

SUNRISE COMMUNITY FARM CENTER, LLC

Junior Mentor Program Description

DEAR PARENTS & POTENTIAL JUNIOR MENTORS

At Sunrise Community Farm Center our mission is to empower all ages through sustainable, inclusive community farming. We foster a sense of belonging where every individual feels valued and discovers their unique contribution to a thriving community. By embracing the primary elements of partnership, we cultivate essential life skills and inspire meaningful engagement with the world around us.

The Junior Mentor (JM) program celebrates campers who have demonstrated an understanding of the values of the farm. Our aim is to allow them to experience the privileges that come with responsibilities and to mentor them in leadership and technical skills using the farm as a model environment!

PROGRAM GOALS

To become a Junior Mentor, a camper must be sponsored by an existing Mentor. JM's go through an orientation and training program with their sponsoring mentor and manager.

In training and for their time as a JM, Mentors who sponsor a JM are fully responsible for the work, behavior, and supervision of their JM. In the case that a sponsoring mentor is not present, the manager on staff will reassign the JM to another mentor.

To complete their training program, Junior Mentors will choose two areas of the farm to specialize as Farm Assistants (FA's).

- Garden
- Small Animals
- Farm & Camper Mentorship
- Horsemanship
- Maintenance

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF JUNIOR MENTOR CHECK OFFS

Junior Mentors are required to go through a check-off process according to their position to determine their readiness to work independently with success. Check-offs are cumulative. As a Junior Mentor gains experience and age, they will become eligible to check off as Assistant Mentors and apply for a job at Sunrise Community Farm Center. The more a staff member wishes to be involved, the more individual and area check-offs they should be able to complete with success. The goals of all check-offs are below.

1. Check-offs are designed to set and measure clear expectations for success. The management team will update check-off requirements on a yearly basis. In order to set, measure, and manage clear expectations, check-offs draw directly from the staff manual each year of updates. The staff manual in turn is necessary to update whenever changes are made to check-off expectations.
2. Check-offs are designed in line with the mission and vision of the organization, to promote good working partnerships between all of the community farm members. The mission will inspire the social skill, or Mentor portion of the check-offs. The vision will

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inspire the technical skill, or Farm Assistant portion of the check-offs. Trust and confidence in successful outcomes are needed to promote good working partnerships in our community.

3. Check-offs are therefore designed to enable all of us to succeed with confidence, and all managers, mentors, and campers to trust each other in the majority of situations. To build confidence, mentors will “check-off” the skills that Junior Mentors have practiced in training according to the guidelines below. When checked off, we trust they will successfully accomplish the duties of their work with reasonable levels of independence.

PHILOSOPHY OF ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE OF SUNRISE COMMUNITY POSITIONS

A community is made up of a group of individuals, and in nature all individuals have intrinsic value related to personhood, energy, and unique strengths and vision. As individuals on a sustainable community farm, this individuality emerges and creates culture in new and exciting ways.

As *mentors* on a sustainable community farm we create synergy by working together. Synergy is an energy dynamic between individuals that equals an energy greater than the sum of their component parts. A sustainable community makes every effort to engage in partnership with one another. Partnering together directs our energy in ways that benefit the whole community. This is why the basis for Sunrise Community Farm Center’s educational programs is Partnership. The mentorship goals are pursued as a team using the synergy of the individuals on our team. Engaging authentically with one another promotes a learning community. This community can only happen when we act with one another as all equally valued beings with rich inner worlds of thought, emotion, and spirit.

A mentor wants to succeed in all things and wants to help others succeed in all things. A mentor, by definition, is someone who has success and reaches back to the next person struggling to guide that person. Mentors at every level must show a passion for stewardship and servitude in order to be sponsored or hired.

As *workers* on a sustainable community farm we work with one another based on levels of experience in this setting. Workers start at the helper level and climb through Farm Assistant and Manager levels. Helpers help Junior/Assistant/Mentors with their tasks so that the helpers gain experience to feel accomplished and successful. Junior Mentors work to feel independence and to gain skills, experience, and knowledge. Farm Assistants/Assistant Mentors take on individual projects to test their leadership skills, decision making, and knowledge in an independent setting. Mentors work for the good of the community both inside and beyond the farm because they love the world.

It is important that Junior Mentors understand the farm's mission. Our purpose is to help JM’s find areas of the farm that they resonate with and set appropriate goals to work towards with their Mentor. Before being signed off, JM’s, their sponsoring mentor, a manager, and parents will discuss the mission of the farm, leadership, and will set goals as a team to support the JM in their growth journey.

If you have any questions about this program, please reach out directly to me at

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admin@sunriseafc.com, or by calling me at (919) 968-8581.

Kind Regards,

Hope

Hope Blanchard

Director of Programs | Sunrise Community Farm Center
admin@sunriseafc.com | (919) 968-8581

“There’s a relationship between trusting people and feeling free...But trust is also, I’d like to argue, fundamentally necessary for the full flourishing of a human life. Without it, we operate in a world that never fully feels like home. Without it, we’re weighed down by chronic worry.”

Ken Ilgunas, *This Land is Our Land*

“We don’t think our way to right action, we act our way to right thinking.”

William James

“Do you ever consider how ridiculous it would be to try to cram on a farm—to forget to plant in the spring, play all summer, and then cram in the fall to bring in the harvest? The farm is a natural system. The price must be paid and the process followed. You always reap what you sow; there is no shortcut.”

Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*