



**PennState**  
College of Health and  
Human Development

**Recreation, Park, and  
Tourism Management**



**Shaver's Creek**  
ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

## ***Advertisement for prospective graduate student:***

**Master's degree or Ph.D. in Outdoor Experiential Leadership (Residential Education) - RPTM**

**and**

**Graduate Assistantship at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center focused on Outdoor School (week long residential camp for Schools)**

November 2017

### **Context**

The Department of Recreation Park and Tourism Management (RPTM) is a vibrant department within the College of Health and Human Development. Academics in the Department embrace a broad conception of all aspects of the fields they teach and research; as well as collaborate across the College and beyond which demonstrates their belief and commitment to interdisciplinary understandings.

Shavers Creek Environmental Center (SCEC) is a field lab for Penn State students seeking experience in natural history interpretation, environmental education, and leadership. Shaver's Creek collaborates across all colleges in the University as well as serving the wider community through engagement with schools, government agencies, for profit and non for profit organizations, and the general public.

Outdoor School is a four day residential environmental education program for elementary age children that supports their science curriculum through hands-on learning experiences. Outdoor School lessons are taught by Penn State undergraduate students from a variety of disciplines.

### **Research**

We are looking for an MSc/PhD student to undertake research on residential experiences and their value as part of mainstream educational provision. The research will draw on literature at the intersection of outdoor recreation, camping, nature engagement, and primary education / moral education. The specifics of the research design will be developed by the student but could involve work with alumni from Outdoor School – whether they be students, student staff from PSU, school staff, parents. A focus of the work will be on the undergraduate students who have worked for Outdoor School and their reflections on the experiences with particular interest in any contributions to a sense of community during their studies. There are extensive opportunities for collaborations on campus with different departments and research centers such as The Rock Ethics Institute. The chair of the students committee will be Dr Derrick Taff. It is anticipated that the Program Director of Outdoor School will sit as a special member of the committee.

### **Graduate Assistantship at Shaver's Creek**

The assistantship for this research is for a 2-5 year period dependent on successful progress. The successful candidate will be a student in RPTM where they will work for 5 hours per week as a research assistant. They will work for 15 hours per week primarily as a teaching assistant. The logistics of working between campus and Shavers Creek mean that use of personal car for transport will be required.



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### **Candidate information**

- The successful candidate will be highly motivated and have a demonstrable interest and background in outdoor experiential leadership. They will be articulate and capable of critical analysis of research in outdoor education / residential education.
- The assistantship covers tuition fees and a generous stipend for 9 months of the year.
- We will begin seeking applicants during the fall of 2017, and the successful candidate will begin studies August 2018
- Further information: Please direct questions to Dr Derrick Taff [bdt3@psu.edu](mailto:bdt3@psu.edu)
- Application Procedure: For more information on Doctoral studies and Application Processes see: <http://hhd.psu.edu/rptm/graduate/application>