

INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST AIDE

KIND OF WORK

Para-professional/technical work assisting in the development and implementation of educational and promotional natural science programs.

NATURE AND PURPOSE

Under general supervision, an employee in this class is responsible for assisting in the development and implementation of on/off site interpretive programs and materials for presentation to the general public, school groups, and specialized Zoo clientele groups. Work may include responsibility for components of a major program and may include outreach, class instruction and public interpretation. Performs related work as required.

EXAMPLES OF WORK (A position may not include all the work examples given, nor does the list include all that may be assigned.)

Suggests, instructs and evaluates interpretive material for presentation to the public for on/off site naturalist educational programs so that the quality of educational/interpretive programming can be produced/maintained by assisting in the developing and editing of education/information materials for teachers, including school programs catalog, curriculum units, special brochures and flyers; writing interpretive and informational articles for the Zoo Magazine; implementing a biofact station program; upgrading booth displays by choosing biofacts to exhibit and ordering graphics; participating in the planning and facilitating of different teacher inservices annually; developing, writing and evaluating a variety of different tours for the school guided tour program for grades K-12; and assisting in conducting interpretive training programs for volunteers for use in various Zoo interpretive programs.

Presents interpretive information to a variety of audiences so that a better understanding and appreciation for the natural world and its animals, along with instilling the importance of conserving these resources by interpreting animals and biofacts, and developing and instructing Zoo classes, including 6-8 weeks of Summer Camp and special event days for school programs.

Maintains accurate records on specific program components so that goals and objectives can be created, the programs can be evaluated, and the physical equipment maintained in good working order by keeping a daily report on presentations (listing group composition, location, program content, audience response); preparing monthly reports; completing a yearly program plan outlining annual goals and objectives; and following up at the end of the year with an annual report.

Cares for selected animals (birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates) used in special interpretive programs so that optimum animal health is maintained by completing a daily keeper report covering animal use, behavior, health, and other pertinent information; maintaining communications with other staff so that animal handling and training procedures are standardized, and significant incidents are shared; preparing and feeding established animal diets and suggesting diet modifications and changes as needed; and maintaining safe, secure, and sanitary animal quarters.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED

Knowledge of:

Minnesota Zoo operational services, philosophy, objectives and guidelines sufficient to develop and implement appropriate educational programs to enhance the visitor's experience and advance the mission of the Zoo.

Zoology, biology, related natural or environmental sciences, curriculum writing, and natural resource education sufficient to develop educational programs.

Teaching practices and techniques sufficient to present/interpret a high quality educational program.

Volunteer organizational dynamics and relationships sufficient to assist in planning and administering a Volunteer Program including designing training sessions, materials and monitoring on-going operations of the program so that the needs of the volunteers are met.

Script writing techniques and theater presentation concepts sufficient to enhance volunteers skills in interpretive interaction with the visitors/general public.

Application of printing and processing of materials; graphics processes and materials; film media, including still photography and processing; video processes and equipment; and 35mm and 2x2 slide production sufficient to develop publications and newsletters.

Personnel and program evaluation techniques sufficient to make recommendations to meet changing program needs.

Ability to:

Communicate verbally and in writing sufficient to write reports and provide/interpret information and public performances for individuals and groups in a clear and concise way.

Establish an effective working relationship with staff of the Minnesota Zoological Gardens, the various groups and schools who visit the Zoo and the general public sufficient to enhance the interpretive activities and provide an enjoyable experience for the visitors.

Maintain small animals in captivity sufficient to ensure safe, secure, and sanitary quarters for them, proper food diets are followed and that they are handled humanely.

Maintain documentation of records sufficient to ensure accurate daily and weekly accounts of program activity.

Est.: 11/3/78
Rev.: 3/92

T.C.:
Former Title(s):