



**2021-22 Environmental Education Corps  
Thorne Nature Experience Position Description**

## **Thorne Nature Preschool Assistant Teacher**

**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 EE 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.

**About Thorne Nature Experience:** This position will be based at Thorne Nature Experience. Thorne is a non-profit organization that is committed to building Earth stewardship by connecting youth to nature through joyful, hands-on, place-based environmental education experiences. Thorne believes in ensuring access for all youth to discovery, exploration, and a connection to the natural world. Founded in 1954, Thorne has a rich history and has reached more than 250,000 children and adults through its four programs: In-School, Summer Camp, Preschool and Field Trip.

**Service Position Summary:** The eeCorps member will collaborate with teachers to support the growth and well-being of the children in the preschool program through daily mentorship and program support.

**Essential Functions (Primary Responsibilities):** The eeCorps member will engage with Thorne to develop, implement, and enhance programs, projects, and activities that will create progress towards eeCorps and Thorne's goals. These duties include:

- Support one Preschool group (up to 10 children) and Lead Teacher during the preschool program (9am-4:30 pm), 5 days per week (M-F)
- Assist Preschool Team with the development and implementation of daily practices and routines, as well as seasonal, place-based, emergent curriculum that promotes early childhood development and deep nature connection
- Participate in family events and parent education programs
- Ensure the indoor and outdoor learning environments are in good condition to support safe, engaging, rich in experience, and positive child development
- Track progress and collect evaluation data for the eeCorps 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 and out of town travel required throughout Boulder County

**Marginal Functions (Secondary Responsibilities):** Additional tasks include:

- Attend Thorne staff and educational meetings, trainings, and professional development as schedule permits
- Assist in the development and implementation of virtual programming to support learning if stay at home orders close the school

**Physical, Emotional, and intellectual Demands:**

- This position requires the ability to work outside in various weather conditions.
- The member is frequently required to walk, stand, and sit for extended periods of time and occasionally climb or balance; and stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl.
- The member must frequently lift and/or move up to 30 pounds, while occasionally lifting and/or moving up to 50 pounds.
- Patience is required, as the member will be serving with young children.

**Desired Qualifications:**

- Experience working with children in the past (nannying, volunteering, etc.) and a desire to learn more about early childhood development in a nature-based setting
- Bilingual (Spanish and English) preferred and/or People of Color are encouraged to apply
- Strong communication skills with parents, staff, and children
- Strong decision-making skills to respond to risk management, emergencies, or difficult situations
- Ability and desire to support excellent place-based, child-centered, emergent curriculum
- 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 check (required)
- Reliable transportation & proof of auto insurance
- Reliable gear for variable weather conditions including freezing temperatures
- U.S. Citizenship or lawful permanent resident status required

**Term of Service - Time Commitment:** This is a Full-time Time (FT) national and community service position requiring, at a minimum, a total of 1,700 hours during the year (approximately 37-40 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. Members will be supervised and supported by Erin Saunders, Education Programs Director at Thorne Nature Experience, as well as by Erin Dreps, eeCorps Program Coordinator. The 2020-21 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 Thorne Nature Preschool (420 Courtney Way, Lafayette, CO 80026) and will involve service at other locations in Boulder County. Position is direct

service, and will involve frequent days of service in different environments (outdoors and/or in a school and/or community building.)

**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 for full-time members, if eligible
- Child care assistance for full-time members, if eligible
- 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 and days of service
- Option to obtain CAEE's nationally-recognized Professional Environmental Educator Certification; ability to participate in regional EE leadership councils
- Non-tangible benefits including extensive training, valuable experience, networking, and the opportunity to serve the local community in a crucial area of need.

**Diversity and Equal Opportunity:**

Thorne Nature Experience is an equal opportunity organization. Thorne Nature Experience does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, age, national origin (ancestry), physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender variance or expression, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. This Anti-Discrimination Policy applies to, but is not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers, selection of Board Members, selection of vendors, and provision of services.

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, eeCorps Program Coordinator, at [americorps@caee.org](mailto:americorps@caee.org). Please include "AmeriCorps Thorne Nature Preschool Assistant 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. Combine all materials into a single PDF prior to submitting.