



ALBUQUERQUE BIOLOGICAL PARK BIOPARK NATURE GUIDE BIOPARK EDUCATION VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION 2009

PURPOSE

The BioPark Nature Guide program is designed to give teens and adults the opportunity to teach BioPark visitors about the fascinating world of animals and plants. BioPark Nature Guides will staff discovery areas at the Zoo, Aquarium and Botanic Garden. Along with teaching about nature, BioPark Nature Guides will help visitors make crafts, conduct hands-on activities, and excite visitors about conservation.

REQUIREMENTS

Anyone, 14 years or older, is eligible to become a BioPark Nature Guide. Volunteers over 18 years old are eligible to become a BioPark Nature Guide Captain. Skills needed to become a successful BioPark Nature Guide include enthusiasm, a commitment to teaching conservation, a strong sense of responsibility, dependability and flexibility to learn and teach about a variety of topics. In addition, Captains need the ability to communicate successfully with young adults in order to coordinate a team of Nature Guides. All required science information and teaching techniques will be taught. As a safety precaution, all applicants are required to submit to a City of Albuquerque background check before they can begin volunteering.

DUTIES

The duty of a BioPark Nature Guide is to staff a discovery area in the Zoo's Backyard Habitat exhibit, the Aquarium lobby, the Botanic Garden pond, the Heritage Farm or the Aquarium/Garden plaza. Nature Guides report to work on time and in uniform. They set up outdoor displays which change daily or weekly. They keep all display areas clean. Nature Guides learn about the animals and plants involved in the program and teach BioPark visitors about their natural history and habitats. Nature Guides educate visitors about conservation and make their visit to the BioPark memorable and fun. Captains have the responsibility of coordinating the teen volunteers on duty and helping to teach visitors.

BioPark Nature Guides work as a team of teens and adults, along with BioPark staff. Parents are not allowed to join their child unless working as a captain or under special circumstances with approval of Education Curator.

MINIMUM TIME

The BioPark Nature Guide areas are open to the public every Monday – Friday, from June 8 – July 31, with the exception of July 3-4. The hours of operation are 10:00am-3:00pm. Volunteer shifts are 9:30am-12:30pm and 12:15-3:15pm. Nature Guides are asked to sign up for at least one shift per week. If you are unable to work one of your shifts, you must call another Nature Guide to substitute – the BioPark is counting on you! Volunteers who work a minimum of 24 hours (8 shifts) during the summer will receive recognition.

TRAINING

BioPark Nature Guides must attend a training class. The first class takes place on two days: June 1 and 2. The session on Monday, June 1, 9:30-3:30, will take place in the Zoo Ed Colores Building. The session on Tuesday, June 2, 9:30-3:30, will take place in the Aquarium/Botanic Garden Education Building. Nature Guides should bring their own lunch or money to purchase food at the BioPark. Volunteers who are unable to attend the training sessions above can attend an accelerated one-day training on Friday, June 26, 9:30-3:30 in the Aquarium/Botanic Garden Education Building or must make arrangements with the BioPark Nature Guide Coordinators to make up the training at another time.

UNIFORM

BioPark Nature Guides will need to purchase a special T-shirt to wear while they work. A nametag will be provided. The rest of the uniform should be neat and professional. Short shorts are not permitted. Remember, you represent the BioPark and the City of Albuquerque.

BENEFITS

BioPark Education Volunteers have the opportunity to do meaningful and gratifying education work with thousands of visitors to the BioPark, an important intangible benefit. Tangible benefits are also available. Upon completion of the training BioPark Nature Guides receive an identification badge, which allows free regular admission to all BioPark facilities (Zoo, Aquarium, and Botanic Garden). While on duty, volunteers receive a discount at the food and gift concession stands.

Nature Guides who fulfill the minimum time commitment will receive a certificate of recognition, appropriate for use on resumes and college and job applications. Letters of recommendation may also be written for those teens with a record of excellent service to the BioPark. Summer volunteers get together on Tuesday, August 4, from 3:30-5:00pm at the Zoo to celebrate the summer, and volunteers who have worked at least two weeks will be recognized.

COSTS

The only expense will be for the T-shirt (approximately \$5).

STRUCTURE

BioPark Nature Guides report to the Captain on duty or the BioPark Nature Guide Coordinator. The Captains and Coordinators report to the site facilitator - Allyson Zahm at the Zoo or Dave Karrmann at the Aquarium/Garden. Cathy Wylie, BioPark Volunteer/Program Specialist, is also available to provide assistance.

HOW TO APPLY

Fill out the attached volunteer information and contract/release forms, and bring to training. Once your application is received, you will be asked to complete a separate background check form.

CONTACT

For more information, contact BioPark Education:
(505) 764-6214, lpowdrell@cabq.gov
www.cabq.gov/biopark



The BioPark is a division of the City of Albuquerque's Cultural Services Department. For general inquiries, please call 311 (Relay NM or 711).