

# Alternative Break 2016-2017:

## YMCA Camp Campbell Outdoor Science School- Boulder Creek, CA

Hi, and thanks for your interest in joining us for your Alternative Break program at YMCA Camp Campbell! This document contains some basic information to help guide you through the process of booking a week with us.

First off, volunteers are an integral part of YMCA Camp Campbell's Outdoor Science School. Our program wouldn't exist without them! We serve 150-220 elementary students each week throughout the school year, and our volunteers are the front line in ensuring the students have the week of their lives! Alternative Break participants at YMCA Camp Campbell will:

- Gain invaluable leadership experience along with a week of community service- and have an amazing time exploring the redwood forest while doing it!
- Receive one full day of training in: behavior management; child abuse prevention; games and icebreakers; and tips and tricks for working with kids in a residential and outdoor setting (how to deal w/ homesickness, etc.)
- Be in charge of and the first line of support overnight for a cabin of 5th and/or 6th grade students from all over the diverse greater San Francisco Bay Area for 4 days and 3 nights (staff and classroom teachers are also onsite to support 24 hours/day).
- Attend field study along with students and their naturalist. Field study time focuses on hands-on ecology exploration in the redwood forest- just a few examples include: seeing banana slugs' wacky and unique adaptations up close, searching for salamanders under logs, or hearing a story themed on interdependence underneath the branches of an old growth redwood tree. Field study time also includes one day-long picnic hike to an amazing ridge top view, a night hike, river study, survival skills, swimming pool, and more- SO MANY of our college students are surprised by how much they learn during field study time as well!

Before we get into all of the exciting details, we just want to share a few quotes with you from Colorado State University students who spent their Alternative Spring Break with us in March 2015, because we feel those that have been through the experience can give you the best idea of how much of an impact a program like this can make in a college student's life:

***"The alternative break really opened my eyes to a different side of life. I am a chemical engineering major so I am very busy all the time and most of the time I am stressed as well. Coming back from the trip I am way more relaxed because most things I do not need to stress about, they are just little things and will not matter in a few months or years. The kids and the trip really taught me to slow down and enjoy the little things in life. I also learned a lot about myself and I am not even close to the same person as when I left. I have a much better sense of leadership and confidence which will help me immensely in every aspect of my daily life."***

***"I was not expecting to be impacted by my group of 6<sup>th</sup> graders in the way that I was. I learned so much about their stories, backgrounds, and aspirations in life."***

***“My experience as a cabin leader was incredible beyond words. The friendships I made at Camp Campbell will forever have a special place in my heart. It was truly the best week of my life, and the staff at Camp Campbell, along with my campers for the week, was amazing.”***

***“I learned to be open to new ideas and backgrounds. I also learned that it only takes one person to change one other person’s life, in turn changing the world. I can make a difference anywhere I go.”***

***“This was the best spring break ever. I would choose this trip over Mexico, the Bahamas, Spain, Greece (and I’ve always really, REALLY wanted to go to Greece). This trip had so much meaning. I felt like I was able to impact the lives of sixth graders while also having my life insanely impacted. I’ve never felt happier than I did on this trip.”***

## **2016-2017 Alternative Break Program Basics**

- Gorgeous location in the redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains in California
  - 1 ½ hours from San Francisco
  - 1 hour from San Jose
  - 30 minutes from Santa Cruz (all distances in driving time by car)
- Dates available throughout the school year (September-June) but please book with us as soon as possible to guarantee a spot- especially if you’d prefer Spring Break!
- Full day of volunteer training and teambuilding included on Mondays; elementary school student participants arrive on site Tuesday mornings and stay until Friday afternoons.
- All housing and meals included free of charge to volunteers from 10:00 a.m. Monday – 2:00 p.m. Friday
  - Most of this time is spent in an active leadership role with the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students attending our program. Exceptions are during training (10:00 a.m. Monday – 10 a.m. Tuesday) and Friday lunch.
  - ‘Hostel-style’ housing is available on Sunday at a rate of \$18/person, and Monday breakfast at \$10/person. (Based on availability and advanced notice.)
  - Even more additional housing, meals, and programs may be available... details ahead!
- Airport pickup available (see ‘transportation’ section)

## **What is Outdoor Science School?**

During a week at Camp Campbell Outdoor Science School, local 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, along with their volunteer leaders, learn about the natural world, explore different natural habitats, and work together as a community. Each year, over 5,000 students and hundreds of teachers and cabin leader volunteers join our dynamic, well-educated, and passionate staff to experience the magic of nature. A week at Outdoor School provides students with a unique opportunity to engage with the natural world, explore forest and river ecosystems, and live in a community with their

fellow students. Students and their volunteer cabin leaders live in heated cabins with bunks beds for three nights, while exploring the magic of the redwood forest during field study with their naturalist during the day.

