

Job Title: Preschool Lead Teacher
Reports to: Preschool Director
Supervises: Preschool Assistant Teacher
Job Status: Full Time, Year Round
Salary: \$33,000-\$43,000 based on qualifications and experience
Benefits: Health and Dental, Short and Long-term Disability, and Life Insurance
403B with 3% Match, Paid Time Off (Vacation, Sick Leave and Holidays)
Dependent Care Assistance Plan, Employee Discount on Thorne programs
Start Date: August 15, 2022



To apply: Send resume and statement of interest, and/or questions regarding the position to Preschool Director, Lorene Wapotich, at Lorene@thornenature.org. No phone inquiries please.

Thorne Nature Preschool Mission:

To support the holistic development of young children and their relationship to the natural world through joyful, hands-on, place-based, developmentally appropriate experiences that nurture the whole child and foster an emotional connection to nature. Learn more at: www.thornenaturepreschool.org

Job Purpose:

Ensure the well-being of the children in the preschool program. Nurture whole child development through supporting children's solo and cooperative play in nature and offering projects and activities inspired by the emergent curriculum arises from the children's exploration. Improve cultural relevance and inclusivity for all families attending the program.

Principal Responsibilities:

- Teach daily preschool (M-F, 9-1:30), maintaining a healthy, safe, and positive environment for children utilizing nature as the organizing principal for all learning
- Supervise and support aftercare at the Lafayette Preschool site 2-3 days/week (1:30-4:30 pm)
- Collaborate with the Preschool Team in the development and implementation of daily practices and routines, as well as seasonal, place-based, emergent curriculum that promotes early childhood development and deep nature connection
- Collaborate with parents, children, and Thorne staff to foster a sense of community and belonging
- Observe and document children's progress in the areas of their social, emotional, physical, creative, and cognitive development and communicate with parents about their child's abilities and goals
- Communicate with parents about their child's development and daily experiences, including regular posting of photos and comments using the SeeSaw app and conducting parent-teacher conferences with written reports twice per school year, including written reports in the spring.
- Help organize and lead family events and parent education programs
- Attend Preschool and Thorne staff meetings, trainings, teacher work and professional development days
- Ensure the indoor and outdoor learning environments meet licensing requirements and are in good condition to support safe, engaging, positive child development

Special Requirements:

- Willing to drive students in a Thorne approved vehicle for field trips as needed (Thorne will train).

- Additional time may be required as necessary, including occasional weekend and evening work for family events

Minimum Qualifications:

- Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) qualified through Colorado Office of Early Childhood – Thorne can help obtain this credential
- Able to be a positive, supportive, caring adult role model for young children
- Comfortable working outdoors and able to take care of self in all weather conditions, including rain, wind, snow, and hot sunny days
- Experience working with young children and families in a preschool setting preferred
- CPR, First Aid, Standard Precautions, and Medication Administration certified. (Thorne will pay for the time needed to complete and the cost of these certifications)
- Willing to complete all trainings and submit all information and forms needed by Thorne to be in compliance with Colorado Department of Human Services Child Care licensing requirements, including background check and fingerprinting.

Desired Skills and Abilities:

- Passion for outdoor experiences and connecting youth to nature
- Ability and desire to support excellent place-based, child-centered, emergent curriculum
- Knowledge of and desire to learn about nature and Colorado ecology
- Ability to adapt and be flexible with the changing needs of the program
- Excellent communication skills with parents, staff, and children
- Strong decision-making skills to respond to risk management issues, emergencies, or difficult situations
- Good organizational skills and ability to handle multiple tasks and roles patiently and professional
- Proficient with MS Office suite (Word, Excel, and Outlook)

Desired Outcomes:

- Exceptional teaching of Nature Preschool Program
- Exceptional communication with parents, staff, and children
- High level of engagement from preschool families in community events
- Achieve 90% or better positive rating of Preschool’s ability to reach learning objectives
- High level of engagement as a member of the Thorne Nature Experience team

Desired Behavioral Traits and Attitudes:

Leader, team player, collaborative, fun, outgoing, passionate, empathetic, organized, creative, resourceful, critical thinker, willingness to be vulnerable, results-oriented, and self-motivated. Passionate about Thorne’s mission and environmentally concerned and aware.

Job Interrelationships:

- Preschool Staff and Thorne Staff
- Parents and Families
- Preschool Students
- Volunteers and Interns
- Community Partners
- General Public

Working Conditions: This position requires the ability to work outside in various weather conditions. The employee is frequently required to walk, stand, and sit for extended periods of time, and occasionally climb, balance, stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl. The employee may occasionally need to lift and/or carry a preschool student weighing up to 50 pounds.

Accommodations: Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of this position.

The Expectation for All Employees: Support the Thorne mission and exhibit a commitment to working collaboratively, with integrity and respect for fellow employees, associates, and our communities. Embracing personal responsibility and accountability for your job.

Equitable Recruiting Policy Statement: Our goal is to increase diversity amongst our staff at Thorne. We do so by providing equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or any other protected characteristic. It is the policy at Thorne to attempt to reach diverse pools of applicants throughout the hiring process by following the Equitable Recruiting Procedure.

Thorne Mission and History: Thorne Nature Experience is a non-profit organization committed to building Earth stewardship by providing youth with joyful, hands-on, place-based environmental education experiences that foster an emotional connection to nature. Founded in 1954, Thorne has a rich history and has reached more than 250,000 children and adults through its four programs: Summer Camp, In-School Program, Field Trip Program, and Nature Preschool.