

Position Description: Program Director



This leadership position at Cottonwood Gulch works with the Leadership Team to implement the outdoor educational programs and the mission of Cottonwood Gulch Expeditions (CGE). Our mission is to provide outdoor learning adventures to youth of all backgrounds that foster personal growth, strengthen community, and inspire stewardship of 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. During the school year, we partner with more than 30 schools and nonprofits, primarily serving 1-12 graders in New Mexico on trips ranging from one day to two weeks. During the summer, we run multi-week expeditions for 8-18 year olds. All of this totals about 10,000 field days each year, and hundreds of lives impacted for the better. We are seeking a Program Director to lead our talented field staff team as they implement these programs.

Job Objective: The Program Director is responsible for overseeing the implementation of CGE’s programs. Working alongside the education director and operations staff, this person will be the main point person for our staff team. They will take the lead on hiring, scheduling, and overseeing our seasonal staff team, with direct support from the rest of the Leadership Team. The ideal candidate will have experience managing staff and experience in an educational setting, with a love of the outdoors and a desire to inspire children through outdoor experiential learning. This person should have experience managing budgets and be prepared to take a leadership role in our programs, including our summer program in Thoreau, NM.

Responsibilities:

Staff Leadership and Support

- Oversee the implementation of our outdoor learning programs. This begins with the well being and training of our most important asset, our staff team. It also includes supervising an Operations Manager (who will ensure the smooth running of our day-to-day field programs).
- Take the lead in hiring and scheduling our seasonal staff team.
- Directly supervise our Operations Manager, Outreach Coordinator, and seasonal Group Leaders,
- Provide regular support and guidance for our field staff in dealing with issues that arise in dealing with outdoor programs in the front country and the backcountry.
- Alongside the Leadership Team, play a prominent role in upholding our mission, values, policies, and procedures by creating a healthy, supportive staff culture.
- Oversee our summer program in Thoreau, NM; must be able to live primarily at our Basecamp in Thoreau for 10 weeks during the summer.
- Oversee staffing for our school programs from our Albuquerque, NM office during the fall, winter, and spring.

- Train CGE staff on how to implement our programs. Our staff trainings occur 2-4 times per year, and include multiple nights in the field at our Basecamp or camping in New Mexico.
- Collaborate to stay current, implement, and evaluate our risk management plan and enforce the rules and regulations that are key to the safety and well-being of the program participants, and the preservation and appreciation of the land in its natural state.
- Work with the Leadership Team to develop and improve systems that benefit all Cottonwood Gulch programs.
- Participate in the Cottonwood Gulch On Call system.

Administrative and other duties

- Help create and manage budgets for CGE expeditions.
- Collaborate with the administrative team to develop aspects of the organization's annual and seasonal financial budgets and goals.
- Assist in finding and writing grants to support CGE programs.
- Respond to the needs of the organization consistent with the philosophy of "see a job and do it".
- Contribute to the care and well-being of the organization's gear and property.

Required Qualifications:

- Applicants must be at least 21 years of age by the position start date and possess a valid driver's license. Must have a clean driving history and be able to meet the criteria for CGE vehicle insurance coverage.
- At least four years of experience in supervising a staff team, with the ability to articulate and implement practices that create a healthy, supportive staff culture.
- Experience working with kids in an outdoor setting, including managing risk in challenging settings.
- Must be able to spend multiple days at a time in the field, including overnight hours. Work hours are frequently outside of traditional office hours.
- Strong organizational skills, and ability to create schedules.
- Experience with Google Drive, Adobe products, and Microsoft Office, or ability to quickly learn to use those products, and similar ones, in a professional setting.
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple tasks simultaneously and independently.
- Ability to communicate effectively and professionally with a wide range of audiences.
- Wilderness First Responder certification, or ability to acquire within 60 days of hire.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Five or more years experience in education, classroom teaching, and/or outdoor teaching with a diverse population of students.
- Advanced degree in education, outdoor education, business management, or related field.
- Fluent or working proficiency in Spanish and/or Native Indigenous languages of New Mexico
- Wilderness EMT
- Experience with development work, including fundraising and grants.

Reports To: Executive Director

Leadership or Supervisory Duties: This person will serve as a part of the leadership team at Cottonwood Gulch and will be responsible for supervising our seasonal field staff team and 2-4 full-time staff members.

Criminal Background Check: Cottonwood Gulch Expeditions requires criminal background checks from all employees.

Work Location: Albuquerque, NM, (mid-August to May) and Thoreau, NM (June to mid-August), with travel throughout the state, including periods of time camping in frontcountry and backcountry settings.

Physical Requirements: Ability to hike up to 8 miles a day on uneven surfaces and carry a pack up to 50 pounds. Ability to sleep in a tent or open-air cabin accessed by stairs, work at a desk, talk on the phone, and use a computer.

Compensation: This is a year-round, full-time, exempt position, eligible for benefits. Starting salary \$46,000-\$54,000 depending on experience, plus room and board while at Cottonwood Gulch Basecamp and on field expeditions. Benefits include health care, dental care, paid time off, retirement plan salary match up to 5%, funding for professional training opportunities and pro deals.

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

Email a resume and cover letter to Jordan Stone, Executive Director: jordan@cottonwoodgulch.org

For full consideration, please apply by August 23, 2021. Position open until filled.