



AmeriCorps



The Nature Connection
A GENERATION WILD COMMUNITY

**2022 Environmental Education Corps
The Nature Connection Position Description**

Climbing & Programs Outdoor Educator

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.

The Member will serve with The Nature Connection (TNC), whose mission is to eliminate the barriers to getting outside by providing fun, active, and educational outdoor experiences for youth and families in our community. The Nature Connection is a Delta County School District initiative, offering school-year and summer programs, youth pathways into outdoor careers, and place developments to get kids outside in the community. Some of the specific programs offered include cross country skiing for students on the Grand Mesa National Forest and mountain bike instruction for youth across the Western Slope.

Service Position Summary: This is a half-time eeCorps position that will serve from January-July 2022. With the support of eeCorps members, The Nature Connection will launch a new program that aims to help students build positive relationships, self-confidence and teamwork through rock climbing. During the summer, members will plan and organize community climbing nights and serve as the rock climbing lead for summer camps and adventure programs hosted by The Nature Connection. eeCorps members will additionally help facilitate other outdoor programs at The Nature Connection including gear lending aimed to empower local teachers with the opportunity to take their students outside, core programs such as Learn to Bike and Skis for Kids, as well as family programs.

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

- (Climbing Program): Assist TNC staff in developing the curriculum for and implementation of the Climbing program for 7th and 8th graders in partnership with school district teachers.

- Continue the implementation of an outdoor gear lending program for local teachers and community groups.
- Provide logistical support for teacher training including development, set-up, take down, and field-based professional development activities.
- Lead in-class activities and field-based programs on camping/outdoor gear use, group dynamics in outdoor situations, trip planning, and logistics support as needed.
- Collaborate with TNC staff to develop outdoor and environmental education activities for youth and family programs that meet the needs of participants from a diverse student population.
- Provide environmental education, outdoor skills instruction, and overall supervision for a number of TNC field trips, school year programs, community days and summer camps.
- Provide direct service to preK-12 students, teachers, and families
- Provide direct program support during TNC summer camps and overnight backpacking trips
- Track progress and collect evaluation data for the program's performance measures
- Attend all eeCorps AmeriCorps trainings and orientations
- Complete all eeCorps National Days of Service projects, as required
- Complete and submit all necessary eeCorps paperwork and reports by predetermined deadlines
- Some local and out of town travel required across Delta County

Marginal Functions (Secondary Responsibilities): Additional tasks include:

- Maintain, repair, and organize outdoor gear including climbing gear, cross country skis, bikes, paddling equipment, and camping gear used in teacher lending, school programs, and community events
- Transport gear to programs using TNC provided vehicles which include 10-15 ft. trailers and SUVs (current driver's license and clean driving record is mandatory)
- Assist in service-learning projects with teachers and students including trail construction and outdoor classroom maintenance
- Attend TNC-supported field trips and special events
- Provide direct supervision and instruction for youth during outdoor programming
- Attend TNC-sponsored community lending events and provide gear check out, basic outdoor skills instruction, and set-up/take down.

Physical, Emotional, and Intellectual Demands:

- Extended time outdoors in various weather conditions in all four seasons
- Strenuous physical activity with up to 30 lbs of supplies transported short distances
- Enthusiasm for working with students from diverse backgrounds
- Ability to learn and perform basic climbing wall maintenance
- Ability to safely supervise participants in remote wilderness settings without reliable cell phone coverage
- Willingness to self-reflect, change and adapt strategies in order to best support diverse populations of school age children

Qualifications:

- Experience bouldering or rock climbing preferred, not required. Training will be provided.
- Experience backpacking and wilderness camping
- Basic familiarity with recreational rock climbing/bouldering and willingness to learn how to safely instruct participants in climbing wall safety
- Current CPR-first aid certification required or will be provided; Wilderness First Aid or Wilderness First Responder preferred

- Ability to drive a vehicle off-road, in snow/inclement weather
- Experience driving a loaded utility trailer preferred
- 2 or more years' experience working with youth in an educational setting
- Willingness to expand knowledge and expertise in outdoor recreation and program management
- Ethic of national and community service and a strong desire to create positive change
- Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing; computer literate
- High School Diploma or GED required, college graduate preferred
- Ability to pass the National Service Criminal History Check
- Reliable transportation, proof of auto insurance, and ability to pass motor-vehicle background check
- U.S. Citizenship or lawful permanent resident status required
- Residents of rural communities in Colorado are encouraged to apply

Term of Service: This is a half-time national and community service position requiring a minimum of 900 hours during the term of service (approximately 35 hours/week.) The position begins January 4, 2022 and ends July 29, 2022. Flexible hours are required, including occasional evening and weekend commitments. Member may be required to 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 Priscilla Williams, Director of Operations at The Nature Connection as well as by Erin Dreps, eeCorps Program Coordinator. 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 The Nature Connection headquarters at 397 Miners Way, Hotchkiss, CO 81419, and will involve service at other locations (indoor and/or outdoor) around Delta County and Olathe.

Benefits: Half-Time eeCorps members receive:

- Possible housing assistance and/or housing stipend
- A living allowance of \$560.71 distributed twice per month up to a maximum of \$7,850. Taxes are deducted and the living allowance is distributed twice per month by direct deposit to the member's bank account.
- An education award of \$3,172.50 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.
- A personal computer to use in completing service-related tasks during their term of service

Diversity and Equal Opportunity:

The Nature Connection believes that all people in our community, regardless of race, background, socioeconomic status, and family circumstances should be provided with opportunities to experience our local outdoor opportunities and develop a connection to the natural world.

DCSD Anti-Discrimination Statement: The Delta County School District does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation (which includes transgender), genetic information, conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth, disability or need for special education services in admissions, access to, treatment, or employment in educational programs or activities which it operates.

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 TNC [Climbing] 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.