

# Guided Discoveries, Inc.

Position: Counselor – Astrocamp  
Location: Astrocamp, Idyllwild, CA  
Work Year: Summer  
Responsible to: Camp Director/Head Counselors

## **Minimum Qualifications:**

1. Must be at least 19 years of age and have completed one full year of college.
2. Past experience working with youth as a camp counselor, recreation leader or other similar experience.
3. Must have strong communication and human relation skills.
4. Certification in lifeguard training, first aid and CPR preferred but not required.
5. Able to accept supervision and guidance and assist in activities where needed.
6. Desire to live and work in a remote camp community.
7. Desire to work with children and ability to supervise them in related activities.
8. Good character, integrity, flexibility and adaptability.
9. Enthusiasm, sense of humor, patience and self-control.
10. Must be able to successfully perform the essential functions of this position.

## **General Responsibility:**

The counselor is responsible for the needs of the campers and to assist in the supervision and facilitating of the programs, camp rules and regulations.

## **Specific Responsibilities (Examples of Duties):**

1. Learn the names and likes/dislikes of your campers. Be knowledgeable about the needs of campers including special diets, eating habits, etc.
2. Assure the cleanliness of dorms and areas daily.
3. Counsel campers when necessary.
4. Create a cohesive bond within camper group.
5. Supervise and participate in recreation programs, keeping control of the group.
6. Adhere to safety rules and company policies and procedures for the well being of the campers and staff.
7. Assist groups with programs. This may include lifeguarding, conducting hikes or other recreational activities during all recreational periods and organizing and executing evening events.
8. Assist with meal supervision of food services, including set up and clean up. Sit with the campers during meals.
9. Assist with group arrival and departure procedures as assigned.
10. Be able to respond to emergency situations when necessary.
11. Assist with other departments when available.
12. Other duties as assigned by Camp Director or Head Counselors.

**Essential Functions:**

1. Must be able to effectively work with the campers, counselors, supervisors and other staff.
2. Ability to communicate any problems with staff or campers to Camp Director and Head Counselors.
3. Ability to assist campers and staff in the transition of camp life.
4. Good physical condition with mobility, visual and auditory skills to maintain control of 8-11 campers in a variety of environments (in the dorms, on hikes, in learning sessions, in the water, etc).
5. Ability to lift, carry and move heavy objects when necessary.
6. Good communication and organization skills are necessary to ensure a good experience for the staff and campers.
7. Ability to properly respond to emergency situations and enforce appropriate safety rules.

**Benefits:**

1. Housing
2. Full meals at the camp dining hall when the kitchen is in operation.
3. Workers compensation insurance and State disability insurance.
4. Ability to participate in camp programs.
5. Opportunity to live and work in a beautiful outdoor environment.

**Salary:**

First year counselors will receive \$250.00 per week, along with opportunities to make extra money with extra responsibilities.



26800 Saunders Meadow Drive Idyllwild, CA 925459 (951) 659-6062

## Would I Make a Good Astrocamp Counselor?

### Why are we showing this to you?

We want you to be happy  
We want you to be successful

Who wouldn't want to spend 8 weeks in picturesque and gorgeous Idyllwild? Unfortunately, being a summer camp counselor is not for everyone. There is an immense amount of responsibilities and tremendous amount of expectations placed on your shoulders. Being a counselor is both physically and mentally draining. Please thoroughly read these forms to see if you would be a valuable member of our Counseling team. If any of this makes you uncomfortable or are things you are unwilling to do, PLEASE DO NOT APPLY!

### An AstroCamp Counselor needs to be able to put their needs behind the children's and camps for the whole summer – 8 weeks!

Great Counselors enjoy that kids are EVERYWHERE while at camp.

You will eat with kids, share housing with kids, shower with kids (separate stalls), teach kids, plan events for kids...there is almost no escape. They will be so close to you that you will breathe their breath. That should be something that excites you, and not something that aggravates you. If personal time is something you need everyday, you are not going to be happy here.

