



## **USCGC ACACIA (WLB-406) “Ace of the Lakes” Overnight Education Program**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **What is the minimum age to participate in the Overnight Program?**

The minimum age to participate is six years. When reserving an Overnight, please specify if your group is primarily 6-8 year old children or participants age 9 and older. This information helps the staff to best present age-appropriate education programming for your Overnight.

#### **How many people do we need to participate in the Overnight Program?**

- a) A minimum group size of 6 people, or equivalent payment, is required to participate in the Program.
- b) Due to the popularity of the Overnight Programs, two groups may share the same reservation date, depending on group size. In the event that a group wishes to reserve the entire cutter for an exclusive stay, the group will be expected to minimum set fee.
- c) If your group number changes by 5 +/-, you need to notify AAI at least 30 days prior to your visit. Otherwise, you will be charged for the number listed on your reservation form, if greater.

#### **How much does it cost for a group to participate in the Overnight Program?**

- a) The cost is \$35.00 per person, for a one-night stay, for organized groups (minimum group size of 6 people or equivalent payment).
- b) A non-refundable deposit of \$150.00 per group is required to secure an Overnight reservation. Deposits are payable to the American Academy of Industry, by check or money order. A reservation must be made via email ([overnights@uscgcacacia.org](mailto:overnights@uscgcacacia.org)) or phone (708-425-8443) prior to deposit payment. Deposits are due within 14 days of making a reservation. The balance payable is due upon arrival and is payable to the American Academy of Industry, by check or money order.

#### **What does the cost of the Program include?**

The cost of the Program includes a guided tour of *USCGC ACACIA*, supervised access to certain areas of the cutter not typical of a standard tour, educational programming, overnight accommodation on board and 5% discount to souvenirs. Meals are not provided however, limited snacks will be available for sale. It is recommended that groups eat dinner prior to arrival. Groups are encouraged to bring snacks and water for consumption during the Overnight.

#### **What time does the Program start?**

The group should arrive at US Steel Southworks, 86<sup>th</sup> Street gate at 7:30 pm to meet the AAI staff and process required paperwork. Please be prompt. Groups that arrive late will join other groups already in progress (if double booked). Groups may run the risk of missing out on regularly scheduled tours and the program will run later than planned.

The Program concludes at 9:00 am the following morning. At that time, participants will have the opportunity to visit the Ship's Store at their leisure. Groups wishing to go out for breakfast and then return to the *ACACIA* are welcome to do so.

**How many chaperones are required to participate with a group?**

- a) Please adhere to the adult-child ratio set out by your organization. For groups without a required ratio, AAI recommends an adult-child ratio of 1:1 for groups with children 6 years of age and an adult-child ratio of 1:2 for groups with children 7 –8 years old. An adult-child ratio of 1:4 is recommended for groups with children 9-12 years of age. An adult-youth ratio of 1:6 is recommended for groups with youth participants of 13 years and older.
- b) AAI considers participants 18 years of age and older to be adults. All chaperones must be adults. The ratios recommended by AAI are simply suggestions. When assigning chaperones, please consider the number of adults a group will need to maintain an environment conducive to learning, safety and good behavior.
- c) At least one chaperone must be berthed in each compartment where children and youth participants are berthed to provide supervision. At least one adult chaperone must be awake when any children or youth participants are awake during the Overnight.

**How many AAI staff will be with the group during the Overnight?**

- a) A minimum of one AAI staff members will lead an Overnight. The number of AAI staff working each Overnight depends on the number of participants scheduled for a given night.
- b) Overnight Education Staff will remain on the cutter throughout the night. When not with the group, staff can be found in the Ward Room, the staff-only area of the cutter.
- c) Staff is responsible for leading all educational and interpretive programming during the Overnight; chaperones are responsible for providing supervision and discipline. The American Academy of Industry reserves the right to eject a group at any time for behavior deemed unacceptable or dangerous by the staff.

