

Overnight Camp Director

Job Title:

Overnight Camp Director

Summary:

This position is the primary leader, organizer, and mentor in charge of an Overnight Camp at our land in Duvall. They oversee up to 36 campers, 3+ volunteers, and 4+ Instructors both in structured daily activities and unstructured time at night, and they work with Program Coordinators to ensure that the camp has everything that it needs to function. They are the expert, and their awareness and embodied knowledge of Wilderness Awareness School curriculum, culture, and policies steer the whole team to success. See Duties and Responsibilities for a more complete description.

2024 Overnight Camps and their requisite skills include:

- Wilderness Survival Overnight: (Ages 11-14) fire building, friction fire skills, identifying and harvesting edible and medicinal plants, ethical harvesting/hunting, cooking over open fire and coals, building multiple types of shelters, knife safety, off-trail adventuring, wildcrafting tools/baskets/rope
- Nature Adventure: (Ages 11-14) field journaling, using field guides, species lists, plant-pressing, plaster casting, tracking, identifying and harvesting edible and medicinal plants, knowledge of local flora/fauna/fungi, sensory awareness
- Castaway Overnight: (Ages 11-14) imagination, resourcefulness, teamwork, fire-building, fire-tending, minimalist camping, knots, camp-craft, social and emotional survival skills, resource tending, leadership, service, group council, gratitude, pushing “edges”, knife safety
- Ranger Adventure Overnight: (Ages 11-14) sensory awareness, group tending, stealth, camouflage, bird language, tracking, identifying and harvesting wild edible plants, physical movement, missions, imaginative scenarios
- Bowcraft Overnight: (Ages 11-14) knife safety, knife and file carving skills, traditional and instinctive archery skills, sensory awareness, stealthy movement, off-trail adventuring, building and decorating a wooden longbow from a board
- Food and Fire Overnight: (Ages 14-18) ancestral fire-making skills, bow drill creation, knife safety, carving skills, harvesting wild wood, preparing kindling, wild food techniques (rock boiling, clay baking, spits, etc), supplementary survival skills, identifying and harvesting edible plants

This position reports to:

- Program Coordinators and Program Manager for the duration of the summer
- The Ranger team in charge of caring for the land weekly in the field

Pay:

- First Year Staff - \$1290 per week, plus all meals and snacks provided
- Second Year Staff - \$1320 per week, plus all meals and snacks provided
- Third+ Year Staff - \$1350 per week, plus all meals and snacks provided

Work Hours:

- This is a seasonal position, working from Sunday at 9:30 am to Friday at 6:00 pm, plus additional weekend time to pick up and drop off gear, and tend to paperwork. Campers arrive at noon on Sunday and leave at 4 pm on Friday.
- Activities for campers are planned in the morning, afternoon, and evening
- Overnight teams will work together to provide each Instructor and the Director with an evening off and breaks
- Directors are not scheduled on one overnight camp after another unless requested
- Summer Camps run from June 23rd - August 16th (there are no Overnights the last week of camp, and day camps run until August 23rd.) Preference will be given to applicants who can work at least 5 of the 9 weeks of camp. No staff will be asked to work 5 weeks of overnight camp.
- Planning Week: June 10th - 14th (At least 10 hours of paid online training for new staff, other training hours determined by positions worked. Directors must attend Director Training, even if they have directed before. Overnight Camp Directors must LEAD additional meetings to train their Instructor teams this week, and will be given additional preparation time.)
- Staff Training Week: June 17th - June 21st (Mandatory for all staff. Training will be held at our Duvall campus. Camping overnight is not mandatory, but HIGHLY encouraged. Expect that Overnight Camp Directors will need to lead additional training for their Instructors this week.)

