



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



Position Title: Education and Conservation Specialist

Position Service Site: Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center (Wisconsin Dells, WI)

Service Time: September 1, 2025 – August 14, 2026 (1,700 Hour AmeriCorps Term, 50 weeks, 35 hours per week)

Benefits: Living stipend for the entire term totals \$23,000 (\$460 per week). An Education Award of approximately \$7,300 will be issued upon successful completion of service. To learn more about the Award: <https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/segal-ameri-corps-education-award/find-out-more>. **Health insurance** is available for individuals in 1,700-hour positions who are not already covered. **Onsite housing** is available for term duration. **Meals** are provided when programming groups are using food services on site.

OVERVIEW: Upham Woods is a residential, year-round outdoor learning center for youth and adults, operating under the Natural Resources Institute of the University of Wisconsin – Madison Division of Extension. Their mission is to provide an innovative outdoor experience that connects youth and adults with the research and educational resources of UW-Madison to improve the human-nature connection, support understanding of science, foster environmental stewardship, and engage communities. Upham Woods rests on 320 acres of forested land, including a 210-acre designated State Natural Area called Blackhawk Island. Its facility is comprised of 14 buildings that offer programming, lodging, and meals for up to 140 people. The center offers environmental education and outdoor recreation programs, 4-H and other youth camps, professional development workshops, and conferences and retreats. Through their programs, Upham Woods aims to ignite curiosity, cultivate leadership, and create a lasting impact on the natural world and the communities they serve.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION: The Education and Conservation Specialist serving at Upham Woods will lead environmental lessons and serve as a land steward of Blackhawk Island. They will aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all groups they encounter. This is a unique and varied position with the opportunity to gain many skills.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Education

- Teach environmental and outdoor education programming to school and community groups and participate in public/community outreach both on and off-site.
- Lead programs for groups between 25-160 people.
- Care, training, and presentation of live animals including reptiles and a raptor.
- Support program design, development, implementation, and evaluation for grant funded and general programs to improve and expand program offerings to new and returning audiences.

Community Engagement

- Serve as liaison (main point of contact) for visiting groups, including on call status*
- Maintain relationships with local community groups
- After ~6 months, mentor new seasonal staff. Includes assisting with staff training on program and liaison duties.
- Opportunity to contribute to public facing communications, including but not limited to social media, newsletters, event marketing, and assistance with fundraising efforts for specific program events.
- Work with the Facility and Operations Manager to administer the Paddle Pass program during the summer months, recording and issuing Paddle Passes per program guidelines.

*On call status refers to liaison responsibilities extending overnight in case of emergency contact from a visiting group via cell phone.

*Conservation & Equipment Maintenance**

- Prepare necessary tools, safety equipment, and project materials for use on conservation project days.
- Evaluate and maintain existing Outpost Program camping equipment including tents, cooking equipment, canoes, paddles, and personal floatation devices.
- Maintain trail tools including Mcleods, shovels, saws, pickaxes, loppers, and rakes.
- Under supervision of the Facility and Operations Manager, perform trail work related tasks such as trail repair, new trail construction, and trail reroutes.
- Perform invasive plant species removal.
- Complete facility maintenance projects including painting, minor cleaning, as needed.

**These activities will primarily occur during the off-peak season, which occurs during the late fall, winter and early spring months.*

HOUSING AND MEALS:

- Upham Woods provides onsite housing in our staff duplex. Room assignments can be an individual or shared bedroom, shared bathroom, and shared common areas (kitchen, living room, laundry facilities).
- Housing assignments are subject to change over the course of the year. Room assignments are made and updated at the discretion of Upham Woods administrative staff.
- A check-in/check-out procedure will be utilized for housing. Occupants may be charged for damages that exceed normal wear and tear to duplex facilities.
- Meals will be provided at no cost to staff whenever a group is on site utilizing food service. Other meals are the responsibility of the WisCorps Individual Placement member. A kitchen stocked with appliances and cooking utensils is available for cooking and food storage onsite.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

- First Aid/CPR/AED (Basic Life Support), Low Ropes Certification (ACCT), Chainsaw safety
- Professional development offered through the UW-Madison Extension such as supporting youth mental health
- Other opportunities as they become available

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimum age requirement is 18 years old.
- Able to perform duties in inclement weather.
- Enthusiastic, creative, and flexible in delivering programs, giving presentations and leading group activities.
- Lifeguard certification is preferred.
- Teaching license, college degree, and/or other education-related certifications are a plus.
- Natural resource management certifications including chainsaw safety, pesticide application, etc. are a plus.
- Withstand the physical demands of work which involves occasionally lifting up to 40 pounds, carrying, stooping, bending, and hiking across uneven terrain.
- Ability to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation.
- Ability to multitask and shift schedule and priorities to meet changing conditions.
- Upon hire, a criminal background check will be conducted by both WisCorps and UW-Madison. Service with WisCorps will be considered probationary until all results are returned and have been reviewed.
- Valid driver's license that meets UW Risk Management Standards.

WisCorps provides equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran per applicable federal, state, and local laws. We are committed to assuring equal employment opportunity and equal access to services, programs, and activities for persons with disabilities. If you have a disability and need to access information in an alternative format, or need it translated into another language, please contact us by phone at 608-782-2494, by email at staff@wiscorps.org, or dial Wisconsin Relay 711.