Position Description: Basecamp Cook/Educator

About Cottonwood Gulch Expeditions

Our mission is to create transformative outdoor experiences that foster personal growth, build community, and inspire a lifelong connection to the natural world. We have been leading outdoor expeditions since 1926 and currently work with hundreds of students (or "trekkers," as we call them) each year. We use the outdoors as our classroom to explore science, culture, history, art, and adventure in New Mexico and surrounding states, all with the goal of inspiring personal growth and a strong community. We steward an active alumni base, who represent multi-generational connections to CGE.

About This Position

The Resident **Basecamp Cook/Educator** team assists other staff members in providing exceptional outdoor education to our summer trekkers by maintaining a functioning Basecamp. During the summer, we run multi-week expeditions for 9-18 year olds. This is a full-time, 24/7 residential position throughout the summer. Resident **Basecamp Cook/Educators** are part of our Basecamp team that provides nourishment through food and educational outdoor programming. Cooks assist our Food Coordinator in designing menus, preparing food, and keeping the kitchen clean. Cooks' schedules differ from everyone else at Basecamp, in that they are expected to be up before bells to prepare breakfast, and are often cooking during daily activities, therefore evening activities (games/campfires) are optional. However, cooks should plan to find ways to involve trekkers as part of their regular routine.

Resident Basecamp Cooks/Educators will also assist our Basecamp team that provides behind the scenes support to keep our 550-acre Basecamp running smoothly. Daily duties can differ depending on need, and typically involve hands-on labor that is expected to be completed autonomously. This team should involve and teach trekkers whenever possible.

Reports To: Food Coordinator

Job Duties

Responsibilities specific to this roles:

- Lead topic specific education sessions, "Cottonwoods," at our Basecamp at least twice weekly throughout the summer to trekkers.
- Resident **Basecamp Cook/Educator** will:
  - Work as a team to design a menu with southwest flair that considers relevant

dietary restrictions and time and budgetary restraints.
    - Cook food in a commercial kitchen for 30-150 people.
    - Use systems to inventory, store, manage leftovers, with food handlers guidelines.
    - Assist in ordering/sourcing food from a variety of vendors.
    - Educate, impart new ideas, and inspire trekkers to learn to cook.
    - Assist in preparing/cooking/dehydrating meals for backcountry settings.
    - Follow all Food Handlers protocols and CGE food safety guidelines and specifications.
- Resident **Basecamp Cook/Educator** may be asked to assist with:
    - Plan and execute effective outdoor programming in the field and at CGE's Basecamp. Actively seek out and participate in learning opportunities.
    - Provide leadership and support to outdoor education expeditions across the American Southwest, including in frontcountry and backcountry settings and at CGE's Basecamp.
    - Manage risk in line with CGE's practices and policies; provide medical care within trained scope of practice.
    - Participate in the maintenance and repair of our gear.
    - Teach Leave No Trace principles and environmental ethics to groups of youth.
    - Drive large vehicles (pickup trucks, 15-passenger vans) on a variety of roads.
    - Collaborate to create a positive environment conducive to learning, growth, and fun.
    - Maintain professional relationships with CGE partners & community members including land managers.
    - Work with Program Director to order supplies and manage a budget.
    - Facilitate hands-on exploration for small groups of trekkers.
    - Collaborate with other specialists and staff to create engaging learning projects for trekkers.
    - Support Basecamp culture by leading chores, providing supervision during "down times," and fully participating in planning and executing each day.

Required Qualifications

- Applicants must be at least 21 years of age by the position start date and possess a valid driver's license. Applicants 18-20 years of age will be considered for Cook and Assistant positions. Must have a clean driving history and be able to meet the criteria for CGE vehicle insurance coverage.
- Experience as a food handler, educator, leader, and risk manager.
- Wilderness First Aid (WFA) or ability to acquire within 30 days of hire; WFR/WEMT preferred.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Must be able to live at our Basecamp near Thoreau, NM, practicing community mindfulness during the summer.
- Ability to communicate effectively and professionally with a wide range of audiences (fellow staff, community members, trekkers, etc.).

We believe outdoor education takes many different forms; your unique skills and experiences will be considered and valued!

Preferred Qualifications

- Google account or willingness to create one.
- Spanish, Diné, Zuni, Tiwa, Keres, Towa, Hopi, or Tewa language fluency.

Physical Requirements

- Ability to sleep in a tent or open-air cabin accessed by stairs at our Basecamp.
- Ability to hike on uneven ground for up to 10 miles per day with a pack up to 50 pounds with participants and educators.
- Ability to stand for 2-3 hours, work at a desk, talk on the phone, and use a computer.

Criminal Background Check

CGE requires criminal background checks from all employees.

Starting Date:

Contract dates for the summer are June 1st to August 8th for summer 2027 with the possibility of additional per diem work in the fall and beyond.

Work Location & Schedule

Thoreau, NM, with potential travel throughout the state, including periods of time camping in frontcountry and backcountry settings. Resident Basecamp Cook/Educators will be based mostly out of our Thoreau Basecamp with some exceptions.

Compensation & Benefits

Salary ranges from $1,950 to $2,900/month depending upon years of experience, seasons contracted, and applicable credentials. Room (open-air cabins), board, laundry, and access to wifi provided at Thoreau Basecamp throughout the summer. $250 travel stipend available if traveling more than 500 miles. Possible opportunities for further outdoor education certifications. Various Pro Deals available to all staff.

Inclusive and Welcoming Environment

CGE is an equal opportunity employer and does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender identity or expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation, mental or physical handicap, serious medical condition, or military status in any of its activities or operations.

Moreover, Cottonwood Gulch Expeditions believes in the learning, growth, and healing that can take place in the outdoors. We also recognize that access to programs like ours—along with access to any green space, clean air and water, and healthy food—continues to be a privilege rather than a right. CGE recognizes that in outdoor spaces, the voices and work of people of color, people from working-class backgrounds, Indigenous people, women, and LGBTQ+ individuals have been often overlooked and marginalized. Therefore, we encourage applications from people in these groups and all people, regardless of background.

To apply: Please apply through Campminder using this link on our website.