Leader - in - Training Program Overview 2027











NC STATE EXTENSION

Character at CAMP
By the american CAMP association

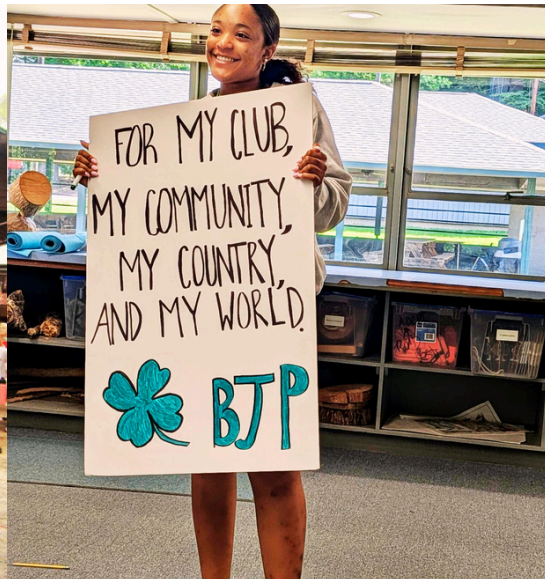
Overview

In partnership with the American Camp Association through the *Character at Camp* initiative, NC 4-H Camps is enhancjng and expanding our Leader-in-Training program to create intentional leadership development opportunities and deepen our impact on youth ages 15 to 17.

Our tiered leadership pathway is designed to build skills progressively and prepare youth for future employment. Specialized training and curriculum will be woven throughout the program to foster character and skill development, with the goals of
1) growing the skills necessary for young adults to contribute meaningfully to their schools, communities and future workplaces
2) building an employment pipeline that extends opportunities for youth to engage in meaningful work in the camping industry, and
3) empowering young people with leadership and mentorship skills to help guide younger campers and strengthen the camp community







To achieve this, we have expanded our existing LIT program by adding year-round engagement opportunities, training workshops, and curriculum that facilitate development of confidence, leadership skills and respect for others, as well as support the growth of applied work skills necessary for success in future employment in the camp industry and beyond.

In 2027, the program will be available at the three North Carolina 4-H Camps. To learn more about NC 4-H Camps, visit www.nc4hcamps.org

Betsy-Jeff Penn 4-H Educational Center EST. 1964

4-H CAMP MILLSTONE 1939 ELLERBE, NC

EASTERN 4-H CENTER

Qualifications

The program is designed to provide youth with leadership skills in a residential camp setting. Youth between the ages of 15 to 17 are considered candidates and are encouraged to apply. Youth are *not* required to be members of NC 4-H to apply or participate.

The role of program participants

The program is designed to provide youth with meaningful leadership opportunities within the camp setting while offering a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of camp life. Each participant will be paired with a staff mentor for the duration of the session to provide guidance, support, and supervision.

Participants will spend their time shadowing a cabin counselor or activity instructor while participating in team-building exercises, leadership development workshops, character education sessions, and program set-up. During designated periods, participants will also select a specific program area in which to assist, allowing them to gain hands-on experience in camp operations.







To ensure the safety and integrity of both campers and program participants, LITs/CITs will not supervise campers alone, and Junior Counselors will always be paired with a Senior Counselor. All are expected to maintain professional conduct at all times. Behavior must be professional and beyond reproach. Any violation of camp policies will be addressed appropriately and may result in immediate dismissal from the program. LITs/CITs will be assigned to work with camper groups that are at least two years difference in age.

Program Progression

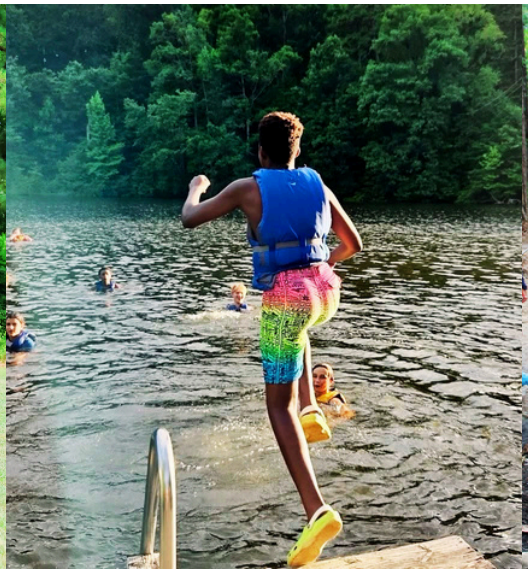
The enhanced leadership development program is intentionally structured to build confidence and strengthen skills as participants advance from one level to the next, with each stage building upon the previous one. Participants will explore different aspects of the camp program, allowing them to develop their skills in a variety of areas, or focus on a specific area. Some exceptional participants may be asked to apply for paid staff positions. However, even successful completion of the program does *not guarantee* graduation into a paid staff position.

Tier 1 - Leader in Training (LIT)

Open to all participants ages 15–17, with submission of application. LITs serve for at least one week of residential summer camp. Prior to camp, they complete online training and, during camp, engage in specialized workshops focused on character and leadership development. Participants will spend 75% of their time shadowing a cabin counselor or program staff member, with 25% of their time spent in team building, workshops and program setup.

LITs are still considered campers and are charged a fee of $355 if pre-camp online training is completed; without completed online training, the fee is $455. Scholarships are available based on need and availability. Pre-camp training is a series of online modules designed to help prepare participants; they are delivered via email with acceptance packets. Fees will NOT be refunded due to program dismissal from poor performance or unacceptable behavior. Participants may remain in this tier for additional cycles as needed to further develop the competencies required for advancement to Tier 2.







Tier 2 - Counselor in Training (CIT)

Invitation, application, and interview required for participation; open to those who have completed Tier 1. CITs serve a minimum of two weeks of residential camp and participate in advanced training throughout camp, including workshops on leadership skills, program development, communication skills and more. They will spend time shadowing both cabin counselors and program staff, and lead camp activities using the skills they've learned. CITs are required to attend two seasonal trainings in spring and fall, and two days of regular staff training prior to summer. **The Spring training will be held virtually on Zoom on May 20, 2027 7-8:30 pm. CITs will participate in 2 days and one night of staff training at their camp, specific dates TBD. The fall training will be held at the Betsy-Jeff Penn 4-H Center on Oct. 30 and 31, 2027.**

Participants receive a stipend of $125 per week, with a two-week requirement.

CITs must commit to two weeks of camp. They will travel home on weekends in between camp sessions, which may be back-to-back, or split across multiple weeks during the summer season. Participants will be notified when weeks are available for selection at their camp. Participants may remain in this tier for additional cycles as needed to further develop the competencies required for advancement to Tier 3.

Tier 3 - Junior Counselor

By invitation and application only, open to those who have completed Tier 2 and are at least 17 years of age. Junior Counselors commit to two weeks of staff training and the full eight weeks of residential camp as paid employees. The application and interview process is the same as for any hired staff member, including a background check. They will be assigned to a cabin with a senior counselor and will share the responsibility of managing their cabin of children each week. Junior Counselors also mentor Tier 1 and 2 participants and commit to attending the two seasonal training weekends along with CITs. Compensation is $290/week for a 10 week commitment during the summer.







How to Apply

Applications will be available online in the fall of 2026. Sign-up to receive notification when applications are open at **go.ncsu.edu/LITnews**

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I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service, and my health to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world.

For more information related to the *Character at Camp* initiative and the LIT program with NC 4-H Camps:

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