#### ◆ Relationships at camp

If you find yourself with someone during the summer, it is difficult to find time for each other, the community, and the campers. There are more needs than can be satisfied, and someone usually gets hurt. You must agree to spend no more time with your new love (except on your day off or discrete time off) than you would with 30 other people at camp. Your character must stand up to the test. Campers always come first naturally.

### AstroCamp requires flexible people happily ready to chip in to do anything.

You may find yourself doing, or even teaching, an activity that you never dreamed you'd do. You may find yourself on an overnight camping trip sleeping on a plastic tarp being woken up by a herd of buffalo, performing on stage in front of 250 people dressed as a roll of singing toilet paper or being woken up at 2 AM by a 9 year old camper who vomited in his sleeping bag. Take the "we don't exactly know what it is, but you should come prepared to do it" clause seriously and with reflection. Whatever it is, you need to approach it with, "Alright, let's go get it done and have fun!" If you fake it, you won't be happy. This is a rare, but vital, quality to possess. If you don't have it, you will find your happiness severely challenged.

## Children and camp can be stressful – you need to be able to deal.

All of the following have happened in the last 3 summers. These are not typical or even common, but they did happen here. The vast majority of kids are just fine.

- ◆ Camper urinated on another campers pillow.
- ◆ Camper said she was the victim of physical abuse at home.
- ◆ Social cruelty – push kids out of group, teasing, and being verbally and non-verbally hostile.
- ◆ Teens tried to sneak off together to make out or something worse.
- ◆ Camper with learning disabilities, developmentally delayed
- ◆ Camper was homesick and crying for 5 days despite everyone's best efforts.
- ◆ A camper stole things from other campers in the cabin.
- ◆ Camper defecated on himself during a hike.
- ◆ Camper huffed aerosol deodorant by spraying it into a pillowcase.
- ◆ Camper brought contraband to camp; i.e. drugs & alcohol.
- ◆ Camper promoted racist ideas and racist literature.

## Community is appreciated, but not loved.

You'll experience a small, tight community, which is a very rare experience in today's world. The joys (shared values and goals, mutual influence, people belong, home) and troubles (rumor mills, personality issues, we're stuck with each other) that go along with that will be yours to treasure and endure.

Most people would like to think that they love strong, tight communities, but often the feeling is one of appreciation not love. Just a few of the realities of community are:

- ◆ On days off, everyone usually does things together, or in small groups. No one is left out – a community ethos. Sometimes this requires great organization, compromise, and planning, which must arise from the staff.
- ◆ When the staff is spread thin due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, the community needs more than your already heroic contribution.
- ◆ Undoubtedly, you will find people you appreciate and appreciate less, but you must be loving to both. Time must be spent with the whole group, and not a sub-group. That is a powerful human tendency to resist, but the health community requires it. For the non-community minded, this is torture. Yes, it will torture you.
- ◆ Dorm areas and the staff lounge are the main shared spaces. It is as filthy or clean as everyone makes it. It is nice for it to be clean, and that requires constant diligent effort on everyone's part. When you see a mess you didn't create, clean it anyway.
- ◆ There are washer and dryers for everyone. That means that the community must work on this task together. When clothes are wet and need to be transferred to the drier, the next person who wants to wash does it. If you want the drier and clothes are in it, you fold the clothes, which are not yours, and then put your clothes in.
- ◆ Emotional support is everyone's responsibility. When this is not done, the community suffers.
- ◆ In day-to-day camp life, when you see that other people need a hand, you are the person to help them, because you noticed. We all do many jobs, and we help each other out.

## Characteristics of stellar staff members

- Have lived away from home before.
- Have worked with children a lot.
- Fighting grudges, angry words, talking behind other people's backs, gossip...all not your style

- People describe you as someone who is warm, a people person.
- You are upbeat. You brighten people's day. You find the humor, even when it is hard to find, and you laugh at yourself.
- You are inclined toward the service of others, and you have examples to back up your intentions.
- Wake up everyday with the thought "What can I do today to make the campers feel special?"
- Go to sleep thinking "What can I do tomorrow to make the campers feel even more special?"
- Creative and outside-the-box thinker and problem solver
- Need to be ready to covered in sand, dirt, covered from head-to-toe in paint and sing loudly and by yourself – even if you sing really poorly.
- Instead of children sapping your energy, they feed it. The more time you are with kids, the happier and more energetic you feel. They are always excited to devote their time to children; it's why they are at camp.
- Energy level is proven working 16-18 hour days, for six days in a row, for 10+ weeks. Sprinters crash and burn at camp, and find themselves exhausted for the rest of camp, and unhappy. You can be happy running a marathon.

