



# Irons Oaks Environmental Learning Center

Education

Recreation

Adventure

Dear Interested Junior Counselor and Family,

We are excited to welcome you to the application process for the summer of 2018 Junior Counselor program with Irons Oaks. This summer promises to be an exciting one filled with learning, growth and new experiences!

Applications are accepted from students entering the 9-12 grades. In this packet there are several forms that need to be filled out and returned before you will be considered for this volunteer-based program. It is important that you, the applicant, fill out all the forms. All applicants will have a formal interview.

- **Application:** Fill out this form completely. Any supervisors, coaches or teachers are acceptable as references.
- **Summer Availability:** List the days you are typically available to volunteer. Junior Counselors must be available for a full day from 8:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Junior Counselors commit to one to two days per week.
- **Skills Assessment:** Don't feel overwhelmed by the number of skills listed. Answer these honestly and realistically. This gives us a place to build off of while you're volunteering with the Oaks.
- **Volunteer Waiver and Release:** This must be returned, signed by your parent/legal guardian.

You will also need to submit with your application packet a **250 word minimum essay** stating why you want to be an Irons Oaks Junior Counselor.

**Completed applications are due by 4:30 pm on Tuesday, May 15, 2018.**

If you are selected for summer participation in our Junior Counselor program, there will be a question and answer meeting for you and your parents. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me.

We are very excited to have your interest in this program and I look forward to meeting you for a more formal interview!

Sincerely,

Cheryl Vargo  
Manager of Irons Oaks  
[cvargo@hfparks.com](mailto:cvargo@hfparks.com)

Deb Way  
Nature Kids Camp Site Director  
[dway@hfparks.com](mailto:dway@hfparks.com)



# Skills Assessment

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*This survey is a guide to assist Irons Oaks in staff scheduling and special project assignments.*

## Please rate the following as:

- 1 - Knowledgeable in subject matter and comfortable leading program
- 2 - Some knowledge and able to assist program
- 3 - Little or no knowledge but willing to learn
- 4 - No interest in learning or teaching topic

### Environmental/Science Topics

- \_\_\_\_\_ Tree ID
- \_\_\_\_\_ Habitats
- \_\_\_\_\_ Animal tracks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Entomology (insects)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Animal classification
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plant ID
- \_\_\_\_\_ Weather
- \_\_\_\_\_ Water cycle
- \_\_\_\_\_ Astronomy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Geology
- \_\_\_\_\_ Archaeology
- \_\_\_\_\_ Restoration
- \_\_\_\_\_ Native plants
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pond ecology
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recycling
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Crafts

- \_\_\_\_\_ Painting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Drawing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Woodworking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Needlecrafts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Weaving
- \_\_\_\_\_ Graphic design
- \_\_\_\_\_ Poster design
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sculpting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Nature crafts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recycled crafts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Cultural Studies

- \_\_\_\_\_ Illinois history
- \_\_\_\_\_ Native American study
- \_\_\_\_\_ African American study
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Recreation

- \_\_\_\_\_ Bird watching
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hiking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Camping
- \_\_\_\_\_ Backpacking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Packing a backpack
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fire building
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tent set-up
- \_\_\_\_\_ Natural shelter building
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tarp shelter building
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cross country skiing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Canoeing
- \_\_\_\_\_ GPS/Way finding
- \_\_\_\_\_ Orienteering/Compass
- \_\_\_\_\_ Teambuilding
- \_\_\_\_\_ Outdoor cooking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Camp songs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Leave No Trace
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gardening
- \_\_\_\_\_ Nature games
- \_\_\_\_\_ Knot tying
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Performing Arts

- \_\_\_\_\_ Puppetry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Storytelling
- \_\_\_\_\_ Improvisation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Audience Groups

- \_\_\_\_\_ PreK
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>
- \_\_\_\_\_ High school
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adults
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seniors

**IRONS OAKS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER**  
**A joint project of the Homewood Flossmoor and Olympia Fields Park Districts**  
**Volunteer Waiver & Release**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

The Homewood-Flossmoor Park District and Olympia Fields Park District are committed to conducting its recreation programs and activities in a safe manner and holds the safety of volunteer in high regard. The District continually strives to reduce such risks and asks that all participants follow safety rules and instructions that are designed to protect the volunteer's safety. However, volunteers must recognize that there is an inherent risk of injury when choosing to volunteer for any activity program.

Please recognize that the Districts carry only limited medical accident coverage for volunteers; therefore, it is strongly urged that all volunteers review their own health insurance policy for coverage. Additionally, each volunteer is solely responsible for determining if he/she is physically fit and/or properly skilled for any volunteer activity. It is always advisable, especially if the volunteer is pregnant, disabled in any way or recently suffered an illness, injury or impairment, to consult a physician before undertaking any physical activity.

**WARNING OF RISK**

Despite careful and proper preparation, instruction, medical advice, conditioning and equipment, there is still a risk of serious injury when providing volunteer services. Understandably, not all hazards and dangers can be foreseen. Volunteers must understand that depending upon the volunteer services, certain risks, dangers and injuries due to acts of God, inclement weather, slip and falls, inadequate or defective equipment, failure in supervision or instruction, premises defects, horseplay, carelessness, lack of skill or technique, and all other circumstances inherent to the particular volunteer services exist. In this regard, it must be recognized that it is impossible for the Districts to guarantee absolute safety.

**WAIVER & RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS & ASSUMPTION OF RISK**

Please read this form carefully and be aware that in consideration for providing volunteer services, you will be expressly assuming the risk and legal liability and waiving and releasing all claims for injuries, damages or loss which you may sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with and associated with your volunteer services (including transportation services/vehicle operations, when provided.)

As a volunteer, I recognize and acknowledge that there are certain risks of physical injury to volunteers in this program/activity, and I voluntarily agree to assume the full risk of any and all injuries, damages or loss, regardless of severity, that I may sustain as a result of my volunteer services. I further agree to waive and relinquish all claims I may have (or accrue to me) as a result of my volunteer services against the Districts, including its officers, officials, agents, volunteers and employees (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Parties").

I do hereby fully release and forever discharge the Parties from any from any and all claims for injuries, damages, or loss that I may have or which may accrue to me and arising out of, connected with, or in any way associated with my volunteer services.

I have read and fully understand the above important information, warning of risk, assumption of risk and waiver and release of all claims. If registering on-line or via fax, on-line or facsimile signature shall substitute for and have the same legal effect as an original form signature.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's signature or parent/guardian's signature