## What happens during field study?

Environmental/outdoor education is an experience with important implications for the students both in the outdoors and back in the classroom. Its importance is recognized in the California State Science Framework to the point that it is no longer considered a separate subject, but rather a theme that should be introduced throughout the instructional program at all levels. The Next Generation Science Standards that are currently being adopted across the country also align wonderfully with what environmental/outdoor education is able to provide to students.

### Our goals for the students while they are here are:

- To identify and understand functioning ecosystems and to appreciate the natural resources these ecosystems provide, which are necessary for the survival of our planet.
- To develop an understanding of the interdependence that exists between humans and their living and non-living environments.
- To give students the opportunity to collect and record environmental data for use both here at camp and back in the classroom.
- To expand students' sensory awareness potential in order to more fully appreciate the many-faceted aspects of nature.
- To increase students' sense of self-worth through successful inquiry based learning and living experiences.
- To provide a quality experience in supervised group living, offering a model that encourages living in collaboration with each other and the environment.

Students and their volunteer cabin leaders will investigate the riparian and biotic aspects of the San Lorenzo River, as well as the unique characteristics of the redwood/mixed evergreen forest, chaparral and meadow communities. Field studies include such experiential strategies and activities as observation, exploration, measurement, sampling, sensory experience and interpretation, and comparative investigations. Over the course of the week, field groups will visit the nature lab, conduct river studies, visit our organic garden, and enjoy hikes on our extensive trail system. Each field group will participate in a day-long hike (approximately 3-5 miles round trip) traveling through several of the various communities. One evening field study will be a night walk, emphasizing nocturnal animal life, night time sensory awareness, and astronomy.

*\*Comprehensive list of teaching topics and sample weekly schedule available upon request\**

## Accommodations

**All cabins have bunk beds, heat, electricity, and access to bathrooms.**

Here's what the housing generally looks like for Alternative Break programs, broken down by day:

**Sunday night:** \$18/person

**Monday night:** Female volunteers share one cabin, males share another. One YMCA staff member will stay in each cabin with volunteers (some volunteers come from our local high schools and are therefore under 18, requiring staff supervision).

**Tuesday-Thursday nights:** Volunteers stay in cabins with 10-20 student participants. We aim for a ratio of 1:10, so if there are more than 10 kids in a cabin it will most likely have 2 volunteers.

We can give you more specific information once you begin to book with us. **Also, some Alternative Break programs express interest in arriving at camp before Sunday and/or staying later than Friday afternoon**, either due to flight needs or because they'd like to spend a little more time exploring what camp and/or the Santa Cruz area has to offer. This accommodation is available on a conditional basis, depending on whether we have space in camp or not. We may already have groups booked those days (family camps, weddings, we do it all!) and therefore unable to accommodate the extra stay.

## Meals during Program (Monday-Friday)

Our meals are eaten family style, where volunteers sit at tables with and supervise student participants in the program from Tuesday lunch through Friday brunch. Each table seats 8-9 students and 1-2 leaders, and leaders share the table with the same group of students throughout the week. Monday lunch and dinner, Tuesday breakfast, and Friday lunch will also be served for volunteers and staff.

**\*\*Coffee and tea are available throughout the day!\*\***

Breakfast 8:00-8:50am

Lunch 12:30-1:20pm

Dinner 6:00- 6:50pm

Brunch (Friday only) 8:30-9:30am

Meals are both kid-friendly and healthy, and we offer vegetarian, vegan, dairy-free, and gluten-free options at every meal- **Please just let us know of your participants' dietary restrictions ahead of time so that our kitchen staff may be prepared!** Our salad bar, sometimes with ingredients straight from the Camp Campbell garden, is served at every lunch and dinner, and bowls of fruit are available in the dining hall throughout the day.

## Transportation

We offer a bus service to and from **San Jose International Airport, San Francisco International Airport (possible additional cost), and San Jose Diridon (CalTrain) Station**. We request a \$10/person donation for the bus service, which goes directly to our Annual Giving Campaign, a YMCA scholarship fund that gives out over \$100,000/year to participants! **Bus service can only be offered between the hours of 9 a.m. and 8 p.m.**, and our amazing and friendly bus driver would most likely be happy to stop so your group can get food/snacks before you get to our location here at camp. Please just plan for an additional \$20 donation if you do want the bus driver to stop.

