

Realistic Job Preview

La Vida Expedition Base Camp Staff

Purpose and Role of Program

The La Vida Adirondack Expedition program is a ministry of the La Vida Center for Outdoor Education and Leadership. During 8-12-day wilderness trips, participants grow through facing individual and team-focused challenges within the context of Gospel-centered practices and discussions.



Specific Tasks

Tasks include but are not limited to the following: belaying at the high rope course and rock climb, hiking 1-3 miles of steep terrain, landscaping, food packing, meal prep and clean-up, hosting visitors, facilitating activities for on-site groups, evacuations, managing gear rentals, driving a van of students, facilitating celebration and worship times, resupplying trips, and joining staff events.



Orientation (Summer Staff)

Your level of participation in training depends on the programmatic needs of La Vida, but in general, most staff attend all trainings. Training consists of canoe and mountain travel, rock climbing and high ropes course belay training, equipment care and standards, spiritual lesson preparation, La Vida curriculum, and trip planning and execution. Other activities may include a few days of medical training resulting in a certification through Wilderness Medical Associates and a one-week training trip of Base Camp Life.



Nuts and Bolts of the Job

All local staff will attend specific training evenings during the spring. The first three weeks of Summer Staff employment is staff training. The hours are typically 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (not including meal prep/clean-up). August Base Camp Staff will learn on-the-job through observation and guidance from experienced staff.

During the remainder of your employment your primary responsibility will be supporting the success of the expeditions through the tasks listed above (3 cycles total for summer staff, 1 for August staff). You may be asked to lead an expedition if necessary.



Emotional Engagement

The relationships between La Vida Adirondack staff is that of an intentional and committed community, where each has opportunity and responsibility to use their respective gifts and abilities. All staff must accept full responsibility to invest in this close-knit community that shares most work and off-time hours together. Staff members are expected to adopt a teamwork mentality listening and encouraging other staff members through clear communication of needs, thoughts, and plans.



Challenges of the Job

Staff occasionally work 10+ hour days. The work can be physically demanding and require staff to be outside in rain, cold, and heat. There is no time off for holidays. There is a steep learning curve for new hires and staff will be asked to assist in work areas that may be unfamiliar. There is also limited time to communicate with friends and family outside of La Vida as well as limited time for leaving base camp property.



Highlights of the Job

Staff are working outdoors in a beautiful location for the majority of the summer in a spiritually rich community. Staff are given the chance to connect with others who are committed to their faith in Jesus, witness large amounts of student growth firsthand, and make life-long impact on the lives of participants. Most meals are shared together and staff often are given an hour of devotional/personal time in the morning. This is an opportunity to learn a wide-range of skills and work with a deeply mission-driven organization. Staff will receive investment from leadership in training, debriefs and shared life. All staff get the privilege of working in the legacy of a 50-year-old program that has served hundreds of staff and thousands of participants.



Spiritual Component

The La Vida Adirondack program offers a unique opportunity for staff members to develop their leadership skills, mature their faith, and build a strong sense of community. Participating in this program requires a willingness to be vulnerable, trust others, and pursue a relationship with Christ while leading. Staff members are expected to have a strong commitment to Christ. A summer can develop your relationship with Christ through engaging in the community and program.

Roles for Summer Base Camp

Different Roles and areas Base Camp staff during the summer session

Kitchen Manager

The person oversees all meal planning, food purchasing and supervision of meal preparation for on-property meals. In addition to general kitchen maintenance (cleaning, upkeep, meeting Department of Health standards), they are also responsible for managing base camp staff personnel and any other work crew members in food preparation and cleanup, overseeing the Base Camp kitchen facility, overseeing the final celebration meal each session as well as other aspects of supporting the logistical needs of each La Vida trip (belaying at the ropes course or rock climbs, resupplies, etc.).

Trip Food Manager

This is the person in charge of all the nutritional planning, food purchasing, preparation, and packaging for all La Vida wilderness trips. They are also responsible for maintaining and updating the Microsoft Excel program designed to assist in the purchasing, planning and packaging of trip food. In addition to the above-mentioned duties, the trip food coordinator will assist the kitchen coordinator with the celebration meal and keep the trip food room organized and under Department of Health regulations. Other aspects of supporting the logistical needs of each La Vida trip may also be required.

Equipment Manager

The person with this role is responsible for maintaining and organizing all ADK program equipment and gear. This includes, but is not limited to, facilitating gear check-out/check-in each session, keeping a current inventory of all equipment, repairing/replacing broken gear, ordering, and organizing all participant gear orders, assisting in staff trainings regarding proper use/field maintenance and care of all equipment.

Office Manager

The person with this role is responsible for maintaining and organizing all ADK program equipment and gear. This includes, but is not limited to, facilitating gear check-out/check-in each session, keeping a current inventory of all equipment, repairing/replacing broken gear, ordering, and organizing all participant gear orders, assisting in staff trainings regarding proper use/field maintenance and care of all equipment.

Guest Relations Leadership

This person works with the ADK director to ensure all guests have a positive stay at the base camp property. Duties include prepping guest spaces, being available to answer questions from guests, cleaning guest spaces and representing the La Vida staff to all base camp property visitors.

Property Leadership

The property manager is responsible for maintaining the entire ADK Base Camp property (landscaping, buildings, grounds), and property equipment (including vans, trailers, lawnmowers, etc.). The property manager should have basic carpentry, plumbing, painting, and electrical skills. They will work together with the ADK director, equipment manager, and program coordinators to supervise and train the base camp staff.

Photographer

The person in this position ensures that all aspects of an ADK summer are documented well and represented on all of La Vida's social media sites. They work with the appropriate office staff to maintain consistent and meaningful posts.

Mountaineer

The mountaineer roles plans, facilitates and supervises all rock climbing experiences that are part of the summer La Vida expeditions, and serves as the "public face" of that aspect of the program, to establish personal connections with participants and staff and communicate the philosophical and spiritual basis of the climbing experience, as well as technical instructions.

Ropes Rescuer

The Rope Rescue roles plans, facilitates and supervises ropes course experiences that are part of the summer La Vida expeditions, and serves as a lead facilitator of that aspect of the program, to establish personal connections with participants and staff and communicate the philosophical and spiritual basis of the high ropes experience, as well as technical instructions.

Program Coordinator

This role assists the ADK director and assistant director with the training, supervising, mentoring, evaluating, and providing pastoral care to all the staff. This person is responsible for the successful implementation of all La Vida and spiritual curriculum, both onsite with La Vida staff, but also on trips. They help train all La Vida summer staff to ensure a consistent understanding of La Vida's curriculum.

They are also responsible for program logistics, securing necessary permits, maintaining good public relations with the DEC, managing logistics with the end-of-trip run and resupply, and supervising the ropes course. They also assist trip leaders with brainstorming and planning their trip's curriculum. Following trip, they will meet with each leadership team to debrief and process their trip experience. They work with the director to maintain program paperwork and the office, plan trips, manage staff, conduct program evaluations, and organize the final celebration.

These roles depend on the needs of the summer and are not a guarantee each year.