

The GateWay Mountain Center – *for Place-Based Learning and Adventure*
P.O. Box 995, Soda Springs, CA. 95728
Ph. (530) 205-6245, Fx. (888) 508-2629
peter@sierraexperience.org

January 23, 2009

Leslie Trook
Principal
A. P. Giannini Middle School
3151 Ortega St.
San Francisco, CA.

Dear Leslie,

It will be our pleasure to provide guiding services to the students of A. P. Giannini Middle School. I have provided a program description and contract with curriculum for three days at Donner Summit; we plan to collaborate with you and other teachers to fine-tune the curriculum content.

One month before the program I will provide student registration forms, hiking group lists, and equipment lists. **Note:** We plan to borrow winter gear from the BAWT gear lending library, and I have put in the request. Have not heard back yet, you may want to keep some budget available to rent snow boots.

GUIDING SERVICES

Program Overview

Gateway Mountain Center programs balance field science instruction, hiking, and reflection. We emphasize active learning that is cooperative, fun, and provocative. Destinations are chosen by our staff to illustrate themes and concepts and to provide a meaningful outdoor experience. Group safety; trail conditions, group cooperation and fitness levels (including adult chaperones) are taken into account in determining a day's activities, and specific itineraries may change as conditions require.

• Tuesday, March 24th.

Board Busses, drive to Donner Summit

Arrival Time: at the Clair Tappan Lodge to be determined.

Check in and Orientation: After disembarking we will provide an orientation for the entire group - going over safety rules and Leave No Trace ethics and practices. The students will have already been assigned to hiking groups and they will know who their designated adult chaperones are. The groups will each move into the lodge with their chaperones, rooms and bunks will already have been assigned. Dinner will be at 6:00pm. After dinner we would like to meet briefly with all teachers and chaperones to discuss our mutual expectations for the following days.

If time allows we will have some supervised snow play behind the lodge.

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• **Wednesday, March 25th.**

Snowshoeing, Weather, Snow Science, Winter Survival

The groups will learn how to dress with layers and how to adjust clothing to stay comfortable outside. We will learn snowshoe skills.

We will proceed to the UC Snow lab, and learn how the Sierra snowpack is the “water bank” for California. The students will do a hands on activity to measure water content in different layers in the snowpack. The groups will then hike back toward the lodge on the snowshoe trail. The students will then learn some of the basics of snow survival including fire building and snow shelter construction.

• **Thursday, March 26th.**

Ski/Snowboard Lesson

We will take a shuttle bus to Sugar Bowl for a beginning lesson in skiing or snowboarding. Guides will conduct a forest exploration activity for any students who do not wish to ski.

• **Friday, March 27th.**

– **Winter Ecology**

Snowshoeing, Animals and how they adapt, coniferous forest species

We will snowshoe through the forest behind the lodge, searching for animal tracks and learning how animals adapt and survive in the winter climate. We will also learn the different tree species and other elements of the forest habitat. Teambuilding challenges will round out the day. Board Vans at 3:00pm for trip back to SF.

Evening Programs:

Tuesday: Film showing

Wednesday: Night walk

Thursday: Campfire (indoor) with skits

Groups will be made up of 10-12 students and one or two chaperones to one guide.

Please call with any questions, (530) 205-6245.

We look forward to sharing a fantastic, learning adventure with your students this winter!

Sincerely,



Peter Mayfield
Gateway Mountain Center

The GateWay Mountain Center is a project of Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs
A 501(c) 3 non-profit public charity
www.saveourplanet.org