Position: Community Adventure Program (CAP) Instructor
Location: Westwood Neighborhood, Denver, CO
To Apply: Send a resume and cover letter to Chelsea Tossing at chelsea@cottonwoodinstitute.org. Interviews will begin July 11th and will continue until filled. Please don’t hesitate to reach out if you have any questions!

About Cottonwood Institute
Cottonwood Institute (CI) is a 501(c)3 non-profit whose mission is to connect middle and high school students to nature and inspire them to protect it. CI partners with local middle schools, high schools, and youth organizations to offer programs that engage students in environmental education, outdoor skill development, and service learning. We lead programs in Boulder, Denver, and Aurora and trips throughout the Colorado Front Range.

CAP Instructor Position Description
Cottonwood Institute is looking for an inspired and passionate educator to teach our CAP Class, an innovative elective that blends service learning, community building, environmental and outdoor education. During CAP, students explore solutions to local environmental issues, choose a challenge to address as a class, and collaborate with local organizations to design and implement a student-directed Action Project. Students also develop outdoor skills and connect with themselves, each other, and the natural world on hikes and overnight camping trips. As a CAP Instructor, you will:

- Design and lead engaging, hands-on lessons on environmental issues, outdoor skills and community action
- Create a physically and emotionally safe space for teenage students to learn from and connect with one another
- Facilitate student-led service projects focused on positively addressing local environmental issues
- Provide individualized support to ensure student and families are well prepared for their trip experiences
- Collaborate with a co-instructor to facilitate positive field day and overnight camping trips

We are currently hiring a CAP instructor for our STRIVE Prep Westwood School partnership. In addition to the program times listed below, CAP Instructors will have two paid hours of planning time for each paid hour of class time.

Program Days: Classes 3 days per week, Monday-Thursday (exact days TBD), with 1 field day & 1 overnight
Class Times: 9:00-10:00 AM at STRIVE Prep Westwood
Contract Length: September 5th - December 9th, 2023 with possible second semester and/or spring contracts
Anticipated hours per week: ~9 hours per week, with additional paid hours for trips, trainings & other duties

About STRIVE Prep – Westwood
STRIVE Prep – Westwood is a charter public middle school in Denver’s Westwood neighborhood. STRIVE schools operate with the goal of closing historic achievement gaps in Denver, emphasizing achievement, justice, and perseverance. STRIVE Prep – Westwood student demographics include: 16% second language learners; 97% free and reduced lunch rates; 93% Hispanic; 3% Black/African American; 1% white; and 3% Asian American, Indian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Compensation: This is a variable hour, non-exempt position. Compensation will be based on experience starting at $18 - $20/hour for approximately 15 weeks (3 months) at minimum 9 hrs/week. CI pays for all time directly working with students during field programs, and employees are eligible for overtime at time and a half for more than 12 consecutive hours and for more than 40 hours in a work week. Additional field programs are available as schedules and interests permit.
Benefits: All CI employees are eligible for Sick Leave benefits in accordance with the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act of Colorado. Employees are eligible for Worker's Compensation if they are injured while leading a program.

Required Competencies: skills and orientations that we feel are necessary for success as a CAP instructor!

Teaching & Facilitation
- Confidence facilitating student-centered learning experiences, including team building and personal reflection
- Experience planning and leading engaging and culturally relevant lessons with groups of teens
- Topical knowledge of service learning, environmental education, or outdoor education

Outdoor Trip Leading
- Capacity to execute on-course program logistics including transportation, gear, food and medical administration
- Experience managing physical, environmental and social risks in dynamic environments
- Comfort with outdoor skills including cooking, camp set up and personal outdoor hygiene
- Possess a current Wilderness First Responder/Wilderness First Aid certification before programs begin

Communication & Collaboration
- Ability to communicate openly, authentically, and promptly with staff, co-instructors and school partners
- Aptitude for collaborating with co-instructors and partners to plan and deliver meaningful programs
- Awareness of personal strengths and needs as an instructor; ability to self-manage and seek support

Relationship Development
- Ability to build authentic and trusting relationships with students from all cultural and economic backgrounds
- Skills to intentionally foster safe and inclusive group dynamics with and between students

Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Deep belief in your responsibility as an educator to learn about and advocate for justice, equity and inclusion
- Personal or professional commitment to expanding outdoor access and belonging for people from all identities, especially historically excluded groups

Preferred Competencies: these are nice-to-haves or things you can learn with us!
- Fluency speaking and writing Spanish to connect and communicate with parents and participants
- Classroom management experience, especially with middle-school aged students
- Extensive experience leading, instructing, or teaching teens in the outdoors
- Deep knowledge of environmental issues such as wildfire, water issues, ecology, or animal issues

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement: Cottonwood Institute (CI) strives to create an inclusive and inspiring environment for all of our students and our staff. We actively value and support folks of every age, race, sex, colors, creed, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, military status, veteran status, political service, or affiliation. We aim to build a staff that reflects the communities we serve. If you are an aspiring outdoor/ environmental educator who identifies as a person of color, woman/non-binary, LGBTQIA+, we highly encourage you to apply even if you’re not sure you meet all of the qualifications in our post!

Cottonwood Institute COVID-19 Vaccination Policy: As a condition of employment, CAP Instructors must comply with the vaccination and/or testing requirements of our partner schools. All Denver Public Schools employees & contractors must be fully vaccinated, and proof of vaccination must be provided upon hiring. For more information about our vaccination policy, please contact dru@cottonwoodinstitute.org.

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