

Great Hollow Wilderness School

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Great Hollow Wilderness School (GHWS) is a branch of the Regional YMCA of Western CT, and is located on an 890-acre wilderness preserve in New Fairfield, Connecticut. Great Hollow is the oldest non-profit outdoor education program in Connecticut, and has been creating and managing change through experiential education for over 30 years. GHWS provides adventure programming, leadership development, and diversity education to Upward Bound and other school-based/educational opportunity programs. Great Hollow serves a wide range of participants from elementary and middle school students to corporate executives. The driving conviction of GHWS is the belief that experiential education is conducive to the growth of individuals from all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Great Hollow is unique in that we have made a commitment to serving populations historically under-represented in the world of outdoor education. Furthermore, GHWS actively works to recruit staff from under-represented populations into the field of experiential education. In doing so, the diversity of our staff group is a direct reflection of the students we serve.

Great Hollow combines adventure-based programs with strong group process. From the outset, students are told that everyone has something to contribute and that in order to succeed everyone must work together, and that if they can succeed at Great Hollow they can succeed anywhere. Participants go through a high ropes course, hike sections of the Appalachian Trail in NY, CT, and MA, cook over fires, canoe, rock climb, and make decisions both good and bad. Through programs and discussions, participants begin to see that they are directly responsible for their successes and failures; that their environment should not dictate their actions; and that with hard work and focus their dreams are attainable. Most of all, they learn that no matter what obstacles they are confronted with they should never lose sight of their goals. We offer young people an opportunity to be proud, to see intellect and ability where they have often seen self-doubt.

Duties

Staff members learn and share responsibility for all aspects of the program including logistics, working at high ropes and rock climbing sites, and instructing courses 1-14 days in length. Instructors work in teams of 2-3 and are responsible for the physical safety and emotional well-being of participants during all activities. Great Hollow instructors must be committed to not only the success and growth of the students they work with, but as role models they must be committed to personal excellence, which includes their own growth and learning, as well as that of their fellow staff members.

We are looking for hard working, intelligent, and dynamic leaders to be positive examples for students in need of strong role models. The work we do here is very challenging and very demanding, but you will receive support from the community, and you will be trained in all technical skill

areas including camping, rock climbing, high ropes courses, and other adventure activities.

Community

Great Hollow is a living and working intentional community, where commitment and accountability to group created standards are crucial. Living and working among a group of 25-30 staff is definitely challenging but we confront and strive to overcome those challenges, both as a matter of necessity and intention. At the beginning of the season the staff draws up a full value contract, a statement of intention concerning how the community will function. It becomes the standard with which we hold each other accountable. It also serves as a tool that, ideally, creates a safe environment within which the group assists each other on a journey of growth and development. Not only are the staff members accountable as individual role models, but our community is also regarded as a model. We have the opportunity to model ideals that are often impossible in the larger community. By experience and example we teach ourselves and those we come in contact with tremendous lessons about what commitment, belief, creativity and resilience can bring about.

Housing

Great Hollow is a living and working community. We provide shared housing, food, and kitchen area which staff members are responsible for maintaining during the summer.

Positions Available

Technical Director, Logistics Director, Food Supervisor. D.O.E. (\$350-\$400/week)+Room and Board

Commitment: May 14th through the end of August – (Full summer season)

Instructors: Salary D.O.E. (\$270 - \$350/week) + Room and Board (\$100 less per week during staff training toward necessary certifications (see below).

Commitment: May 20th through the end of August – (Full summer season)

Additional positions available as follows:

- **Beginning of July through August 4th** - Center for Attention Related Disorders (C.A.R.D.) therapeutic day camp program; Wilderness Day Camp; Youth Services agencies.
- **August 12th through the beginning of September** - College outdoor orientation programs

Great Hollow provides technical training in all areas during a mandatory two-week staff training May 20th through May 31st. Additional training sessions are offered throughout the summer.

Wilderness First Aid & CPR are available May 18th, 19th, & 20th for those that need to obtain these certifications.