



GORDON

**LA VIDA CENTER FOR
OUTDOOR EDUCATION**

STAFF APPLICATION

LA VIDA

ADIRONDACK STAFF POSITIONS

The information listed below on La Vida summer staff positions is designed to assist you in the important decision of serving with the La Vida ministry. Your skill level, physical abilities, leadership capabilities, financial needs and what you will gain from the experience all need to be carefully considered. Along with prayer, we recommend you consult with friends, family, a pastor and/or a Young Life leader for their guidance. It is important that you seek guidance as you consider this service-learning experience.

La Vida is hard work and long hours by anyone's standards. It requires people with a special kind of mature Christian commitment and desire to serve under all sorts of conditions. Living and working in tight quarters and working with other leaders in a service-oriented community are crucial aspects of your La Vida summer experience. Therefore, only those who get along well with others and can be supportive of the overall mission of the program will add to the La Vida ministry. Those chosen to serve on staff will learn many lessons and share great experiences with other staff. We ask and expect a great deal from the La Vida staff, but we believe you will be more than satisfied with what you receive in return.

Because of La Vida's investment of time and effort into our staff's training and development, we ask staff to make a two-summer commitment. We have found that staff who come back for a second summer (does not need to be consecutive) have much more to offer the program and can also help train the new staff members. Returning for a second summer is contingent on each staff member's leadership capabilities and how they fit in with the rest of the La Vida staff.

Traditionally La Vida positions were filled by volunteers who found the training and experience well worth the time and effort. However, since 1984 La Vida has committed to providing a small stipend for each staff person. Due to a limited budget we can only pay part of the stipend, and we ask staff to be responsible for raising the other part of this stipend from friends, family and/or their church. Over the years we have found that God has honored these efforts to raise personal support for ministry. Those who believe in your abilities as a servant of our Lord may be more than happy to support your call to service and contribute to the La Vida ministry.

Stipend ranges are listed with each job description. Each staff member will be asked to send 10 support letters to family, friends, and others in an effort to supplement higher stipend amounts. Support letters, pledge cards and response envelopes are available to assist each staff person in raising this support. All donations will pass through Gordon College so a tax exempt receipt can be issued to each supporter.

LA VIDA STAFF POSITIONS

Please Note: Not all positions may be available at time of application

Program Directors—The program directors are in charge of the training, supervising, mentoring, evaluating and pastoral care of the staff. They are also responsible for program logistics, securing necessary permits, maintaining good public relations with the DEC, managing logistics with the run and resupply, and supervising the ropes course. They work with the summer director in maintaining program paperwork and the office, patrol planning, staff and program evaluation, and organizing the final celebration. In addition, he/she will aid the camp director in all administrative duties and support other aspects of the program as needed. Stipend is \$2,000, commensurate with experience.

Mountaineer—The mountaineer is a position for a seasoned outdoor person who is responsible for the setup, facilitation and safety of all rock climbs, celebration climbs, and all technical equipment used in these activities. In addition, the mountaineer will assist the program directors with other program activities as needed (for example: ropes course facilitation, staff training and evaluation, reconnaissance, resupply, the celebration and run, equipment maintenance and check-in/out). This position can often be combined with the property/equipment manager position. Stipend is \$1,200–1,500, commensurate with experience.

Kitchen Manager—The kitchen manager is the person in charge of all nutritional planning, food purchasing and meal preparation for on-property activities (staff meals, celebration meals in conjunction with trip food manager). In addition to general kitchen maintenance (cleaning, upkeep, meeting Department of Health standards), he/she is also responsible for managing work crew and other support staff personnel in food preparation and cleanup, overseeing the Base Camp kitchen facility, overseeing the final celebration meal and any other aspects of supporting the logistical needs of each La Vida patrol (belaying at the ropes course or rock climbs, resupplies, etc.). Stipend is \$1,200–1,500, commensurate with experience.

Trip Food Manager—The trip food manager is the person in charge of all the nutritional planning, food purchasing, preparation and packaging for all La Vida wilderness trips. He/she is also responsible for maintaining and updating the Microsoft Excel program designed to assist in the purchasing, planning and packaging of trip food. In addition to the above-mentioned duties, the trip food manager will assist the kitchen manager with the celebration meal and keeping the trip food room organized and

under Department of Health regulations. Other aspects of supporting the logistical needs of each La Vida patrol may also be required. Stipend is \$1,200–1,500, commensurate with experience.