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Provide knowledge and subject matter expertise to your team and campers specific to your overnight skill set, and design a way of presenting and training curriculum and schedules for your Instructors
- Follow protocol for picking up, signing out, maintaining, dropping off, and signing in camp gear for the week
- Follow additional protocols for working on Linne Doran (our Duvall property), and communicate with Ranger crews tending to the land about wildlife, trash, gear usage, protocols, and land needs
- Communicate with Program Coordinators about tracking and using additional skill-specific gear (bait, tarps, ropes, etc), and follow store instructions for tracking and distributing camper gear such as knives and fishing poles

- Organize up to 36 campers into clans that are mindful of age, gender breakdown, and friend requests
- Follow protocol for organizing, synthesizing, maintaining, and disposing properly of camper and volunteer medical information, and distributing/monitoring camper medication
- Communicate with parents about camper needs (physical, emotional, medical, developmental, etc) ahead of time and as incidents occur
- Communicate with Program Coordinators about camp emergencies, incidents, and needs as quickly as possible, and seek guidance in resolving situations you are unfamiliar with
- Communicate with the week's Lead Cook about food allergies, meal times, and other support that the kitchen staff may need
- Spearhead camper sign-in/drop-off and pick-up, maintain attendance and authorized pickup documents, and collaborate with your team to ensure you have a system for making this run smoothly
- Give specific Director Talks to the whole camp and effectively delegate other aspects of the week and curriculum pieces to the rest of your team
- Track individual Instructors throughout the week, and observe their strengths and growth opportunities. Provide a structure for verbal feedback and brainstorming throughout the week, and provide written instructor feedback at the end of the week.
- Bring staff minds together in the morning, provide a space and structure for planning the day, and empower your team. In the evening, provide a space and structure for debriefing the day, tackling incidents, and planning for the remainder of the evening and the next day. Monitor Instructor capacity and adjust activities accordingly
- Track clans throughout the week, and provide learning opportunities, trail magic, and additional activities to assist Instructors with providing fresh and engaging nature connection activities, including large group activities for the whole camp
- Be the authority on skill-specific curriculum for your Instructors, and be ready to assist them with additional activities, games, and challenges
- Create a system for providing breaks and nights off for your Instructors and yourself
- Provide support to Instructors in addressing accidents, injuries, illness, DEI incidents, and the emotional well-being of campers, in addition to overnight-specific issues such as homesickness, teen sexuality, behavioral issues, and general overwhelm
- Work with campers, families, and Program Coordinators to address issues of program readiness, and have difficult conversations as needed

- Maintain essential camp paperwork, and ensure that it is turned in to the appropriate places on time at the end of the week
- Maintain Camper Medication Log and distribute medication to campers at specific times.
- Supervise, mentor, and keep an awareness of up to 36 campers ages 11-14 or 14-18, 3+ volunteers ages 18+, and 4+ staff members ages 18+
- Check-in with volunteers age 18+ to ensure that they are receiving the mentorship they want and providing the supervision camp requires
- Uphold Wilderness Awareness School's mission and policies
- Communicate with the camp Director and fellow instructors promptly about accidents, injuries, illness, DEI incidents, and the emotional well-being of campers
- Camp on WAS forest property alongside campers for the week to monitor camper safety and behavior overnight

Physical Requirements:

- This is a physically demanding job and Directors must be able to be on their feet for many hours at a time, walk long distances, move over uneven terrain, carry their gear (water bottle, lunch, snack, clothing layers, first aid kit, radio, bandana ball, additional activity supplies), be out in the elements all day, and sleep in rustic provisions at night.
- Directors should be extremely aware of their own physical needs as well as the physical needs of their campers. They should work with Instructors to suggest adjustments to their day based on this information. This includes but is not limited to checking water consumption, adjusting meal times, taking shade breaks, adjusting hike distances and activity types, providing adequate downtime for campers, and tending to other physical and emotional needs that arise in overnight camp conditions.
- Caring for the physical, emotional, and mental needs of oneself and a group of young people can be taxing. Successful Directors protect themselves against burnout by tending to their own physical, emotional, and mental health as well. This includes delegation, asking for help, taking breaks and time off whenever possible, practicing emotional regulation, cultivating grit and resilience, advocating for oneself, and modeling this for campers. At overnight camp, this also includes making space for other staff and volunteers to do the same, and adjusting plans as needed. One should ensure that they are well-rested and well-resourced before beginning their overnight week.