**Where do people sleep on the cutter?**

The cutter has two main berthing areas. Both berthing compartments have 18 bunks. The berthing compartment is outfitted with bunks for sleeping.

**My group has members of both genders, what do we do about sleeping arrangements?**

AAI does not have a policy on this issue. It is up to the group to decide whether to berth males and females together, or in separate compartments. If your group requires separate berthing for each gender, please note this on your Reservation Form.

**Is the Overnight Program available year round?**

Yes. The Overnight Program runs every Friday and Saturday night year round. Weekday bookings may also be available upon request. The Overnight Program may not be available on dates close to major holidays or AAI special events. The cutter is outfitted with heat and air conditioning. However, participants are advised to dress appropriately for the outside weather; layers are suggested.

**What type of group is the Program appropriate for?**

The Overnight Program is appropriate for school groups, community groups, youth groups, tour groups, soft adventure groups, active seniors groups, Elderhostel, Scouting groups, corporate retreats, YMCA groups, church groups and any other group interested in a unique educational experience. AAI also has a number of facility rental and catering options available for groups.

**I'm not part of an organized group but I still want to participate in the Overnight Program.**

AAI is planning to host a number of Family Overnights each calendar year. These are open to individuals and families, rather than organized groups. The dates for Family Overnights will be posted on the AAI's website. Advance registration will be required. The Overnight Program will be open to persons of age 6 and up. Cost is \$35.00 per person.

**Is the cutter accessible for participants with disabilities?**

Unfortunately, the cutter is not completely wheelchair accessible. However, in many cases, visitors with disabilities enjoy full participation in the Overnight Program. Guide animals are permitted on the cutter. Please contact AAI for details on accessibility.

**Where does the Overnight Education Program take place?**

The Program takes place aboard the retired *United States Coast Guard Cutter ACACIA (WLB-406)*, moored in the North Slip of historic US Steel Southworks, Cook County, Illinois.

**Directions are as follows:**

**From Chicago & points West:**

Take I-55 N to Chicago. Merge onto I-90/94 via exit 292B toward Indiana. Keep Right to take I-94E. Exit on 87th Street, turn Left (East) and continue to Burley Avenue. Turn Left on Burley Ave, and then turn Right onto 86th Street. Enter the Southworks property through the gate at the end of 86th Street.

**From Illinois & points South**

Take I-57 N to Chicago. Merge onto I-94 E toward Indiana. Take the N Stony Island Ave. exit – Exit 65 – toward 95<sup>th</sup> Street. Merge onto S Stony Island exit. Take Stony Island Ave, East. Turn Right onto E 95<sup>th</sup> Street / US-12 / US-20. Turn Left onto S Commercial Ave. Turn Right onto 87th Street, turn Left (East) and continue to Burley Avenue. Turn Left on Burley Ave, and then turn Right onto 86th Street. Enter the Southworks property through the gate at the end of 86th Street.

**From Wisconsin & points North:**

Take 94 East, south past downtown Chicago. Keep Right to take I-94E. Exit on 87th Street, turn Left (East) and continue to Burley Avenue. Turn Left on Burley Ave, and then turn Right onto 86th Street. Enter the Southworks property through the gate at the end of 86th Street.

**From Indiana & points East:**

Take I-90 West, crossing into Illinois. Take the 87th Street exit, and take a sharp right onto 87th street. Turn Left on Burley Ave, and then turn Right onto 86th Street. Enter the Southworks property through the gate at the end of 86th Street.

Parking space is limited so please carpool if possible. Bus parking is not available at this time. Parking is available adjacent to the cutter. AAI not responsible for damage or theft of vehicles parked over night, nor their contents.

**While in the Chicago area, my group would like to visit other local attractions. What do you suggest?**

For information on other area attractions that you may want to visit during your ACACIA Overnight trip, call the Illinois & Indiana Departments of tourism (800-406-6418 & 317-232-8660) respectively.

