

YOUTH VOLUNTEER TEAM DESCRIPTION:

Zoo Guides

Summer 2011

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium



The Zoo Guides Program of the Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium Youth Volunteer Team provides high school students an opportunity to increase and share their knowledge of animals, conservation and the environment while gaining valuable volunteer experience in a zoo and aquarium setting. We are looking for responsible, dedicated and enthusiastic youth to volunteer during the summer of 2011. Please read the following descriptions and requirements carefully before submitting your application.

ZOO GUIDES WILL...

- Talk with Zoo Guests and Camp Participants about the animals in our exhibit areas.
- Educate Zoo Guests and Summer Camp Participants on a variety of animal, conservation and environmental issues.
- Guide activities in animal exhibit areas to encourage both children and adults to think about their place in the natural world and the role they can take in its conservation.
- Work with Summer Camp staff to offer an exciting learning opportunity to children ages 4 to 12.
- Set up and provide instruction with crafts, activities and games for Summer Camp participants.
- Help camp staff to guide campers around zoo grounds while observing animals, attending keeper talks, and going on behind-the-scenes tours.
- Interact with Zoo Guests and Camp Participants of all ages in a FUN and EDUCATIONAL setting.

Please Note: Youth volunteers (including Zoo Guides) DO NOT assist with animal care.

ELIGIBILITY

Zoo Guides must be at least 14 years old by the first day of training – April 5, 2011. Applicants must also be high school students, entering 9th through 12th grade, during the 2011 -2012 school year (or equivalent if Home School or Running Start student).

TIME REQUIREMENT

Membership in the PDZA Zoo Guides requires a significant time commitment not just through the summer months, but also during the last few months of the school year. Zoo Guides are expected to serve a total of **154 hours** between the start of training on Tuesday, April 5 and the end of the Summer Season on Sunday, August 28, 2011. The total number of volunteer hours required from Zoo Guides during the School Year and the Summer Season are as follows:

School Year (5 April – 12 June) – 41 hours total (33 hrs. Mandatory Training + 8 hrs. Practice Shifts)
Zoo Guides are required to attend 7 sessions of mandatory training totaling 33 hours during the month of April. The exact dates and times of these trainings can be found in the section of this document entitled “Training.”

In addition to the mandatory training, Zoo Guides are asked to complete eight (8) hours of practical training/work between Sunday, May 1 and Sunday, June 12, 2011. These hours will be acquired in two, four-

hour work shifts to be completed on any two weekend days (Saturday or Sunday) of their choosing. These days do not have to be consecutive.

Summer Season (20 June – 28 August) – 113 hours total (110 hrs. Regular shifts + 3 hr. Mandatory Meeting)
The official Summer Season will begin on Monday, June 20, 2011 and will end on Sunday, August 28, 2011. During this period of time Zoo Guides are required to work two, regularly-scheduled, 5.5-hour shifts per week for a total of 110 hours. Zoo Guides will be able to choose the two days on which they will regularly work and may be required to work on weekend days (Saturday and/or Sunday). Absences (for vacation, school commitments, etc.) are allowed pending prior notification to the Volunteer Office.

Zoo Guides will also be required to attend a MANDATORY, three-hour, Mid-Season Meeting on **Thursday, July 21, 2011** from 5:30pm – 8:30pm.

These are the minimum service requirements necessary to officially complete the Youth Volunteer Program of Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium. Zoo Guides, upon discussion with the Volunteer Office, may complete more hours than required if desired.

Optional Volunteer Days (29 August – 5 September)

Zoo Guides have the option to continue working at the Zoo until Monday, September 5, 2011 which marks the official end of the Zoo's "Summer Season."

APPLICATION

Zoo Guide applications are available for download at www.pdza.org. Applications can also be obtained by contacting the Volunteer Office at volunteer@pdza.org or (253) 404-3687. *Applications must be postmarked on or before January 29, 2011.*

Following a review of all applications, selected Applicants will be required to attend one group interview and one individual interview. The group interview will take place on **Saturday, February 26, 2011** from **1pm-4:30pm**. Individual interviews will be scheduled at the end of the group interview, and will take place in the following weeks.

Absence from the group interview or your individual interview without giving the Volunteer Office prior notice of your absence will result in automatic disqualification from the Zoo Guide application process.

Final team selections will be made in late March and successful Applicants will be notified if they have been selected for the Zoo Guide Program.

TRAINING

Training will take place over seven (7) days in April. The exact dates and times of training are as follows:

Tuesday, **April 5:** 6pm-9pm (Mandatory Parent/Guardian Meeting)
Thursday, **April 7:** 6pm-9pm
Sunday, **April 10:** 12pm-7pm (please bring a sack dinner)
Sunday, **April 17:** 12pm-7pm (please bring a sack dinner)
Saturday, **April 23:** 12pm-7pm (please bring a sack dinner)
Tuesday, **April 26:** 6pm-9pm
Thursday, **April 28:** 6pm-9pm

Zoo Guides **MUST** complete ALL mandatory trainings. Trainings will cover all the necessary topics and skills required for a Zoo Guide to be successful in their position. Example topics include zoo policies, volunteer procedures, customer service, animal information, and job functions.

Absences from mandatory trainings (for illness, vacations, school commitments, etc.) are allowed **provided:**

- No more than 2 training sessions are missed. – No Exceptions.
- The Volunteer Office receives prior notification of the absence – Failure to provide prior notice for an absence from any one (1) mandatory training session will result in immediate dismissal from the Zoo Guides Program.
- An alternate training is successfully completed for those sessions missed.

Please Note: The inability to attend all trainings, provide advanced notice of an absence, or successfully complete an alternative training as outlined above will result in dismissal from the Zoo Guides.

Zoo Guides will continue with practical training during the two, 4-hour shifts that take place in May and June.

Upon completion of their training, Zoo Guides will be expected to pass a basic zoo-knowledge test with a score of at least 80% before they will be allowed to start their normal shifts. A Zoo Guide may take this test as many times as necessary to pass.

PARENT/GUARDIAN MEETING

There will be one MANDATORY meeting for all Parents/Guardians and Youth Volunteer Team participants. This meeting will cover program participation expectations and is an opportunity for Parents/Guardians to have their questions answered and to meet the Youth Volunteer Team Supervisors.

The Parent/Guardian meeting will take place on **Tuesday, April 5, 2011** from **6pm – 9pm**. A reminder of this meeting will be given upon acceptance into the Zoo Guides Program.

PROGRAM FEE

The Youth Volunteer Team requires a fee of \$35 to cover expenses including, but not limited to: a volunteer shirt, nametag, training materials, and social activities. Financial aid is available for qualified applicants. Applicants requesting financial aid assistance will need to submit a PDZA Education Department Financial Aid Application with their Zoo Guide Application in order to be considered for assistance. Financial Aid Applications are available for download at www.pdza.org. The Program Fee is due following acceptance to the Zoo Guides. Please **DO NOT** send a Program Fee with your application.

APPLICATION AVAILABLE ONLINE at www.pdza.org

Or you may contact the Volunteer Office at:
volunteer@pdza.org or (253) 404-3687.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 29, 2011.