

DEAR ALP PARTICIPANTS AND PARENTS,

We are excited to invite you into the Adirondack Leadership Program! We commend you for your desire to grow as a leader. ALP will be a memorable way to spend part of your summer as you will get to see the breath-taking beauty of the Adirondack mountains and waterways while having fun meeting new people in your group. Many participants have said that La Vida is a life-changing experience and one they will never forget. We have many great resources to help make this experience exciting and engaging for you too!

We place a lot of emphasis on the community experience and value each member of the group for their unique personalities and contributions. You will be placed with approximately six to 10 other participants along with two highly trained La Vida staff. The program focuses on developing your leadership skills, character, a positive identity and a commitment to serve and care for others through a Christian perspective.

Please review the arrival information sent to you by email before your trip as well as the other resources included to help prepare you for your trip.

If you have any questions, call us at the La Vida Office, 978.867.4111. We'll see you at camp!

Sincerely,



Rosie Marshall
P: 978.867.4887



255 Grapevine Road

ALP CONFIRMATION FORM

Please complete the following forms and submit online/mail them to the address below at least one month before your trip. Alternatively, you can send a fax to 978.867.4110 or email to Rosie.Marshall@Gordon.edu.

Forms that need to be completed:

- ☐ Release Form (2 pages: Risk Release, Photo Release, Meningococcal Meningitis Vaccination Response Form, Sunscreen Release, Insect Repellent Release, and HIPPA Release)
- ☐ Essential Eligibility Criteria Form (online form)
- ☐ Medical History and Emergency Form (4 pages: emergency contact information, medical history sections I and II containing current immunization records and physical dated within the last 12 months and signed by a doctor, authorization to administer medication to minors)
- ☐ Copy of insurance card

Mailing Information:

- Between September 1 – May 25 please mail all materials to:
 - La Vida Adirondack Expeditions Gordon College
255 Grapevine Rd.
Wenham MA 01984
- Between May 25 – August 31 please mail all materials to:
 - La Vida Adirondack Expeditions Base Camp
460 County Route 50
Lake Clear NY 12945

Balance Information:

If you paid online through our WordPress website, please log in and pay your balance there. If you paid by check or over the phone, please make checks out to **Gordon College** with **ALP** and **the trip dates** in the memo or give us a call.

Cancellation Policy:

- \$100 deposit is non-refundable
- Cancellations between May 1-May 31: \$675 refunded
- Cancellations made on or after June 1: No refund

CAMP INFORMATION

New York State Regulations

This trip will be coordinated by La Vida Expeditions, a certified camp under the New York State Department of Health. The Department of Health requires all participants receive information about camps in New York State. Please see the *NYS Department of Health Camp Information* form online for more details.

Current Physical and Immunization Records: **Please note that the La Vida ADK Expedition Physical Form is different from the La Vida Adventure Camp Physical Form.**

- Each camper must complete the Medical History Form prior to the start of camp.
- The La Vida Physical Form needs to be signed and dated by your doctor.
- All camps in New York are required to have medically authorized immunization records.
- Immunization records **MUST** be current, completed, signed and dated by your doctor or they will not be valid.
- You may provide a photocopy/fax of the participant's immunization records as long as they are up to date and include your doctor's signature and date of signature. Alternatively, you may transcribe the immunization records onto our form and have your doctor sign and date our form in the space provided.
- All participants must be covered by a health insurance provider. Please include a copy of the insurance holder's insurance card.
- Participation in ALP is not possible without these completed forms.

Schedule for the 8-Day Trip:

	Day 0	Arrival at Gordon College the night before as needed
8:00 AM	Day 1	Registration in the A.J. Gordon Chapel Loop at Gordon College, ALP Departure for Base Camp in Lake Clear, New York (P4 in the included map)
	Day 2 & 3	Team Training: Ropes course & rock climbing in the Adirondacks
	Day 4-5	Canoe or backpacking expedition
	Day 6	Solo and reflection
	Day 7	Expedition end and celebration at La Vida Base Camp
	Day 8	Final challenge run and drive to Gordon College
8:00 PM	Day 8	Camper pickup at the A.J. Gordon Chapel Loop at Gordon College

Medicine at Camp

All groups will be carrying a medical kit during the expedition. In order for the leaders to dispense any prescription medicine participants bring with them, we are required to have you and your doctor complete an Authorization for Administration of Medication at Camp form. Please complete this form and return it with your La Vida Physical Form. **Because of New York State laws, we are NOT authorized to distribute non-prescription medications at camp (i.e. no Ibuprofen, Aspirin, Tylenol etc. unless prescribed).**

Meningitis Information

The New York State Department of Health requires that all participants be informed about the risks of meningitis. Please see the *NYS Department of Health Camp Information* form online for more details.

