

# Summer Leadership Project (SLP)

## Counselor Position 2024

June 10th to July 26th (7 weeks)



### Mission Statement

**Vida Verde is a nonprofit that promotes educational equity by providing free, overnight, environmental learning experiences for students who don't otherwise get the opportunity.**

### About the Org

Vida Verde has a long history of achieving remarkable results through its mission-driven organization and high-quality programs delivered at little to no cost. We are a small, tightly-knit, exciting organization. Our jobs are the BEST, and so are the people who work here!

With equity as a cornerstone of Vida Verde's mission, our entire staff intentionally and actively engages in Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) work. We understand and agree that this work is critical in helping young people access high-quality, culturally relevant and inclusive nature education experiences; experiences that will translate into positive outcomes in their traditional classrooms.

(read our full JEDI statement below)

### The Counselor Position

The SLP Counselor position is great for past SLP participants who are at least 18 years old and looking to gain experience leading bay area youth through positive, formative experiences. It is not a requirement to have participated in the program before. SLP Counselors mentor, care for, and live with participants as role models ensuring everyone's physical and emotional well being. Counselors strive to raise self-esteem and foster the group dynamic by actively participating in all activities, including: day and night walks, meal prep, campfires, electives, kitchen cleaning, farm chores, group discussions, and more. You will thrive as a counselor if you have excellent communication skills, are confident speaking in a group, a desire to learn and be challenged, and want to work hard towards educational equity.

### Compensation

- 1st year pay is \$1500 for the entire 6 weeks of programming PLUS housing
- Seven days of professional training, and leadership mentoring throughout the program
- Large canvas tent accommodations throughout the program, 3 miles from the ocean/beach
- Access to community hot tub, trail, creek, excess veggies from garden, and ample days off
- 3 organic meals per day during program weeks

## **Responsibilities include**

- Participate in everything! (redwood hike, beach/tide pool exploration, goat milking and farm experience, night hike, and more.)
- Ensure participants' physical and mental safety.
- Sleep in a tent close to participants.
- Facilitate safe and positive interactions between participants.
- Collaborate with the facilitator team to develop an emotionally safe and supportive learning environment.
- Be committed to the Vida Verde mission and vision; embody the Vida Verde values at work.
- Participate in meal prep and cooking with participants.
- Assist with games, songs, and storytelling activities.
- Facilitate small group journaling/sharing activities with teens

### Physical Requirements

- Work outside in varying weather conditions
- 90%+ work time on feet. Walk up to 2 miles in a day.
- Long workdays during program when participants are here (~10-12hr workdays)

## **Location:**

Vida Verde's home site is located at 3540 La Honda Road, San Gregorio, CA 94074. This is a 25-acre property along San Gregorio Creek, 1 hour from San Francisco and 45 minutes from Santa Cruz. The nearest town is Half Moon Bay, 15 miles away.

## **Application Procedure/Timeline:**

Send resume, letter of interest, and 3 references (personal or professional) by **email only ASAP** to Devin Peyton and Paula Alves  
[devin@Vveducation.org](mailto:devin@Vveducation.org), [paula@Vveducation.org](mailto:paula@Vveducation.org)

**Thinking about applying but not sure if you're ready? Give us a call or email to get some questions answered!**

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## **Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (JEDI) Statement**

### **We Acknowledge That**

Everything is not okay.

We live in a world and society with personal, structural, and institutional injustice based on race, gender, sexual orientation, and other differences. This is affecting the lives of the Vida Verde students and the Vida Verde community in myriad profound ways.

## **We See Our Role As**

We have a deep commitment to examining, understanding, and working intentionally, every day, and for the long run to do our small part in dismantling the pieces of institutional injustice that we are able to. Vida Verde is one of the few outdoor education organizations that is focused on educational equity, and is dedicated to engaging Bay Area youth from low income families and communities who do not have free access to outdoor education experiences. Even though equity is a cornerstone of Vida Verde's mission, intentionally and actively engaging in Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) work more holistically will only continue to support these young people in accessing quality culturally relevant and inclusive nature education experiences that translate to positive outcomes in their traditional classrooms.

## **Why?**

- Culturally relevant outdoor programs better engage students, and support them in developing necessary critical thinking skills, improving their health and wellness, and more meaningfully connecting them to the land and food, and often fostering a passion and interest in the outdoors.
- The future of the environment is tethered to connecting the diverse youth of today to the outdoors.
- Research shows diversity in staff, an inclusive workplace culture, and culturally responsive practices lead to both better experiences and outcomes for students, and better attraction and retention of talented staff.
- Vida Verde aspires to serve as a blueprint/model for other values-aligned organizations (especially outdoor education organizations) who are looking for an example north star in JEDI work.

## **Our Vision:**

We envision a future where all people have access to quality experiences in the outdoors, which have the power to profoundly impact hearts, minds and bodies.

## **Our Commitments:**

- To steadfastly work toward our mission to promote educational equity by providing culturally relevant, free, overnight, environmental learning experiences for students who don't otherwise get the opportunity.
- Through culturally relevant programming, work to ensure Vida Verde students view nature as a place FOR them; a place they have a fundamental right to access, and a place that may influence them as leaders to vote, act and spend with the environment in mind.
- To build and grow a more racially diverse staff and board, and foster an inclusive culture within Vida Verde where all staff, donors and volunteers feel they are valued and belong.
- To serve as a blueprint/model for other values-aligned organizations (especially outdoor education organizations) who are looking for an example in JEDI work.

### **Values of Vida Verde**

#### **The Mission First**

We are a mission-centric organization. We make every decision with the kids' benefit and the mission as our guide. We specifically tailor the program to meet the unique needs of the kids we serve, with deep respect for students and their communities.

#### **Persistent Improvement and Our Best Practices**

We are driven to continually improve and reach the highest standards across the organization for the benefit of the kids we serve. From program quality to healthy communication, from strategic goal setting to prioritization: we are detail-oriented, reflective, and strive to serve as a model. We balance our best practices and lessons from our history with innovation and inspiration for improvement.

#### **The Environment and Natural Resources**

We practice responsible and long-term thinking regarding land stewardship facility management, building, and design. Using resources wisely, we value the earth's resources over convenience and cost, and share that value with the greater community.

#### **Relationships and Community**

People are at the heart of this work. We strive to create long-lasting relationships with our staff, supporters, students, and teachers. We believe that by honoring and including diverse perspectives, our organization is stronger and more sustainable. We believe in love, not hate. We help different people see each other and all that we share in common, as well as what we can learn from each other.

#### **Making It Happen**

We overcome outrageous obstacles and successfully achieve ambitious goals by using a combination of resourcefulness, a positive mindset, and our team's diverse set of skills and experiences, without compromising our work/life balance and well-being. We know that beliefs lead to actions, which lead to results. We "make it happen" even when circumstances would lead most to think progress impossible.