



# Ann Arbor YMCA Camp Al-Gon-Quian Counselor-in-Training Program

Dear CIT Applicant and Parent,

Thank you for your interest in Camp Al-Gon-Quian's Counselor-in-Training (CIT) Program. The purpose of this letter is to help both the applicant and the parent understand more about the program, and our expectations of the CITs.

## Eligibility

In order to be considered, applicants must have completed the tenth grade. We suggest that applicants have completed the AGQ Leaders-in-Training Program or have previous experience working with children. While it is not required, we suggest applicants are 16 or 17 years old. We do accept 15 year old CITs, but we require Junior Counselor (paid full-summer staff members) to be 17. Therefore, 15-year-old CITs in 2010 will be eligible for the volunteer CIT II program in 2011 but not for hire as a Junior Counselor until 2012.

## CIT Program Schedule

The counselor in training program takes place throughout the summer coinciding with regular camper sessions. CITs must participate in all days of the CIT session. CIT applicants have the opportunity to request sessions on the CIT application. Please double check that the applicant is available for all requested sessions, as after placement is completed changes rarely can be accommodated.

CIT Session A (Sessions 1 & 2): June 26 – July 17

CIT Session B (Session 3): July 17 – July 31

CIT Session C (Session 4): July 31 – August 14

CIT Session D (Sessions 5 & 6): August 14 – August 28

Are you ready to be a CIT? Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I have a sincere desire to work with children?
- Would I like the opportunity to develop and improve my leadership ability?
- Do I enjoy learning in a hands-on environment?
- Is an out-of-doors work experience right for me?
- Am I ready to become a role model for younger children?
- Can I handle the responsibility of being a camp counselor?
- Am I ready to put campers' needs ahead of my own?
- Am I ready to create camp magic?
- Do I have the ability to work well with others in a variety of situations?

If you have answered yes to the above questions, then the CIT program may be an opportunity for you to gain valuable experience in a fun-filled environment.

## CIT Program Information

The CIT Program offers countless opportunities to interact with children, lead activities and participate in camp programs. The majority of Camp Al-Gon-Quian's current staff members completed both the Leaders-in-Training and the Counselor-in-Training programs. Participants speak fondly of the life skills gained, opportunities offered and guided support throughout their time as a CIT.

CITs fulfill many different roles at Camp Al-Gon-Quian. CITs must have a sincere desire to work with children, a wish to give back to the camp community, a strong work ethic, lots of energy and creativity, a positive attitude and the ability to put children's needs ahead of their own.

### Training

The objective of the CIT program is to better prepare the participants for future work with children, in or out of the camp setting. This is done through hands on experiences, guidance from staff members and, of course, pre-camp training and on-site workshops. Training and workshops in the spring will cover ice breakers and games, child abuse awareness and prevention, positive discipline techniques, child development stages, the mission and philosophy of Camp Al-Gon-Quian, camp operation, homesickness and much more. All CIT volunteers must attend one CIT workshop before their session.

### Working at Camp

CITs will live in a cabin with a senior counselor as a co-counselor. The CIT will be an apprentice to this staff member, learning how to care for campers in every aspect from waking campers up in the morning to rest hour responsibilities, cleanliness of the cabin and campers, to evening cabin time and putting the children to bed. CITs are usually placed in cabins with campers no older than entering 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

During the day, CITs will participate in two portions of the program, dishing and activity areas. Three to four CITs will be assigned dish duty per week. During their time dishing, CITs have some free time during the day to relax, shower or sleep. While not on dish duty, CITs will be assigned to work in activity areas. During their time in each area, CITs will learn how to run the given activity and teach the skills to campers. CITs will select a "concentration" activity area where they will consistently work, as well as have the chance to try different areas.

Program participants will also help the store manager in the camp store during free time and free swim. CITs will be involved in planning evening activities and will participate in evening activities as staff or as leaders for younger cabins. CITs will be responsible for helping put campers to bed and in evening cabin time, devotions or other bedtime activities. The curfew for CITs is 11:30 p.m., and they will sign in before bed as all staff members do.