Property/Equipment Manager—The property/equipment manager is responsible for maintaining the entire property (landscaping, buildings, restrooms), the ropes course landscaping and property equipment (including vans). The property manager is also responsible for management and supervision of work crew members and the gear shed (i.e., equipment check-in, checkout, inventory, gear repairs). The property manager should have basic carpentry, plumbing and electrical skills. They will also work together with the camp director and program directors in the supervision and training of the support staff. He/she may be asked to support other aspects of the program. This position can often be combined with the Mountaineer position. Stipend is \$1,200–1,500, commensurate with experience.

Support Staff—In addition to the above-mentioned positions, there are also general support staff positions. These people serve in no specific role all the time, but instead fulfill many roles in the various aspects of the program. These tasks include, but are not limited to, belaying at the ropes course and rock-climb sites, assisting in equipment maintenance, food preparation for on and off site, etc. Stipend is \$900–1,500, commensurate with experience.

Sherpa and Assistant Sherpa—The name “Sherpa” is taken from a tribe of Himalayan mountain people who are well-known for their mountain skills, strong legs and spirit of service. La Vida Sherpas are similarly asked to be inspiring servant leaders as they travel with the patrols under their care during summer expeditions. Sherpa responsibilities and pay are determined by the director and program directors through a series of staff training experiences. Stipend is \$900–\$2,200, commensurate with experience.

MAJOR DUTIES FOR THE SHERPAS INCLUDE:

- Being part of the staff community in all aspects of life and ministry
- Taking part in opening camp and training at the beginning of the summer
- Working with the program directors and group leaders in planning for patrols
- Traveling with patrols and instructing on La Vida Expeditions:
 - Working with small groups and cooperating with their leaders
 - Counseling individuals when needed and providing encouragement
 - Instructing participants in general outdoor skills, ecology and first aid
 - Leading Bible studies, group discussions and worship
 - Being a role model in all areas of character development
 - Being responsible for all safety and medical field emergencies
 - Following each group on their finals expedition to assist with any complications
- Working with the program directors in evaluating patrols
- Working periodically in logistical support of other patrols
- Supporting other leaders during their finals or solo periods
- Belaying and helping instruct ropes courses and rock climbs
- Being on call to help with La Vida emergencies or problems
- Participating in work projects when possible

Nehemiah Program (Work Crew)—Going along with La Vida’s philosophy of service learning, this is a volunteer position for high school or college students who have previously participated in La Vida. The work crew position gives past participants the opportunity to come back to serve with the ministry so others may experience La Vida. The Work Crew primarily reports to the kitchen and property managers. The work crew program is a two- to four-week commitment. Contact the La Vida director for more information.

QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

Qualifications of All Staff:

- Mature commitment to Jesus Christ
- Working knowledge of Scripture and basic Christian doctrine
- Connection and participation with an active church
- Completion of one year of college (except work crew)
- Experience or desire to gain experience in leadership
- Good judgment and safety consciousness
- Ability to relate to and work with adults, peers and high school youth
- Strong desire to serve along with ability for flexibility, patience and love
- Strong desire to exemplify Christ-like character in one's everyday, personal life
- Physical health that would allow one to lead wilderness expeditions
- Commitment to work for two consecutive summers

Certifications of All Staff (except Work Crew):

- Valid driver's license
- Social Security card
- Driver's history record (for obtaining a Gordon College van license)
- Gordon College van license (required)
- CPR for the "Professional Rescuer" (American Red Cross)—medical training provided; or CPR "Health Care Provider" (American Heart Association)
- Wilderness Advanced First Aid (Wilderness Medical Associates) or Wilderness First Responder (WMA)—provided during staff training

Responsibilities of All Staff:

- Adhere to all La Vida philosophies, policies and procedures
- Believe and adhere to Gordon College Statement of Faith
- Be a positive representative of La Vida to the public
- Send at least 10 prayer/support letters to family, friends, etc. (to help supplement stipends)

Directions for Application

1. Fill out the staff application
2. Make copies of all pertinent certifications listed above (front and back)
3. Mail or email the application and copies of certifications to:

Nathan J. Hausman
La Vida | Gordon College
255 Grapevine Rd
Wenham, MA. 01984

nate.hausman@gordon.edu

4. Returning staff need not have Staff Recommendation Form completed

LA VIDA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY STAFF OR POTENTIAL STAFF

1. What are the living conditions like?

Men and women will have separate cabins complete with running water and electricity. The cabins have an open floor concept (all beds in one large room with bathroom to the side), which will require flexibility and sensitivity on the part of the entire staff.

