

# Longtime College Settlement of Philadelphia Summer Camps Champion Linda Herring-Hill Recalls 40 years of Involvement

*Ahead of Receiving Anna Freeman Davies Founders Award at Centennial Celebration Gala Saturday, October 15*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- On the evening of Saturday, October 15, [College Settlement](#) of Philadelphia will host their 10th Annual "Acorns to Oaks" Gala celebration in Horsham on the grounds of College Settlement Camp, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

The evening's focus will be on the celebration of the Centennial of College Settlement Camp, founded in 1922 to serve the children of Philadelphia and their families by providing a healthy outdoor, country experience in the aftermath of the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic. The mission of College Settlement of Philadelphia and College Settlement Camps is more vital than ever as the Philadelphia region copes with the COVID-19 pandemic.



College Settlement celebrates the 100th anniversary of their summer camp programs in 2022.

"This year's gala will be an opportunity to share 100 years of history, our recent accomplishments, and our plans for our future," said Terry Dougherty, Executive Director of College Settlement. "Most importantly, we will be honoring special guests that mean so much to our success story, and all of College Settlement's alumni. This has been a year for us to look into the past and be grateful for our founders, camp directors, teachers, counselors, campers and students, all of whom have had the College Settlement experience and have had a positive impact on the experience of others."

Among the awards to be presented at this month's gala:

- Frank Gerome, on behalf of camp alumni, will accept the Summer Camps at College Settlement Award, presented to Alumni from all over the world who have captured and shared the spirit of College Settlement. Gerome joined the camp in 1965, was named Executive Director in 1982, and retired in 2013.
- Linda Herring-Hill will receive The Anna Freeman Davies Founders Award, given to recognize volunteers, community members, and former board or staff who have made an outstanding contribution to College Settlement and continue to remain committed to its mission. After attending as a camper, Linda has worked with College Settlement for over 40 years.



Longtime College Settlement Camp champion Linda Herring-Hill will receive the Anna Freeman Davies Founders Award during the Centennial Celebration Oct. 15, 2022.

"I truly believe that what's part of the magic of College Settlement Camp is the attempt by the staff to do anything and everything to make the camp experience more joyful, happy, and intensely memorable for the kids," said Herring-Hill, in a recent interview.

Herring-Hill, who teaches second grade at Lamberton Elementary in Philadelphia's Overbrook Park, recalled how special themed-days were, and still are, a big part of the camp experience.

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*Linda Herring-Hill, 2022 Anna Freeman Davies Founders Award Recipient*

"I remember one evening after hours trying to set up a huge circus tent in the middle of the field in the dark just so the kids would wake up surprised. Another time, again after hours, we worked in the dark to transform Mansion House into a castle," Herring-Hill said. "Still one more time, yes after hours, the counselors and I stayed up painting and creating turtle shells for us and the kids for Ninja Turtle Day. More recently, Josh and the staff worked on creating aliens/gorgons in the Day Camp building for Stranger Things/Sci-fi Day."

Memories of 40 summers spent at College Settlement Camp, 40 summers during which Herring-Hill was a camper, a counselor, a house leader, team leader, environmental education director and now, a member of the board of trustees at College Settlement.

Growing up in Northeast Philadelphia, Herring-Hill was a camper at College Settlement Camp for six summers – “from when I was nine to 14. And back then, except for my first summer when I only did the two week session. we were allowed to do more than two weeks. My friends and I always did four weeks.”

Going to College Settlement Camp with many of her neighbors in the Northeast, Herring-Hill made a lot of new friends, including Lora Metelitz, who she met that first summer and is still her best friend over 40 years later.

Herring-Hill first learned of College Settlement Camp through her neighbors. “There were a bunch of kids from our street that went, and our next-door neighbor was sending her kids, and suggested to my mom that it would be good. My parents, thank God, had the great wisdom to send me, and I loved every moment. I met so many great people, people from diverse backgrounds that I would never meet just hanging out on the street in Philly.”

After the 2000 summer camp season, Herring-Hill took on a new role as a Unit Leader in the Day Camps.

“I became the nature lady, an environmentalist, at the camp,” she said. “I showed children how to play with the animals at camp, chickens, goats, guinea pigs, snakes, turtles. If people couldn’t find me, they knew I was in the creek with the kids looking for turtles.

“I always loved nature,” said Herring-Hill. “And I wanted something different after being unit leader for so many years. It gives me another way to be with our kids. First time being in a creek, first time holding an animal, walking in the woods. For me, this camp is about having the kids come out to camp and play and see people from all walks of life, learning to get along with everyone.”

Of her new position on the College Settlement board, Herring-Hill noted that “it’s a different way for me to give back, a different way for me to preserve the magic of the place, the vision and the mission of College Settlement. This is a place where kids from Philly can come out to a country setting, where they can explore, get close to nature, and open their minds to many different, diverse people. It’s an eye opening experience that you wouldn’t get if you stayed in the city. I want to keep that going for another 100 years or more. I’m sure that next summer, I’ll be back at the camp playing in the creek with the kids.”

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