

## **Job Opening for American Alpine Institute Senior Bookkeeper**

### **Introduction to the Job:**

The American Alpine Institute senior bookkeeper position is a job for a creative and energetic person who has great enthusiasm for people and a desire to work for a company that is committed to providing innovative and inspiring education, to protecting and preserving the natural environment, and to working proactively to assure adequate funding for public lands and public access to backcountry recreation opportunities for all.

This is a year-round, part-time position (approximately 45 to 50 hours per month average for the year), with hours varying somewhat week-to-week and month to month. In addition to specific recurring duties and special projects from time to time, the person in this position also oversees an assistant bookkeeper who works approximately 45 hours per month.

The duties of this job include the full range of typical bookkeeping responsibilities plus the management of a few accounts that are unique to this business (which you can learn on the job). Because the person filling this role will review the finances of international programs (in which Institute guides pay for hotels, restaurant meals, groceries for meals in the mountains, camp hands, llama and mule drivers who transport our gear in the mountains, and ground transportation), interest in mountaineering or international travel is not necessary but can be helpful.

As an overview of the Institute, we aspire to be what numerous media writers have termed America's leading mountain climbing school and international guide service. The Institute is described by past and current employees as having an office environment that is the most mutually supportive they have ever experienced. There are no office politics at the Institute – only respect, care, and support for fellow workers as we team up creatively and energetically to achieve our mission in education and protection of the natural environment.

The successful candidate for this position will be part of a team that runs an interesting and varied business that operates educational programs in six states and sixteen countries from its offices in Bellingham, Washington. It is comprised of a highly motivated and dedicated staff that serves an enthusiastic clientele from all over North America and around the world.

### **To Apply**

Complete the [job application](#), and to it, attach your cover letter and résumé.

Your cover letter is an important part of the application. In addition to providing us with an introduction to who you are (perhaps touching on where you've been and where you're going in life), would you please specifically address the following two questions:

- 1) Why do you feel this job could be a "good fit" for you (in terms of both duties and hours)?
- 2) How do you satisfy the listed requirements?

Thank you in advance for your application and letter!

## **A Summary of Experience Requirements and Job Duties**

As the Senior Bookkeeper, you will oversee the work of the Assistant Bookkeeper along with your own separate duties. Work in the senior role includes reconciliations, journal entries, financial reporting, various employment and tax filings, and oversight of the assistant. Hours will vary depending on the time of year because though we are busy year-round, we have two busiest seasons with high volume and two with moderate volume. Hours will average from 10 to 12 per week but will vary outside of those averages depending on the week and the month.

### Experience and Skills Required

- An understanding of generally accepted accounting principles
- Abilities to think, write, and speak articulately, creatively, and effectively
- An ability to work with complete honesty and a high level of energy, commitment, and responsibility
- Enthusiasm for working with other articulate and creative co-workers
- A good sense of humor
- An appreciation for the cultural and economic value of public lands and outdoor recreation
- An understanding of the serious implications of climate change and the need for individuals, businesses, and governments to reduce their carbon footprints
- 3 + years of Full Charge Bookkeeping experience
- Quickbooks Online Proficiency (ProAdvisor is a Plus)
- Degree in Accounting or closely related field (Bachelor's or Associates)
- Excel mastery
- Experience and knowledge of payroll, payroll taxes, and annual payroll filings
- Experience filing Employment Reports in Washington State (L&I, Employment Security, FMLA) a must
- Experience working with professional tax preparers to file income tax returns.
- Proficiency in creating journal entries and a strong understanding of accounting practices and principles

## Job Duties

- Monthly Bank Reconciliation
- Oversee Assistant Bookkeeper to verify completeness and accuracy of data entry
- Monthly Payroll
- Create various journal entries to record GL transactions
- Generate a variety of reports for management upon request, including but not limited to P&Ls, balance sheets, and cash flow statements and projections
- Maintain accurate books and accounts through periodic account audits
- File Quarterly Reports (L&I, Employment Security, FMLA, 941, B&O, and out-of-state-withholdings)
- Complete annual Worker's Compensation Audits in states without reciprocity
- Complete Annual Financial Reports in compliance with various requirements by federal land management agencies (e.g., National Park Service, US Forest Service)
- Prepare the books for submission to CPA for annual income tax filing
- General HR duties of onboarding new employees

## Compensation:

- \$20-\$25/hour+ depending on experience.
- Partial reimbursement for personal health insurance
- 10 days paid personal time off days (PTO) days allocated pro rata based on 2080 hours per year
- Pay rate, number of PTO days, and health insurance benefits increase with time.

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## An Introduction to Bellingham

Many find Bellingham to be a wonderful place to live. With an extensive system of parks and trails, good outdoor fun is right out the door for runners as well as road and mountain bikers (the American Hiking Society named Bellingham "Trail Town USA," along with only 29 other communities).

Sea kayakers can put in just 12 blocks from our office where the end of the road meets the inland waters of the Pacific Ocean in northern Puget Sound. Travel east and you can be climbing on a massive glacier on Mt. Baker in two hours. Drive north two hours to Squamish, British Columbia, and enjoy some of the best rock climbing in western North America.

Outside magazine ranked Bellingham #1 in the US for living in a place with great opportunity for outdoor sports. Bellingham is ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the US by the Environmental Protection Agency for municipal governments committed to buying green energy. And the city is ranked number two in the U.S. for three other things: highest per capita use of the public library (we're all trying to expand our minds); highest per capita number of arts organizations (we're all trying to find

ourselves); and the highest per capita number of espresso shops (we're all trying to stay awake in the process). In all seriousness, if you move here, you will become part of a part of a bright, energized, sports-minded, and environmentally conscious community that also happens to be very warm and friendly.

