



APPLY TO BE A YOUTH VOLUNTEER AT POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM

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TACOMA, Wash.—Volunteers are a vital part of what makes Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium such an exciting and educational experience for guests. Applications open soon for high school youth volunteers for summer 2023. As a Youth Volunteer, students will inspire others to make protecting wildlife a priority while gaining valuable volunteer experience in a zoo and aquarium setting.

High school volunteers are required to be between the ages of 14 and 18 or entering 9th through 12th grade in Fall 2023.

“Applicants should be comfortable learning, growing and taking concrete actions in a community focused on conservation through the lenses of animals, environment, and climate,” said Youth Volunteer Coordinator Amy Wilson.

Students can apply to be a Zoo Guide or Camp Assistant.

Zoo Guide

As an important member of the zoo’s team, Zoo Guides educate guests about the animals and a variety of conservation and environmental issues. For example, Sumatran tigers are critically endangered, with only about 400 remaining in the wild. Volunteers play a critical role in saving the species as they educate guests about what they can do to help tigers in the wild.

“Volunteers will encourage both children and adults to think about their place in the natural world and their role in actively working to protect nature,” said Wilson.

As a Zoo Guide, volunteers will learn about conservation and animals. They will also learn life skills such as public speaking, teamwork, and communicating with others. The volunteer experience gives them the tools to be successful in their future endeavors.

Applications for Zoo Guides will be available beginning Thursday, Dec. 1 and are due Monday, Jan. 9.

If accepted, Zoo Guides must commit to attending nine required training sessions in March – June and working one, six-hour shift per week for nine weeks during the summer season.

Camp Assistant

Camp Assistants work with Zoo Camp staff to facilitate unique experiences for children ages 4 to 12. As part of the Zoo Camp team, they'll support staff in providing opportunities for camp participants to learn about wildlife through community building, outdoor exploration, special animal encounters, hands-on activities, and classroom learning.

Applications for Camp Assistants will be available beginning Monday, Jan. 9 and are due Monday, Feb. 20. Applicants do not need to have experience working with all ages but should be able to demonstrate a strong interest supporting children as they learn and explore. Camp Assistants will gain leadership and communication skills and benefit from staff mentorship during their time at Zoo Camp.

If accepted, Camp Assistants must commit to attending an evening orientation and a day long in person training session in June. Selected Camp Assistants must commit to working a minimum of three weeks during the summer season.

To learn more about applying to be a Youth Volunteer, visit pdza.org.

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