## Paperwork

We have a packet that we will need completed by each volunteer **before** they arrive. It will include:

- **California Request for Live Scan Service\***
  - We need every volunteer over 18 years of age to be fingerprinted with the FBI and Department of Justice, and YMCA policy states this may only be done in the state of California. \*If your school is coming from out-of-state, we will provide the fingerprinting service for you once you arrive on site, please just have the completed paperwork ready to speed up the process. **Please be aware if a volunteer is not cleared by both the FBI and DOJ, they will not be able to work with children on our site.**
- **General Liability Waiver**
- **Climbing/High Ropes Waiver**
  - We sometimes use our outdoor rock climbing wall with the outdoor science school program, and the high ropes course may be booked at an additional cost
- **References (2\*)**
  - One form to be completed by one professional and/or non-family member reference
  - \*Second reference will be group/AB program leaders. We will ask you to give us some information about your selection process, and why you chose each candidate.
- **Health form**
  - Includes emergency contact info, health history, and medication/special dietary needs

## Possible Additional Programs

These are some programs we **may** (depending on availability) be able offer in addition if interested. These programs happen outside of the usual Monday-Friday volunteer week at an additional cost.

One of the main ones we often offer is **open swim at our pool and waterslide on Sunday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.** The cost is \$10/person, and available to the public most Sundays throughout the school year, weather permitting. Please just let us know before you come if this is an opportunity you'd be interested in! If you would like to book the pool for your group outside of these open to the public Sunday hours, we can put you in contact with the Aquatics Director to discuss group rates.

<b><u>Program</u></b>	<b><u>Prices</u></b>
--High Ropes	\$30.00 per person
--Leap of Faith	\$12.00 per person
--Flying Squirrel	\$10.00 per person
-Climbing Wall	\$100.00 per hour
--Tie-Dye Shirts	\$10.00 per person (includes shirt)
--Day Hike	\$60.00 per hour
--Low Ropes/Team Building	-Cost is dependent on group size, duration and needs.

We will put you in contact with Nick Carney, Program Director of our Client Services department, if you are interested in any of these additional opportunities.

## Possible Additional Food Service

Modern equipment and service, hand-made, healthy, locally-sourced ingredients, and professional staff provide a quality of service that will surpass expectations and delight guests. Below are our standard meal rates when adding on additional meals to a service week (for example, Monday breakfast):

<b>Breakfast*</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>	<b>Brunch*</b>	<b>\$12.00</b>
<b>Lunch*</b>	<b>\$12.00</b>	<b>Dinner w/ dessert*</b>	<b>\$15.00</b>

**\*Mealtimes are the same as those during program (see 'Meals during Program' section)**

You are also free to bring your own snacks (the bus can stop on the way for supplies!) and/or order pizza from the local delivery place during the times you are here and meals are not provided- you'll have access to a refrigerator and microwave as well.

## Booking Process

YMCA Camp Campbell's booking process follows a specific timeline. Once you have received this email, look over your options to estimate your costs. Spring/late March is our most popular time for volunteer groups to book, and will fill the fastest. If your program has alternative breaks during other seasons (fall, winter, late spring/May), we are especially hoping to expand these partnerships. If you decide you are interested in booking with us, please write us back with the following information:

- **Name of University**
- **Main contact name, title, and contact information**
- **Number of total volunteers estimated**
- **Date(s) desired**
- **Phone Number**
- **Email Address**

## FAQ:

- **What kinds of elementary school groups book at Camp Campbell?**
  - We work with 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders from all over the Bay Area, and the diverse communities we work with are just one of the wonderful aspects unique to our program. We work with both public and private schools, and about 50% of our schools are defined as Title 1 (low-income) populations.
- **What does your weekend availability look like?**
  - Contact our program directors for onsite availability for the weekend before/after your week of volunteering is scheduled.
- **Who is responsible for what while we are at camp?**

