

Frequently Asked Questions About Second Nature Wilderness Family Therapy

What qualifications do I need to become a Field Instructor?

Applicants are required to be a minimum of 21 years old, to have a high school diploma or equivalent, and to have current CPR and First Aid certifications. Second Nature will process a Federal Background Criminal Investigation (BCI) of all potential employees, and upon hire dates, all new employees are required to undergo a pre-employment drug test.

Second Nature also asks that Field Instructors make at least a one- year commitment, unless filling out a seasonal contract

It is helpful, but not necessary, to have backpacking experience. Experience working with youth, counseling, or teaching is helpful as well. Second Nature also offers in-house training from which Field Instructors can learn communication skills, crisis interventions, and many more tools that are useful in our work.

How do I apply to become a Field Instructor?

Email your completed application, a resume, one letter of recommendation, and a copy of your current (within the last year) First Aid & CPR (American Red Cross) certifications. The letter of recommendation should be from an academic and/or professional source. You can send the letter with your application and resume, or they can be sent directly to the office by your references. The Recruiter will review your information and contact you to let you know if you qualify to participate in an informal phone interview. If all goes well during the interview, you will be invited to participate in one of our field interview sessions. Sending in all of the application materials in advance will give you a better chance of participating in the interview session that best fits your schedule.

What is the interview session?

The interview is a seven-day period spent mostly in the field, backpacking and learning with other perspective employees. The interview may be both emotionally and physically challenging. You will hike 2 to 10 miles per day over medium to rugged terrain with a backpack the entire week. Second Nature trainers will ask you to be emotionally vulnerable and as uncomfortable as you are willing to be. You also will have the chance to learn about the program experientially. You will participate in role modeling, learning about the program from the perspective of both the student and the Field Instructor. Your trainers will teach therapeutic interventions during the week. These will include communication and interpersonal skills, anger management techniques and how to appropriately confront students' issues. You will learn to use "I Feel Statements" to express feelings, and you will learn the concepts behind the Feeling Statement to be able to teach it to the students.

The training is not a competition with the other trainees, but a time for all to work as a team and interact in a healthy manner. The training is viewed as an interview process where you will be observed within the structure of the program. It is a time for you as a potential employee to “interview” the program as well. Participating in the interview does not guarantee you a job. However, if you have been selected to participate in the interview you have already met some of the requirements and Second Nature has high hopes for you to be hired. At the end of the training session, you will know your employment status.

What is Second Nature designed to do for students?

Second Nature is designed to create an intensive initial impact for students, teach them positive behaviors and communication skills, and integrate strong work habits with effective interpersonal functioning. The beginning of the student’s stay is comprised of teaching the basic lessons of the outdoors, personal responsibility and awareness of how their behavior impacts others and their environment. It also is a foundation for them to build self-esteem based on internal feeling instead of their external world. During the latter phases of the program, students are motivated to move from a state of awareness into a state of action, turning towards positive personal habits and healthy, productive living. The concept of acting positively and taking accountability for personal behaviors instead of living reactively to the external world is emphasized during this phase of the program. The students spend time focusing on teamwork, cooperation, resolving conflicts, inter-personal skills and service.

What kind of students does Second Nature permit into the program?

Second Nature works with students who are thirteen to seventeen years of age. The majority of the students are referred to the program by Educational Consultants who help parents map out the most appropriate plan for their children’s needs. Students participating in the program usually fail to respond to rules, act entitled, have made poor decisions, underachieve or experience a decline in academic performance, have low self-confidence, and/or experience conflict within their families. Some of the emotional behavioral issues are depression, learning differences, oppositional defiant disorder, attention deficit, substance abuse, anger management and inappropriate behavior. The students are carefully screened before entering the program. Those individuals with severe mental illness, who pose a serious threat to others, or who pose a serious threat to themselves are not appropriate for our program.

What are the primary responsibilities for Field Instructors?

The primary responsibility for Field Instructors is to ensure the physical safety of the students. Instructors are there to assist the students’ physical needs first and foremost. Just as important is the Field Instructors’ responsibility of keeping the group environment emotionally safe and enabling the students to discuss sensitive and personal issues. In addition, Field Instructors help to implement the therapeutic plan for each student. This is done by helping students to complete assignments, teaching and role modeling assertive

communications tools, implementing initiative activities, running group therapy sessions, and talking one on one with students.

What are some of the rewards and challenges of the job?

Many people are attracted to the Field Instructor position because of some of the personal rewards associated with it. Field Instructors can connect with each other, Therapists, and Field Directors making significant friendships and healthy working relationships. Field Instructors also can connect with the students, helping them to confront their issues, to communicate appropriately, and to grow. It can be rewarding to be involved in the process of making a positive difference in someone's life. Many Field Instructors also use the therapeutic tools that they teach the students in their own lives. Thus, this job can allow for a good deal of personal growth. Finally, living and working outside for a full week can be a great reward.

