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**Position:** Community Adventure Program (CAP) Instructor

**Location:** AXL Academy - Aurora, CO

**Status:** Full-Time, Non-Exempt, eligible for overtime (30-40 hours/week)

**Compensation:** \$20-\$27 depending on experience; see incentive structure below for details.

**To Apply:** Please fill out our [application here](#) by July 31st. Interviews will take place starting August 9. If you have any trouble with the application, please send your application to [Maeve@CottonwoodInstitute.org](mailto:Maeve@CottonwoodInstitute.org).

### About Cottonwood Institute

[Cottonwood Institute](#) (CI) is a 501(c)3 non-profit that is on a mission 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.

### Community Adventure Program (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, and environmental and outdoor education. During CAP, students develop outdoor skills and connect with themselves, each other, and the natural world on field days and overnight camping trips. Students also 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 in their community. As a CAP Instructor, you will:

- Design and lead engaging, hands-on lessons on environmental issues, outdoor skills, and community action.
- Create a positive 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 students and families are well prepared for their trip experiences.
- Collaborate with a co-instructor to facilitate positive field day and overnight camping expeditions.

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

- Grade level: We currently offer one 7th grade class and one 8th grade class per trimester.
- Program Days: 2 classes per day, 5 days per week, Monday-Friday, with 2 field days & 2 overnights per trimester
- Class Times:
  - Trimester 1 and 2: 10:25-11:25 and 1:10-2:10
  - Trimester 3: 1:10-2:10 and 2:10-3:10
- Contract Length: August 19, 2024 - June 4, 2025
- Anticipated hours per week: ~30-40 hours per week, with additional paid hours for trips, trainings & other duties

### About Aurora Expeditionary Learning (AXL) Academy

Aurora Expeditionary Learning (AXL) Academy is a PK-8 Expeditionary Learning school and serves 400 students from Aurora. Cottonwood has partnered with AXL for the past 8 years and has a long history of successfully offering CAP Class. AXL student demographics include 78% free and reduced lunch rates, 41% Hispanic, 29% Black/African American, 20% white, and 3% Asian, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander.

**Compensation:** This is a variable hour, non-exempt position. We are committed to providing a thrive-able wage for our staff and reevaluate our compensation structure regularly. Every instructor starts as a Level 1 Instructor at a base hourly rate of \$20 per hour, with additional compensation for the incentives below.

- + 2% of base rate (\$.40/hr) for Level 2 Instructor: 10-19 lifetime CI Field Days Worked
- + 4% of base rate (\$.80/hr) for Level 3 Instructor: 20-29 lifetime CI Field Days Worked
- + 6% of base rate (\$1.20/hr) for Level 4 Instructor: 30-39 lifetime CI Field Days Worked
- + 8% of base rate (\$1.60/hr) for Level 5 Instructor: 40-49 lifetime CI Field Days Worked
- + 10% of base rate (\$2.00/hr) for Senior Instructor: 50+ lifetime CI Field Days Worked
- + 2% of base rate (\$.40/hr) for returning CI Instructor (5+ days worked with CI in previous school year: August - July)
- + 5% of base rate (\$1.00/hr) for 3+ years paid guiding experience outside of CI. Because this past experience can be subjective, CI will review this on a case-by-case basis and values paid experience over volunteer experience.
- + 2% of base rate (\$.40/hr) for Wilderness First Aid
- + 4% of base rate (\$.80/hr) for Wilderness First Responder/EMT
- + 5% of base rate (\$1.00/hr) for K-12 Teaching Certification
- + 5% of base rate (\$1.00/hr) for College Degree
- + 10% of base rate (\$2.00/hr) for Master's Degree
- + 10% of base rate (\$2.00/hr) for functional Spanish proficiency (able to speak with and write to students and parents/guardians if necessary)

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. Other perks include:

**Benefits:** Our benefits include:

- 15 paid holidays, 15 vacation days, and 6 sick days per year
- Eligibility for simple IRA retirement plan and 3% match from Cottonwood
- Health insurance 75% paid for by Cottonwood
- Access to industry Pro Deals
- Free access to CI gear during non-program hours
- Paid professional development opportunities and ongoing trainings, including paid WFA/WFR certification courses
- Mileage reimbursement for personal vehicle trips over 50 miles per day
- Eligibility for Worker's Compensation if injured while at work
- Eligibility for Sick Leave benefits in accordance with the Families and Medical Leave Insurance Program (FAMLI) of Colorado.

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

#### *Interpersonal Skills*

- Communicates openly, honestly, and in a timely manner with staff, co-instructors, and school partners
- Accurate awareness of personal strengths and areas for development; initiative to learn and grow
- Models strong equity and inclusion practices in their work with students, families, and partners
- Maintains a calm, focused, and positive attitude when faced with challenges; shows personal resilience

#### *Educational Skills*

- Experience planning and leading engaging and culturally relevant lessons with groups of teens
- Confidence facilitating student-centered learning, including team building, outdoor, and environmental activities
- 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

#### *Outdoor Trip Leading/Technical Skills*

- 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

**Preferred Competencies:** These are nice-to-haves or things you can learn with us!

- Strongly preferred: fluency speaking and writing Spanish to connect with parents and participants
- Strongly preferred: familiarity with the Aurora community
- 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 our students and 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!*

**To Apply:** Please upload your resume and cover letter to our [application form here](#), or email Maeve at [maeve@cottonwoodinstitute.org](mailto:maeve@cottonwoodinstitute.org). Interviews will begin August 9th and continue until the position is filled. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions!