Student Job Description

Title: Interpretive Center Program Assistant
Responsible To: Program Manager & Preserve Director
Department: Ecosystem Preserve

Purpose: To assist the program manager in the management of the daily operations (education and exhibits, marketing and communication, visitor services and curation of living, non-living and digital collections) at the Bunker Interpretive Center.

Primary Responsibilities:

These responsibilities are divided up between two to three program assistants each year based on their skills and interests.

Education and Exhibits

- Prepare educational materials and supplies for our educational programs and keep them organized. This includes creating registrations sheets, making nametags, creating props (for puppet shows, games and activities), creating and writing handouts, scavenger sheets and educational discovery sheets, copying supplies, creating art project samples, etc.
- Assist with writing interpretative text and designing educational signs and displays for the Bunker Interpretive Center under the direction of the Program Manager. This includes researching, writing, proofreading, and laying out text, photographs and images in an attractive, engaging and informative way. Additionally includes fabrication of props and putting up and taking down displays.
- Assist the program manager with the coordination and execution of special events such as the Family Weekend activities, First Saturday programs, Spring Break Fun programs, and Annual Native Plant Sale.

Marketing and Communication

- Assist the Program Manager and Departmental Assistant with a variety of writing, editing, and proofreading projects which may include writing articles for the e-newsletter, posting status updates and photos on our Facebook page, creating event posters, writing and proofreading text for brochures and website content, proofreading a variety of educational lesson plans and reports, and taking photos.

Visitor Services

- Assist visitors to the Bunker Interpretive Center and the Preserve by welcoming them and answering questions.
- Answer the telephone, emails, Facebook posts and/or direct questions to appropriate people.
- Staff the Bunker Interpretive Center when the manager or director are not present. This includes opening and closing the building, assisting faculty and staff and visiting groups with AV requirements and may occasionally include evening and Saturday hours.
- Perform light cleaning duties to maintain a clean and inviting presentation inside the BIC such as tidying up educational displays, dusting, sweeping, recycling etc. as needed.
Curation of Living, Non-living and Digital Collections

- Prepare non-living specimens for entry into collection, identify, catalogue and enter into database (includes working with bird nests and eggs, bird study skins and parts, turtle shells, mammal skins, skulls, rocks, seeds etc.)
- Assist the animal care program assistant in maintaining living components (aquariums and terrariums, gray water treatment system, bird feeding stations, native plant gardens, butterfly house, toilet composter etc.) of the Bunker Interpretive Center.
- Organize and identify digital collection of photos.
- Other tasks as assigned.

Necessary Skills, Abilities, and Qualifications:

- Must be highly motivated, reliable and accurate in performing everyday tasks, demonstrates initiative and works both independently and collaboratively.
- Must have strong organizational skills and have the ability to manage multiple projects at the same time.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with an aptitude for writing, proofreading, and editing strongly desired.
- An eye for or experience in graphic design and layout, prop creation, sketching and/or photography highly desirable.
- Exhibit a willingness, curiosity and an excitement to learn about the ecology and natural history of the flora and fauna of West Michigan.
- Possess a dynamic personality and energy and enthusiasm for the position.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Facebook and using a copy machine.
- Needs to be comfortable feeding and caring for animals and plants.

Benefits: Gain valuable experience and build your resume/portfolio (extremely valuable if interested in becoming a naturalist, interpreter, park ranger, curator at a museum, aquarium or zoo, camp director, educator or support staff including graphic designer or communication coordinator at an environmental nonprofit organization outdoor recreation manager, early childhood educator, or an elementary teacher), learn about the fields of interpretation and environmental education and jobs available in these fields, learn about interpretative writing and design, learn about the operation of a nature center, spend time outside, learn more about God’s creation and yourself.

Time Commitment: 6 to 15 hours a week. Afternoons preferred. Some evening and Saturday work required.

Suggested Wage Level: II
Suggested Wage: $8.00 an hour

Typical Length of Employment:

_____ Summer           ____X__ Academic Year           _____ Whole Year