

Garden Assistant Volunteer

Overview:

The Garden Assistant is a live-in, volunteer position at Karmê Chöling (KCL) Shambhala Meditation Center. We are located in the Green Mountains of rural Vermont and are one of the oldest meditation retreat centers in North America. As a volunteer, you would be an active community member in our household of 25-30 people. We foster an atmosphere of mindful body, speech, and mind and practice bringing these three elements into our daily activities and interactions. If you have a desire to learn to meditate or have an affinity for it, this position allows you to live, work and practice with a group of active meditators.

Working as a Garden Assistant at KCL is an excellent opportunity to learn organic gardening and composting from a Master Gardener. At KCL the Garden Assistant lives and participates in the household while working outdoors in vegetable, herb, and flower production.

In general, the following will be the responsibility of the Garden Assistant:

- Supports propagation, cultivation, and harvests of all vegetable, flower, herb and possibly mushroom crops
- Supports compost production
- Helps maintain beauty and cleanliness of garden workspaces
- Maintains weed control
- End-of-crop clean up and rotation
- End-of-season clean up
- Additionally responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - o Monitoring and managing the climate in Greenhouses
 - o Watering of all crops and seedlings
 - o Protecting crops in case of inclement weather
 - o Being the point-person for the Kitchen and/or Ikebana
 - o Taking on special projects (i.e. food preservation)

Minimum requirements of this position:

- Commitment to a daily meditation practice, either ongoing or learning if you are new to it
- Previous experience with garden work preferred (or a strong desire to work with plants and soil)
- Curiosity about organic gardening
- Be a good team worker
- Ability to take directions from the Master Gardener and Garden Manager
- Good overall health
- Enjoy being outside doing outdoor work

- Able to perform repetitive and heavy work
- Have flexibility around the work schedule and needs of the Garden

The Garden Assistant is provided with room and board. Daily group meditation practice is worked into the schedule. Weekly teachings, a meditation instructor, and personal practice and study time are also available.

The work week is usually 5.5 hours/day, 5 days/week and can include weekends where needed. Days and hours can vary during warm weather when extra watering is required or when crops are ready to harvest. The garden season runs from seed propagation thru preparing the beds for winter, April - October.