

# BLUESTONE VILLAGE

## A Nature-based Community Initiative

Position: Bluestone Mentor, Summer in the Forest

Hours: Monday–Thursday from 8:45 am–12:45 pm. Part-time, up to 16 hours per week (following [summer camp schedule](#))

Location: Bluestone Village at Camp Koinonia, 165 Lake View Dr., Highland Lake, NY

### Overview

Our playful, immersive outdoor programs offer a wonderful way for children to make lasting connections with the natural world. Essential social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills grow, as does a genuine love for nature. We cultivate gratitude, empathy, and appreciation of our diverse community. Position works with children ages 20 months–5 years old. This is a project of the Bluestone Village: A Nature-based Community Initiative ([bluestonevillage.org](http://bluestonevillage.org)).

The goals of Bluestone Nature Programs are:

- To honor young children as independent, capable thinkers through child-directed, experiential, place-based approaches to learning;
- To engage in a rhythm of reflection, inquiry, observation, trial-and-error, risk-taking, perseverance, discussion, problem-solving, expression, and teamwork through a balance of emergent curriculum, intentional activities, and unstructured nature play;
- To offer opportunities for children to explore identity in the context of nature and the larger community, while cultivating kindness, empathy, compassion, and gratitude; and
- To model best practices and approaches to nature-based early childhood education

## **Job description**

Mentors work closely with our Director and children. Tasks include carrying out curriculum based on children's emergent interests, collaboration with other teachers and/or volunteers, and daily clean up. Mentors set the tone for learning as engaged, enthusiastic role models of nature-based education while maintaining a safe, positive atmosphere.

This position is best served by individuals with a blend of qualifications that span having sound knowledge about early learning as well as a fondness for nature. Candidates should possess curiosity, if not deep understanding, of the local ecosystem with a commitment to helping young children develop their ecological identities through inquiry and play. Candidates should be playful, energetic, and curious.

The ideal candidate will:

- Be passionate about exploring with children in nature.
- Be self-motivated and self-directed with the flexibility to work independently and collaboratively as part of a team.
- Have strong leadership abilities and excellent interpersonal skills, organizational, and time-management skills.
- Be a skilled communicator, guided by a desire to listen to and speak compassionately with both children and adults.
- Feel comfortable and confident about meeting the needs of children outdoors in all seasons.

## **Primary Job Responsibilities:**

- Responsible for facilitating immersive outdoor experiences for young children. This includes maintaining a safe, loving environment with safety routines that protect yet empower children.

- Nurture individualized needs of children while managing whole group experiences and unstructured play in nature.
- Daily set-up/break-down of the outdoor classroom (hands-washing station, fire ring, toilet tent, etc.).
- Utilize an emergent curriculum plan, daily 'sketch of the day' based on children's and seasonal interests.
- Manage materials and equipment; request new materials as needed.
- Other duties that support families, children, and staff will also be assigned as needed.

#### **Collaborative duties with fellow staff:**

- Provide positive guidance to children in navigating their social interactions with peers and adults.
- Maintain friendly yet professional interpersonal communication skills with children, families, fellow staff and volunteers.

#### **Essential Experience & Education**

- Possess or in pursuit of bachelor's degree in nature-based early childhood education, environmental studies, outdoor education, natural history, biology, elementary education, or closely related field
- Minimum of two years of experience leading outdoor education programs, with emphasis on coyote mentoring, directional teaching, flow learning, and emergent outdoor learning approaches (preferred)
- Possess the following credentials, certifications, or licenses: Current first aid and CPR credentials (Wilderness First Responder preferred)
- Must pass background check and child abuse clearances
- Experience working with young children as appropriate for the classes you will teach

- Physically able to hike, carry gear, and carry a small child if needed (up to 50 lbs)
- Naturalist background with knowledge of local ecology, flora, and fauna; Master Gardener or Master Naturalist certification (not required but preferred)

Classes are entirely outdoors, so you must be experienced and eager to facilitate outdoor learning in all seasons!

### **Most Desirable Qualities**

- Love of children
- Love of nature
- A strong work ethic with a track record of being reliable, honest, and kind
- Ability to laugh, remain calm, and persevere when faced with challenges
- Patient, positive disposition
- Eager to grow and learn with others

### **Additional Skills & Training**

- Excellent verbal communication skills
- Excited to lead outdoor programs in all kinds of weather
- Flexible mindset and positive attitude
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team

### **Salary**

This is a part-time, hourly position. Pay commensurate with experience, starting at \$10/hour.

### **How to Apply**

This job description offers guidelines for the position, not hard and fast rules. If you have 75% of the qualifications listed, we encourage you to apply! Send your resume to

Emily Woodmansee, [director@bluestonevillage.org](mailto:director@bluestonevillage.org). If hired, you will complete a background check, fingerprinting, and formal application of employment.

### **Equal Opportunity Statement**

We are proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We recruit, employ, train, compensate, and promote regardless of race, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity (including gender nonconformity and status as a transgender or transsexual individual), age, physical or mental disability, citizenship, genetic information, past, current, or prospective service in the uniformed services, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law. Persons from Indigenous, Latinx, African-American and other diverse racial or cultural backgrounds are encouraged to apply. If you have a disability and require accommodation or assistance with our application process, please reach out so we can help.