

# **CIT (Counsellor-In-Training) PROGRAM-AT-A-GLANCE**

**T**amakwa's CIT summer is all about **Transition**....the transition from camper to staff. The CIT experience has a mixed purpose: to be a summer of **fun**, a summer of **training**, and a summer to **show** the skills necessary to be a counsellor. For CITs, this summer is the coming together of their **PAST, PRESENT, & FUTURE** at Tamakwa:

- The fun and camaraderie they knew as campers.....
- The training, duties and privileges they accept as they take on new responsibilities.....
- The opportunity to show the skills and attitudes necessary for a future staff position....

<b>WHAT CITs DO...</b>	<b>WHAT CITs GET...</b>	<b>PRIVILEGES...</b>
<p><b>Help teach activities (rotating assignments)</b></p> <p><b>“Practicum” - counsellor apprenticeship</b></p> <p><b>Assist staffing canoe trips</b></p> <p><b>Plan camp-wide evening programs</b></p> <p><b>Help set the tone for tradition &amp; spirit in camp</b></p> <p><b>Participate in workshops in camp safety, programming, and effective counselling</b></p> <p><b>Take turns <i>helping</i> to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ observe waterfront areas during free-play</li> <li>▪ supervise and serve meals in Dining Hall</li> <li>▪ cover cabins during Rest Hour</li> </ul> <p><b>Participate in counsellor workshops</b></p> <p><b>Plan &amp; Present “Final Banquet” held on the last night of camp as well as Friday Night Services</b></p>	<p><b>Learning to be an “effective” counsellor</b></p> <p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <p><b>Skills to teach activities</b></p> <p><b>Chance to enhance their own activity skills</b></p> <p><b>Opportunity to make positive impact on the camp</b></p> <p><b>Understanding of the Tamakwa style of counselling</b></p> <p><b>Close bond of camaraderie with the CITs as a group</b></p> <p><b>Feeling of accomplishment</b></p> <p><b>Gratitude of campers</b></p> <p><b>Sense of responsibility</b></p> <p><b>Sense of independence</b></p> <hr/> <p><b><i>QUALITIES WE LOOK FOR IN CITs...</i></b></p> <p><b>Positive Attitude</b></p> <p><b>Enthusiastic &amp; Energetic</b></p> <p><b>Cooperative &amp; Flexible</b></p> <p><b>High Award Skill Levels</b></p> <p><b>Highly Motivated</b></p> <p><b>Responsible &amp; Reliable</b></p> <p><b>Takes Initiative</b></p>	<p><b>Live together independently as CIT group (in same gender cabins)</b></p> <p><b>Join evening staff recreation and snacks</b></p> <p><b>Weekly staff “super snack”</b></p> <p><b>Telephone access</b></p> <p><b>Activity time of their own</b></p> <p><b>Special evening programs &amp; CIT group events</b></p> <p><b>Special Staff activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff Hockey</li> <li>▪ Staff Basketball</li> <li>▪ Staff Ropes Events</li> <li>▪ Staff Windsurf / Sail</li> </ul> <p><b>Frequent “Free” Rest Hours</b></p> <p><b>Advantaged opportunity for Junior Counsellor positions</b></p> <p><b>Host C.A.M.P. Radio shows</b></p> <p><b>Lead singing and cheering</b></p> <p><b>Participate in intercamp competitions</b></p> <p><b>Attend general staff meetings</b></p>

## THERE IS “ANOTHER” SIDE TO THE CIT SUMMER

Besides the fun, challenge and perks, this is also what we call the CITs’ “**REFERENCE SUMMER**”....their single most important opportunity to demonstrate how deserving and ready they are to be invited back the following summer as a staff member (including Junior Counselors, Specialists, and Trippers-In-Training). This is the summer by which we measure how well they have made the **transition**.

For most 16 year olds, this transition is a giant leap. CITs are suddenly going from the world of “**CAMPERHOOD**” to “**STAFFHOOD**”. Their focus is changing...

...from their own self-interests to the interests of the campers.

...from relying on others to being responsible for others.

...from having expectations of the camp to satisfying camp’s expectations of them.

...from feeling entitled to a summer at Tamakwa to having to earn it.

...from being a “client” to becoming an employee.