2. When will I have days off?

Days off do not occur on a regular basis except for one day off between patrol sessions. We will establish a vacation schedule based on when people are leaving and La Vida's needs.

3. What about dating relationships?

Romantic relationships between a La Vida staff member and a participant are strictly forbidden. Likewise, dating is not encouraged among the staff. In the past, inter-staff relationships have sometimes distracted individuals and negatively affected the La Vida community. Our focus is ministry. But we also realize that feelings for others are bound to occur in such a close community. In those cases we ask the couples to keep their feelings on "simmer" until after their La Vida assignment. In the event that a relationship becomes too exclusive and affects either the ability to serve or the staff community, action will be taken in the interest of preserving an atmosphere of ministry.

4. Do I need all my own equipment?

No. We will loan you what you need, but we would like each Sherpa to invest in their own sleeping bag, foam pad and backpack. We also require you to bring or buy the following items: your own boots, flashlight, match container, water bottles, jackknife, whistle, bug net, foul/warm weather gear, and 100 feet of nylon cord. We have dealerships with about 15 outdoor equipment manufacturers and can get you a wholesale price for all of these items.

5. Can I bring my own vehicle?

Yes. However, the La Vida budget is unable to pay mileage for use of your own vehicle. Gas will be covered when a vehicle is used for program purposes.

6. How much money do I need?

Your room, board and on-site training will be covered by La Vida. You will need money for staff outings (i.e., meals off Base Camp property, entertainment, ice cream, snacks, etc.) and laundry.

7. What about alcohol or tobacco use?

The use of alcohol and tobacco is not permitted except during time off—assuming you are of legal age. No one is allowed to smoke or drink while on the Base Camp property.

8. Can I invite friends and family to visit me?

Guests are welcomed and can visit during certain times of the summer. Guests can stay on the property if they so desire and the facilities are available—conditions are still somewhat rustic. Visits are not to interfere with the needs of the program and trips that are in session. *Please check with the director prior to scheduling a visit.*

9. What will be my mailing address and phone number?

Your Name
c/o La Vida
P.O. Box 219
Lake Clear, NY 12945
518.891.4188 (office phone for emergencies only)

At this time the ministry has only one phone line for program use only. Writing and receiving letters from family and friends are appreciated and encouraged. Email access is available in Saranac Lake, a 15-minute drive from La Vida's Base Camp.

10. Can I commit to a wedding or family vacation during the summer?

A La Vida summer is incredibly full. You can only get away for events like these by informing us at the time of application or during your interview. It will be up to the college director (Rich Obenschain) and the summer director (Nathan Hausman) to determine if La Vida is able to accommodate your request. In some cases it is not possible. The same applies to those with early departure dates.

1. What is the staff stipend scale?

La Vida expects staff to serve for two summers. During the first year of service to La Vida, a staff member can expect to be paid \$900–\$1,400. A returning staff member can expect to be paid \$1,100–\$2,200, depending on the number of years returning. We also require that each staff member send out 10 prayer/support letters to help La Vida supplement increasing stipend amounts. Stipends include payment for leading one College Expeditions trip (May or August). An additional \$300–\$600 can be earned by working both College Expedition trips.

2. What if I raise more than the summer stipend limit?

Stipend guidelines and limits have been established to ensure fairness and to follow federal non-profit regulations. Staff are encouraged to raise an additional \$350 to supplement their summer stipend. This additional money will help La Vida raise the \$20,000 needed in order to pay its share of staff stipends.

3. So I need first aid, CPR, life saving, first responder certification?

Wilderness Advanced First Aid (WMA) or Wilderness First Responder (WMA), and advanced or two-person CPR are minimum certifications required to work La Vida (except work crew). La Vida offers Wilderness Advanced First Aid and Wilderness First Responder Bridge courses during training, but you are expected to be certified in CPR and life saving prior to the summer. A CPR course may be offered during the spring semester.

