

Dear Counselor in Training Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the 2026 Leadership Development Program at Morris Arboretum & Gardens Nature Explorers Camp. This program is designed to offer you the tools to become an effective leader, make a meaningful contribution and have a positive camp experience.

There are two 3-week sessions from which to choose. Session 1 will run from June 29-July 17 and Session 2 will run from July 20–August 7, 2026. CITs are required to commit to an entire session.

Applications are due by March 6, 2026 and references by March 13, 2026. Interviews will begin the week of March 9, and decisions announced by April.

Once accepted into the CIT program you become a representative of Morris Arboretum & Gardens with responsibilities regarding children’s safety and enjoyment at Nature Explorers Camp. You are expected to be a positive role model not only at camp, but also at school, in your community, and on social media.

Please read over the application and make sure that you are prepared mentally and ready to be an active part of the camp community. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ilana Grubin

Camp Director
215-247-5777 x 127 (office)
igrubin@upenn.edu

Jude Thachet

CIT Mentor
215.247.5777 x 132 (office)
jthachet@upenn.edu

Before completing the application, consider the questions below to determine if being a CIT is appropriate for you. While you might not answer yes to every question, you'll gain a better understanding of what is expected from CITs and the skills you will learn in our program.

- Do I want to work with children and make a positive impact in their lives?
- Am I concerned about children's safety and well-being?
- Am I ready to become a role model?
- Do I recognize the positive and negative results of the choices I make?
- Will my personal background be an asset to the camp community?
- Do I have enough self-discipline to do the right thing all the time?
- Can I handle the responsibility of taking care of younger children?
- Am I ready to put campers' needs ahead of my own?
- Am I friendly and outgoing? Can I smile even on a bad day?
- Would I like the opportunity to develop and improve my leadership ability?
- Do I feel comfortable speaking in front of and leading a group?
- Am I self-motivated? Can I work well without continual direct supervision?
- Can I accept feedback and make positive adjustments?
- Can I be a team player and work well with others in a variety of situations?
- Can I adapt to changes easily and appropriately?
- Do I have plenty of energy?
- Do I love being outside?
- Do I enjoy learning in a hands-on environment?
- Am I responsible enough to dedicate my time to working?

I have considered the questions above and believe I am ready to take on the responsibilities of a CIT at the Nature Explorers Camp of the Morris Arboretum & Gardens.

Printed Name: _____ Date:

Signature: _____

Applicant Information

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Street Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

Morris Arboretum Member: Yes___ No___ (this does not affect your chances of being accepted)

Parent Name: _____ Phone number: _____ email: _____

School: _____ Current Grade: _____

Preferred Session

Session 1: June 29-July 17 Session 2: July 20-August 7 No Preference

How did you hear about our summer camp? _____

Why have you chosen to apply for the CIT Program?

What do you think a parent of a camper will expect from you as a CIT and how will you meet these expectations?

What do you think the Lead Counselors and Camp Supervisors will expect from you?

We have a limited number of spots available in our program. Why are you a great candidate for the position?

Please list any clubs, groups, organizations, jobs, sports, or activities that you have participated in:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

In the groups/activities that you listed above, did you exhibit leadership abilities in any of these positions? Please list and describe each.

Have you participated in our camp or had any other camp experiences? What did you enjoy the most?

Do you have any special skills or hobbies (i.e., ability to speak another language, music, theater, sports, etc)?

Describe your experience working with children:

Will you be using this experience for community service hours? Yes ___ No ___
**This does NOT affect your chances of being accepted.*

Are you a former camper at Morris Arboretum & Gardens? Yes ___ No ___

I certify that the above information is true. I understand that selection into the CIT program is based on this information as well as an interview and references. Each applicant must provide 2 letters of reference. For more information, contact Ilana Grubin, the Camp Director, at igrubin@upenn.edu

Applicant's Signature _____ Date: _____

**Do NOT collect the forms from your references. Have them send it directly to the camp director.*

Name of reference _____ email address _____

Name of reference _____ email address _____

C.I.T. (Counselor-In-Training) REFERENCE FORM

APPLICANT NAME: _____

has applied to be a C.I.T (Counselor-In-Training) at Morris Arboretum & Gardens Nature Explorers Camp. Please share your assessment of the applicant's ability to function in this role by completing this document. All information will be kept confidential. Thank you.

1. What is your relationship to the applicant and how long have you known them?

2. Three words to describe them: _____

3. Please describe the applicant's interactions with peers.

4. What can you tell us about the applicant's dependability and level of initiative?

5. Is the applicant able to listen to constructive criticism and apply feedback?

6. In what ways has this applicant demonstrated themselves to be a good role model?

7. Is there anything else you would like to share about this applicant? Do you recommend them for our program?

Return this form by March 13, 2026 to **Jude Thachet** at jthachet@upenn.edu or mail to 9414 Meadowbrook Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19118.

Printed Name: _____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Organization: _____ Email: _____