March 25, 2011

Yosemite Institute

Field Educator

To Kim Laizer,

As a graduate in biology from Muhlenberg College with research experience in ecology and marine biology, I believe will be an asset to your team at the Yosemite Institute. My interest in conservation biology began early in my college career and only strengthened as I completed several research projects in the San Juan Islands off the coast of Washington state. I was able to learn about the special natural history of the area, work with a variety of team members to successfully complete logistically difficult projects and give many presentations to visiting school groups on our research. These experiences gave me the knowledge and perspective to successfully tackle projects in many different environments.

More recently I have been working for a non-profit organization in the mountains of western Maine called Maine Huts and Trails. During the past two winters I have lived and worked in a remote group setting with co-workers, I wrote the staff manual for future hut staff and gave many educational presentations on our conservation practices, green energy systems and on the natural history of western Maine. This experience has made me more conservation minded, a more effective leader and given me experience teaching and leading discussions with both children and adults.

During my many years teaching swimming lessons, I especially loved working with kids. I have worked with children of all ages, from infants to teenagers, as well as children with physical and mental disabilities, plus lots of terrified toddlers and energetic pre-teens. I have found that working with children has tremendous rewards, particularly during those first independent stokes, or that first spark of understanding. This position would be a great way to for me to blend my love of biology with my adventurous nature and my passion for connecting people with nature.

For several years now I have been taking some time to enjoy the outdoors and explore new and interesting places. I have spent a year working and traveling in New Zealand, two winters in the mountains of western Maine, and I have hiked two long distance trails, the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail. These experiences have made me a strong, passionate and dedicated individual and have equipped me with navigational skills, extensive backpacking experience and a passion for the outdoors. Backpacking and being in the outdoors has enriched my life in countless ways and I would like the opportunity to share that experience with others.

Working for the Yosemite Institute would be great fit for me because non-traditional outdoor education is an area of high interest to me, I have lifeguarding, teaching and natural history experience and I am a high energy person. I know I can bring a lot of hard work and enthusiasm to your team so please consider me for an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Marianne Cataldo