

Girls Rock Camp Alliance
2018 Conference
JOY IS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

**2018 Conference Information
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Welcome Letter from the GRCA Conference Committee

Hey y'all!

The Girls Rock Camp Alliance exists to unite, develop, and support its member organizations. The most important method of support the GRCA provides for member organizations is the **Girls Rock Camp Alliance Conference**, which takes place every spring.

Each year, member organizations send key staff, board members, and volunteers to the conference for training, skill sharing, networking, and to have a hand in the governance and direction of the GRCA. Friends and allies of the GRCA are also invited and welcomed. Many opportunities for leadership arise at the conference; full member camps vote on the slate of board members and help determine the focus of the GRCA over the coming year, and members are able to join various GRCA committees, departments, caucuses, and working groups.

Although GRCA staff and board members host and organize the conference, members provide the bulk of workshop development and leadership. As experts in the field of organizing girls rock camps in their communities, GRCA members are encouraged to share their skills and experiences at the conference. We believe this shared pedagogy leads to a broader scope of knowledge and perspectives that benefits all GRCA members.

We strive to create a space that is accessible and accommodating to many abilities and ways of being, and ask for your help in continuing to build a stronger, more resilient community that reflects our strengths and identities.

The Girls Rock Camp Alliance recognizes that music is a powerful means to enact social change and create community among our members as well as the youth involved in rock camps all over the world. The GRCA works to amplify historically excluded and underrepresented voices in music culture, such as the voices of girls and trans youth, women, people of color, and queer folks. We value collaboration and using our collective voice to create personal and social change all over the world.

We believe that [Joy is a Revolutionary Force](#), and this year at the conference we hope to explore this theme through our movement building and workshop sessions.

We can't wait to see you at Appel Farm in April! Keep reading for more information about this year's conference!

In solidarity,
GRCA Conference Committee

Locations

When: April 26 to April 29, 2018

Where: Appel Farm and Music Center in Elmer, New Jersey - 45 minutes from Philadelphia.

Conference Location:	Bus Pick-up (Thursday, April 26) + Drop-off (Sunday, April 29) location:
Appel Farm + Music Center 457 Shirley Road Elmer, New Jersey 08318 USA	Girls Rock Philly Headquarters 1428 Germantown Avenue Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122 USA

Important Dates

November 20, 2017	Conference Registration OPENS!
December 1, 2017	Track Coordinator application OPENS!
January 13, 2018	Track Coordinator application closes
January 24, 2018	Track Coordinators announced!
	Request for Workshop proposals OPENS!
March 1, 2018	Request for Workshop proposals closes
April 1, 2018	Conference Registration closes & conference registration fees due
April 26 - 29, 2018	2018 GRCA Conference!

Conference Schedule

Here are some of the key happenings of the weekend. A more detailed schedule will be shared soon! *****Schedule subject to change*****

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4:30pm: GRCA Bus #1 departs for Appel Farm 6:00pm: GRCA Bus #2 departs for Appel Farm 5:30 - 9:30pm: Registration + Orientations	Morning: Caucuses, Working Groups and GRCA Movement work Afternoon: Sessions 6:30 - 8pm: Opening Ceremony 9:00pm: Evening Activities	Morning: Caucuses, Working Groups and GRCA Movement work Afternoon: Sessions + Annual Member Meeting 6:30 - 7:30pm: GRCA Celebration 9:00 pm: Evening Activities	Morning: Caucuses, Working Groups and GRCA Movement work Afternoon: Sessions 4:00 - 4:30pm: Closing Ceremony 5:00 pm: GRCA Bus departs for Girls Rock Philly 7:00 pm: Board dinner with new board members & self-organized after conference social event!

Conference Fees

The GRCA uses a sliding scale for conference fees. Sliding scale enables folks to determine what best fits their budget. That being said, know that your payment for the conference is wholly subsidizing the cost of the conference in all its parts. We ask that all attendees and attending camps take into consideration both their financial needs, and the financial needs of the GRCA. **The actual cost per person of the GRCA Conference is approximately \$150 per person.** This does NOT include the many hours of year-round volunteer labor required. Please consider this when selecting your payment amount.



Stay on-site at Appel Farm (lodging & food provided): **\$100-\$450 USD, sliding scale**

Day Attendee only (food provided): **\$75-\$450 USD, sliding scale**

Late registration fee: **\$25 USD**

We offer two scales for conference registration fees. Participants can stay off-site and attend as a Day Attendee. **If you stay off-site, you are responsible for finding your own lodging as well as your own transportation, public transportation is not available, to and from the site during the conference.**

If you have questions about registration fees, are interested in a payment plan or need help paying registration fees, please email melanie@girlsrockcampalliance.org.

