



AmeriCorps
Colorado

**2021-22 Environmental Education Corps
Odyssey School of Denver Forest School and Travel Learning Adventure Program
Position Description**

Forest School and Play Based Ecological Literacy Facilitator and Action Researcher

Program Overview: Led by the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE), the Environmental Education Corps (eeCorps) AmeriCorps Program places AmeriCorps members at organizations throughout Colorado to focus on increasing environmental literacy for PreK-12 students and implementing the goals outlined in the Colorado Environmental Education Plan. eeCorps works directly with teachers, schools, and environmental education providers to support them in expanding reach and increasing impact of EE programming, while providing access to equitable learning experiences for all PreK-12 students. eeCorps members provide direct service to improve outcomes in Environmental Stewardship and Education. AmeriCorps provides opportunities to improve lives and foster civic engagement all across the country.

This position will be located at Odyssey School of Denver, which is located at 6550 E. 21st Ave. Denver, CO 80207. The Odyssey School of Denver is a diverse, K-8 Expeditionary Learning (EL) public charter school. We understand that adventurous learning provides opportunities for leadership and collaboration as groups of students and adults face challenges together. We do this through outdoor experiences with a Forest School Ethos that embrace elements of uncertainty, agency, challenge and mastery along with a focus on Crew, Odyssey Habits of a Learner, and a Growth Mindset. It is often during outdoor adventure experiences (day and extended) and Forest School sessions that students and adults discover they can do more than they thought was possible and find aspects of themselves that they didn't know were there.

Service Position Summary: The AmeriCorps Member will co-facilitate Forest School Sessions and Overnight Travel Learning Trips through play based ecological literacy experiences, Social and Emotional curriculum, individual and group discussions on Mental Health as well as co-facilitating a Restorative Justice culture through community building and intervention circles. This position will be carried out in collaboration with the Director of Culture and Adventure, Classroom Teachers as well as Master of Social Work Interns through weekly school-wide Forest School experiences, some extended overnight travel learning trips for grades K-4 and a unique extended overnight travel learning program for grades 5-8. The experiences will illicit deep knowledge of self and others (human and non-human) through play based ecological literacy and Social and Emotional skills that emphasize individual and group decision making in situations that have high levels of uncertainty and agency in the context of authentic real world experiences that allow for mastery of skills and deep knowledge through revisions and mistakes on a student led timeline.

Essential Functions (Primary Responsibilities): eeCorps members engage with their Host Site organizations to develop, implement, and enhance programs, projects, and activities that will create progress towards eeCorps' and Odyssey School of Denver's goals. These duties include:

- Responsible for facilitating weekly Forest School Sessions for grades K-8 which includes backwards planning, seasonal curriculum mapping, and data collection.
- Responsible for leading single and multi-day adventurous learning extended trips with grade levels K-8 and implement operating procedures and educational philosophy of the school on all travel learning trips.
- Ensure that all adventure gear is maintained, used properly, and repaired as needed.
- Coordination of permitting, campsite reservations, and programmatic scheduling.
- Foster a safe, respectful and orderly community by communicating clear expectations for students' conduct and utilizing practices that encourage students to take responsibility for their own actions and learning.
- Responsible for risk management and teaching technical skills for the duration of the travel learning trips including but not limited to climbing, team-building activities, campcraft and environmental education hiking. Other technical activities may include class I-III rafting, canyoneering, mountain biking, road biking, and kayaking.
- Participate in a strong professional culture that is sustained via collective leadership and action.
- Observe and support the Odyssey staff community courtesies and Habits of a Learner.
- Collaborate with Director of Culture and Adventure to schedule, plan, and support facilitation of Travel Learning Program, as well as weekly Forest School Sessions throughout the year, and coordinate parent chaperones and Forest School Volunteers.
- Attend and participate in all Staff Council and professional development meetings. Avoid scheduling conferences, medical appointments, etc. during these times.
- Be prompt for school, meeting and supervision responsibilities.
- Track progress and collect evaluation data for the program's performance measures
- Attend all eeCorps AmeriCorps trainings and orientations
- Complete all eeCorps required National Days of Service projects
- Complete and submit all necessary eeCorps paperwork and reports by predetermined deadlines
- Some local travel required in the Denver Metro area

Marginal Functions (Secondary Responsibilities): Additional tasks include:

- Collecting Qualitative Data (Photos, Videos, Interviews) on the following topics:
 - De-Colonizing Nature Play and Learning. How can we increase participation and access to nature based learning with historically marginalized communities?
 - Documenting effects of nature play and outdoor learning on academic progress.
 - Experimenting with different types of anecdotal assessment.
- Comparing, combining, and analyzing qualitative data from The Play Based Ecological Literacy and Forest School Program with Quantitative Academic Achievement Data from the classroom.
- Collaborate on Seasonal Curriculum Mapping using The Coyote's Guide to Nature Mentoring to Integrate with EL Education Curriculum Modules and Ecological Literacy Guidelines
- Learn about and connect with family and community funds of knowledge to incorporate into the seasonal curriculum mapping.
- Contribute to a school-wide literature review of research on Outdoor and Movement Based Learning and share findings with colleagues through staff professional development.

