

INTERPRETIVE INTERN POSITIONS AVAILABLE

UNPAID, PART-TIME for the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU

Applicants are encouraged to apply by May 1 for Fall semester; Nov. 15 for Spring semester; and March 1 for Summer opportunities. Credit may be available through your major's internship program—ask your advisor.



Overview:

Interpretive Interns work with the Education Coordinator to lead guided tours at the Arboretum for school field trips and pursue an independent project related to environmental education. Training provided. Applicants should have a desire to work enthusiastically with students in an outdoor setting and to learn about our flora and fauna.

Duration of internship:

1 Semester. Internship can be extended into Maymester, or take place during summer as appropriate or desired.

Approximate start date:

Week 1 of each semester.

Weekly time commitment:

4 hours per week, between 9-12 a.m. on two days between Monday through Thursday. (Students taking the internship for 2 credits will have 6 hours per week)

Under the supervision of the Arboretum Education Coordinator, the Arboretum Interpretive Interns will:

- Receive basic training in general interpretive techniques, effective ways to engage with early elementary students, the specific interpretive tour route and activities, basic Arboretum history and current activities, and horticultural information about the living collections.
- Serve as Interpretive Docent for one to two guided tours per week during the tour season (late March through graduation in Spring, and mid-September through early November in Fall) Tours are groups of 20 students or less with chaperones, scheduled on weekdays between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. for 45 minutes to one hour. Most groups are elementary-aged. [Summer interns have other opportunities—please ask for details]
- Further gain experience in educational design, natural interpretation, or program development and facilitation by completing an independent project such as:
 - Revamp our self-guided **Explorer Backpacks** to make them differentiated by age and include better directed activities and consistent materials.
 - Develop a **local field guide** to the arboretum's trees, plants, and animals for independent student or visitor use.
 - Develop and present a **new tour script and activities** for high school students to engage at the Arboretum.
 - Develop and present ideas for a **Meaningful Watershed Experience** project to be suggested to local elementary schools to help them comply with the Chesapeake Bay Agreement. This is a multi-faceted, long-term project for the students.
 - Develop and present a new tour script and activities for our **Forest Web Tour** along a theme aligned with S.O.L. objectives for 3rd to 5th grades.
 - Develop and present 3-4 **Wondercraft art programs** incorporating a nature component or natural elements for a chosen age-range of student.
 - Develop and present other programs on some aspect of nature that you're interested in for the age range you desire.
 - Spring interns: Assist with developing our annual summer Explorer Day Camp programming.
 - Fall interns: Assist with developing and executing our annual Harvest Fest (late October).

Interpretive Interns are required to:

- Be able to meet the responsibilities and time commitment above
- Be dependable and punctual
- Be enthusiastic about working with elementary-aged students in particular
- Possess excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Have the ability to work independently and to a high standard
- Have interest in the environment and enthusiasm about the importance of plant/animal interactions
- Expand their knowledge of plants, basic ecology and the Arboretum by using resources such as the Arboretum website, consulting field guides, and asking questions
- Be able to negotiate outdoor terrain and stand for a period of one hour
- Be a current student of James Madison University or another regional college (preferred but not required)

This is an unpaid internship but JMU credit may be available – ask your professors. Questions about the interpretive internship? Email Ms. Katie Rankin, Education Coordinator, rankinkt@jmu.edu.



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ARBORETUM INTERPRETIVE INTERN APPLICATION

Contact Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Email address: _____

Undergraduate graduation date (past or planned): _____ Major: _____

1. What is your educational background or experience relevant to this internship?

2. Please describe your experiences working with children, if any.

3. Why are you interested in environmental education or nature interpretation?

4. Which independent project(s) interest you, and why?

5. What do you hope to gain from this internship experience?

Availability

This internship requires 4 hours per week. The training sessions and guided tours interns will lead or assist with are scheduled between 9:00 and 1:00 p.m. on weekdays, and you will come into the Arboretum education center to complete your other projects at a set time.

6. Describe your availability during the week:

Thank you for your interest in interning at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum!
Please send your application to Ms. Katie Rankin at rankinkt@jmu.edu.