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**Kitchen Manager (Full-Time)**

The Kitchen Manager leads the Kitchen department in meeting the needs of retreaters and staff as it relates to meal service and kitchen management. At Vajrapani Institute, we strive to cultivate a contemplative environment and the kitchen department is at the heart of that endeavor – nourishing our staff and guests’ bodies so they have the energy to nourish their minds in spiritual growth. Our Kitchen philosophy is to provide a meditative atmosphere that allows a calm, peaceful, and loving energy to flow into the food. The intention is to cultivate a sense of pervading peacefulness and serenity so that anyone who steps into the kitchen and dining areas feel that sense of support and nurturing.

The Kitchen Manager ensures the meals provided are wholesome, nutritious, and balanced vegetarian food. Our food services provide meals for group retreaters in our main dining room along with delivering meals to solo retreaters in our ridge cabins. The Kitchen Manager also oversees the Vajrapani Institute Food Policy and organizes regular kitchen cleaning. The Kitchen Manager reports to the Center Manager and is a member of the leadership team which coordinates together to create successful retreat experiences for our guests.

We are looking for a kindhearted, mature and spiritually oriented person who values harmony and can live and work in a contemplative environment with a community of practitioners made up of retreaters and staff members. The ideal candidate is one that sees the service of a kitchen as a way to offer love and compassion through their food. They love seeing a tidy kitchen and can mentor others in aspects like meal prep and commercial kitchen clean up. They enjoy the operational side of a kitchen, balancing department costs with sourcing the right healthy, nutritious foods from local markets and farms.

As we are a retreat center with most of the staff members living on the land, the ideal Kitchen Manager would live on the property.

Following a 2 yearlong closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will be reopening in a limited capacity around Spring 2022. Ideally, this position would start immediately as it is an integral part of reopening.

**Responsibilities**

* Manage a small kitchen team comprised of staff and volunteers
* Manage kitchen team scheduling and holding weekly team meetings
* Procuring all kitchen food, goods, and supplies
* Coordinate kitchen cleaning duties among the team
* Prepare balanced vegetarian meals for individual retreaters, group retreaters, and staff lunch
* Uphold our food policy regarding food allergies and special need requests (vegans, precept days)
* Meal planning and maintain meal logs
* Prepare and deliver meal bags to solitary retreaters in our ridge cabins
* Coordinate with housekeeping to stock fridge and dry goods for those in solitary retreat
* Coordinate with SPC to stock food at the teacher house (Geshe House)
* Work with the Center Manager to recruit, hire, and train new kitchen staff and volunteers as needed
* Orient new employees and volunteers on the Community Kitchen Use Guidelines
* Maintain communication systems for the kitchen team
* Present Working Meditation Guidelines to group retreaters
* Improve kitchen systems and projects as needed
* Assist other departments as needed
* Facility weekly kitchen team meeting
* Attend weekly staff meeting

**Qualifications**

* A spiritual practice/orientation
* At least two years cooking experience
* Kitchen management experience
* Commercial kitchen experience
* Excellent communication skills, including clear directions to staff and volunteers
* Excellent organizational skills in procuring food, organizing pantries, and scheduling kitchen clean up
* Enjoys working in a team environment
* Ability to maintain calm and patient among busy kitchen activity
* Enjoys cooking and has knowledge of vegetarian health and nutrition
* Familiarity with Buddhism
* Approved to work in the U.S.

**Benefits**

* Full-time, 35 hour per week position with hourly compensation
* Daily staff meditation sittings
* Opportunity to do a supported one-month personal retreat during our annual winter staff retreat
* Free lunch on workdays
* Health care stipend
* Dental coverage after first 3 months
* Housing perks for living on the land

Confidence can sometimes hold us back from applying for a job. We at Vajrapani Institute know there is no such thing as a “perfect” candidate. Here we look for exceptional people who want to make a positive impact through their work and help create a place where they, and others, can have spiritual growth. So whatever background you bring with you, please apply if this role would make you excited to come to work every day!

**About Vajrapani Institute**

Vajrapani Institute is located on a secluded 70 acres of land within the redwood forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Our purpose is to inspire deep spiritual growth by providing supportive conditions to both guests and staff members from all religious background. For over 40 years, we have been hosting retreats in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of our founders Lama Yeshe and Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche. VPI is an affiliate of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), an international, non-profit organization with over 140 centers, devoted to the transmission of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition and values worldwide through teaching, meditation, and community service.