

ELCA INTERNATIONAL CAMP COUNSELOR PROGRAM INFORMATION

MISSION

The ELCA provides camps with counselors from partner churches in other parts of the world. Summer camp participants gain an experience in global education. Young adults from partner churches receive an opportunity to do ministry in the United States and return home with new ideas and a better understanding of the world.

WHO ADMINISTERS THE PROGRAM?

The ELCA International Camp Counselor Program is administered by the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit in partnership with the Global Mission unit of the ELCA churchwide organization.

WHO ELSE PARTICIPATES IN THIS PROGRAM?

The program anticipates being able to place up to 40 counselors this year. The goal is to host approximately 10 young adults from Europe and 30 from Africa, Asia, Central and South America.

HOW ARE THE COUNSELORS SELECTED?

Counselors are interviewed, then nominated and endorsed by heads of overseas partner churches. Participants will later be asked to complete an information form. Whenever possible, the interview team should include a person from the U.S. who will evaluate the ability of the person to converse in English and provide some basic information about the program. An additional person should also be nominated and endorsed in the event that the primary candidate withdraws. Participants will be placed in camps throughout the United States.

U.S. Arrival Date: 23 May 2018 **U.S. Departure Date:** 15 August 2018

WHAT ARE THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS?

Participants must be at least 18 years of age on the day that they enter the United States - THERE CAN BE NO EXCEPTIONS. Participants should also be no older than 30 years of age. Experience also suggests that older participants may have an easier period of adjustment in the program. Participants must have the personal maturity to be open and flexible in a new and challenging environment. They must be willing to share their Christian faith with others. Participants must also be confident in their use of the English language in conversation. All nominees must either be students or they must be employed. The U.S. Government will not issue a visa to persons who are currently unemployed.

Participants must agree to return to their home country at the conclusion of the program. Persons who may be seeking political asylum in the United States should not be considered for this program. Persons who may be seeking to extend their stay in the United States for educational study should not be considered for this program. Violations of this policy may result in the exclusion of your church from the international camp counselor program in future years.

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WHAT ARE CAMP COUNSELORS EXPECTED TO DO?

Counselors will be expected to serve on the camp staff for about 11 weeks. They will be asked to share their gifts in Bible study, worship, music, recreation, and any specific skills they might bring. They will be asked to share their faith and their culture with children, youth and adults. They will be asked to supervise children between the ages of 8 and 14. They may also be asked to share with the rest of the staff in occasionally doing food service or maintenance work. **Participants from overseas should understand that this work is physically, emotionally and spiritually demanding and that personal time and privacy is very limited.** Most camps give time off only on Saturdays and part of Sunday.

HOW IS THIS PROGRAM FUNDED?

The program is primarily financed by the camps who invite. This covers the international and U.S. domestic airfare, medical insurance, a 2-day orientation program in Chicago and a 4-day debriefing and tour in Chicago at the conclusion of the summer.

Important: The participant and/or your church will be responsible for all travel and application costs related to securing a U.S. visa and for all transportation to and from a major international airport in or near your country for travel to the U.S. No exceptions please.

The ELCA will mail all necessary visa application forms, instructions and a letter of support at the earliest possible date.

Each counselor will receive \$45/week in spending money from the camp. Counselors will receive no other payment for their services.