Group Assignments

You will be notified of your specific group assignment (backpacking/canoeing) by email at least three weeks before the trip begins. Please notify us if you need to know sooner to gather appropriate equipment. Turning in your paperwork on time will help in this process.

Equipment

It is important for each participant to have the right clothing and equipment for their expedition. Clothing and equipment do not need to be brand name, and many things on sale racks at sport stores will suffice. The Equipment List is a recommended guide to packing for the expedition. The clothing and equipment list will be reviewed during the first two days of the program. Pack all of your personal clothing and equipment in a duffel bag, backpack or a labeled garbage bag that can be transported with you to the La Vida Base Camp in a van or trailer. Participants who are borrowing gear from La Vida will check it out at base camp and will have a chance to pack their things to be ready for the expedition. Luggage not needed on the expedition will be stored in a designated location at the base camp.

Fees and Money

Participants must bring a refundable \$20 cash equipment and deposit fee to cover any potential lost or damaged equipment. Additional money should be brought to spend on lunch and snacks for the trips to and from New York.

Preparing for the Trip

One of the best ways to prepare for your La Vida Expedition is to be in good physical condition. We recommend some walking, running, biking, and/or swimming before your trip. The expedition is designed to be challenging, so preparing ahead of time can be helpful.

Another way to prepare is to think about what you want to get out of your experience. Begin considering physical, social and spiritual goals for yourself, and how your group may help you achieve those goals. If you feel apprehensive about some aspects of the expedition, you should also begin identifying just what you are apprehensive about, and how your group may be able to help you. Each participant will be asked to share at the beginning of their expedition what they hope for the trip and what they anticipate will be a challenge. You will be part of the development of a group covenant which outlines how your group will encourage and support one another.

It is very powerful to identify a mentor for this experience. This should be someone with whom you can share your goals and apprehensions before the trip, and then process the experience with afterward.

Solo and Fasting

The solo is a 1-day period towards the end of the trip where you will have the opportunity to practice the spiritual disciplines of solitude, simplicity and silence as well as fasting and prayer. It is a unique chance to step back from the normal distractions of life and evaluate what is important to you, set goals for the future and realize what you are thankful for in your life. Participants are placed approximately 150 feet from each other and given the space to read, journal and spend time in nature while under the close supervision of the La Vida Trip Leaders. A majority of participants say this is the most impactful time of their experience.

One element of solo that adds into the experience is fasting. Most people, but not all, do fast on their solo unless they are diabetic, hypoglycemic or have an eating disorder. Your leaders will prepare, support and encourage you to challenge yourself in this experience. They will be checking on you a few times during the day. Fasting has a long history, especially in the church, and others have incorporated it into their lives as well. It is a chance to give up something so that you can grow in your faith. If you choose not to fast, food can be provided or you can do a partial fast with a smaller amount of food. We strive for open and approachable conversation regarding solo, so please initiate a conversation with your leader if you need to make any of these modifications.

The solo experience is managed very closely by the leaders. All participants are within a short walking distance of the leaders' campsite. Participants are checked on a minimum of twice a day and are given

water and any medications that need to be distributed. Those who are a little more anxious about the experience are placed closer in proximity to the main campsite. Everyone will wear a whistle at all times in case of emergency and are given a strobe light to turn on if they have to blow their whistle in the middle of the night.

Camping and Wilderness Travel

You will be camping outdoors every night of the trip and canoeing or backpacking most days of the expedition. This means that you have chances to see the lakes and rivers of the Adirondack State Park, develop your canoeing or backpacking skills, set up tents at different sites and become efficient travelers. Groups travel approximately 5 miles a day; however, each itinerary is different.

You will canoe or backpack with all your gear as you travel to different campsites. This gear includes your personal gear as well as group gear: food, cooking utensils, camping equipment etc. The packs can weigh between 40-50lbs initially but will get lighter throughout the trip as the food is a large portion of the weight. In general, participants should not carry more than 30% of their body weight, so the group will work together to distribute items as necessary.

Maintaining hygiene in the woods is easily attainable if you have the right supplies. We provide hand sanitizer and biodegradable hand soap for each group to keep their hands clean. Participants are welcome to bring one travel size biodegradable soap as long as they follow [Leave No Trace](#) ethics. You can also bring unscented baby wipes if you want. Once used, these are considered trash and must be carried with you until you get to base camp where you can throw them away. Your leaders will review hygiene and LNT principles at the start of your trip. We also will provide instruction on any necessary female hygiene while on the expedition as well.

