

American Alpine Institute^{Ltd.}

Admin Assistant Position at American Alpine institute

Intro to the Job:

The American Alpine Institute is a climbing school and guide service based in the Fairhaven Historical District of Bellingham, WA. The Institute operates mountain climbing courses, expeditions, ski and snowboard clinics and guided descents, and treks – at all skill levels and in six states and sixteen countries. The Institute is composed of a highly motivated and dedicated staff serving an enthusiastic clientele from all over North America and abroad. Many reviewers have labeled AAI the top mountain guide service in North America.

The Administrative Assistant position is an entry-level job for a creative and energetic person who has enthusiasm for people and outdoor recreation. The duties of this job include the full range of typical office operations. Because the person filling this role will gradually learn the details of AAI programs and can gradually gain the knowledge to skillfully counsel and register clients on the telephone, a climbing or mountaineering background is helpful, though not required.

Job Summary:

Entry-level administrative assistant position with growing responsibility in:

- Dealing with initial client contact and passing each person on to the appropriate Program Coordinator
- Processing program registrations
- Support of marketing efforts
- Basic office operations

As knowledge of AAI programs and policies increases, take on growing duties in the areas of:

- Taking phone reservations from climbers and then shepherding them through the registration process
- Helping clients choose between programs based on their background and goals

Job Requirements:

- A general familiarity with word processing and data base programs; an ability to type accurately and with good speed
- An ability to speak articulately, comfortably, and clearly on the phone, conveying sincere interest and enthusiasm in the topics being discussed
- An ability to write clearly, creatively, and effectively.
- An ability to become familiar with AAI programs and to gradually develop the skills to describe them accurately
- An ability to attend to routine office management duties with precision
- An ability to work with a high level of energy, commitment, and personal responsibility

Another Attribute Helpful to Longer Term Advancement

- Experience in and understanding of mountaineering to a degree that will eventually allow you to understand AAI programs thoroughly and counsel clients on their choice of programs
- If you don't have climbing experience but would like to learn, you will be glad to know that employees at AAI can take the Institute's climbing courses without charge.

Wages and Hours

- \$15 to \$16 per hour depending on experience + a \$500 bonus at the end of each six month period.
- Starting hours are 30 to 32 hours per week. This could be expanded to 40 hours beginning in the spring or summer, but this will depend on workload.
- The work schedule is Monday-Friday, 9am to 5:30pm, starting at about six hours per day. The length of days can vary, but we prefer work on five days each week rather than four. Certainly for special events, opportunities, or needs, the schedule could be shifted to four days occasionally.

Benefits:

Paid Personal Time Off -- Paid Personal Time Off (PPTO), which encompasses both paid vacation and paid sick leave, at a rate of .04 hours for every hour worked. Office and shop employees are entitled to use their accrued PPTO beginning on the 90th calendar day after the start of their employment or after they have worked 500 hours, whichever comes first.

Health Insurance Reimbursement – The health insurance reimbursement starts at \$55 a month. This is increased along with an annual raise.

Access to Pro Deals and Shop Discounts - Most climbing and skiing items are available. We also provide no-interest loans that you reimburse through your paycheck for shop purchases.

Access to AAI Programs - We can work out access to most AAI programs. In some cases, when there are licensing or food fees, there will be a small cost. But most programs will be free to you.

Expectations:

- Honesty and integrity
- Flexibility in scheduling
- A willingness to work hard
- Kindness and a sense of humor

Intro 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 8th 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.

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.

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 a director of operations, an assistant director for information technologies and marketing, four program coordinators program coordinators, two administrative assistants, 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 the another. 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.

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.

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.

AAI is an equal opportunity employer.

To apply for the position, log onto:

<https://alpineinstitute.wufoo.com/forms/xp3fzdb0dvrso/>

If you have any questions, please email Jason Martin at jason@alpineinstitute.com or call 360-671-1505.