Who We Center

We believe our movement will be strongest when it is one that centers and is led by those most impacted by intersecting structures of oppression (people of color - particularly black and indigenous people, trans and gender non-conforming folks, people with disabilities, neurodiverse people, poor and working class people, queer folks, femmes and feminine people, fat people and people of size, and people outside the U.S. and the West). Therefore, we encourage all our members and membership organizations to be thoughtful when choosing who to send to the conference. That being said, people of all identities and backgrounds are welcome at the conference. Conference attendees will be sharing space at meals, in workshops, and in the bunks with a diverse group of people. At the conference we must ask ourselves and our fellow organizers to think about how we make space for other folks and take necessary space for ourselves.

Please let the conference organizers know how they can support you through this! Need help picking a bunk space that feels good and safe for you? Feeling unsure on how to navigate social or workshop spaces? Need a buddy to process some feelings? We are here for you! During orientation we will go over the easiest ways to identify a conference organizer so you always know how to find us.

Youth Conference Attendance (Under 18)

This year, we are exploring ways the GRCA can support the leadership of youth under 18 both at home organizations and within the larger alliance. Currently, the bulk of conference programming is targeted toward organizers who are over the age of 18, and we invite ideas on growing the conference and the GRCA's utility for youth organizers. At the 2018 conference, leadership opportunities for youth under 18 include workshop facilitation and digital participation in certain workshops, caucuses, and solidarity working groups. To explore ways to grow these opportunities moving forward, we will also hold a solidarity working group specifically focused on supporting youth leadership within the GRCA and a caucus for youth organizers ages 18-24. More information will be provided closer to the conference, so that young folks who are unable to attend can participate, whether via Skype, phone, or by preparing writings or artistic expressions sharing their input, etc.

At this time, please note that the GRCA cannot accommodate youth under age 18 overnight at Appel Farms unless their legal guardian is a conference attendee. To arrange a homestay for a workshop facilitator under age 18, please contact shiftingpower@girlsrockcampalliance.org.

As a movement dedicated to supporting and building youth power, we are excited to engage with the entire GRCA community as we continue to grow in this way.

Accessibility

The GRCA conference committee recognizes ways that conference has been structurally and physically inaccessible in past years. This conference uses a mix of spaces with varying accessibility. This year, as we work to make to the conference more accessible to everyone, we will try to be transparent about the space and limitations. Our work towards accessibility is a work in progress and we commit to it actively! We are happy to work with you to make sure the workshops, meetings, meals, lodging, and caucuses are in rooms you can access comfortably! Please e-mail shiftingpower@girlsrockcampalliance.org with any access needs or concerns you may have.

Physical Access (meeting spaces)

The GRCA bus from Girls Rock Philly headquarters to and from Appel Farm in school busses. This often involves waiting in line for a long time and climbing 2 - 4 stairs. The ride is about 90 minutes. Carpools can be arranged for people who cannot comfortably take the bus.

Accessible parking is available at the conference site.

Meeting spaces at Appel Farm have paved walkways leading up to the entrance.

The dining hall (main meeting space) and all workshop spaces are wheelchair accessible.

The dining hall is a large room with lots of round tables and chairs. There are often lines at mealtimes. People who are unable to wait in lines will be able to skip the line. All conference attendees will be notified of this policy.

All meeting space bathrooms (with the exception of the Photo Bathrooms and the Cubicle Suite bathrooms) are wheelchair accessible. They are all multi-stall and will be marked all-gender during the conference.

Workshop spaces are often crowded and occasionally there are not enough chairs. We ask that participants give priority to people who need to sit in a chair, and that those who can, sit on the floor.

Group activities occasionally involve physical elements (stretches, walks, etc.), which are always optional for all participants.

Housing (on-site)

The Robyn and Bessie Smith dorms are fully wheelchair accessible. Bessie Smith has a gravel drive with a concrete walkway to the building. There is a tar-top drive that leads to concrete walkways for the Robyn dorms.



Dolly Parton facilities are limited. Patrons are welcome to drive directly to the Dolly Parton to unload. Access to the building may be obtained through a rear entrance sidewalk, but patrons often walk across grass to access the building.