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## **An Introduction to the American Alpine Institute**

The American Alpine Institute is an international mountain climbing school and guide service. It offers courses in rock, snow, and ice climbing for those just beginning to climb as well as for those with experience who want to advance their skills. AAI offers guided climbs and expeditions on which its clients apply all their climbing techniques and good judgment in an effort to climb one or more major summits. We also offer skills-clinics for backcountry skiing and snowboarding, ski and snowboard descents of major summits, avalanche safety classes, rescue courses for lay people and professionals, and treks in the Cascades, Alps, Andes, and Himalaya.

AAI climbers find great reward in the philosophy of and commitment by AAI guides to always help each climber expand their climbing skill and judgment regardless of the context. Even on guided climbs, we don't simply get people to the summit – we help them become better climbers in the process.

The single largest areas of operation for the Institute are in Washington, California, and Alaska. In Washington's Cascades, most courses and guided climbs begin in early May -- when the weather improves and the mountains come into good shape -- and continue until early October. In California's Sierra, we offer programs year-round, while in Alaska our focus is on the best weather months of May, June, and the first half of July. We also operate in many other areas: in the summer we have programs in Canada, France, Switzerland, Russia, Tanzania, Peru, and Bolivia, while in the fall, winter, and spring we have programs in Nevada, Colorado, Canada, Ecuador, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina, Tanzania, Antarctica, and a variety of locations in Asia.

Great geographical diversity of programs is part of the appeal that the Institute has to its clients. We climb the 7 Summits, and – large and small – we also trek, teach, and climb on the most beautiful mountains in the world, from Alaska to New Zealand and from Chile to China.

A combination of this technical and geographical diversity with a dedication to making every program that we operate packed with learning and rewarding experiences, has earned high regard for the Institute throughout the world. In *Outside* magazine, Jon Krakauer termed AAI the “best all-around guide service and climbing school in North America,” *Travel and Leisure* rated it “America's top climbing school,” and Matt Mooney of the New York Times calls AAI “the Harvard of climbing schools.”

Extremely happy clients, many repeat customers, skilled administrators and program counselors, and a staff of dedicated technical guides who are skilled as teachers – have together built that reputation.

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## **Facilities**

All of the Institute's operations are managed out of our offices (two converted houses in the Fairhaven Historical District) in Bellingham, Washington. Working here are a president, an executive director, an assistant director for information technologies and marketing, four program coordinators, an administrative assistant, two equipment and retail shop managers, and three equipment specialists.

The Equipment Department fills the smaller of the Institute's two buildings, with retail space on one floor and rental gear and guide service gear on the other. The Equipment Department outfits the guide service with technical gear, rents equipment to clients and the general public, and sells gear to clients, guides, and the general public.

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## **Leadership in the Outdoor Industry**

As well as working hard for its clients, AAI also works hard for the preservation of wilderness, the protection of public lands, and the well-being of the human powered outdoor sports industry and has been a major creator and shaper of programs and policy within it. Several guides serve as teachers and examiners in the American Mountain Guides Association's Certification Program; two AAI guides have served as national chairmen of the program; AAI's president also served as a board member and president of AMGA for a decade; and the Institute's Director of Operations currently serves on the AMGA board of directors.

AAI is a member of the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), the trade association of America's human-powered outdoor sports industry, and AAI's director served on its board and as its president for many years. AAI has participated in OIA's manufacturer's standards committees, and three AAI staffers have served as members who vote on ASTM standards for climbing equipment manufactured in the U.S. One Institute staff member served as a delegate to the National Summit on Outdoor Recreation and on the National Steering Committee of the Leave No Trace (LNT) program that established LNT as a non-profit organization. One AAI staff member also served as Chairman of the National Summit Committee on Search and Rescue.

The Institute has been cited by the National Park Service as one of five top

leaders and innovators in environmental protection nationally. The Institute has reduced energy consumption on all its programs worldwide, and it offsets 100% of its carbon consumption through investment in green energy. AAI also offers clients an opportunity to subsist on green energy via carbon offsets, and it provides them with tuition credits when they participate in the program. AAI is a national leader in developing methods to achieve total carbon offsets.

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### **Work Atmosphere**

AAI is a great place to work. It provides opportunity to work with a group of great people who care about their work, each other, and the environment in which we live. It is a skilled and very enthusiastic group that is extremely active in a variety of outdoor sports (especially climbing and skiing, but also mountain biking, running, sea kayaking, and fishing). Many long-term friendships and climbing partnerships originate here.

We are also privileged to work with a well-educated, highly motivated, and very enjoyable clientele. It's a lot of fun helping AAI climbers prepare for great adventures around the world. The work at AAI involves a great deal of personal contact with AAI clients, many in person and many more on the telephone. Variety is also characteristic: from designing marketing and promotional materials and strategies, to program development and scheduling, to routine data entry and brochure mailings, all aspects of administering to and corresponding with our clients are conducted on a friendly, enthusiastic, and professional basis from our centralized office and equipment shop.

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**To apply for the position, log onto:**

<https://alpineinstitute.wufoo.com/forms/bookkeeper-position-application/>

If you have any questions, please email Dunham Gooding at  
[Dunham@AlpineInstitute.com](mailto:Dunham@AlpineInstitute.com)

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**AAI is an Equal Opportunity Employer**

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