

# Nature Preschool Lead Teacher



**Department:** Education

**Supervisor:** Jennifer Roder, Education Director

**Hours:** Full-time (40 hrs/week)

**Pay Rate:** \$24,000—\$27,000 (commensurate with experience)

The Nature Preschool at Ijams Nature Center (NPINC) provides a hands-on, experiential approach to learning that is based on the needs and curiosity of young children. Our mission is to inspire children, families and educators to connect more deeply with the world around them. Through NPINC's research and programs, children and families develop a profound engagement with the natural world, where nature is an integral part of children's daily learning. All of the above is to be done with a focus on safety, customer service and effective educational methods in a supportive environment.

## Responsibilities

- Lead mixed-age preschool classroom in daily curriculum activities focused on outdoor exploration and nature-based learning
- Provide a variety of nature-based materials and resources for children to explore, manipulate and use, both in learning activities and in imaginative play
- Use an integrated, nature-based approach to teaching early literacy and math skills
- Establish and enforce rules for behavior, and procedures for maintaining order
- Provide language-rich environment through story-telling, reading, puppetry and imaginative play
- Organize and lead outdoor activities designed to promote physical, mental and social development, such as games, arts and crafts, music, and storytelling
- Lead nature activities, such as catching tadpoles and insects, making leaf collections, playing in the dirt/mud and other field-based learning opportunities in outdoor classrooms
- Observe and evaluate children's performance, behavior, social development and physical health
- Maintain accurate attendance records
- Communicate regularly with parents, including weekly activity emails, quarterly progress reports and periodic student evaluations
- Identify children showing signs of emotional, developmental or health-related problems, and discuss them with supervisors, parents or guardians, and child development specialists
- Meet with parents and guardians to discuss their children's progress and needs, determine their priorities for their children and suggest ways that they can promote learning and development
- Enforce all administration policies and rules governing students
- Prepare materials and classrooms for class activities

- Follow all cleaning and disinfecting schedules for classroom furnishings, restrooms, kitchen and materials
- Assimilate arriving children to the school environment by greeting them, helping them remove outerwear and selecting activities of interest to them

### **Qualifications**

- Experience developing and managing nature-based education programs
- Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education, or Wildlife, Biology or other resource management program
- Experience with education in a non-traditional setting
- Experience working with preschool-aged children
- Strong customer service skills
- Attention to detail
- Willingness to multi-task and work under pressure
- Ability to work without supervision
- Experience working with Microsoft Office, PowerPoint and Excel

### **Additional Desired Qualifications**

- Demonstrated ability to teach in an outdoor setting
- Willingness to be outside most of the day, during all weather conditions
- Ability to be creative, supportive and enthusiastic with children
- Knowledge of Montessori and Waldorf education principles
- Experience teaching art, music or drama to children

This position will spend at least 70% of the time outdoors, in all weather conditions. While performing the duties of this job, this employee may be exposed to dust, temperature variance, weather variance, noise, pollens and fumes. The person in this position must be comfortable maintaining a positive learning atmosphere in all conditions, and must make sound judgments about safety. While performing the duties of this job, this employee is frequently required to sit, talk, hear, use keyboard, view computer monitor and use phones. The employee occasionally will be required to lift and/or move up to 40 pounds and may need to carry it for approximate distances up to 50 feet, bend, reach with hands and arms, use fingers to write or type and handle or feel, walk, carry documents, crouch, stoop, kneel, climb stairs and use a step ladder in lifting and lowering materials. The position requires use of office equipment such as computer, copier, hole punch, calculator, fax machine, postage machine and point-of-sale system. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and the ability to adjust focus.

### **How to Apply**

Email or mail a cover letter, resume and a list of references to Jennifer Roder, Education Director, at [jroder@ijams.org](mailto:jroder@ijams.org).

*Ijams Nature Center is an equal rights employer committed to diversity in staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, visitors and program participants without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.*