Dorms are a combination of bunk beds and single beds, with roughly 20 beds per room. Each room has a shared bathroom, with stalls and stall showers. There are no private changing areas beyond the bathroom stall. Each bunk area has one room which has a wheelchair-accessible bathroom.

General Housing Dorms are filled first-come first-served. The GRCA offers the option of bunks designated for particular groups, including People of Color, Trans & Gender Non-Conforming People, and a Quiet and Sober Bunk. Please indicate on your registration form if you are interested in any of these options.

Dorms are currently not suitable for young children and families due to late hours and noise.

Getting around Elmer, New Jersey

Appel Farms is a popular retreat location in Elmer, New Jersey as it is in a scenic and rural area. It is **not particularly close to grocery stores or pharmacies**. In addition, there is **no public transportation at Appel Farms**. For this reason, it is recommended that you bring any additional snacks, supplies or personal items that you would like with you for the duration of the trip. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included with the cost of conference attendance.

GROCERY STORES:

ACME Markets,

[20 S Delsea Dr, Clayton, NJ 08312](#) (15 min by car)

C-Town

[100 E Commerce St, Bridgeton, NJ 08302](#) (18 min by car)



ShopRite

[201 William Dalton Dr, Glassboro, NJ 08028](#) (25 min by car)

PHARMACIES:

Walgreens Pharmacy at Crozer Chester Medical Center, [1 Medical Center Blvd, Chester, PA 19013](#) (30 min by car)

Content & Language

The general conference content is presented in English. Most workshops will be presented in English. Workshop leaders will be encouraged to have a "Language Checker" in each workshop to make sure language being used is understood by all.

Evening social activities do allow for the option of bringing your own alcohol. An alternate sober space will be provided during evening activities.

Childcare

The GRCA can provide on-site childcare if needed. Please indicate on the registration form that you are interested in bringing a child under 18 to the conference. We are also exploring housing options for young children and families. The more notice we have, the more prepared we can be to support you and your child!

Scent

The Girls Rock Camp Alliance requests that we work to create a low/no scent space at the conference, in order to help those with chemical/scent sensitivity fully participate. Please be mindful of scented items you are bringing into conference and use **unscented** hair and skin products, deodorant, markers, and do not use perfumes or essential oils. Even natural scents can cause allergies and health issues for members with sensitivities. Each bathroom/shower will be stocked with scent-free soaps and shampoos. For more information on what scent-free means,



please check out [this](#) article by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha. [Here](#) is a comic on how to approach packing for the conference!

Stretch Not Strain

In the spirit of a popular rock camp group agreement, we are asking all of our conference attendees to “stretch not strain.” What we mean by this is - we are asking folks to stretch themselves to think about the privileges that they have and think about the ways they can make this space accessible and safer for others. That is stretching. However, we also realize folks experience other types of oppression based on race, class, nationality, citizenship, gender, and sexuality. We are not asking folks to strain themselves, to do something that is not accessible for them in other ways, or to feel like they are not welcome in this space because they do not have the privilege to do certain things. Please remember that these are suggestions. If you cannot do something that is ok, AND what are the other changes you can make? What are the ways you can stretch yourself without straining?

We know that this is a process and that we are asking for a number of new things from conference goers, AND we know that the conference has not been a physically accessible space for many years. Let’s continue to do the work, especially folks with various privileges, to make sure everyone has a seat at the table.

General Transportation

GRCA provides busses to and from the conference on Thursday and Sunday. When you register, you can let us know if you are interested in taking the GRCA bus. We welcome people to drive to the conference as well. If driving, you can head straight to Appel Farm on Thursday without stopping in Philadelphia.

Thursday, April 26th	Bus #1 will depart Girls Rock Philly at 4:30 pm
	Bus #2 will depart Girls Rock Philly at 6:00 pm
Sunday, April 29th	Bus #1 will depart Appel Farm at 5:00 pm



Rideshares: we have created a rideshare board for conference attendees. We encourage folks who can offer a ride as well as who need a ride to sign up! GRCA will not be responsible for coordinating the rideshares. Please find the rideshare board [here](#). We think that this will be particularly helpful for rides out of Appel Farm on Sunday!

For participants who are flying: The GRCA does not provide any transportation from Appel Farms back to Philadelphia before the 5:00PM bus on the last day of the conference. There are also no public transportation options back to the city. Please take this into consideration while deciding your flight times for Sunday, April 29th. (In the past, participants have self-organized taxis if their flight times required them to leave before 5:00PM)

It is wise to allot *at least* 3-4 hours for travel time between leaving Appel Farms and arriving at the Philadelphia International Airport.