Physical, Emotional, and Intellectual Demands:

- Ability to work in outdoor settings in various weather conditions overnight for up to 5 nights in various elevations and environments and/or for up to 9 hours in a day.
- Ability to ride a bike 2 miles to a Forest School Site
- Able to carry 20% of your body weight for back packing trips and to lift 40% of your body weight for gear loading and un-loading.
- Commitment to learning more about and practicing anti-racist and anti-oppression actions and mindsets that help achieve equity in education
- The passion to form productive relationships with a diverse group of students, staff and families.
- A commitment to land based acknowledgments that honor history of indigenous people and the present and past impacts of settler-colonial culture.

Qualifications:

- Forest School Level 3 Certificate preferred (or will be provided).
- Minimum 3 years' experience in adventure/outdoor education preferred.
- Wilderness First Aid/CPR or higher certification from a reputable source preferred (or will be provided).
- Experience leading youth on multi-day wilderness trips.
- Current AMGA SPI, PCIA top rope or Equivalent with experience leading youth climbing.
- Demonstrated excellence in risk management with a passion for adventure education
- Good computer and/or online information system and organizational skills.
- Ethic of national and community service and a strong desire to create positive change
- High School Diploma or GED required, college graduate preferred
- Ability to pass criminal history checks, reference checks, and MVR check
- Reliable transportation and proof of auto insurance
- U.S. Citizenship or lawful permanent resident status required

Term of Service: This is a full-time national and community service position requiring a minimum of 1,700 hours during the year (approximately 40 hours/week.) The position begins August 23, 2021 and ends July 29, 2022. Flexible hours are required, including occasional evening and weekend commitments. Member must serve on Days of Service that take place on certain national holidays throughout the year.

Training and Support Provided: eeCorps members receive significant training and experience in community engagement, project implementation, leadership, diverse populations, and more. Up to 20% of total hours served may be spent in applicable approved training and professional development.

Some program specific trainings for this position with the Odyssey School of Denver may include individual and group professional development with an EL Education School Designer (<https://eleducation.org/what-we-offer/school-design/overview>) and specific training leading to a Level 3 Forest School Certificate (<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/18LCAvVWgIYpwJ2NnLbXRNPG5x2l0ldWx5eUnbBGjrk/edit?usp=sharing>).

Members will be supervised and supported by Ryan Pleune, Director of Culture and Adventure, as well as by Erin Dreps, eeCorps Program Director. The 2021-22 cohort of eeCorps members serving throughout the region will act as additional resources and support for each other.

Location and Service Conditions: This position is based at Odyssey School of Denver, which is located at 6550 E. 21st Ave. Denver, CO 80207 as well as offsite locations for the Forest School and Travel Learning Program.

Benefits: Full Time eeCorps members receive:

- A bimonthly living allowance of \$695.66. Taxes are deducted and the living allowance is distributed twice per month by direct deposit to the member's bank account.
- Health insurance
- Child care assistance
- An education award of \$6,345 upon successful completion of term of service. It is possible to defer student loans while serving as an AmeriCorps member.
- Mileage reimbursement for travel to required trainings, days of service, and program sites
- Non-tangible benefits including extensive training, valuable experience, networking, and the opportunity to serve the local community in a crucial area of need.
- Ability to participate in regional EE leadership councils; option to obtain CAEE's nationally-recognized Professional Environmental Educator Certification.

Diversity and Equal Opportunity: The Odyssey School of Denver does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, hair/hairstyle (CROWN Act) in administration of its hiring policies.

The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) recognizes the value of diversity and inclusiveness to advance environmental education. CAEE defines diversity in its broadest sense and welcomes everyone to the field of environmental education and the Alliance, including but not limited to people of all races, ethnicities, genders, gender expressions, sexual orientations, abilities, ages, national origins, socioeconomic status, religious affiliations, languages, and heritages.

If you are interested in applying to this position, please send your resume and a short cover letter outlining your interest in the program and commitment to national service to Erin Dreps, AmeriCorps Program Coordinator, at americorps@caee.org. Please include "AmeriCorps Odyssey School of Denver Forest School and Adventurous Learning Application" in the subject line. Please also attach a list of three (3) references, and a diversity and inclusion statement that is no longer than one page in length.