MITZVAH CORPS
Hands-on Social Justice Service Programs for Teens
633 Third Avenue, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10017
212.650.4071
mitzvahcorps@urj.org
www.mitzvahcorps.org

Program Director – Mitzvah Corps Nicaragua

Job Description & Responsibilities

Mitzvah Corps is the premier residential social action program for Reform Jewish teens. Working with Mitzvah Corps gives you the opportunity to facilitate and experience direct-service social action and to work with our brightest and most passionate Reform Jewish young adults. Participants engage in daily hands-on social action experiences while creating a vibrant, inclusive, and supportive Jewish community. The evenings and weekends are devoted to exciting social programs, spending quality time getting to know the communities in which they are living and working, and engaging in deep learning, worship experiences, and group volunteer opportunities.

The success of each program relies on a strong, caring, and enthusiastic staff team. While each position is responsible for specific aspects of the program, there are also a wide variety of general staffing responsibilities. Mitzvah Corps provides a holistic, immersive, Jewish service learning experience, and as such, all components of our program must be handled with care and intentionality. The details of the staffing responsibilities are outlined below.

Responsibilities of All Staff

Every staff member is responsible for overseeing the emotional, physical, and mental health, happiness, and wellbeing of the participants. With the exception of designated time off, they are "on duty" 24/7. They are expected to contribute equally to both social and educational programming, and approach both structured and unstructured program time with intentionality and purpose, ensuring that Mitzvah Corps and Reform Jewish values are prevalent throughout the experience. Specific responsibilities include:

- Ensure all health and safety policies and procedures are being adhered to
- Spend time each day with the teens at their volunteer sites; if applicable, alternate between visiting each site in one day for brief periods of time, and spending a full day with a particular site
- Be available to all participants, and maintain awareness of their emotional and physical needs
- Create and implement educational programming that gives appropriate Jewish context to the hands-on work that is accomplished during designated volunteering time
- Create and implement a unique variety of *t'filah*, prayer, experiences for Shabbat and weekday services, both in conjunction with local congregations if available, as well as independently
- Create and implement structured social programming, both off- and on- site; giving participants the opportunity to build community in an informal yet deliberate way
- Contribute to the program's social media presence on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook
- Create content for the Mitzvah Corps Blog; take photos and videos to be shared with parents and stakeholders
- Uphold the integrity of the living space by contributing to household responsibilities such as cooking, shopping, cleaning, and maintaining organized common living spaces
- Share in "on call" responsibilities, being the emergency contact for parents
- Other duties as assigned

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Responsibilities of Program Director

The Program Director is the most senior-level staff member on site. They are ultimately responsible for the health and safety of all participants and staff, are the liaison between our partner organizations who are coordinating all volunteering and logistics, oversee all educational and social activities, and communication with Mitzvah Corps Coordinators, parents, vendors, and other key stakeholders. Specific responsibilities include:

- Ensure all health and safety policies and procedures are being adhered to
- Direct supervision and management of on-site program staff team
- Communicate with CASE guides prior to program
- Communicate with families and parents before and during program; includes written and oral communication, both formally conveying necessary program information as well as informally answering questions, reaching out to collect outstanding paperwork, and more
- Ensure high standards of programming are upheld throughout all educational and social programs
- Ensure that Mitzvah Corps and Jewish values are present and intentionally addressed throughout all aspects of the program, including volunteering, structured education programs, and social community-building time
- Oversee program finances, includes:
    - Manage program budget, outside of organized expenses (taken care of by partner organizations)
    - Responsible for program credit card
    - Responsible for keeping receipts and sending credit card logs to Mitzvah Corps Coordinators
- Oversee all housing logistics, includes:
    - Communication with housing/hotel manager
    - Responsibility of maintenance of housing accommodations
    - Oversight of participant housing assignments
- Oversee all volunteer site logistics, includes:
    - Communication with site contacts if necessary
    - Gather necessary volunteer waivers from sites to send to families and recollect
    - Pre-program visits with each site during staff week
    - Ensure health and safety at each site
    - Communicate specific packing list items or dress code for each site to participants and families
    - Ensure each site provides appropriate, relevant, and meaningful work for participants
- Ensure that volunteering and logistics provided by partner organizations are aligned with Mitzvah Corps values and standards, and step in as necessary
- Send daily participant reports to Mitzvah Corps Coordinators
- Communicate daily with Mitzvah Corps Coordinators

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Required Experience of Program Director

- Experience as a leader in an immersive Reform Jewish setting, preferably a URJ or NFTY summer program, or a congregational youth group
- Experience in a position responsible for health and safety in a residential setting
- Experience in creating and implementing meaningful informal Jewish education programming for teens
- Experience supervising staff teams
- Experience in volunteerism, *tikkun olam*, and service learning participation or education preferred
- Additional experience in the field of the particular program's volunteer focus preferred

Required Skills of Program Director

- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Energy and enthusiasm
- Flexibility
- Ability to build and maintain appropriate relationships with teenagers
- Ability to lead in a collaborative team environment
- Ability to take initiative
- Ability to remain calm and make swift decisions in emergencies
- Ability to provide ongoing positive and constructive feedback, and facilitate professional growth, of program staff

Additional Required Skills

- Must be at least 25 years of age
- Possess a valid driver's license and ability to work legally in the United States
- Able and willing to drive teenage participants
- Function successfully on little sleep

We can be reached at any time at mitzvahcorps@urj.org or 212.650.4071. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us, and we look forward to hearing from you!

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