Supporting International Travelers:

A Welcome Letter from the International Welcoming Committee

Hi friends! We are so excited that you will be attending this year's GRCA conference, and we can't wait to meet you at Appel Farms!

We want to introduce you to our International Welcoming Committee, The Moon Crew! This committee is made up of three GRCA Board members who are not from the United States and understand the challenges that come along with traveling from international locations. We are here to support you with any questions you may have about traveling to the U.S. and attending the GRCA Conference.

We are committed to supporting you to feel safe and supported in preparation for, during, and after your travels, and are here to help make sure that you have all the necessary information you need to be ready for your trip.

Whether you need a letter for the U.S. embassy in your country or to facilitate your entry, translated materials, access to a translator/interpreter, or anything concerning your experience as an international visitor, we are here to help you along the way.

We are also excited to announce that we will have a migration advocate on call who will be available if you may encounter any issues at the border or at the airport!

If you have any other questions, please contact your International Welcoming Committee hosts (AKA the "Moon Crew") - Savhanna, Casey, and Mayra. You can reach any of us at our name (at) girlsrockcampalliance.org

So excited to share space and work alongside you all, so very soon.

Meals

All meals are included for both onsite and day participants. You will have an opportunity to specify dietary needs in your registration.

Thursday	Dinner
Friday & Saturday	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Sunday	Breakfast, Lunch

GRCA will be working closely with our caterer and trying the best that we can to accommodate your dietary information. However, since we are feeding more than 200+ on a small budget, it may be difficult to ensure that all the meals prepared can accommodate your specific allergy or preference. Again, we are doing the best that we can, but we want to encourage you to bring extra snacks. There are also grocery stores within driving distance (ACME, ShopRite and C-Town) and a fridge in the dining hall in which you can store your food.

Lodging

The GRCA will be the only group at Appel Farm, a summer camp facility, but there are a limited number of spots for on-site lodging. We have beds for approximately 178 people, using both top and bottom bunks. **Housing is first come first served!** There will be no private rooms available at Appel Farm; all available rooms are bunk style. There will be heating in all conference rooms and sleeping areas.

We also offer identity-based cabin options. If you are interested in staying in the People of Color cabin or the Trans/Gender-nonconforming cabin let us know! We also offer a sober and quiet cabin. Questions about these cabins can be found on the conference registration form. We ask for and encourage your input in making this work!

Girls Rock Philly can provide a limited number of homestays before and after the conference (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday nights), if you're interested please check the appropriate box when filling out your conference registration. Our conference logistics coordinator will reach out to you to organize these homestays.



If you have questions about lodging or need help finding nearby hotels, please contact melanie@girlsrockcampalliance.org.

Volunteering

We all make the GRCA Conference a success! Please consider volunteering for: childcare, food prep/clean-up, food service, registration (Thursday), roadie, end-of-conference clean-up (Sunday). If you are interested, please note on your registration. Our volunteer coordination team will follow up with you.

Registration

GRCA Conference Registration is first come first served based on completed application (this means the registration form as well as your first payment). The onsite lodging will fill up fast, so we suggest you register as soon as possible to save your spot at Appel Farm!

Registration process

- 1) Read through conference information!
- 2) Fill out online registration by April 1, 2018.
 - a) In your application, you will let us know who we should invoice for your registration (yourself, your camp, or other person)
- 3) Once we receive your registration, GRCA staff will send an invoice to the appropriate person
- 4) Submit payment by deadline April 1, 2018.
- 5) Once we receive registration and payment, your application will be considered complete

Reminder: Payment plans are available! If you would like more information, please email melanie@girlsrockcampalliance.org.

Our registration deadline is April 1, 2018 11:59 pm EST. After this date, all registrations will be charged a \$25 USD late fee.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

- 1) If you cancel before April 1st, you will receive a full refund.
- 2) If you cancel between April 1st - April 12th , you will receive a 50% refund.
- 3) If you cancel after April 12th, you will be charged your full conference fee.

Our Conference Logistics Coordinator is here to support you!

Please feel free to reach out to Mel (melanie@girlsrockcampalliance.org) if you have any questions, comments or concerns. She is here to support you during your registration and conference experience!

****Important note!** Please confirm your general travel plans, GRCA bus plans, homestay requests, linens needs, childcare needs and payment plans with Mel by **April 1, 2018**. Any requests made after this date cannot be guaranteed.

Sign up for 2018 GRCA Conference [here!](#)