

VETSWORK – ENVIRONMENT

AMERICORPS POSITION DESCRIPTION



for the greatest good



POSITION TITLE: Visitor Information Assistant

PARTNER ORGANIZATION: USDA Forest Service/Alaska Region/Tongass National Forest

WEBSITE: fs.usda.gov/main/tongass

PROJECT LOCATION: Southeast Alaska Discovery Center, 50 Main Street, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

SERVICE DATES: February 7, 2022 to December 16, 2022 (1700-hour position)

POSITION SUMMARY: In partnership with the Mt. Adams Institute (MAI), the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center will sponsor a VetsWork AmeriCorps intern to serve as a Visitor Information Assistant. The intern will provide informational and educational services to the visiting public. The mission of the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center is to educate the public on the natural and cultural resources of Alaska, including its public lands. Through the medium of a 21,000 sq. ft. visitor center and museum, the intern will connect with visitors to help them understand and appreciate the role of the Tongass National Forest in sustaining healthy ecosystems and vibrant communities throughout the region. The Intern will provide high-quality public service, including mission-driven, scientifically-sound interpretive programs. Using the Center's exhibits, a classroom, or the Forest as a backdrop, the Intern will also provide high-quality conservation education opportunities for teachers and their classes. The Intern will also perform vital facility operations and maintenance tasks for the facility and other nearby recreation areas.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (TO INCLUDE, BUT NOT LIMITED TO):

- Craft and deliver interpretive programs about Alaska, including the Tongass National Forest.
- Craft and deliver conservation education programs to engage youth.
- Support the director in all facets of management and operations as needed - from administrative and technical support to maintenance.
- Serve as a collection officer, responsible for accurately collecting and accounting for entrance fees, map sales, passes, and other money and property as required.
- Make PA system announcements of films, programs and/or needed safety messages.
- Operate theater system, change films, set up PowerPoint, and assist presenters with programs.
- Provide weeding, sweeping, pruning and beautification of the grounds.
- Provide daily facility and grounds cleaning to keep the facility tidy throughout the day.
- Attend and complete all MAI/AmeriCorps trainings and service requirements including orientation, trainings and team meetings.
- Complete and submit all necessary MAI/AmeriCorps paperwork and reports in a timely manner.
- Wear MAI identifiers and required safety gear while performing service or attending official events.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

Service Site

- Must have a valid driver's license, clean driving record and ability to provide documentation.
- Comply with all Partner Organizations safety policies and procedures.
- Be a team player, and be willing to assist with all tasks in positive manner.
- Have a keen interest in learning interpretive and conservation education delivery techniques.
- Have a keen interest in learning the flora and fauna of the Tongass National Forest.

Mt. Adams Institute strengthens the connection between people and the natural world through education, service learning, career development and research.

- Have the ability to answer the same question over and over while maintaining a positive attitude.
- Strong customer service skills and enjoy helping people of all ages and levels of understanding.
- Ability and comfortable handling money and collecting fees.
- Be safety conscious for yourself and others.
- Be able to learn a complex theater projection system.
- Be comfortable with public speaking in front of both large and small groups.
- Be able to work a variety of schedules including evenings and weekends.

AmeriCorps

- Must have served in US Armed Forces and have a DD214 with an honorable discharge.
- At least 21 years of age at beginning of service term.
- U.S. citizen, national or lawful permanent resident.
- Possession of a high school diploma or equivalent, or commit to earning one prior to receiving education award.
- Ability to commit to the full 45-week term of service.
- Attend virtual MAI Orientation (February 7-11) and Intern trainings.
- Selection, placement and retention are contingent upon passing the National Sex Offender Public Registry, state of service and state of residence criminal history check and a national FBI check.
- Members are eligible to serve up to four terms of service and receive AmeriCorps Education awards for each term of service up to the value of two full time education awards only.
- **Must be fully vaccinated** against Covid-19 with the ability to provide documentation or have an approved medical or religious exemption prior to the start of the position. *Exemption forms can be found on our [website](#) and once submitted, they must go through a review and determination process before being approved.*
- **Must follow all Covid-19 policies** at the service site including any changes that are implemented throughout the course of the program. Policies may include masking/social distancing, remote/virtual work, altered field duties and other restrictions determined necessary to keep site staff, partners and the public safe. Accepting a position means accepting the current requirements and any updates to those requirements while enrolled in the program.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Experience designing educational or interpretive programs.
- Experience presenting programs to youth or adults.
- Experience interacting with the public on a consistent basis.
- Experience with fee collection, and other administrative duties.