### **TRANSITION FOR THE CAMP, TOO**

Most of the CITs have grown up before our very eyes, yet the time has quickly arrived for us to give them adult responsibilities, adult privileges, and have adult expectations. Though we take pride in making Tamakwa “their home away from home” where they yearn to return year after year, we now have to assess them as potential staff members and decide who among them will return as staff and who will not. Having to turn someone down - after being so involved in their lives - is one of the most distressing tasks a camp director must perform. When that happens, it does not mean Tamakwa is **NO LONGER** interested in them. But suddenly, in addition to being the place that nurtured them, Tamakwa is an employer whose mandate is childcare -- a small camp with a finite number of counsellor positions -- and a place with high standards for its staff. That high standard was one of the things you as parents were entitled to expect when you sent your children to us as campers.

### **AND...TRANSITION FOR YOU, THE PARENTS**

This year is also a transition for you the parents. You have had a big stake in Tamakwa. You have gone to great expense to send your children to us, you have been a faithful and loyal “*patron*” of Tamakwa, and you have been an involved parent who could call upon us on your children’s behalf. Until now, you controlled whether or not your child spent the summer at Tamakwa. But after this year, the control is out of your hands. After this year, they have to fly solo. They have become regarded as candidates for employment, for which we will deal **only** with them directly.

In a sense, you and Tamakwa have been partners in the development of your children. Now our role as partners is changing. Now we have to be partners in developing them as adults in an employment situation. **OUR** roles are changing because **THEIR** roles are changing. After their CIT summer, they will be the ones to contact us directly. That is part of our partnership in the development of your children.

Next year they will be applying to us for a job and for many of them, the first jobs of their lives. That process will end either with the good news of a job, or the disappointment of being turned down for that summer. Considering that the number of candidates typically far exceeds the number of actual staff positions, there will be some competitiveness to secure a job in the following year. We wish we could shelter them from the competitiveness at this stage in their lives, and we wish we could shelter them from the disappointment that may result if they do not get asked back. No matter how great they are, only the top 10 or so male and female CITs are going to get staff positions. It’s just a fact of life at Tamakwa, because that’s typically all camp can accommodate. This is why it’s not just about who has been at camp the longest or who is a good kid. They have to have some sophisticated skills to help properly staff camp activities.

## PREPARING FOR THE TRANSITION STARTED EARLY

We try our very best to prepare CITs and their parents for this transition. We start at that first meeting with the CITs, either individually or as a group. You won't be at those meetings. But if you were, you would hear us talk about the program, the fun and rewards in store for them, the privileges they can look forward to, and what they can expect from us. You would have **also** hear us say things like:

- ◆ “This is your “**Reference Summer**”...the one and only summer by which you will be assessed for a staff member position next year.”
- ◆ “The theme of this summer is **transition**”.
- ◆ “Your attitude, initiative, motivation, energy, and enthusiasm -- in other words **HOW** you deal individually with this transition -- is our main criterion.”
- ◆ “We think you are ALL great kids... EVERY ONE of you has the potential to be Tamakwa staff, that is why we have a CIT program. We **want** you to succeed; we will **show** you what buttons to push so that you will be hired next year. Whether or not you actually push those buttons is totally up to you.”
- ◆ “It is competitive. By sheer numbers alone, we will not be able to invite ALL of you back next year.”
- ◆ “Returning to camp is no longer guaranteed or *fait accompli*.”
- ◆ “The number of years you have been here is only one of many factors and in no way guarantees being invited back on staff next year.”
- ◆ “Skills and high level awards are becoming increasingly critical as a key to getting hired.” (*Enclosed is a description of activity High Level Awards Expectations, which we introduced when they were 49ers and Voyageurs in anticipation of becoming CITs.*)
- ◆ “You will need your Bronze Cross certification (or U.S. equivalent Red Cross L.G.T.) to be hired for most staff positions. For those without it, we may teach the course during your CIT summer and would expect you to participate.”
- ◆ “As a CIT, you are still legally a camper and must live by all the rules of camp, including the no-smoking rule.”
- ◆ “The program is meant to be fun...but it's also meant to be training. It's what **YOU DO** with that training that will determine if you have a future on Tamakwa's staff.”

## HELP US CONVEY THIS MESSAGE TO YOUR CHILDREN

We need for **YOU** to understand as well as help **THEM** to understand now what is at stake. It's not **JUST** about another fun Tamakwa summer. It will be that. But **more** than just that is on the table for this year, their CIT summer.

We will always be loyal to Tamakwans who have come up the ranks for several years, but nothing precedes our faithfulness to the expectations of parents that we hire the very best staff we can get for their campers. We are mindful of the importance of the coming summer for your child and we will continue to keep you abreast at every phase of the CIT process: their happiness and progress during the summer, the evaluations, and the hiring decision for the following year.