### Time Off

CITs receive two nights off during their time at camp. One evening off is out of camp and one is on camp. The night off camp usually consists of a dinner out, window shopping in downtown Petoskey or a movie. CITs will be accompanied by the CIT leaders, but will be given free time while in Petoskey with prearranged meeting times and places. Usually on the night off that occurs on camp, CITs have a campfire, order pizza or watch a movie. This time is set aside for CITs to relax, have a break from work and to enjoy the company of other CITs.

### Challenges of the CIT Program

The CIT program is challenging for young people on many levels. First, it takes a large amount of energy to complete all of the daily tasks and responsibilities of a CIT and maintain a positive attitude. Second, it is a transition time. Participants are no longer campers and must be willing to be a constant role model, placing the campers' needs in front of their own. And third, the CIT program participants often become future staff members. While this is a positive and exciting aspect of the program, it often leads to the CIT program becoming competitive. We want every participant to have a positive experience at Camp Al-Gon-Quian; therefore, we challenge each CIT to push him or herself with achieving personal goals in their work with children rather than focusing on a competitive edge for future hiring.

## Application Process

Step One: CIT applications must be returned to the camp office by February 15, 2010. To ensure your application will be considered, have your three references return the Confidential Reference Forms to the Ann Arbor YMCA by February 15. Please do not use family members as references. Teachers, coaches, mentors, religious leaders and employers are all excellent choices.

Step Two: Group interviews will be conducted the weeks of March 8-12 and March 15-19 at the Ann Arbor YMCA. A staff member will contact the CIT applicant during the week of February 15 to set up an interview time.

Step Three: Placement decisions will be based on the application, interviews, reference forms and, if applicable, the suggestions of the 2009 LIT staff members and the applicant's history at Camp Al-Gon-Quian. Placement decisions will be made the last week of March and placement notification for all applicants will come in the mail the week of April 5. If you haven't heard anything as late April approaches, be sure to let us know.

Please be aware that space is limited and not everyone who applies will be accepted into the CIT program. In order to maintain a high-caliber program and offer adequate opportunities to meet our goals, Al-Gon-Quian must maintain a manageable and appropriately sized program. Counselor-in-Training is a volunteer position and accepted applicants will not receive payment. Volunteering in the counselor in training program does not guarantee a future position at Camp Al-Gon-Quian.

It is our hope that all applicants to the Counselor-in-Training program gain valuable experience in the job application and interview process, and that all of our Counselors-in-Training at camp gain skills that are applicable not only to being a camp counselor but to other aspects of their lives. Thank you for applying to be a Counselor-in-Training and please do not hesitate to call or e-mail me if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Sarah Kurtz  
Director, Camp Al-Gon-Quian  
Ann Arbor YMCA  
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[camping@annarborymca.org](mailto:camping@annarborymca.org)



# Ann Arbor YMCA Camp Al-Gon-Quian Counselor-in-Training Program Application

Deadline for applications is February 15, 2010

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age as of 6/10: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Which communication form is best? Email  Cell Phone  Home Phone

I will be entering \_\_\_\_\_ grade in the fall of 2010 at \_\_\_\_\_ school

I participate in the following extracurricular activities: \_\_\_\_\_

I have attended Camp Al-Gon-Quian for \_\_\_\_ years.

Please list any other camps you have attended: \_\_\_\_\_

I have completed at least one session of the LIT program at Camp Al-Gon-Quian Yes  No

If no, I plan to complete at least one session of the LIT program (summer 2010) prior to the session I am applying for as a CIT Yes  No

CIT Shirt Size  Small  Medium  Large  X-Large  XX-Large

**List certifications that you hold, or courses you are currently taking that would be useful at camp (e.g. First Aid, Lifeguarding, etc.). Please send a photocopy of these cards with your application.**

**Please designate your first, second and third choice of sessions.** Please include any sessions/dates that you would not be available.

CIT Session A	Session 1+2	June 26 – July 17	_____
CIT Session B	Session 3	July 17 – July 31	_____
CIT Session C	Session 4	July 31 – August 14	_____
CIT Session D	Session 5+6	August 14 – August 28	_____

If you have specific reasons to your requests of sessions, please write them below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Activity Area Interests

Please place a 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 on the line before each activity using the following criteria.

