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Protecting the natural environment
of the Tongass National Forest and
supporting the development of
sustainable communities within
Southeast Alaska

Position Title: Alaska Way of Life Youth Development Fellow

Host Organization: Sitka Conservation Society (www.sitkawild.org)

Location: Sitka, Alaska

Work type: Full time, temporary

Duration: 12 weeks

Compensation: Paid internship, stipend for travel

The Sitka Conservation Society works to protect the natural environment of the Tongass National Forest, while supporting the development of sustainable communities across Southeast Alaska. We live and work in the coastal town of Sitka, Alaska, *Sheet'ká Kwáan*, and our work reaches broadly across the world's largest intact coastal temperate rainforest. We pursue our mission through the levels of sustainable community development, regional partnerships and programs, national policy advocacy, and storytelling for change. Climate change underscores all of our efforts at SCS. We work to prevent catastrophic change and adapt to the effects that are already upon us by developing projects and policies that shift us away from fossil fuels, while also preparing our communities and youth for the changes in our planet that are now inevitable.

Join our dynamic organization and help support our youth development program, which seeks to connect youth with the natural environment of the Tongass and equip them with the skills needed to thrive on these lands and waters, navigate an uncertain and ever changing future, and advocate for the action needed to address climate change. Your main project will be to support the Alaska Way of Life 4-H project, an experiential place-based afterschool and summer camp program for youth 5-18. Activities with the youth could include but not limited to kayaking, hiking, berry foraging, salmon harvesting and processing, gardening, renewable energy education, and advocacy/organizer training. There is also a communications and outreach component to this work, which could include photography, social media, outreach and education, and written pieces. Your efforts will help cultivate the ability of Southeast Alaskan youth to become leaders that shape the trajectory of our state for years to come.

Duties include:

- Work with a team of co-leaders to successfully engage youth through mentoring them to learn hard and soft skills necessary to safely recreate, forage and live on the Tongass National Forest and model respect for self, place and others.
- Expand your own knowledge in skills and activities needed to thrive in the natural environment of Southeast Alaska, including foraging, harvesting, processing, hiking, outdoor survival skills, mental health skills, etc
- Providing staffing and support for youth afterschool and summer camp programs, including facilitating icebreakers and group games

- Support peer-to-peer learning and connect community members with skill sharing and teaching opportunities
- Preparation of communications materials including PSAs, social media posts, etc for advertising opportunities, and sharing reports, information
- Follow the work plan assignments as outlined by supervisor/project manager and work together with team members and partners

Qualifications/Skills/Required Training:

- Experience in working with youth or young people individually and/or in groups
- Experience in working with youth to optimize behavior, manage risk and group dynamics
- Be open and willing to learn how to guide youth in nervous system regulation ● Train to be a 4-H volunteer once on site, requires a clean background check ● Ability to effectively work with people of diverse backgrounds and an eagerness to build relationships with new people will be important for this role. Experience in community organizing will be helpful.
- Ability to problem solve, work independently, communicate directly, be proactive, and innovate
- Demonstrated ability to create accessible, compelling communication materials ideally in multiple mediums (writing, design, video, graphics, etc.)
- Familiarity and background knowledge of Alaska and environmental policy, especially in the context of natural resource policy, climate policy, social policy, etc. is a plus ● Interest in living with the land, community sustainability, and the diverse Alaska way-of-lives appreciated
- We prefer to hire someone from Alaska or someone who has an ancestral connection or deep love of Alaska
- **Preferred experience in or completed coursework in:** outdoor recreation, therapeutic recreation, experiential education, environmental education, or another field ● Preferred certifications: CPR/AED 1st Aid, Wilderness First Responder, Wilderness First Aid,
- **Preferred experience in or completed coursework in** outdoor recreation, therapeutic recreation, experiential education, environmental education or another related field.

Learn more about our youth programs at https://www.sitkawild.org/community_programs