



Utah's HOGLE ZOO

VOLUNTEER: ZOO GUIDE

POSITION DESCRIPTION

A Zoo Guide volunteer at Utah's Hogle Zoo is an informal educator who interprets information about animals, their natural history, and conservation efforts with the public in a zoo setting. Their main goal is to create meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences for guests. Zoo Guides directly support the Zoo's mission in creating champions for wildlife by inspiring visitors to develop a deeper appreciation for nature and take conservation action. In this program, Zoo Guides will learn about wildlife, ecology, and conservation while developing new skills and insight into working in a zoological setting.

REPORTS TO:

Interpretive Volunteer Coordinator in the Education Department

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Zoo Guides go beyond simply providing facts; they strive to create an emotional and intellectual connection between the visitors and the animals. Zoo Guide responsibilities include:

- **Delivering Programs:** Conducting engaging presentations and informal chats at specific locations throughout the Zoo.
- **Facilitating Interactions:** Assisting with hands-on educational opportunities including field trips, adult classes, and summer camps as well as animal feeding interactions with guests like giraffe feeds.
- **Employ Educational Materials:** Utilizing biological artifacts, visual displays, and other content to enhance visitor understanding.
- **Making Information Accessible:** Translating complex scientific information into language that is understandable and engaging for diverse audiences.
- **Inspiring Conservation Action:** Encouraging visitors to consider their own impact on the environment and adopt sustainable behaviors.

QUALIFICATIONS

Zoo Guides must genuinely care about people, animals, nature, and conservation. They are enthusiastic and willing to share accurate, science-based information with Zoo visitors. Zoo Guides are committed to providing our guests with exceptional customer service, dependable, and able to meet the minimum program requirements. Due to the environment of working in a zoological setting, volunteers must show maturity, self-motivation, and the ability to follow

2600 SUNNYSIDE AVENUE, SLC, UT 84108
801-584-1700

ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS



directions. Core skills for a Zoo Guide include strong communication abilities, a solid knowledge base in biology and wildlife conservation, and excellent interpretation skills to engage diverse audiences effectively. The Education staff will assist volunteers in using and developing these skills. Zoo Guide skills include:

- **Communication and Presentation Skills:** Clearly and confidently conveys accurate information to diverse audiences using engaging, mission-driven messaging.
- **Knowledge of Animals and Conservation:** Demonstrates a strong understanding of species, habitats, and conservation issues, connecting zoo animals to broader environmental impacts and solutions.
- **Interpersonal Skills and Customer Service:** Creates welcoming, respectful, and positive interactions that enhance each guest's zoo experience.
- **Storytelling and Creativity:** Uses compelling narratives, thematic framing, and creative techniques to make animal information memorable and meaningful.
- **Adaptability and Problem-Solving:** Responds effectively to changing situations, guest needs, and exhibit dynamics while maintaining professionalism.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Works cooperatively with staff and fellow volunteers to support shared goals and deliver cohesive guest experiences.
- **Attention to Detail:** Maintains accuracy in messaging, follows protocols carefully, and upholds program standards consistently.

ORGANIZATION AND DEPARTMENT GOALS

Zoo Guides play an essential role in advancing the Zoo's mission and vision as well as contributing to the Education Department's interpretive strategic plan. They do this by:

- Providing programming that removes barriers and engages and motivates visitors to become champions for wildlife.
- Valuing collaborative teamwork as One Zoo.
- Fostering a welcoming and professional environment to promote a Zoo for All.
- Creating connections between animals and people that develop empathy.
- Enhancing environmental, science, and conservation literacy in guests.
- Supporting Education Department mission outcomes including changes in guest understanding, affect, and behavior.

REQUIREMENTS

- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Must commit to volunteering 24 hours a calendar quarter (an average of 8 hours per month)
- Must provide authorization of background check
- Submit a negative TB test followed by an annual TB Screening

SCHEDULE AND TIME COMMITMENT

Zoo Guide shifts provide many opportunities to volunteer. Hours of volunteer service coincide with current Zoo hours with some after-hours special events.

- There is a minimum requirement of 24 hours per quarter (an average of 8 hours per month) to remain an active Zoo Guide volunteer.

- Zoo Guides must attend any mandatory trainings.
- Zoo Guides must attend at least two of the quarterly meetings per year.

PHYSICAL DEMAND AND SPECIAL WORKING CONDITIONS

This position requires long periods of standing and walking in addition to exposure to the elements such as heat, cold, rain, and snow.

COMPENSATION

All volunteers at Utah's Hogle Zoo are considered non-paid employees. Benefits include discounts on food and gifts and volunteer recognition events and parties.

THE VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT WILL:

volunteeroffice @hoglezoo.org

- Maintain records for active volunteers.
- Issue volunteers a uniform and name tag.
- Provide ongoing support and assistance with volunteer/staff relationships.
- Administer volunteer benefits.
- Provide a written reference which will include hours of service, tenure, and job description when requested.

TO APPLY

Zoo Guide applications are accepted throughout the year with annual interviews generally held in April and September.

Please submit a [Zoo Guide Application](#).

Utah's Hogle Zoo is committed to creating a volunteer program that represents our community and includes individuals from various backgrounds, age groups, perspectives, experiences, abilities, and strengths.