth group leader, and/or neighbor. When contacting your reference, be sure to explain the goal of the WLA and why you are applying to attend the program. Have your reference return the completed Reference Form so you can submit it in with your other application materials.

TUITION AND PAYMENT

Tuition for the five-day residential field school is \$500. **A \$250 deposit is due at the time of application.** Final payment is due 31 days prior to the field school. If an applicant is not accepted into the program, the deposit will be returned. If the student accepts their offered position in the program, the deposit is non-refundable. After accepting a position, if an applicant cancels 31 days or more before the start of field school, the Institute will refund part the tuition minus the \$250 deposit. Cancellations received **less than 31 days** before the start of field school will not receive a refund. For scholarship recipients, you must pay the full tuition if you cancel **less than 31 days**. If the Institute is forced to cancel the field school, participants will receive a full refund or transfer option. PICE encourages parents' to purchase travel insurance in the event of cancellations due to unforeseen situations or emergencies. A parent or applicant must notify the Institute in writing of a cancellation. PICE will charge a \$35.00 fee for any returned checks.

Please enclose your deposit (\$250.00) with this application (check or money order only). Make checks payable to the **Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education (or PICE)**.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships for the field school are available. Scholarships generally cover 50% of the tuition costs (\$250). If you need greater support (up to 80 %), please indicate this in your application materials. To apply for a scholarship, please fill out the **Scholarship Form**. **State and local conservation organizations, clubs, or business may be willing to sponsor your enrollment – we encourage you to seek sponsorship from your community!*

TRANSCRIPTS

You are **required** to include current transcripts from your high school, your application in **NOT** complete without them.

OPTIONAL APPLICANT SURVEY

WLA values the unique backgrounds and diversity of our students. The **Applicant Survey** is **NOT** mandatory, but will provide us with valuable demographic information that will help us evaluate our recruiting methods and our progress in reaching a diverse audience. Please note, this form will be filed separately from your application and will have no bearing on the selection process.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information or any questions please contact the WLA Director, **Michele Kittell at (570) 245-8518** or mkittell@picweb.org.

APPLICATION CHECK LIST

Please remember WLA cannot review your application until we received all of the completed documents listed below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WLA Application Form (pages 1 & 2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Box |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of your transcripts | <input type="checkbox"/> Applicant Reference Forms (3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Essay | <input type="checkbox"/> Optional Applicant Survey* |

**optional and therefore exempt from required forms; may be submitted separately from application.*

GENERAL QUESTIONS

22. Please list any **academic** achievements or activities (e.g. honor roll, envirothon team) : _____

You may attach additional information to your application if needed.

23. Please list any **non-academic** extracurricular achievements or activities (e.g. community service, 4-H, athletics, clubs, etc.): _____

You may attach additional information to your application if needed.

OUTREACH – POST FIELD SCHOOL

The Wildlife Leadership Academy field school will equip you with the necessary knowledge and skills to become an ambassador for conservation in your community. Following the completion of the field school, you will be **required** to participate in a minimum of three outreach activities in your home community through education, service, media contact (i.e. newspaper, radio) and/or creative art. After field school, you keep a record of your outreach activities and are encouraged to complete more than three with rewards available for those who excel including tuition scholarships to return to field school well as college scholarships. Please verify your commitment to fulfilling these obligations in the **Signature Box** below.

The Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your contributions are tax-deductible. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or disability in any of our policies or programs.

SIGNATURE BOX

I have read the attached information about WLA's goals. I support these goals and if accepted will make every effort to fulfill my obligations to become an ambassador for wildlife conservation by participating in a minimum of **three** field school related outreach activities in my community.

IF FOR SOME REASON I CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN WLA AND NEED TO WITHDRAW MY APPLICATION, I AGREE TO NOTIFY WLA STAFF IMMEDIATELY SO THAT I WILL NOT DEPRIVE SOMEONE ELSE OF THE CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE.

I certify that all of the statements made in this application are true to the best of my knowledge and I will be removed from the application process if false information is presented.

Applicants signature: _____ Date: _____

Photo and quote release: In consideration of submitting my application, I recognize that by applying to WLA field schools, I grant WLA freedom to use my name, photograph, and/or words in the production of publicity, educational materials and promotional materials.

Applicants signature: _____ Date: _____

QUESTIONS BELOW ARE FOR ALL APPLICANTS

Check here if the applicant's parents maintain separate households but share joint legal custody of the applicant *(Please note if you checked the box at the left, the signatures of both parents are required below before we can review the application.)*

I have read the attached information describing the Wildlife Leadership Academy. Having discussed the program with the applicant, I authorize him/her to apply for and participate in the program.

