

# A2I- Aspire To Inspire Leadership Development Program



Camp Concepts believes leadership is influence. We can influence best when true elements of personal connection and trust are established. We also strongly believe that leaders are not born but rather they are developed. Using our more than 30+ years of education and camp experience, our A2I leadership development program helps young people build a leadership experience resume that will not only serve them well each summer, but also as they consider college and their career beyond.

Leadership training takes time and energy, as well as a positive attitude from the trainee. This training program is a mentor-based experience where positive leadership skills are modeled by experienced leaders. We view this training program as a 2-summer commitment on our part to help young leaders gain initial exposure and entry-level experience in working with children at camp. A 3rd summer (as an Associate Counselor) may be added at the discretion of Camp Concepts.

## Stage 1

The first stage of training begins as a Counselors-In-Training (CIT) at age 14 or 15. This is an important stage because it is typically the first 'work' experience for young people. During this summer they learn the camp work culture, view techniques of leadership demonstrated by more experienced leaders, and understand what it means to be accountable for their job performance while learning the value and importance of peer/colleague accountability. Although this is a volunteer summer, CITs typically earn some tip money but are also given certification for completing 260 hours of community service for serving in our 8-week summer season. A CIT is expected to fulfill at least 6 of the available 9 weeks of summer.

## Stage 2

The following year, (providing the camp is satisfied with leadership progress) the emerging leader will matriculate up to the role of Junior Counselor (JC) at age 15 or 16. With increased experience comes increased responsibility and leadership development working with children. The role of JC builds on their leadership self-confidence while adding a valuable summer of additional leadership experience. A JC receives a summer leadership stipend of \$1,300 (for 8 weeks of summer). They also receive an additional certificate of completion of 200 community service hours. A JC is expected to fulfill at least 7 of the 9 weeks of summer.

## Stage 3

On some occasions, after successfully completing the JC summer, the leader may be elevated to the role as lead or co-counselor. Otherwise, the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage is that of Associate Counselor (AC). In this capacity, the leader will be given lead responsibilities on a substitute basis when a lead counselor is out of work. They continue to receive leadership guidance and mentorship from experienced camp and education professionals. Those completing this 3<sup>rd</sup> summer receive a personalized written leadership recommendation. This has proven valuable to those seeking to enter college or university or who want to find jobs working with children. In addition, the 3-summer leadership tenure looks very good on future job applications. An AC will earn a \$1,600 summer stipend (for 8 weeks) and can also receive a certificate for completing 150 hours of community service to the camp. An AC is expected to fulfill 7 of the 9 weeks of summer.

## The Result

Leadership growth and development take time but are best cultivated within a supportive and professional work environment. These leadership skills learned will translate well into any future endeavors or phases of life. We look forward to working with each young leader to help develop them into stronger, more confident leaders of tomorrow.