Job Description

Recreation Specialist

Position Specifications

Job Title
Recreation Specialist

Department
Recreation

Direct Reports
Part-Time Employees and Volunteers

Reports To
Manager of Programs and Special Events

Benefits
Medical, Dental, Vision, PTO, IMRF

Classification
Full-Time

Schedule
Estimated 40 hours per week
Ability to work a flexible schedule
Monday – Friday; will include occasional evenings and weekends based on programming and association business needs

Salary/Hourly Wage
$41,319 - $61, 979

FLSA
Exempt

Job Purpose

The Recreation Specialist uses recreation, leisure, and activity-based interventions to enhance the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social well-being of individuals with disabilities. This role assesses participant needs, develops and implements individualized and program plans, facilitates therapeutic recreational programs, and evaluates outcomes to support functional improvement, independence, and overall quality of life within recreational settings.

Position Qualifications

- Graduate from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in Therapeutic Recreation, Parks and Recreation or related field of study.
- Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist Certification (CTRS) through National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) or Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), or the ability to obtain certification within a timeframe determined by Association policy and/or the Executive Director.
- First Aid/CPR/AED certification required or ability to obtain.
- Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) certification required or ability to obtain.
- Ability to drive Association vehicles and obtain an Illinois Commercial Driver's License (CDL).
- Maintain all required certifications.
- Demonstrate thorough knowledge of the theory and philosophy of therapeutic and community recreation, with a strong commitment to individuals with disabilities. Possess the knowledge and ability to work effectively with individuals with disabilities.
- Ability to assess, plan, develop, implement, and evaluate therapeutic recreation programs.
- Highly motivated, outgoing, and confident self-starter with strong interpersonal and communication skills, both oral and written. Demonstrates leadership qualities, including maturity, flexibility, and professionalism.

- Experience in supervising, training, and evaluating part-time employees, with openness to developing individual organizational and supervisory styles.
- Demonstrates the ability to work independently and collaboratively, brings strong problem-solving skills, and consistently shows reliability, punctuality, and a positive, team-oriented attitude.
- Represent the Association positively to NWSRA Board Members, SLSF Trustees, interns, volunteers, part-time staff, parents/guardians, participants, Member District and school district personnel, and the public.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Plan, develop and implement a variety of programs, including general, clubs, special events, Leisure Education, Winter, Spring and Summer camps, trips/overnights, Lightning Athletics, inclusive placements and cooperative programs, with creativity and enthusiasm.
- Implement behavior management strategies as needed while supporting individual and social skill development, encouraging independence, promoting full participation by adapting activities, and ensuring participants' physical/emotional well-being.
- Serve as a team leader for recreational programs, supervising and evaluating part-time employees and volunteers to promote group cohesiveness.
- Solve complex problems, work efficiently under pressure, and meet deadlines for projects, assignments, and events.
- Select and recommend supplies and equipment while overseeing inventory, cleaning, inspection, restocking, and ongoing maintenance within assigned areas of responsibility.
- Assist in developing clear and concise communication for program staff, part-time employees, parents/guardians, and community and district partners.
- Provide on-call support for programs, addressing urgent participant needs and assisting with coverage, emergencies, or operational needs as required.
- Effectively use phones, computers, tablets, software, and online tools to complete job duties, while preparing, receiving, understanding, and responding promptly to written communications via mail, text, or email.
- Drive Association or personal vehicles for recreation programs, meetings, or Association business.
- Assist with recruitment and outreach efforts by attending job fairs, school career programs, community events, and staff interviews.
- Perform other duties as needed to support the Association's Vision, fulfill the Mission, and uphold NWSRA's Core Values.

Physical Demands

The Recreation Specialist must, with or without reasonable accommodation, be able to perform the following functions:

- Frequently stand, walk, sit, rotate, or feel; reach with arms and hands. The employee must be able to talk, hear, and see (both near and far).
- Gather, load, transport, and set up equipment and supplies.
- Ability to safely lift and transfer loads of up to 75 lbs. or apply up to 40 lbs. of force continuously to move objects.
- Visual acuity required to operate Association vehicles.

Working Conditions

This job operates in a wide variety of environments. The noise level can range from quiet to loud. When working indoors, conditions can include different types of lighting, temperatures, and noise. When working outdoors you may be exposed to different types of weather conditions, heat, humidity, frigid, windy and wet conditions along with a variety of insects. You may encounter various exposures such as pool chemicals, cleaning chemicals, infectious diseases and a variety of elements when driving and programming for the Associations programs or Foundation events.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Equal Opportunity has been, and will continue to be, a fundamental principle at NWSRA, which bases employment upon personal capabilities and qualifications without discrimination because of an individual's actual or perceived race (including but not limited to traits associated with race, such as hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists), color, religion, sex, gender (including gender identity and expression), age, national origin, citizenship status, work authorization status, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, disability, association with a person with a disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, unfavorable discharge from military service or military status, civil union partnership, order of protection status, pregnancy, childbirth or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth, or any other protected characteristic as established by law. Applicants requiring a reasonable accommodation to participate in the hiring process may contact HR at HRteam@nwsra.org.

Job Acknowledgment

I have received, reviewed, and fully understand the job description for the Recreation Specialist. I further understand that I am responsible for the satisfactory execution of the essential functions described therein, under all conditions described.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____