

Expedition Camp Instructor

Job Title:

Expedition Camp Instructor

Summary:

Expeditions are some of the most exciting and varied camps that WAS offers, with expectations of individual instructors varying widely based on the expedition. In general, Expedition Camp Instructors are responsible for working together to supervise the entire group of 20-32 campers, and may instruct a group of up to 9 campers for each camp week they are scheduled, in transportation, structured daily activities, and unstructured time at night. Instructors work with their camp Directors and each other to keep campers safe and engaged using a blend of Wilderness Awareness School general curriculum, (nature connection routines, games, songs, and stories; the art of questioning; plant and animal identification and tracking; community and ecology; wandering; sensory awareness, basic survival skills; etc.), curriculum specific to their expedition camp, and their passions and expertise to facilitate camper connection with nature, community, and self.

Expedition Camps include:

- Salish Sea: (ages 14-18) Campers travel from Duvall, WA by van and boat to a location in the San Juan Islands, backpacking all their food and gear to a remote, coastal camp. Campers learn wild edibles (may include fishing and shellfishing), build rafts from driftwood, hike remote island paths and beaches, explore tide pools, track coastal wildlife, and more.
- Survival Trek: (ages 14-18) Campers set out from Duvall, WA on foot, backpacking all their gear into the woods in a quest to survive and thrive in the woods. Campers will practice backpacking skills, purify wild water, construct and sleep in tarp shelters for three nights, learn and practice navigation skills, identify and harvest wild edibles, learn and practice knife safety and skills, hunt and catch bullfrogs and fish, and develop mental survival skills.
- Wolf Tracking: (ages 14-18) Campers will travel by van from Preston, WA to the Teanaway region of the Cascade mountains. Campers will spend a week with a community of wildlife trackers, learn about the biology and ecology of wolves, look for wolf tracks and signs, and study a variety of other animals in the environment while exploring the rivers and forests.

This position reports to:

- Program Coordinators and Program Manager for the duration of the summer

- The Expedition Director weekly in the field

Pay:

- First Year Staff - \$1435 per week, plus all meals and snacks provided
- Second Year Staff - \$1470 per week, plus all meals and snacks provided
- Third+ Year Staff - \$1505 per week, plus all meals and snacks provided
- This does not include preparation hours, which will be paid separately according to the needs of the expedition.

Work Hours:

- This is a seasonal position. Hours and days depend on specific expeditions
- Expedition teams will work together to provide each other with breaks
- Planning Week: Training hours determined by positions worked. Expect that Overnight Instructors will have additional paid training. (*Dates on Application*)
- Staff Training Week: Mandatory for all staff. Training will be held at our Duvall campus. Camping overnight is not mandatory, but HIGHLY encouraged. Expect that Overnight Instructors will have to attend additional training this week. (*Dates on Application*)

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Duties and Responsibilities of Expedition Instructors may vary widely depending on the Expedition. For more specific information about what each expedition entails, please ask the individual Expedition Director
- Supervise up to 9 campers at a time 14-18 in a wilderness area
- Use a combination of Wilderness Awareness School curriculum and activities combined with your talents to spark camper passion, curiosity, and gifts, and create connections for campers with nature, self, and community
- Provide knowledge and subject matter expertise to your team and campers specific to your expedition
- Work with a team of instructors and directors to plan and lead activities for up to 32 campers
- Communicate with the camp Director and fellow instructors promptly about accidents, injuries, illness, DEI incidents, and the emotional well-being of campers
- Work with the Director, fellow Instructors, and Campers to address overnight-specific issues (such as homesickness, overwhelm, and behavior), and troubleshoot expedition-specific issues (transportation, limited cell service, limited resources, etc)
- Work with your camp directors and mentors to monitor and develop your own instructing and mentoring abilities in a culture of feedback

- Uphold Wilderness Awareness School's mission and policies

Physical Requirements:

- Physical Requirements of Expedition Instructors may vary widely depending on the Expedition. For more specific information about what each expedition entails, please ask the individual Expedition Director
- This is a physically demanding job and instructors must be able to be on their feet for many hours at a time, walk long distances, move over uneven terrain, carry their gear (both personal, and instructional), be out in the elements all day, and sleep in rustic provisions at night
- Instructors should be extremely aware of their own physical needs as well as the physical needs of their campers, and be able to make adjustments to their day based on this information. This includes but is not limited to checking water consumption, adjusting lunch/snack 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 expedition camp conditions
- Caring for the physical, emotional, and mental needs of oneself and a group of young people can be taxing. Successful instructors protect themselves against burnout by tending to their own physical, emotional, and mental health as well. This includes asking for help, taking breaks and time off when given, practicing emotional regulation, cultivating grit and resilience, advocating for oneself, and modeling this for campers. At expedition camp, this also includes making space for other staff to do the same, and adjusting plans as needed. One should ensure that they are well-rested and well-resourced before beginning their expedition week.

Qualifications and Expectations:

- Able to pass a background check
- Qualifications and Expectations of Expedition Instructors may vary widely depending on the Expedition. For more specific information about what each expedition entails, please ask the individual Expedition Director
- Experience working with teens in a professional capacity, 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). Wilderness Awareness School hosts these trainings will be presented by Remote Medical Training and offered to staff at cost (\$295). (*Dates on Application*)
- Expedition Instructors may also want to consider a Wilderness First Responder certification, but this is not required.

- Minimum age of 18 by Summer. (Expedition Instructors working preferred to be a minimum age of 20, as campers range up to age 18.)
- 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, and self-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 contributing member of a team, 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, and leadership
- Empathy, compassion, and an open mind

Preference will be given to applicants who have:

- Instructed year-round WAS programs, instructed WAS Expedition programs, volunteered for WAS Expedition programs, completed the WAS Nature Instructor Training program, or completed The Immersion at WAS
- Exceptional skills in the expedition 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 Instructors:

- 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 before your week, contact the Director and Program Coordinator. They will work to find a suitable Instructor to replace you for your week, and you may be able to return to other camps later in the week as a Backup Instructor. If you fall ill during your shift, you will work with your Director, team, and Program Coordinators to decide the best course of action, as Backup Instructors may not have the required training to take over your position.

Benefits:

- Paid training and mentoring in the Coyote Mentoring method and the 8 Shields Model by leaders in the field
- Discounts on Wilderness Awareness School bookstore items
- All meals and snacks provided during your Expedition week
- The option to apply for employee housing on our land in Duvall, WA, at significantly reduced rates for the area
- Weekly verbal and written feedback on your growth as a Nature Instructor, contributing to a potential professional reference at the end of the season
- Be a part of an amazing team of passionate people doing important work!