YMCA CAMP CARSON SERVICE CORPS PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Camp Carson Service Corps Program is a leadership experience designed to help young people gain leadership skills through experiential service learning, leadership sessions, and trainings during their two-week stay. They form a tight-knit group as they work together to accomplish daily activities.

> "You learn so many life skills that you will continue to use for the rest of your life."
>
> -Josh, 2021 Service Corps

Our hope is that Service Corps participants leave with a desire to continue their service to others. The program is designed to instill our "kids and guests first" philosophy which makes Camp a place where all children, staff, and guests are **Accepted** for who they are, **Challenged** to stretch their comfort zones, and **Empowered** to make a difference in the world.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Service Corps volunteers assist with and lead a variety of activities throughout the camp that are essential to our success in providing quality experiences for our campers. This includes developing camper skills in an activity area, washing dishes, working in canteen, and mentoring campers in a cabin setting. These experiences are used to develop the leadership skills that will be beneficial in future summers at camp and other life endeavors.

> "At the end of the day, know that you joined Service Corps to do something bigger than yourself, and to help staff and campers have the best summer they could. I have no doubt I would do it all again to make more memories."
>
> -Jordan, 2021 Service Corps

CAMP ACTIVITIES

Service Corps members have time for classic camp fun and time with campers. They engage with campers at activity areas, as they are assigned an activity area to work during morning blocks. In the afternoons, they may help with cabin activities, work in canteen, or shadow a staff member on waterfront rotation. They participate in all evening programs, including opening and closing campfires, and hootenanny. They have opportunities to assist with planning and implementation of camp-wide programming. They are also engaged in staff meetings on Friday evenings.

SERVICE CORPS ORIENTATION WEEKENDS

Service Corps members attend a Service Corps Program Orientation in the Spring. This weekend includes a stayover at Camp Carson and a volunteer event. This weekend prepares Service Corps members for their summer at camp.

HOW TO APPLY

1. Fill out the Service Corps Program Application (application will be available online in January).
2. Return to Ryan Meeks at rmeeks@ymcacampcarson.org.
3. The Camp Carson team will review your application and schedule an interview.
4. Selection is dependent on the interview, availability, openings, and needs within the program.

SERVICE CORPS PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DO SERVICE CORPS MEMBERS HAVE COUNSELORS?

The Service Corps Program is led by a Service Corps Director, a college-age leader who will supervise them in the kitchen, during their sessions and trainings, foster team-building and friendships, and guide them through their transition from camper to volunteer.

WHAT DOES A SERVICE CORPS DAY LOOK LIKE?

A day in the Service Corps Program is very similar to a day at camp for our campers and staff members. Their programming and break times will vary from day to day, but will generally follow this sample schedule.

SAMPLE SERVICE CORPS DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00am Wake Up
7:40am Chapel
8:00am Breakfast
8:30am Breakfast Dishes
9:30am Leadership Session
10:00am Activity Areas
12:30pm Lunch
1:00pm Lunch Dishes
2:15pm Cabin Activities/Waterfront Time
4:30pm Leadership Session or Break or Cabin Activity
5:30pm Dinner
6:15pm Rec Hour/Evening Program
8:30pm Showers/Devotions with Cabin
10:30pm Devotions with Service Corps members
12:00am Light Out

WHAT EXACTLY DO SERVICE CORPS MEMBERS DO?

Service Corps members are volunteers at Camp Carson, and their activities rotate between service roles at camp (washing dishes, laundry, facility projects, etc.) plus mentoring and working with our campers at activity areas, evening programs, and in the cabin.

WHY DO THEY LOVE VOLUNTEERING IF THEY ARE DOING ALL OF THAT DIRTY WORK?

"Working in the dish room built my teamwork skills to an all-time high. With the amazing playlist, I had so much fun singing and dancing with my peers, or just with myself."
-Meagan, 2021 Service Corps

Our Service Corps members understand that in order for our campers to have the best week at camp, all programs and teams must be functioning at their best - that includes the kitchen, the dishroom, the property team, our office staff, and our counselors. Their assistance with each of those areas helps in the overall camp experience for everyone. Service Corps members learn that deep connections are made through shared experiences and hard work. We have also found that these future leaders enjoy having a purpose at camp and seeing behind the scenes. The memories and friendships that are created when serving others in the Service Corps Program are what makes all the hard work worth it.

"Although it's not the full counselor experience, Service Corps lets you interact with campers in a way you never have before."

-Ainsley, 2021 Service Corps

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