**What is AAI's cancellation policy pertaining to the Overnight Education Program?**

- a) If for some reason your group finds it necessary to cancel a visit, your deposit will not be refunded. There is one exception: if you notify AAI at least 60 days in advance of your scheduled visit and at that time reschedule your visit for a later available date within one year of the initial reservation date, AAI will apply your deposit to the new date.
- b) On very rare occasions, inclement weather may cause conditions hazardous enough for AAI to close the cutter. In such cases, every effort will be made to provide scheduled groups with advance notice so that they can reschedule their visit or, if they choose, cancel altogether and receive a full refund of their deposit. Unfortunately, in some situations advance notice may not be possible.
- c) The safety of participants and staff is AAI's paramount concern. Please understand that this is a major factor in decision making should an Overnight be cancelled due to severe weather. AAI will not be responsible for any other inconveniences or consequences arising from the cancellation of a group's visit. It is suggested that groups check the local forecast for Northwest Indiana and surrounding areas before departing for their Overnight. Weather forecasts are available by calling national weather forecast, Chicago:815-834-0675. Should the group have concerns about a possible cancellation, a group representative should contact AAI between 9:00am-5:00pm on the date of the Overnight to discuss the group's concerns.

#### **What sanitary facilities are available for participants?**

Sanitary facilities are located onboard the cutter. Shower facilities are not available. Group bathroom breaks are taken at regular intervals throughout the Program. Individual bathroom breaks are taken on an as-needed basis.

#### **What if I feel sick or claustrophobic during an Overnight?**

- a) Any participant feeling claustrophobic or unwell during an Overnight should alert a group leader or Overnight staff member immediately so he/she can exit the cutter. Staff will make every effort possible to make participants comfortable. It is the group's responsibility to bring their own first aid kit and medications for participants.
- b) Participants wishing to leave the Program at any time are free to do so. Children and youth participants cannot leave without being escorted by a chaperone. Participants choosing to leave the premises will not be readmitted to the Overnight and will not be refunded their registration fee.
- c) Participants requiring refrigeration of prescription medicines will be accommodated.

#### **Does my group need to make a reservation to participate in the Overnight Program?**

Yes, advance reservations are required. Typical Programs normally books approximately 9-12 months in advance, depending on the season.

#### **How do I make a reservation for my group?**

Reservations can be made by made via email ([overnights@uscgcacacia.org](mailto:overnights@uscgcacacia.org)) or phone (708-425-8443).

#### **Once I make a reservation for my group, what paperwork is required?**

Upon making a reservation for your group, you will receive a letter by mail instructing you to visit AAI's website to read and download relevant information. Individuals without Internet access can request paper copies of these documents.

- a) Payment of the group's deposit is due within two weeks of making a reservation. Failure to pay the deposit within this time frame will result in the cancellation of the group's Overnight reservation. The Reservation Forms should be submitted with the deposit. This Form is available on AAI's website.
- b) AAI requires a certificate of insurance demonstrating the group's liability insurance for bodily injury and property damage (minimum of \$1 million per occurrence) at least 30 days in advance of your reserved date. A Proof of Insurance is now acceptable from scout groups. Many organized groups

can procure copies of their certificate of insurance through their agencies (e.g. Scouting, YMCA, school groups, etc.). Groups who need to purchase a certificate of insurance for this outing can do so through a private carrier.

- c) Scout groups are required to present a copy of their signed and stamped tour permit at least 30 days prior to the Overnight date. Non-scouting groups are required to submit a signed copy of the Acknowledgment Letter, available on AAI's website, at least 30 days prior to the Overnight date.
- d) The Muster of Participants form should be submitted 14 days before the group's Overnight. This form is available AAI's website.
- e) Upon arrival, three items are required. The group leader must submit the following:
  - Signed copies of the Wavier of Release and Liability Agreement for the group (a separate form for every person participating). The Wavier of Release and Liability Agreement may be found on AAI's website;
  - Completed Medical Condition Forms, also available on AAI's website, for any participants with serious medical conditions; and
  - The balance due is payable upon arrival, by check or money order, to the American Academy of Industry.