Qualifications and Expectations:

- Experience instructing WAS Overnight camps, directing WAS day camps, OR significant experience in other WAS programs with an ability to demonstrate a mastery of the skill in question and WAS camp culture, and similar leadership positions elsewhere
- 2+ years of experience working with teens, experience mentoring and giving feedback to adults, and a desire to build upon this experience
- Current Wilderness First Aid and CPR certifications (or able to acquire before the first day of camp). We will host two WFA/CPR trainings at our Linne Doran campus in Duvall, on March 23-24, 2024, and June 8-9, 2024. These trainings will be presented by Remote Medical Training and offered to staff at cost (\$250).
- Directors may also want to consider a Wilderness First Responder certification, but this is not required
- Able to pass a background check
- Minimum age of 18 by June 10th, 2024. (Overnight Staff working with the 14-18 age group preferred to be a minimum age of 20.)
- Able to reliably arrive early/on time to the Wilderness Awareness School Duvall campus with their gear for camping the entire week
- Able to work at least 5 of the 9 weeks of camps, in addition to a week of Staff Training and additional Director and Overnight training during planning week
- Able to reliably receive email, phone calls, and text messages from supervisors and teammates, and access and make use of online camp resources
- Must demonstrate exceptional judgment, risk assessment, independence, self-tending, and group-tending skills
- Be a professional adult: operate with responsibility and integrity
- Creativity and passion for mentoring youth in a natural flow learning environment with an open and flexible structure
- A commitment to developing your capacity with conversations around justice and equity as well as cultivating a welcoming and inclusive space for all.
- Strong ability to work as a team leader, able to bring your unique voice, gifts, and contributions to a relational work setting
- Willing to participate in a healthy feedback culture, providing and receiving feedback from volunteers, peers, supervisees, and leadership
- Empathy, compassion, and an open mind

Preference will be given to applicants who have:

- Taught year-round at WAS, directed WAS Overnight Camps before, or instructed the specific Overnight camp previously
- Exceptional skills in the area of the camp they are working
- Demonstrated exceptional maturity, problem-solving, and camper mentoring skills
- 2+ years of experience working with teens

- Experience as a naturalist instructor working with youth and teens in the outdoors
- Experience with the 8 Shields Model and Coyote Mentoring method
- Knowledge of Pacific Northwest hazards, mammals, tracking, edible/medicinal plants, navigation with and without map/compass, field ecology, trees, survival techniques, birds/birdsong, and history of local Indigenous Nations and right relations.
- Knowledge and/or training in justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work
- Completed one or more Wilderness Awareness School programs

Sick Time and Backup Staff:

- Seasonal Instructors accrue sick time hours at a rate of 1 PSSL hour per 40 hours worked. These hours are not paid out at the end of the summer but can be rolled over from one summer to another
- In practice, this means that new Instructors may earn up to 10 paid hours of sick time by the end of the summer and that returning Instructors may have up to 10 paid hours available to use on day 1. Sick days outside of this, unfortunately, can not be compensated
- If you fall ill over the weekend before your shift or are otherwise unavailable to arrive at camp in the morning, be in contact with the Program Coordinator and your Assistant Director as soon as possible to decide how to proceed.

Benefits:

- Paid training and mentoring in the Coyote Mentoring method and the 8 Shields Model by leaders in the field, or paid training as a trainer
- Discounts on Wilderness Awareness School bookstore items
- 15+ free, nutritious, delicious meals cooked by our on-site cook team: Sunday dinner; breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks Monday - Thursday; and breakfast and lunch Friday.
- Camp on WAS land for free for your appointed weeks, including access to potable water, firewood, laundry, the yurt, and Cedar Lodge
- One of the five working evenings off
- The option to apply for employee housing on our land in Duvall, WA, at significantly reduced rates for the area
- Be a part of an amazing team of passionate people doing important work!