- 1- An activity I believe I can organize and teach as an expert
- 2- An activity I believe I can assist in teaching
- 3- An activity I believe I can participate in
- 4- An activity I am interested in learning about
- 5- An activity I am not interested in

## Waterfront Activities

- \_\_\_ Swimming
- \_\_\_ Canoeing
- \_\_\_ Sailing
- \_\_\_ Waterskiing
- \_\_\_ Free Swim
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Creative Arts

- \_\_\_ Wood Working
- \_\_\_ Writing Poetry
- \_\_\_ Newspaper Publication
- \_\_\_ Dance
- \_\_\_ Creative Writing
- \_\_\_ Drama
- \_\_\_ Painting
- \_\_\_ Lanyard/Friendship Bracelet Making
- \_\_\_ Candle Making
- \_\_\_ Sketching/Drawing
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Miscellaneous

- \_\_\_ Song Leading
- \_\_\_ Assembly Leading
- \_\_\_ Story Telling
- \_\_\_ Evening Activities
- \_\_\_ Large Group games
- \_\_\_ Name Games
- \_\_\_ Devotion Leading
- \_\_\_ Yoga/Meditation
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Outdoor Adventures

- \_\_\_ Archery
- \_\_\_ Riflery
- \_\_\_ Wall/Rock Climbing
- \_\_\_ Zip Line
- \_\_\_ Basketball
- \_\_\_ Volleyball
- \_\_\_ Disc Golf
- \_\_\_ Lacrosse
- \_\_\_ Tennis
- \_\_\_ Nature
- \_\_\_ Hiking
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Barn

- \_\_\_ English Riding
- \_\_\_ Grooming
- \_\_\_ Western Riding
- \_\_\_ Feeding
- \_\_\_ Ground Lessons
- \_\_\_ Trail Rides
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Camping

- \_\_\_ Overnight Campout
- \_\_\_ Fire Building
- \_\_\_ Outdoor Cooking
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### IMPORTANT – PLEASE NOTE

After receiving your completed application packet, including reference forms, a staff member will contact the CIT applicant for an interview. If accepted, the CIT will be mailed materials for the program. This will contain very important information for **both participant and parent to read, fill out and sign.** Participation in the CIT program **does not guarantee future employment at YMCA Camp Al-Gon-Quian or the Ann Arbor YMCA.**

## Parent Agreement:

I have read and understand the CIT application letter and understand that my child is applying for a volunteer position. I agree to have my child apply to Camp Al-Gon-Quian's CIT program, his or her participation in a group interview, and, if hired, participation in the CIT training and program.

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Short Answer Questions

**Working with children is a unique and challenging experience. It can create a variety of feelings and questions within yourself and your life. Because of this, being aware of your own feelings is an essential part of the role of counselor in training. The following questions will give you the opportunity to think about some of your previous experiences. Please think about these carefully and share your thoughts with us.**

1. If you participated in the Camp Al-Gon-Quian Leaders-in-Training program, please answer the following questions. If, skip ahead to question 2.
  - a. What was your personal highlight of the LIT program?
  - b. What lessons did you learn as an LIT?
  - c. In what ways did your LIT experience prepare you for the CIT program?
  
2. If you did not participate in the Camp Al-Gon-Quian Leaders-in-Training program, please answer the following questions. If you answered question 1, skip ahead to question 3.
  - a. Please tell us about a time you had a role as a leader.
  - b. What is the most valuable life lesson you have learned recently?
  - c. What makes you a good candidate for the CIT program?
  
3. In your opinion, why does Camp Al-Gon-Quian provide the CIT program?
  
4. There are many options for high school students during the summer. Why do you want to be a CIT?
  
5. If your CIT session were to start tomorrow, what things would you feel most confident in and why? Least confident?
  
6. We have a diverse community at camp. How will you foster a sensitive, open, honest and accepting community among campers and staff?
  
7. Please give us an example of a time when you had to put someone else's needs ahead of your own.
  
8. Please give us an example of a time when you had to "make your own fun" by inventing a game, activity, thing to do or adventure with few materials, supplies or guidance.
  
9. Tell us about an adult (other than your parent/s) who has impacted your life.