

applicant number	applying for	preference
4	Discovery Counselor	Discovery

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO REAPPLY?

As amazing as my first experience with Dawg Camp was, I still believe my journey has just begun. I was debating whether or not I should reapply because of the time commitment, being overwhelmed with too many campers, and being afraid I would not be able to make meaningful relationships with all the students I have a duty to mentor. I was at the niche with one of my connectors from SGA last year as well as a dawg camper, so my mentees could get to know each other and bond over my relationship with them. They both literally got on their knees in the middle of the Niche dining hall to beg me to be a counselor again! Sometimes it's hard for you to see certain things in yourself that others see clearly. My kids reminded me that I have a knack for making people feel special and seen. My love of first years and my commitment to their success was reminded to me and I would be insulting my passion of helping students acclimate to the university if I didn't take every opportunity I could. Recently I have been having a few conversations with other DC17 staff members to reminisce about our experiences, and they have reminded me that I took a lot of things for granted. Whether they be relationships I didn't commit myself to fostering, lengths I wasn't willing to go to, or issues I was afraid to address, I definitely did not reach anywhere close to my full potential. I've been playing a lot of catch up trying to get close to members on staff and learn from their camp experiences, but I should have put in the effort last semester to solidify those relationships. I now truly see the value of every second you spend with DC, and the friendships that I've developed after Discovery have inspired me to give next semester my all. The final reason I've decided to reapply is because there were multiple instances throughout the training period members of staff showed a lot of signs and sentiments that I would not do well at Discovery, that they were scared for me, and that they even thought I was going to cause a scene/incident at camp. These sentiments stemmed from people who didn't really know who I was and only saw me as a loud extroverted dude. My confidence has never wavered more than last semester, and I feared any kind of failure so that their words wouldn't come through. I felt like I couldn't be myself, had to be overly cautious, and that I had to prove myself. Not only did this stunt my growth, but it really made me feel not worthy of the title I was given up until after discovery. I want to instill faith and confidence into every new counselor and help make them feel more welcomed and trusted in.

THREE WAYS YOU PLAN TO STEP UP AS A RETURNER

The top three ways I plan on stepping up are to help create a truly cohesive environment, instilling faith into the other counselors, and ramping up our recruitment game. One of the qualities I am proud to possess is the fact that I give everyone the benefit of the doubt. Someone will have to cross/betray me around 15 times before I actually will feel uncomfortable around them. I recognize people mess up and their impact does not always equal their intent, but I truly believe lessons can be learned at any time. Instead of cutting ties, I prefer to have a conversation and share my thoughts so they can be more understanding. Also to help the cohesiveness of the group, I will go into ultimate DAD mode. At my 21st birthday for half the night I just introduced my friends to each other and made them get to know one another. I thrive in awkward situations where I don't know people cause it gives me a chance to be goofy and break the tension while also making awesome memories with new friends. As mentioned in the essay question prior, I had bad experiences with DC17 where fellow staff made me feel like I was pitied into getting the counselor position, and that I would have issues during discovery, and those words truly hurt me. Something I really want to hold myself to is letting all staff, new or old, that they deserve to be in this space, they are going to make memorable lasting impacts, and that I have complete and utter faith that they will shine and excel in this position. Sometimes these words might have been implied by other awesome counselors, but sometimes you really have to hear them to restore your confidence. Lastly I want to completely change what recruitment looks like. First of all I want everyone to feel responsible for recruiting not

just the committee, and I want everyone to go beyond their high school and Facebook friends. I want to help lead trips to areas that don't send a lot of people to UGA let alone college like the Appalachian, western, and south eastern areas of Georgia. To actually show incoming first years out commitment to their success as well as reach out to people we don't have direct contact with. The kids coming from these areas arguably need a mentor the most and a simple Facebook message is not going to get them excited.

EXAMPLES OF JUSTIFICATION

Some moments I was really proud of myself for doing this year were creating the persona of Farmer Ed, aiding the FYE committee, helping out Leadership Team during the summer before Discovery, and building the castle for the Silver Color Group room. So when I created farmer Ed I was legitimately just trying to wear silver clothing and not look like a crayon. Little did I know my persona was indirectly making other campers from other small groups feel better about being themselves and showing their color group spirit. I guess when they saw my notorious overalls and hat to match, campers felt no shame in expressing themselves and letting their personalities shine. I hope that if I have the opportunity to be on the DC18 staff, my personality would inspire camper and other staff members to be the best versions of themselves. As a part of the FYE committee I truly saw the value of post-camp engagement. And even though our video didn't get created, and the dawg camp dance also wasn't able to happen, I know I did my best to gas up my campers as well as others to really show out and make new friends and take advantage of the learning opportunities the FYE committee helped create. By attending every event that didn't conflict with my job schedule, and personally dragging my campers to events, I know I did my best to make the camp experience last longer than the summer. I happened to have a lot of free time this summer, so I came up to Athens 3 weeks before Discovery to see if I could make better use of my time than I was at home. It was awesome to get closer to LT while helping here and there with special programs and recruitment. While I was there early for camp, I knew that the Silver Color Group room had to be the most lit on FFA's campus, and since our theme was game of thrones, I knew our castle had to be epic. Working on silver props with other counselors that were there earlier really gave me an awesome time to bond with my color group and create awesome decorations at the same time.