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- VetsWork is an apprenticeship program approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Labor. Members with G.I. Bill benefits may be able to dual enroll as an apprentice and access their Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) of up to approximately \$2,400 per month. Actual benefits vary by individuals' qualified benefits.
- \$16,875 living allowance paid over the 10 ½ -month term of service (\$375 weekly, before taxes).
- \$6,495 education award (qualified student loans and/or education expenses)
- Loan Forbearance
- Health Care Insurance
- Child Care Reimbursement

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- Professional development, trainings and networking opportunities.
- USFS driver's license, safety and other training certifications, and uniform components

HOUSING:

- A \$1,100 stipend per month housing stipend is provided by service site. Intern will be responsible for finding a rental.

TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION:

- Airfare is provided at the start of our program; from Intern's location to the Service Site (up to \$700)
- Upon successful completion of the program, airfare is provided from Service Site to Intern's home (up to \$700).
- Agency/Organization vehicles are available for work-related travel.
- Intern is responsible for travel to and from duty station.
- A personal vehicle is useful; however, public bus transport is fairly reliable and cost effective. A personal vehicle must be ferried or barged to Ketchikan.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- Ketchikan's average rainfall is 13'. Strong winds are also common for this rural island setting. Following the shoreline, Ketchikan has one main road that is 32 miles long.
- The small city and borough of Ketchikan is surrounded by the evergreen beauty of the Tongass National Forest. Forested mountains and vast Pacific Ocean waterways provide the backdrop for hiking, boating, fishing, kayaking and exploration.
- The community of Ketchikan is situated along the shores of Alaska's Inside Passage within the heart of the nearly seventeen million acre Tongass National Forest. Mountains rise from the sea, and the lush forested landscape thrives due to abundant rainfall in this temperate rainforest environment.
- The community is comprised of three islands, Revillagigedo, Gravina and Pennock and transportation between them requires a boat or plane ride across the Tongass Narrows. Ketchikan is 90 minutes by air from Seattle and 36 hours by sea. The second largest cruise port in the state, Ketchikan is a popular destination for independent minded travelers too, due to superb fishing, outdoor recreation, thriving Native culture and amazing scenery.
- The town of Ketchikan itself is home to about 14,000 year around residents, and is a vibrant, hardworking community. One of "America's Top 100 small arts communities" Ketchikan's impressive variety of shops and galleries feature works by many of the island's resident artists and an assortment of souvenir items and unique gifts.
- This close-knit community offers an extraordinary array of activities and attractions that highlight the town's history, industry and culture.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION:

MAI celebrates equity, diversity, and inclusiveness and does not discriminate against any person or group based on race, ethnicity, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, expression, gender identity, ability, national origin or ancestry, veteran status, social economic class, religion, professional status, pregnancy, or parents/guardians with children. MAI is committed to a diverse workplace and to supporting our Interns and staff with trainings and career development opportunities.

MAI provides reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees. Applicants with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation and/or alternative formats at any point in the employment process.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

Email the following documents to Katie Schmidt at katie@mtadamsinstitute.org:

- Resume
- Cover Letter (One for each position applying to).
- Three Professional References (someone who has supervised you; military, civilian, or academic) - Information to include: Name, Title, Relation to you, email & phone number.
- Supplemental Questions:
 - What is your motivation for applying to VetsWork?
 - What are you hoping to get out of this experience?
- DD 214 – (with Honorable Discharge):
 - “General under honorable conditions” discharge are considered on a case-by-case basis
 - Must be long form “Member 4 copy” (has 30 total boxes of information).

PROCESS:

1. MAI screens application materials, conduct pre-interviews, and recommends qualified applicants for Service Site interviews.
2. Service Sites interview candidates, conduct reference checks and recommend placement.
3. If position is offered, additional paperwork will be required.

Due to Covid-19 parts of our programming may change

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- More information at “[VetsWork Frequently Asked Questions](#)”
- Cover letter information can be found at <https://www.macslite.org/articles/cover-letters>

QUESTIONS? CONTACT:

Katie Schmidt

Recruitment Coordinator | 503-504-5994

katie@mtadamsinstitute.org | mtadamsinstitute.org