**Reflect on these writings. You want to live, work and play in a place where you will be happy and successful.**



## Counselor FAQs

### 1. Can I make/receive phone calls?

Yes. You may make calls from the office or staff lounge or use your cell phone. We ask that counselors DO NOT make phone calls during the workday or when you are in charge of campers. Your cell phone will work anywhere on campus.

You may also receive EMERGENCY (or EXTREMELY important) calls on our business line; the number is (951) 659-6062. Do not give this number out to friends!

### 2. Do I have access to the Internet?

AstroCamp has wireless internet. You are more than welcome to bring your laptop computer. We ask that you not use the internet in the dorms or in view of campers. After hours it's common to use the staff lounge when you are not in charge of campers. We also ask that you never share your computer with your campers – they are to be completely unplugged while they are at AstroCamp.

There are also multiple staff computers with Internet access in the staff lounge. We ask that you try to limit your usage to 10 minutes or less on a camp computer.

### 3. Are there laundry facilities?

Yes. There are free laundry facilities on campus. You will have to supply your own detergent, which can be purchased in town during our time off.

### 4. How isolated is the camp? Is there somewhere near by where I can buy toiletries, personal items, etc?

Our campus is located in a small mountain town. In Idyllwild there are grocery and drug stores where essentials can be purchased. Also, counselors go the nearest big cities (Hemet, Redlands, LA) during their time off and can pick up other essential items if needed.

### 5. Can I receive and send mail regularly?

Yes. We make a "mail run" to town Monday-Saturday to pick-up and send mail, UPS, etc.

Our address for U.S. MAIL is:

Your Name  
c/o AstroCamp  
P.O. Box 3399  
Idyllwild, CA 92549

Our address for U.P.S. and FED-EX is:

Your Name  
c/o AstroCamp  
26800 Saunders Meadow Rd  
Idyllwild, CA 92549

## **6. What is the weather typically like?**

AstroCamp's summer days can fluctuate from warm to hot. Last year we were fortunate to not have a single day above 90 degrees. The nights can get chilly (you're over 6,000 feet in elevation) with lows in the 50s. If you volunteer to go on a overnight camping trip, temperatures can be in the 40s. Bring clothing ranging from shorts to pants to hoodies.

## **7. Are there camp visitor days?**

No there are not.

## **8. What's the best time for me to exercise?**

Before 7 AM – when you wake up your campers – is the best or at night after they're asleep.

## **9. How much training will I receive? What will I be trained in?**

Training week consists of setting up the camp, learning the in's and out's of children aged 8-17, how to best protect them and the legal thing surrounding working with them, learning the daily AstroCamp routine (including activities and evening events, etc.), and bonding with other staff members.

## **10. Do I have to be Lifeguard, First Aid or CPR certified?**

No, it is not a necessity. A Lifeguarding certification, First Aid and CPR are great tools to have in your back pocket, but as a counselor, it is not necessary. All of our instructors are lifeguards and first aid/CPR certified.

## **11. Is there a dress code?**

Yes and no. We do not require that you wear a uniform, but we ask that you dress modestly and appropriately and please practice good cleanliness and person hygiene. What modestly means is no thong bikinis, no Speedos; and please limit the use of low-rise pants, short-shorts, midriff baring or low cut t-shirts. Please keep in mind they're around teenagers all summer so please dress modestly not to draw an undue attention to your body. Campers will push the limits, but we as the role models should set a modest tone. When we say appropriately, we mean that you are not to wear any clothing advertising an alcoholic beverage, tobacco, drug usage, or profane slogan. Please use your judgment.

Also, a quick note, no tank tops in any food service areas, armpit hairs in the salad bar is not up to code with health standards!