This work can also be challenging. The adverse weather can be difficult on both students and staff. The student's struggles can be challenging for staff as well. Due to being pulled from the extreme comfort of their homes and due to the tension created from promoting accountability, the students sometimes voice disappointments and frustration at perceived powerlessness. This can be emotionally trying for new staff as Field Instructors are powerful influences in the student's life.

Where is Duchesne, Utah?

Second Nature is located in Duchesne, a town in Northeastern Utah. It is approximately two hours east of Salt Lake City on Highway 40.

What does the field area look like?

Field Instructors backpack with students in the Uinta Mountains during the summer months and in the high desert near Nine Mile Canyon in the winter months. The elevations range from 4,000 to 11,000 feet. Temperatures in the summer range from the upper nineties to the mid- sixties. Winter temperatures range from the fifties to well below freezing.

What kind of camping do we practice?

Second Nature practices Low Impact Camping, avoiding adversely affecting the environment. Upon signing up to do an interview, potential employees receive more information regarding Second Nature's practices of Low Impact Camping.

What is a Field Instructor's schedule?

The Field Instructor work weeks run from Tuesday to Tuesday. The schedule is eight days on and six days off. The work week begins with an In-Service meeting. The In-Service meeting is a time for all the staff of one rotation to receive information from the Field Directors,

Therapists, and other Field Instructors. Following the meeting, Field Instructors drive to the field to join their group, exchange information with the Field Instructors who have spent the previous week in the field, and then remain in the field until the following Tuesday. At the end of the work week, Field Instructors return to the office, spend a few minutes putting away materials and then they are free to start their six days off.

How much does Field Instructors get paid?

Second Nature has a level system for Field Instructor pay. Each level has increased responsibility and increased pay. Field Instructors begin earning \$127 per day for their first three shifts, also called the Internship. The next three or four shifts are call Level I, and Field Instructors earn \$150.15 per day. Next, Field Instructors move to Level II, and earn \$175 per day. Within nine months it is possible for a Field Instructor to become a Senior Field Instructor and to earn \$210 per day. Within fifteen months it is possible to be a Level 4 and earn \$225.05 per day. Dedicated individuals who make Level 5 Mentor will earn \$249.90 per day.

What kind of benefits do Field Instructors receive?

Medical and dental insurance is offered to all Field Instructors. After one year of employment, Field Instructors may also participate in the company's 401K program. Field Instructors are offered professional gear discounts with certain companies to purchase necessary gear for the field. Second Nature also requires employees to participate in certain training courses for level advancement, such as de-escalation training and some medical training like the Wilderness First Responder (WFR). Second Nature pays for these certifications. Instructors who are married or dating may work together at Second Nature. The couple will spend at least their first three rotations in separate groups in order to facilitate the development for their personal style outside of the relationship. After this time period they can make a request to the Field Directors to work together.

Are seasonal positions or internships available?

Yes, seasonal employment and university internships are available.

Where do most Field Instructors live?

Most Field Instructors live in Salt Lake City, Park City, Provo/Orem area and Moab. Duchesne is only two hours from Salt Lake City and an hour and a half from Park City and Provo. Moab is located about three hours from Duchesne. Because the Field Instructors only have to commute once a week (remember the schedule is Tuesday to the following Tuesday), many live in these areas. We do not provide any living arrangements through Second Nature. Many people find living arrangements with other Field Instructors, sharing apartments with a person on the opposite schedule or renting a house together. Second Nature has a staff bulletin board and a staff Internet site where Field Instructors can post the need for housing or roommates.

How do Field Instructors spend their time off?

Finding adventures in Utah is easy to do. Nine Mile Canyon is located one hour south of Duchesne, and is the home of some of the most amazing petroglyphs left by the Fremont Indians. Just an hour and a half away from Duchesne, Rock Canyon and American Fork Canyon are a climber's dream. Joe's Valley, located near Castle Dale, is also a great place for both climbers and boaters. The Uinta Mountains are the only major range in the lower 48 states which runs east and west, and they are the home of the highest peak in Utah at 13, 528 feet. The Uintas are a great place for anglers, backpackers, and hikers. Moab offers itself as a base camp for the extraordinary southeastern Utah National Parks such as Arches and Canyonlands. It also offers river trips, bicycle excursions, hikes, marathons and mountain biking festivals. In the winter months, Utah is the home of some of the best skiing and snowboarding on earth, both backcountry and resort. Some of the resorts include Snowbird, Park City, Alta, Brighton, Solitude, Canyons and Deer Valley. A little farther away, but easily within driving distance during a six day off week, are Montana, Wyoming and Colorado, with more great skiing and National Parks like Yellowstone and the Tetons.

To dabble in some cultural activities, Salt Lake City and Park City are the places to be. The Utah Symphony, Sundance Film Festival, summer concerts at the Red Butte Gardens and Gallivan Center, ballet, opera or modern dance performances are all available cultural activities. Restaurants are abundant and diverse, ranging anywhere from Vietnamese to Tibetan to Italian and American.

What if I have more questions?

If you have any other questions about the Field Instructor position, or if you are interested in applying to work as a Field Instructor, please call the Second Nature Recruiter at: 435-738-2040, or preferably by email: recruiter@second-nature.com
