

5287 Otter Lake Road, White Bear Township, MN 55110

Phone: (651) 407-5350

Email: tamarack@co.ramsey.mn.us

www.TamarackNatureCenter.org

Join our 2020 Tamarack team as a **Junior Assistant Naturalist!**

What is a Junior Assistant Naturalist?

Junior Assistant Naturalists (JANs) are very important members of the Tamarack summer day camp team. Like a camp counselor, they serve as fun, friendly companions and mentors to our younger participants. JANs assist with all aspects of day camp including preparing activities, leading games, and helping supervise campers to make sure everyone has a fun and safe experience.

What are the requirements for being a JAN?

- Volunteers must be 14-17 years of age. (Applicants must be age 14 by September 1, 2020 to be eligible.)
- Enjoy working with children, be willing to play, get your hands dirty and be an active participant.
- Be a responsible, trustworthy and dependable volunteer. Be able to take direction and feedback, follow through with assigned responsibilities, and maintain a mature, positive, service-oriented attitude.
- Attend a required information session with a parent.
- Complete an in-person interview with Tamarack Staff.
- Participate in a mandatory 2-day JAN training.
- Commit to volunteering for **at least 3 weeks of camp.**

How do I apply to be a Junior Assistant Naturalist?

Complete the enclosed application materials and return them to Tamarack by the deadline. You will receive an e-mail notifying you that your application was received and an invite to the required information session. If accepted as a new JAN, you will be placed with camps according to your availability, skills and interests, but we will also work to give you a well-rounded experience. Final camp assignments will be sent to you by the middle of May (or earlier if possible).

JAN Applicant Checklist:

Complete the enclosed application materials and return them to Tamarack by **Saturday, April 18**

- JAN Volunteer Application
- Letter of Recommendation
- Personal Contract
- Availability & Preferences
- Parental Consent & Emergency Contacts

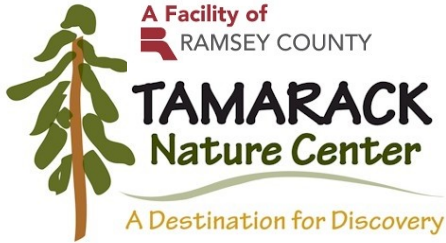


What are the benefits of being a JAN?

- Make new friends and be part of a team.
- Build leadership skills; gain valuable, fun, hands-on experience working with children and nature.
- Volunteer time may be eligible for service learning credits and is always great for resume building.
- Get a Tamarack Summer Camp t-shirt and water bottle.
- Enjoy an exclusive JAN Campfire Celebration at the end of the season.

Mark Your Calendars!

- Required Information Session (with a parent):
Wednesday, May 6, 6:30pm
- Required In-Person Interviews:
Saturday, May 9 and Saturday, May 16
15 minute interviews from 9am to 4pm
- Required Training Dates:
Wednesday, June 17 & Thursday, June 18
- JAN Campfire Celebration: **Thursday, August 6**



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2020 Junior Assistant Naturalist

NEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Last Name: _____ First: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Grade Level: _____ School: _____ Adult T-Shirt Size: _____

How did you hear about the JAN program at Tamarack? _____

We communicate with our volunteers extensively through e-mail. Please list the e-mail address you want us to use when communicating with you throughout this application process and throughout the summer. If you need us to send communications to both parent and student e-mail addresses, please list both.

Email Address(es): _____

Please tell us what interests you. Check all that apply:

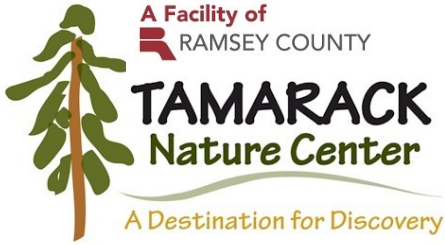
- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Mud & Mayhem | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration & Adventure | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Character Role Play | <input type="checkbox"/> Fossils & Geology | <input type="checkbox"/> Storytelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Birds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor/Survival Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> Insects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Crafts | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening & Plants | <input type="checkbox"/> Experiments | <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others (please describe): _____ | | | |

Do you have any previous volunteer experience? What did you do and where?

Do you have any experience working with younger children (babysitting, camp counselor, younger siblings, etc)?

What skills, interests, and abilities would make you an asset to Tamarack's summer day camp team?

Why do you want to be a Junior Assistant Naturalist with Tamarack Nature Center?



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2020 Junior Assistant Naturalist LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

The student listed below is applying for a Junior Assistant Naturalist volunteer position with Tamarack Nature Center, where he/she will be assisting with our summer day camp program. One of the requirements of the program is a recommendation from a teacher, counselor or mentor. We are looking for youth who are mature enough to work with younger children, are dependable and have a positive attitude, but who are also fun and friendly. If you can provide a reference for this student, please complete this form and return it to him/her or to the address or email listed above. (If you prefer to substitute a letter for this form, please be sure to address the questions listed below.)

Thank you!

Tamarack Nature Center Staff

Name of Youth Applicant: _____

Name of Reference: _____ Relationship to Applicant: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?

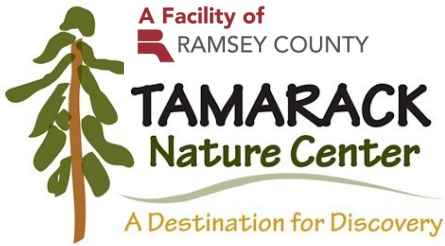
Describe this student with the first words that come to mind.

How do you think volunteering in a summer day camp program might help this student grow?