Contact During the Expedition

You will not have access to communicate with family once you have arrived at the base camp. We encourage everyone to be fully invested in the experience and to remain present throughout all activities. Our philosophy of "Be Here Now" starts from the time you arrive for La Vida to the time you depart and hopefully is implemented in your life after La Vida.

Special Note to Parents: Likewise, the La Vida staff will not be sending regular updates to parents during the expedition, nor will we be able to deliver non-emergency related information to your child. Once your child arrives to the base camp, our attention is 100% on them to ensure a seamless experience. We try to send out one email update towards the end of the trip but cannot always guarantee this. Although we recognize that this time apart can be difficult for both parents and participants, you can trust that your child is in good hands with our staff. Our program has had an impeccable safety record during our 50+ years of ministry, and we are consistently seen as a model camp in the ADK's.

If you have questions or wish to contact La Vida during the program, you can contact the Adirondack Program Director at the La Vida Base Camp in Lake Clear, New York:

La Vida Base Camp

P.O. Box 219, Lake Clear, NY 12945

P: 518.891.4188

E: Rosie.Marshall@gordon.edu

ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

If viewing digitally, fill out your EEC form [here](#).

We are so excited that you are considering a La Vida Expedition! Most La Vida participants have rarely, if ever, gone on a camping trip before and may find that this experience will stretch them. That opportunity for growth through challenge is exactly what makes an expedition so unique and powerful! With that being said, the location and activities of a La Vida Expedition are remote and exposed to outdoor elements. Due to the rigorous nature of the activities, we invite you to thoughtfully review the criteria below regarding various challenges associated with a La Vida Expedition:

The health and safety of our students and staff are a top priority, along with the educative quality of the program experience for all participants. The Essential Eligibility Criteria are applied to all students on a La Vida Expedition. If an applicant does not meet the specific criteria, La Vida may be able make some modifications to the expedition only if they do *not*:

- Jeopardize the health and safety of the other program participants or staff
- Place an undue administrative or financial burden on La Vida
- Severely alter the programmatic goals and methods used

Requests for modifications to the expedition must be discussed with La Vida staff **at least one month prior**. Modifications are not guaranteed; La Vida will work with the requestor to determine the feasibility of the request. A final plan must be reviewed and approved by La Vida. Requests that are sent in within a month of the expedition start date are less likely to be approved given the challenges in making late modifications to the expedition.

Gordon College Students Only: If La Vida is unable to modify the expedition, the student will be invited to participate in the Discovery program.

Each individual La Vida participant, and guardian, if participant is a minor, are responsible for reviewing the relevant Essential Eligibility Criteria below. As you read the criteria below, consider your ability to meet these requirements from a physical, mental health, cognitive, and emotional perspective.

Participants should be able to...

- Understand and follow verbal and visual instructions individually, and in a group setting.
- Comprehend hazards and safety concerns when explained, and adhere to safety policies and procedures even when staff and trip leaders are not immediately present.
- Identify hazards posed by the environment (steep terrain, sun, cold, etc.) and other participants (fatigue, state of mind, etc.).
- Effectively communicate to others personal distress, injury or need for assistance.
- Stay properly hydrated and nourished, and learn skills for self-care, including proper hygiene and use of clothing and equipment.
- Refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, and any misuse of prescription or over the counter drugs.
- If using prescription drugs, self-administer medications under staff supervision according to New York State Department of Health regulations.
- Contribute to a safe social and learning environment and maintain appropriate relationships with other group members and instructors.
- Refrain from harassment, bullying, and all other behavior that disrupts the learning of others or the cohesion of the group.
- Abstain from cell phone use for the duration of the program.

- o La Vida staff carry communication devices for emergency situations but, otherwise, a La Vida Expedition is a cell phone-free program
- Wear a climbing harness, helmet and any other safety gear correctly after instructed.
- Live and function in an outdoor camp setting without access to electricity for up to 12 days.
 - o *No prior camping experience is expected nor necessary. This criterion is meant to address students who have medications or other medical interventions that require access to electricity.*
- For participants bringing a personal medical device (i.e. glucose monitor, hearing aid): function in a wilderness environment, knowing it is at risk of water damage.

Backpacking Activities: Participants should be able to...

- Walk continuously for up to 2 miles at a moderate pace (2 mph) over steep and uneven terrain unassisted while carrying a backpack weighing 30-50 pounds, and then repeat following 5-15 minutes of rest (up to 9 miles total in one day).
- Not have immediate access to advanced medical care facilities for the duration of the backpacking portion of a program. Participants may be up to an 8-hour hike from definitive care.

Water Activities: Participants should be able to...

- In the event of a capsize, independently get out from under capsized canoe, remain face-up in water with personal floatation device, and identify, make progress to and ascend shoreline with or without instruction.
- Carry a canoe with another person (\approx 75lbs) over uneven terrain for up to 1.5 miles with periodic breaks.
- Get in and out of a boat from the shore or from the water independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance.
- Swim in water, while wearing a personal flotation device.

