**YOUTH WELLNESS ADVOCATE INTERNSHIP**

**Position summary:** This position is open to applicants currently pursuing a Bachelors or Masters in Behavioral/Wellness Health, Social Work, Psychology, Counseling, or a M.E.S.H. related field. The Youth Advocate role is critical in supporting the behavioral, mental, social and wellness health of campers ages 8-17 throughout their time at our overnight summer camp. They are responsible for establishing strong, positive relationships with the youth at camp, as well as serve as a resource for other seasonal program staff. This is a residential position, requiring full-time residence at Agassiz Village’s camp from June 19 to August 9, 2024. Free room and board are provided as well as a stipend.

**Job Requirements and Responsibilities:**

* Youth advocates are assigned to a cabin section and work under our LCSW licensed Director of Camper Care and help establish and maintain healthy and appropriate relationships with youth, focusing on safety, support, interaction, and engagement.
* Utilize strengths-based counseling with youth around issues such as homesickness, peer conflict, family issues, and mental health issues.
* Anticipate and mitigate situations of difficult youth behavior.
* Review cabin counselor notes twice daily identifying issues that may be developing and addressing those issues before they become more challenging.
* Facilitate training for seasonal program staff.
* Provide ongoing guidance and coaching to seasonal staff on how to appropriately respond to youth needs and behaviors.
* Identify youth needs through discussion and observation then respond using the appropriate intervention.
* Obtain personal care items and other resources for youth as needed.
* Communicate with families to discuss their child’s successes and challenges while at camp, when necessary.
* Consult with the Director of Camper Care and Camp Nurse regarding youth issues and/or disclosures; complete necessary documentation related to youth issues and/or disclosures.
* Work one-on-one with campers who are having trouble participating in the program.
* Be present throughout the day interacting with children during meal times, activities and rest periods helping to build a positive climate by ensuring youth feel welcomed, are warmly greeted, are valued and target the development of SEL skills.
* Embed SEL instruction within regular activities, such as pausing a basketball lesson to teach strategies about how to persist through frustration, or enacting instructional strategies during regular activities that explicitly support SEL skill development, such as talking to children about how to work productively with one another in a group assignment.
* Instruct stand-alone SEL lessons that explicitly targets SEL topics, such as relationship skills or identifying one’s emotions. These lessons can include the use of SEL lesson plans and pacing guides.
* Help Cabin counselors to set the culture of camp by identifying cabin rules and expectations on how we treat each other and camp with respect, care and dignity.
* Provide group support in the cabin setting including assisting with facilitating group conversations to help prevent bullying or other forms of negative behavior or aggression.
* Intervene if campers are experiencing significant behavioral challenges.
* Help campers and staff resolve conflicts appropriately.
* Provide support and guidance to staff as they deal with camper’s behavior problems.
* Be available to step into situations that may arise during the camp and provide necessary assistance to the camper prior to allowing the camper to return to activities.
* Assist in consulting and guiding staff to monitor the overall emotional and social wellbeing of the community.
* Provide emotional support to staff and help aid in mediating staff conflicts and help monitor staff morale.
* Keep Director of Camper Care informed of all situations and issues as they arise and provide daily updates through informal conversation and formal documentation.
* As a mandated reporter, assist Director of Camper Care with appropriate calls to social services.

**Qualifications:**

* Student pursuing a Bachelors or Masters in Behavioral/Wellness Health, Psychology, Social Work, Counseling, or a M.E.S.H. related field.
* Comfortable working in an outdoor setting where campers and staff live and experience developing a positive community and active camp activities. Work hours may vary.
* Willing and able to work as part of a team.
* Understand at-risk youth.
* Excellent verbal communications skills.
* Possess the following qualities: patience, compassion, fairness, listening skills, and the ability to relate to children.

**Contract Dates:** June 19, 2023 – August 9, 2023. This position is required to live on site at 71 Agassiz Village Ln. Poland, ME 04274

**Salary Range:** $400 summer stipend. Accommodations and meals are provided for the full contract.

**REPORTS TO:** Director of Camper Care (licensed social worker)

**About Agassiz Village:** Established in 1935, Agassiz Village is a nonprofit youth development organization whose mission is to “prepare youth for life’s journey.” Through our exceptional summer camp experience and year-long programming, youth develop and practice critical leadership and life-shaping skills that positively impact their futures. Each summer, a staff of 70 support over 500 children from under-resourced communities in New England at our 330-acre lakefront overnight camp in Poland, Maine where youth experience unique learning opportunities, be challenged to discover interests, uncover new skills, make lifetime friendships, and connect with inspiring mentors. During the summer Agassiz Village offers three 12-days overnight camping sessions over the course of six weeks. In addition, teens in our year-round program are supported to graduate high-school and prepare to be career/college ready.

**Our Staff Culture:** We work hard to establish a collaborative and positive community where we treat one another with kindness, understanding, and give one another the benefit of the doubt. We celebrate new ideas, encourage making mistakes and trying again, and emphasize effort rather than perfection. At Agassiz Village, performing well at your job means also contributing positively to our team and environment. We teach our campers how to be compassionate, how to build connections, help them to build their confidence, and help them to bounce back when things don’t go their way. That means that we need to be strong role models of these qualities as well. Most of all, we emphasize constant growth and improvement and are always striving to find a better way to do what we do.