



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Dear LIT Applicants and their Families:

Thank you for your interest in the Leader in Training program. The purpose of this letter is to help prospective LITs and their families understand a little more about the program and our expectations of participants. LITs are in training and are not considered to be staff members during the program, nor are they campers. Instead, they are considered to be in a special and unique category with unique privileges, responsibilities, and requirements. Pricing information for the LIT Program can be found on the LIT application, financial assistance is available.

In order to be considered for this program, applicants must be at least 16 years of age, or entering their junior year of high school in September of 2024. To apply applicants should submit the LIT application form with short essay responses. Once the LIT application form and essay responses have been received by the camp office, the Camp Director, Leadership Director, or designated representative will contact the applicant to discuss the application. Placements will be made on a rolling basis throughout the winter and spring.

LIT applicants can request one of two sessions, each lasting 4 weeks. The first session will take place during the first four weeks of the summer (June 23-July 20, 2024) and the second one will take place during the last four weeks of camp (July 21-August 17, 2024). Although space is limited, we will work very hard to place accepted applicants into one of our two LIT programs. If deposit payment information is provided with your application, we will sign you up and email confirmation materials once you are interviewed and accepted into the program. **Applicants cannot sign up for the LIT program through the normal camper registration form; only the LIT-specific application form will be accepted.**

LITs will participate in workshops and experiences designed to build their leadership ability, increase their skill competency, build their self-esteem, and educate them about the needs of children. The Leader in Training program will be run by the Leadership Director, who will work in conjunction with the camp's administrative team. As part of the program, LITs may go on an adventure trip that includes a hike and a campout along the Appalachian Trail. They may also spend time with the teen leaders at other YMCA camps. They will work together in a variety of team-building activities throughout the program. To develop new skills, they will plan an Evening Program for the entire camp and help with Weekend Programs.

Some of the training topics will include Group Work, Communication, Leadership, Child Abuse Prevention Training, Child Developmental Stages, the Mission of the YMCA, and more.

Each LIT will be assigned to a cabin group. This will allow them to work directly with campers and to learn from counselors and Unit Directors. During this time spent with their cabin groups, they will be in training, but will also be expected to plan an evening devotion session and to run a cabin activity. They may also assist in teaching Coaching Periods. LITs will never have the sole responsibility for supervising a group of campers during their four weeks as an LIT.

Throughout the program, the LITs will be evaluated by their peers and the staff, and will be given feedback to help them become aware of both their strengths and their areas for growth. At the completion of their four-week program, the LITs will leave camp in order for the next leadership program to begin. If we can accommodate volunteers, the staff and administrators may ask LITs who demonstrate outstanding leadership, are highly skilled, and fully represent the YMCA values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility to stay on as Ls (Leaders) during the last four weeks of camp. Because some LITs are placed as Ls, we will conduct criminal offender (CORI) and sexual offender (SORI) background checks on all LIT applicants who are over 17. If an LIT is asked to stay as an L, his or her parent or guardian will be mailed a consent form with a detailed description of the Ls role, which must be signed by both the parent or guardian and the volunteer.

L positions for LITs are not guaranteed and depend on space and availability as well as the evaluation process. If you are not asked to stay on, it does not indicate failure for you, or for the program itself. LITs who are not placed as Ls are welcome to apply for staff positions next summer. Please do not make your summer plans assuming you will be placed as an L. Both the LIT and the parent will be notified of the outcome during the last week of the program. LITs who are not placed as Ls may apply to participate in the LIT program during the second half of the summer at the full cost of the program.

If you have any questions about the program, please email the Assistant Camp Director, Gillian, at gillian@camphirock.org, or call (413) 528-1227 x3006. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I hope you are looking forward to a great summer.

Sincerely,
Gillian Orlando-Milbauer
Assistant Camp Director