4. When does the summer begin and can I come early?

The summer training begins at dinner (arrive by 5 P.M.) on the Sunday after the May College Expedition. Oftentimes La Vida needs help opening up camp and supporting the College Expedition. Make a note on your application if you are able and willing to come early to help.

5. When does the summer end and can I leave early?

The summer ends on the Saturday after the fall College Expeditions and two days of cleanup, debriefing, closing up camp and one last meal together. Those who need to leave early must inform us at the time of application or during their interview. It will be up to the college director and summer director to determine if La Vida is able to accommodate requests. Please make sure your request has been cleared prior to signing the contract.

6. What does the summer schedule consist of?

We begin the summer ministry with three weeks of training/preparation that includes medical training, a training trip, and workshops framed around group facilitation, spiritual impact and growth, and other “soft skills.” There are three sessions of eight-, nine-, 10-, and 12-day patrols, as well as the 12-day August College Expeditions.

For more information and detailed job description contact:

Nathan J. Hausman
La Vida | Gordon College
255 Grapevine Road
Wenham, MA 01984
978.867.4111
nate.hausman@gordon.edu
www.gordon.edu/lavida

LA VIDA

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION FOR ADIRONDACK EXPEDITIONS

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name _____
Last First Middle initial Nickname _____

Date of birth _____ Social Security # (for background check) _____

Present address _____
Street City State Zip Until

Day phone _____ Cell phone _____

Email address _____

Permanent address (if different from the above address)

Street City State Zip Until

Day phone _____ Evening phone _____

Position applying for ☐ Summer ☐ College ☐ Both Dates of availability _____

Potential conflicting dates (weddings, etc.) _____

EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND

(for the past three years starting with most current employer)

Employer	Position	Dates	Contact Person	Phone	May We Contact?
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_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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GORDON

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255 Grapevine Road, Wenham MA 01984-1899

T 978 867 4111 F 978 867 4110

www.gordon.edu/lavida

OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE

Purpose: This section is helpful in staff selection, and it also enables La Vida to better determine the needs of our staff training sessions. Please do not feel unqualified if you do not have experience in all wilderness contexts. In the section below, please list your most significant experiences. Attach additional sheets if necessary. **Returning staff need not complete this section.**

Please describe your previous camping, hiking and canoeing experience. Include duration, location and activities involved.

Please describe why you see wilderness education as being an effective ministry tool.

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS

Please list relevant training and certifications below. Please include first aid, CPR, medical certifications, etc.

Course Title	Company and Location	Date Taken	Expiration Date

LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Please list any other qualifications not included above that pertain to the position you are applying for.

NEW STAFF SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS (Returning Staff See Seperate Form)

Write a brief paragraph in response to each of the questions below. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

1. State why you feel called to work and serve with La Vida.
2. What are three leadership traits you see in yourself that could be beneficial to the La Vida ministry?
3. What role do you see the wilderness and nature playing in the development of today's youth?
4. If your friends or family were asked to describe you, how would they do so?
5. When faced with conflict, how do you resolve it?
6. What has been your past experience with La Vida? What did you learn from that experience that you continue to implement today?

7. What is your definition of a healthy, Christian community? How do you see yourself fitting into that?

8. What is one unique gift, talent or special ability you could bring to the La Vida staff?

REFERENCES (Not Needed for Returning Staff)

Included in this packet is a recommendation form. Please distribute three of these forms to people (one may be a relative) who are familiar with your work and have been in a position to evaluate you in areas relevant to working at La Vida. Have each person send the completed recommendation to the address below. Please note that your application is not complete until La Vida receives the application and all three recommendations. Please list the references below:

Name	Address	Phone Number	Relationship
1.			
2.			
3.			

I have reviewed this application thoroughly. The information I have provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that my signature indicates my commitment to La Vida philosophies and policies and my willingness to adhere to them throughout the duration of my employment with the program.

Signature _____ Date _____

The full application must be returned to be considered for employment at La Vida.

Mail this application to:

Nathan J. Hausman
La Vida | Gordon College
255 Grapevine Road
Wenham, MA 01984