Additional Comments (use other side if needed):

Please rate the applicant in the following areas:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement	I Don't Know
Reliability					
Follow-Through					
Initiative					
Enthusiasm					
Attitude					
Flexibility					
People Skills					
Maturity					

Signature: _____ Date: _____



2020 Junior Assistant Naturalists

AVAILABILITY & PREFERENCES

Name of JAN Candidate: _____

How many weeks would you like to volunteer as a Junior Assistant Naturalist this summer?

3 weeks (minimum) 4 weeks 5+ weeks

Camp Week	Dates: 8:15am-4:30pm, Mon- Thurs	Please Check all the weeks you are available:	Please check all weeks you are available for Before Camp Care (7:30-9am)
Week 1	June 22 – 25	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Week 2	June 29 – July 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Week 3	July 6 – 9	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Week 4	July 13 – 16	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Week 5	July 20 - 23	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Week 6	July 27 - 30	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Week 7	August 3 – 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Week 8	August 10 -13	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are scheduled for a half-day preschool camp in the morning or afternoon, will you have transportation to or from Tamarack at lunchtime? YES NO

During weeks you are not working as a JAN, are you interested in helping with Backyard Bunch, a play-based, drop-off program for preschoolers on select Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings? YES NO

Some of our camps are held at Snail Lake Regional Park. If transportation will be an issue for you on those days, please let us know so we can schedule you for camps that do not go to Snail Lake. Can you be dropped off and picked up at Snail Lake Regional Park if you are scheduled for a camp that is held there? YES NO

Review the enclosed document called “Connecting Children with Nature” to see what you can expect for each age group of campers. Then, tell us the top 3 age groups you would like to work with this summer. We will consider your preferences when scheduling, but will also try to give you a well-rounded experience.

#1 Choice _____

- *Sprouts & Critters = 3, 4 & 5 years old*

#2 Choice _____

- *Discoverers = 1st—2nd grade*

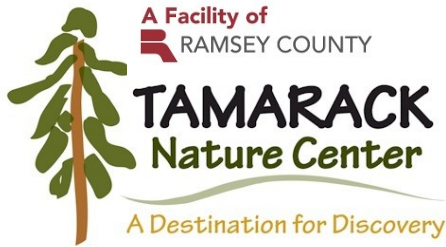
#3 Choice _____

- *Explorers = 3rd—4th grade*

I am comfortable with any age group!

- *Trekkers & Adventurers = 5th—8th grade*

Please provide any other information about your summer schedule that you think would be helpful to us.



2020 Junior Assistant Naturalists

CONNECTING CHILDREN WITH NATURE

Information for JAN Applicants

Sprouts (3 years old)

Developmental Characteristics:

- Need opportunities to explore
- Beginning to develop a sense of independence
- Enjoy dramatic play with others
- Learning how to share
- Enjoy sensory learning and play
- Need clear and consistent rules and consequences
- Can make simple choices between two things
- Practicing their words and expression of feelings

Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:

- Pick flowers and berries
- Feel fuzzy leaves
- Play Hide & Seek in the bushes
- Balance on a log
- Run through a field
- Splash in puddles
- Sing silly songs
- Play I Spy

Critters (4 & 5 years old)

Developmental Characteristics:

- Very talkative and enjoy discussion
- Ask a lot of “how” and “why” questions
- Developing classification skills and reasoning
- Working on fine motor skills
- Enjoy a hands-on learning approach

Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:

- Listen to and discuss a story
- Make a tree bark boat and sail it
- Blow dandelion seeds
- Go for a blindfold walk
- Start a rock collection

Discoverers (1st & 2nd grade)

Developmental Characteristics:

- Enjoy doing and exploring
- Wrapped up in self
- Incorporate senses into activities
- Have a short attention span
- Lots of energy
- Can focus on teamwork rather than competition
- Need specific, clear instructions
- Beginning to reason logically
- Enjoy collecting, organizing, and sorting

Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:

- Dig for worms
- Hunt for wild edibles
- Run through sprinklers
- Play organized games
- Go pond dipping
- Gaze at the clouds
- Read a book
- Paint with watercolors
- Make leaf rubbings

Explorers (3rd & 4th grade)

Developmental Characteristics:

- Need recognition & praise for good work
- Have rapidly changing interests
- Enjoy activities that use the whole body
- Easily motivated
- Beginning to define self through accomplishments
- Enjoy imaginative play
- Learning to plan ahead and evaluate
- Starting to consider the perspective of others

Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:

- Make walking sticks and use them
- Go on a nature scavenger hunt
- Go pond dipping
- Have a cookout
- Skip stones at the lake
- Go canoeing
- Play organized games
- Make paper

Trekkers (5th & 6th grade)

Developmental Characteristics:

- Beginning to desire independence
- Very concerned with fairness
- Good listeners
- Like rules and logic
- Prefer new tasks and experiences over reflection
- Developing a more mature sense of right and wrong
- May shrug off responsibility
- Difficulty making decisions
- Developing ideals and selecting role models
- Good with teamwork, but can also be competitive

Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:

- Build a fort with friends
- Go canoeing
- Write a poem
- Build a fire
- Design a tree house
- Paint with watercolors
- Search for wild edibles and make a salad
- Play team building games
- Learn about animal tracks
- Have a relay race

Adventurers (7th & 8th grade)

Developmental Characteristics:

- Capable of abstract thought
- Capable of longer, more active adventures
- Enjoy interacting with peers
- Enjoy solving real-life problems
- Capable of independent, critical ideas

Age-Appropriate Nature Activities:

- Design and construct a garden
- Use GPS units to navigate
- Debate an environmental issue with peers
- Go on a canoeing adventure
- Create a nature challenge for younger kids