

**Texas Community College Teachers Association**  
"Building a Better Texas"  
Social Responsibility Form

**College:** Panola College  
**Contact:** Cheri Lambert, OTR  
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**Submission Category:**  
Community Service

**1) How did it come about/Who started it?**

Camp Tenaha began in 1998 to fulfill a project requirement for a course in the Panola College Occupational Therapy Program. An OTA student (Jeani Battershell) who was completing a fieldwork rotation at a local nonprofit therapy organization decided to create a one day summer camp for children with special needs as her project. The goal was to provide a way to maintain the children's skill levels over the summer when they were no longer in the school system receiving occupational therapy services. The day was so therapeutic that the student and the fieldwork educator (Terrie King, LOT) decided that this project needed to happen every year. This program was proposed to the OTA Program Director at Panola College (Cheri Lambert, OTR) and "adopted". This summer marks the 11<sup>th</sup> year that Panola College OTA program faculty and students have worked with and learned from the kids at Camp Tenaha. Having evolved for over a decade, Camp Tenaha now provides up to 23 children with special needs a fun filled free summer day camp every Saturday in June from 9am till 1:00pm. Every activity provides an opportunity for challenge and success. All of the camp counselors are allied health students and the children enjoy the one-on-one therapeutic attention and assistance throughout the day. What started out as a simple service learning project developed into an annual program that has benefitted hundreds of special needs children and allied health students.

**2) Who is charged with primary responsibility for the program? What support does the program receive from the senior leadership of the institution?**

Camp Tenaha program coordination is the responsibility of Terrie King, MA, LOT. Terrie teaches full time in the Panola College OTA program. She and the OTA students plan the camp activities. The administrative staff at Panola College is extremely supportive and stands behind this program 100%. Former and present College presidents and Board members have volunteered to provide lunch for the kids and students. The Director of Food Services at Panola College has provided assistance through consultation regarding food preparation, serving and dish sanitization. Vocational Nursing Program instructors are involved every Saturday to support the health needs of the children and students.

### **3) How is it sustained? What is its budget?**

The program is sustained through networking between Panola College OTA Program and New Destination, Inc. The OTA Program uses Camp Tenaha as a 32 hour clinical rotation experience for approximately forty students. New Destinations, Inc. provides the administrative support and a 55 acre camp ground. Supplies and equipment for camp are obtained through collaborative fundraising events sponsored by both the College and New Destinations. Camp Tenaha's actual out of pocket expenses are minimal due to the resourcefulness of both agencies. The camp budget is approximately \$5,000 which is used for supplies and camp equipment.

### **4) How does this benefit your students, college, and community?**

Terrie King, LOT and Cheri Lambert, OTR collaborate between the freshman and sophomore OTA class members to create the Camp. A group of sophomore students manage this project as an aspect of OTHA 2235 Healthcare Management in Occupational Therapy. Their responsibilities are to create the camp activities ensuring the highest level of therapeutic quality in each activity. One member of this team will continue camp involvement serving as the Senior Camp Advisor during the actual camp experience. This same member assists in the freshman therapeutic activity course OTHA 1315 Therapeutic Use of Occupations and Activities I, to ensure the carry over of the intended plan. The freshman students take the camp plan that the sophomore camp team developed and create the actual activity set up as well as the facilitation on camp days. Camp Tenaha serves as a clinical rotation for the freshman students and a practicum rotation for the sophomore students (OTHA 2266 and OTHA 2260). In addition, the master level OT students from Louisiana State University in Shreveport, LA and two instructors join the event to develop a better understanding of the very important evaluation and supervisory roles between educational levels which is required in the world of OT intervention. Also, the Vocational Nursing students and an instructor attend each camp day as part of their clinical experiences in pediatrics. Their role varies, but their main goal is to make sure we all stay healthy and well in the hot Texas summer sun.

Our local community is very involved through donations and volunteering their time. A different local church volunteers each Saturday to obtain the supplies for lunch and to be our fun serving group. And last but not least, the project also networks with a local AMBUCS organization that helps with funding needs, volunteers and insurance coverage. Camp Tenaha proves the powerful combination of service learning and community networking. This event would not occur if not for the community networking and volunteer time provided through so many folks.

### **5) Are there vendors or other outside resources you used that you would recommend to others?**

We definitely recommend collaborating with other programs within the college network and community. Many educational programs such as the education,

allied health, or athletic department could learn from a civic service learning project. We could not do this camp with out the generous support of community civic groups such as AMBUCS, The Rotary and local churches.

**6) What advice would you offer to another institution that might consider implementing such a program?**

Start small, have a brainstorming party and invite lots of folks from the community, keep the vision alive even when it gets a little rocky. Remember why you are doing this project and evolve to where the student is experiencing the full effect of their efforts.