

applicant number	applying for	preference
6	Discovery Counselor	Discovery

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO REAPPLY?

Everyone's transition from high school to college is different. Some handle the transition with ease, and thrive in their newfound college environment, while others are not so lucky. Some have trouble making friends, some with finding their place.

Dawg Camp counselors serve as a support system for these students, giving students someone that they can turn to when they need, a shoulder to cry on, and a friend. When these issues arise, as they did for me, Dawg Camp counselors can step in so that everything can be better. While the Dawg Camp counselors are there, they will not just magic away issues and problems. They are there for the long haul, so that their campers will not only have a mentor by their side, but also a friendship that will be an asset to them in the future. I want to be able to give back to students at this university through the very program that was there for me.

For example, one of my campers was recently having issues with their anxiety and the classes they are taking, and wanted to drop one of those classes. They however didn't know how to talk with their parents about it, considering mental health was not something that they had discussed with them much before. I was able to help my camper navigate this situation, and put themselves in a better place. That is why I am reapplying to be a Dawg Camp counselor, so that I can selflessly help other people so that they might be in a more positive place in their life.

In addition, I want another pass at being a counselor because while I did a good job as a counselor, there are things that I would like to do differently a second time around. Some are things I would like to place more emphasis on and also some are things that I saw other counselors do that I thought were fantastic ideas. I would like to bring these things together in my approach to counseling so that I can more effectively serve my campers in my capacity as a Dawg Camp counselor.

THREE WAYS YOU PLAN TO STEP UP AS A RETURNER

Firstly, I will work to intentionally foster an inclusive community dynamic with the staff, making a point to initiate social interactions early on so that people are more comfortable with one another and so that as a whole the staff is functioning as a tight knit community. This tends to happen naturally as the trainings go on but I will make a point to try and focus on this, similar to how you focus on intentionally developing relationships with your campers at and after Dawg Camp. This makes it easier for people to step outside of their comfort zone, as weird as that sounds.

Secondly, I am aware of how being a returning member of staff means that I will be a mentor and role model for some of the members of staff. I will keep this in mind, and make a point to model good behavior and focus on supporting and developing my fellow staff members as we go on this journey together. This is a more passive thing on my part but something I need to be considerate of, especially in the context of my behavior during trainings.

Thirdly, I will take a more active role in supporting my color group leader in regards to the planning of things related to our color group as a whole. This last year on staff I was very passive in regards to things related to our color group but I am looking forward to putting in more time and effort in regards to color group related matters.

EXAMPLES OF JUSTIFICATION

I am very comfortable putting myself out there to intentionally work on and develop relationships with people, something that is a benefit in regards to me being a counselor. I also try to be very aware in social situations of people being excluded, and make a point to include those people if they seem to be on the fringe of the group. This is something I consistently make an effort to do, because nobody deserves to be alone.

I also take being a counselor very seriously, and spent several hours outside of trainings going over and reviewing the facilitation guides so that I would be prepared enough when the camp actually happened. I also communicated with my co-counselor often about things that we needed to work on or if there were issues we needed to address.

Finally I do not view the relationship between my campers and me as based on whether or not all of my campers are close friends with one another or if they all hang out with one another. What I do focus on is my individual relationship with each one of them, taking time to make sure that they are doing ok and seeing if they need anything. This is incredibly important, as it can be very easy to give up on reaching out to them, but the fundamental end goal of Dawg Camp is to make their transition into college as smooth as possible, and you can best enable that in most cases by serving as an upperclassmen they can turn to for advice and support.
