**Water Safety Aide Course at the Harvard Town Beach**

***The Road to Becoming a Harvard Town Beach Volunteer or Staff***

The Harvard Town Beach has been providing high quality, inexpensive water safety education and recreational programs to the town of Harvard for over 45 years. This has been possible largely by the consistent dedication and effort of mature and responsible staff and young volunteers that consistently go above and beyond the call of duty.

**What is the WSA Course?**

The WSA Course is the gateway between being a participant of beach programs, and staffing the programs. It takes students’ knowledge of swimming and water safety and teachings students how to in turn help teach these skills. This course will additionally teach students teamwork, leadership, professionalism, and responsibility.

Once this course is passed, students will have the knowledge, skills and experience to assist with lessons and assist in water front emergencies and will have a solid resume building experience for working at any water front in the future.

**Who is Eligible to take the WSA Course?**

Any resident of Harvard that is at least 13 years of age by July 1st, wants to understand the basics of teaching swimming lessons and water safety, and is ready to take on a larger, more responsible role as a staff of the beach. You must also have taken or be able to pass all three Level 6 American Red Cross Swimming lessons (Fitness Swimmer, Personal Water Safety, and Lifeguard Readiness).

**What Will I Learn?**

The WSA Course prepares students to assist in teaching American Red Cross Swimming Lessons, as well as covers vital safety and emergency response information for first aid and common water front emergencies.

Students will become experts in:

* Mechanics and technique in basic aquatic skills
* Mechanics and technique in the strokes taught in the Red Cross Swimming Classes
* How to demonstrate, assist instruction of, and narrate these skills to swimming class participants
* How to make sure swimming class students are safe, engaged, and learning at their level
* Safety in water basics
* Basic water rescues and water emergencies
* Basic first aid concepts

Students will gain skills in:

* Leadership, able to lead portions of swimming lesson classes on their own with the supervision of a Water Safety Instructor
* Working with younger children
* How to present yourself in a professional manner
* Policies and protocols common in most work places

**Logistics!**

***When is the Course?***

The WSA Course is usually seven days long, in the second half of June, before school gets out, in the evenings. Summer 2014 WSA Course dates are:

* Sunday June 15th, from 1pm – 6pm
* Monday June 16th – Friday June 20th from 6:30 – 8:30pm
* Saturday June 21st from 11am – 1pm

***How do I sign up?***

Email the Harvard Town Beach Director, Alexandra Luck at AlexandraLuck@gmail.com or register online. The cost of the course is $30, checks can be made payable to Harvard Park and Rec, subject WSA Course.

**What happens at the end of the course?**

Once the student passes the WSA Course, they are eligible to apply for a volunteer or paid position.

For students younger than 15, it is a perfect time to apply to participate in the WSA Volunteer Program.

**The Harvard Town Beach WSA Volunteer Program**

In the WSA Volunteer Program – students have the opportunity to implement their skills in assistant teaching swimming lessons, take on important safety and program responsibilities, and get the opportunity to learn what it means to be a professional. A common analogy is that being a WSA Volunteer is a bit like being a Counselor in Training at a summer camp. The major difference is that because waterfronts have much greater safety risks than other parts of summer camp, there is a greater level of responsibility and therefore maturity needed. That is why the WSA Course is mandated.

Once you complete the WSA Course students can apply to be a volunteer at the beach in The Harvard Town Beach Water Safety Aid Volunteer Program. Acceptance into the WSA Volunteer Program is based on level of maturity and skill demonstrated in the WSA Course, as well as the number of total Volunteer Applicants. Additionally, volunteer applicants must fill out an application form, participate in an interview, and a Shadowing experience with the Harvard Town Beach Staff (the WSA Course may count as a Shadowing experience depending on when the WSA Course was taken). These steps are to insure the safety and quality of the volunteers/staff at the Harvard Town Beach, the safety of the Swimming Lesson Participants, and the quality of our programs. It also is an excellent exercise in introducing students to the job application process.

**Note: *Applying for a Paid Position Directly after taking the WSA Course***

If you are over 15 you may apply for a paid position before taking the course and if chosen will be accepted contingent on successfully completing the course. It is important to note that preference for paid positions is given to qualified candidates that have demonstrated their motivation by successfully volunteering as a WSA Volunteer in the WSA Volunteer Program.