

February 10, 2011

Kim Laizer
Mentor Teacher
Yosemite Institute
P.O. Box 487
Yosemite, CA 95389

Dear Ms. Laizer,

I am excited to apply for a position as Field Educator with the Yosemite Institute. My experience teaching for Stanford's Earth Systems Program, mentoring youth with Camp Kesem, and leading with Stanford Outdoor Education (SOE) make me a great fit for the position. My bachelor's degree in Earth Systems (ES) has versed me in a range of science disciplines, and my ES master's degree in science communication and education prepared me to apply my science background to teaching. My master's adviser Dr. Nicole Ardoin speaks highly of the work done at Yosemite Institute and I am excited about the opportunities you offer. I am confident my skills in leadership, curriculum development, organization, and outdoor education make me a strong candidate for a Field Educator position.

My involvement in SOE developed my skills in outdoor leadership, risk management, and group facilitation. These experiences were enhanced by my experiences as an outdoor leadership counselor and coordinator for Camp Kesem, a one-week overnight camp for children whose parent has or had cancer. Camp Kesem showed me the power of using the outdoors as a context for cultivating connections and fostering leadership, particularly for youth. Mentoring students in the outdoors has made me adept at leading a group with diverse backgrounds and tailoring programming to fit their needs. I am eager to apply my experiences to a position as Field Educator and to continue growing as a leader, mentor and outdoor educator.

My position as a Head Teaching Assistant (TA) for the Earth Systems Program enhanced my skills in group management, curriculum development and communication. I co-managed a team to create a cohesive curriculum based on diverse topics for Earth Systems 10 (ES10), an introductory science course. We designed and delivered unique teaching materials and assessments, communicated with professors, organized logistics and taught weekly sections. For Senior Seminar I worked one-on-one with seniors to develop their communication and presentation skills. This management experience along with my communication and organization skills, prepared me to work effectively as part of your teaching team.

I understand that Yosemite Institute provides students with the powerful opportunity to interact with the outdoors in a meaningful way. I would be honored to participate in the challenging and rewarding work of facilitating such experiences for young people from around California. Thank you for considering my application for the position of Field Educator. I look forward to hearing from you regarding the interview process.

Sincerely,

Gina Lappé