- You are directly responsible for supervision on-site for your group for the duration of your stay.
- An on-site Program Director will be available for emergency contact for the duration of your stay.
- Should your group anticipate the need for medical staff during your stay before or after the usual volunteer week (Monday-Friday), please provide the necessary people and equipment for the duration of your stay. Camp Campbell does not employ on-site medical staff for guest bookings.
- In the event of an emergency, any EMS, evacuation or transport, medical, or law enforcement personnel and services required by a guest group will be the client's responsibility.
- Camp provides program and food service staff to run activities and meals during our Monday-Friday outdoor school program, and additional meals and activities may be available to groups if discussed and contracted ahead of time.
- **Can we bring our own food?**
  - Yes, you may bring pre-packaged snacks for your group. You will have access to a refrigerator and microwave during times no meal service is provided for your group (usually Saturday/Sunday).
  - Once the students arrive, volunteers may continue to store food in the refrigerator and microwave and enjoy it on their break time.
  - Camp Campbell strives to be a peanut-free facility. Please help us respect those with allergies by not bringing food containing peanut products on site.
- **How do meals work?**
  - Meals are served family style, with 1-2 volunteers sitting at a round table with 8-9 students. Volunteers converse with students and help to ensure food is being allocated equally.
  - Dietary restrictions and allergen-free food service can be provided by camp. Communicate your needs to the Program Director via email.
  - All lunches and dinners include a salad bar.
- **Do you have water or cold beverages available throughout the day?**
  - Water dispensers are available in the dining hall 24 hours a day and all of the sinks in camp pull from the same water source and are quite drinkable. Please encourage your group to bring water bottles for use during non-meal times.
  - At all meals, milk is available.
- **Can you accommodate dietary restrictions, food allergies, and special menus?**
  - Yes! Camp Campbell regularly accommodates special menus due to food allergies and dietary restrictions. Let us know what your specific needs are, and we will do our best to accommodate you.
- **Can we have campfires?**
  - Yes! As part of our greeting/appreciation of our alternative break volunteers, if you are here on Sunday evenings we will provide the supplies for your group to have a campfire and s'mores (weather permitting).
  - We may also have campfires during program with the students, often including a skit night, where volunteers and students perform on stage.
  - Firewood is provided.
  - You are responsible for supervision and management of all fires outside of program.
- **What should we pack with us?**
  - We will provide a detailed packing list before your groups arrival, but here's a general idea:
  - Active, weather-appropriate, layered apparel:
    - Weatherproof shell or rain coat

- Warm jacket
  - Long pants/jeans
  - Trail-friendly, close-toed shoes with good soles and support
  - Wristwatch/time piece (extra important as we ask that you do not use your cell phones in front of the students)
  - Bathing suit/towel
  - Water-friendly shoes for showers and pool deck
- Equipment:
  - Sleeping Bag or Bedding
  - Pillow
  - Flashlight
  - Re-usable water bottle
  - Sunglasses
  - Hat or beanie
  - Lip balm and sunscreen
- Miscellaneous Items:
  - Musical instrument
  - Art supplies
  - Snacks / specialty food items for restricted diets
  - Day pack / Back pack
  - Any needed medical supplies / prescriptions
- Group Leaders:
  - Cell Phone for contact with parents/families of volunteers (you are the primary contact)
  - Schedules, handouts, documents needed for group
  - Medical forms (if needed)
  - Completed California fingerprint forms (every volunteer 18+ must be fingerprinted before working with us!)
  - Liability waivers (will be sent to you)
- What not to bring (volunteers):
  - Expensive electronic devices (laptops, video game systems)
  - Alcohol
  - Pets
  - Weapons of any kind
  - Controlled substances
  - Program equipment (harnesses, helmets, climbing equipment, bows/arrows)
- **Is there a camp store?**
  - Yes! Our camp store is fully stocked with essential camping items like flashlights and toothpaste, and also has awesome Camp Campbell apparel available. Please communicate with the program director ahead of time if you would like it opened for your group.
- **How does camp handle billing?**
  - Your final invoice will be generated after to your stay at camp, and will be emailed to you as a PDF document.
  - Remit payment no later than 30 days (checks, cash or credit) to the mailing address provided on your invoice. Outstanding payments later than 30 days will be considered delinquent, and are subject to an additional percentage fee.
- **What is your photo policy?**
  - Guests of Camp Campbell are requested to release their rights to photos and/or video taken on-site, and Camp Campbell regularly uses video and photos to market camp to the public. Media release waivers are available from a Program Director, or



on-site at the camp office. Waivers are required for any third-party videographers or photographers that may be contracted by your group.

- It is YMCA policy that pictures of children are NEVER taken on personal cameras, only those owned and operated by YMCA staff. You are welcome to take photos and video of the facilities, staff, and other volunteers (just please ask them first!), but you may not take photos of the campers on your personal devices. We may be able to share any pictures taken with YMCA cameras with your group.
- **What is your alcohol policy?**
  - Camp Campbell does not allow alcohol on-site during outdoor science school.