First Parent/Guardian

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____ Relation: _____

Address: _____ Day Phone: _____

Email: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Second Parent/Guardian

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____ Relation: _____

Address: _____ Day Phone: _____

Email: _____ Evening Phone: _____

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APPLICANT REFERENCE

This form should be completed by an adult who is not a relative and knows the applicant well such as a teacher, employer, group leader, neighbor, coach, or administrator. Please fill in your name and address below before giving this form to your reference. This form must be completed, placed in a sealed envelope, and returned with your other application materials in order for you to be considered as a candidate for the WLA field school.

Applicants Name: _____ Phone: _____

Applicants Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name of Reference: _____ Date: _____

The person named above is applying to participate in the Wildlife Leadership Academy field school. If accepted, he or she will undergo a unique and challenging experience. The field school is exciting but can also be exhausting. He or she will also be expected to participate in outreach activities after the week-long experience is over. The goal of the program is to give students the knowledge and leadership tools to become conservation leaders in their community and beyond.

Please be candid in your assessment of the applicant's assets and limitations in regard to our goals above. If necessary, you may attach additional comments on a 8.5 X 11 sheet of paper. Please use dark blue or black ink only.

1. How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?

2. Please read the following statements about the applicant and indicate your choice based on experience:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Do Not Know	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Is mature and a team player	5	4	3	2	1
Is open to new people and experiences	5	4	3	2	1
Demonstrates initiative	5	4	3	2	1
Is able to follow directions	5	4	3	2	1
Adapts well to pressure	5	4	3	2	1
Is a hard worker	5	4	3	2	1

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Do Not Know	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Shows a strong sense of responsibility	5	4	3	2	1
Interacts well with peers	5	4	3	2	1
Has strong communication skills	5	4	3	2	1
Demonstrates leadership capacity	5	4	3	2	1
Possesses a high energy level	5	4	3	2	1
Has a good sense of humor	5	4	3	2	1

3. The applicants greatest strength is:

4. The applicants most significant limitation is:

5. Please use this space to include other information that may reflect on the applicant's qualifications.

6. To what extent do you recommend the applicant for the Wildlife Leadership Academy?

- No reservations
 Some reservations
 Significant reservations

Reference's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reference's Name (printed): _____

Telephone number: _____ Best time to call: _____

Profession/Title: _____

Address: _____

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Scholarship Application

The Wildlife Leadership Academy is committed to making our field schools accessible to all students regardless of their financial situation. Limited scholarships are available to those who are in need. Please fill out the following form to apply for a scholarship.

Applicants Name: _____ Phone: _____

Applicants Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date: _____

1. What level of support are you requesting?

- 50%
- > 50%

2. Please check all that apply and provide the applicable information:

- Low income:** How many people in your household? _____
What is your expected family income this year? ____; last year? _____
- Other financial needs:** Please specify below in Question 3 special circumstances in your family income that have created a need for additional assistance
- Minority:** Please specify _____
- Academic Excellence:** must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher and be on the Honor Roll.

3. Please explain why you should be selected for a WLA tuition scholarship? *If requesting more than a 50% scholarship please be clear about why you are in need of more support.* *You may attach an additional piece of paper to your application if more space is needed.*

**Scholarship funding is limited and dependent upon available funds. ALL scholarship recipients must submit the \$200 deposit with the application and pay a minimal of an \$80.00 non-refundable deposit if a position is accepted in the program. Depending on the scholarship level funded, you will be refunded part of your deposit if necessary.*

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Optional Applicant Survey

In an effort to further track and evaluate who applies for the Wildlife Leadership Academy, we invited you to complete this voluntary and confidential applicant data survey. Please be advised that this survey is not part of your official WLA application and this page will be removed from your application package prior to being viewed by any staff making selections for the field school.

1. How did you hear about the WLA field school?

2. Have you ever participated in a WLA field school? yes no

If yes, which year: _____ Which field school: _____

3. Do you know someone who has participated in a WLA field school? yes no

If yes, Name: _____ Field school attended: _____

4. What is your ethnicity?

- African American
- Alaskan Native
- Asian American
- Bi-racial or Multi-racial
- Hispanic/Latino
- Middle Eastern
- Native American Indian
- White/Caucasian

5. What is your gender? male female

6. What is your family's approximate annual income? (check one)

- Under \$40,000
- \$40,000-69,999
- \$100,000-\$124,999
- \$125,000-\$149,999
- \$150,000-\$169,999
- \$170,000-\$199,999
- \$200,000+

Again, any information provided will not be used in making any selection decisions.