If you have any questions on these Essential Eligibility Criteria or about your ability to meet one or more criteria, please contact La Vida at Rosie.Marshall@gordon.edu.

HYGIENE NEEDS ON LA VIDA

Hygiene can easily be maintained while in the woods for extended periods of time, so here are answers to our most frequently asked questions about all things related to hygiene!

Will we shower on a La Vida Expedition?

Participants and leaders will not have access to showers or bathtubs throughout the trip. But don't worry! Keep reading for tips on how to stay clean while living in the woods!

How do I stay clean?

For your safety and health, it is vital that you wash your hands with soap and water before preparing each meal and before and after you go to the bathroom. Soap and hand sanitizer are provided, but below is a list of biodegradable and environmentally friendly products if you would like to bring your own:

- Unscented, alcohol-based gel hand sanitizer
- Organic Pure Castile Liquid Soap (Baby Unscented) Dr. Bronner's
- Wilderness Wash—Sea to Summit
- Ez Wyp Biodegradable Non-Alcohol Wipes

If you plan to wash during the trip, you'll have to carry a bucket of water 150 feet off trail so that you do not leave any soap residue in the body of water. Everything brought into the woods, must be packed out, so we suggest bringing an extra Ziplock or two to carry personal trash with you throughout the trip. You can throw this away in trash bins at the La Vida Base Camp when you return from the woods.

How will we go to the bathroom?

The great outdoors is your bathroom! We'll teach you more details when you arrive, but basically, you are going 150 feet off trail to go to the bathroom. If you have to go poop, you will dig a hole (we provide the shovel!) that is at least 6 inches deep and then bury your waste and toilet paper in that hole.

Brushing teeth

We advise that every person brush their teeth twice a day and floss once a day. Neglecting to brush your teeth will not only deter your peers from having quality conversations, but also put you at risk of serious health concerns such as gum disease and cavities. Leaders are trained to deal with medical emergencies during your La Vida trip, but an infected gum or molar can result in an immediate removal from trip. If you have recently had oral surgery (i.e. removal of wisdom teeth), please inform the program director prior to arriving for your expedition.

What if I wear contacts?

We highly recommend using glasses for your trip. If you do want to bring contacts, bring daily contacts plus solution. You'll just have to make sure that your hands are really clean before putting them on. Bring your glasses as well just in case you lose the contacts or just want to give your eyeballs a break.

Why can't I bring deodorant?

Wearing deodorant has become a daily practice that is hard to imagine living without. However, it is common for multi-day hikers to leave their antiperspirants at home. We ask our participants to do the same on a La Vida expedition for the following reasons:

1. The smell and ingredients of deodorant attracts bugs and other curious wildlife.
2. Deodorant does two things to counteract unwanted bodily odors. One, it kills the bacteria that lives within armpit hair (the source of the smell). Secondly, antiperspirants prevent sweating by clogging the pores. Because you will be sweating on trip with no access to showers, the application of deodorant with an antiperspirant can clog your pores so much that it would be unhealthy for your skin. Rashes and irritation can occur if too many layers are applied without continual cleaning of that area.

What if I have hair that requires more maintenance?

The risk of tangled/knotted hair is real and uncomfortable. We encourage participants to bring a small hairbrush or comb. Wearing your hair in braids can also help eliminate tangles. Although we would love to think that your trip will be sunny every single day, we know the reality is that you will experience some rain. For those on canoeing trips, the possibility of getting your hair wet is even greater.

What if I get my period on the trip?

Don't worry! Having your period during a La Vida Expedition is manageable! It just takes a little preplanning. In order to be confidently prepared and to avoid yeast infections and urinary tract infections we recommend packing the following:

- Thin panty liners: Instead of bringing many changes of underwear, which take up more space, thin panty liners are lightweight and can be disposed of every day.
- Compact tampons/pads: Pads with wings and extra sticky strips are good because they will stay in place as you move.
- Menstrual cups or discs

Packing Tips:

- Remove all of these items from their cardboard boxes before packing.
- It is important that **every** woman brings the supplies mentioned because new types of physical exertion may change when women get their period.
- Use one Ziplock bag for unused, clean items and another zip-lock bag for used items. Store both bags in a small bag or stuff sack. You can wrap used products in tin foil and store in a plastic bag. This will eliminate odor. La Vida provides small feminine hygiene bags during gear check-out at base camp on the first day of your trip.

Read more of our FAQ's here: <https://lavidacenter.org/alp/faq/>

LA VIDA

AT GORDON COLLEGE

