

Overnight Camp Instructor

Job Title:

Overnight Camp Instructor

Summary:

Overnight Camp Instructors are responsible for supervising and instructing a group of 9 campers for each camp week they are scheduled, both in 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 the overnight camp, and their passions to facilitate camper connection with nature, community, and self.

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
- 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

This position reports to:

- Program Coordinators and Program Manager for the duration of the summer
- Overnight Camp Director weekly in the field

Pay:

- First Year Staff - \$1230 per week, plus all meals and snacks provided
- Second Year Staff - \$1260 per week, plus all meals and snacks provided

- Third+ Year Staff - \$1290 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. 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 with an evening off and breaks.
- Instructors are not usually scheduled on one overnight camp after another.
- 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:

- Help campers find and set up their campsites for the week
- Supervise up to 9 campers at a time, ages 11-14 on WAS forest property in Duvall
- 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 each overnight skill set
- Work with a team of instructors and directors to plan and lead activities such as songs, games, and stories for up to 27 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 behavioral issues
- Camp on WAS forest property alongside campers for the week to monitor camper safety and behavior overnight
- Mentor a volunteer age 18+ in WAS curriculum and leadership development, and provide written and verbal feedback
- Work with your team to ensure that all team members take breaks and have an evening off, including the Director

- 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:

- 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 (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.
- 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 overnight 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 overnight 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 overnight week.

Qualifications and Expectations:

- 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*)
- Able to pass a background check
- Minimum age of 18 by Summer Season.
- 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

- 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:

- Taught year-round WAS programs, instructed Overnight WAS programs, volunteered for Overnight WAS programs, completed the WAS Nature Instructor Training program, or completed The Immersion at WAS
- 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 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
- 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
- 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!