Internships at Ellen Trout Zoo!

The goal of the Ellen Trout Zoo’s internship program is to provide pre-professional, experiential learning opportunities for dedicated students interested in animal care, zookeeping, environmental issues/ethics, informal education, visitor studies, communication and community service.

Through participation in the program, students will assist zoo staff with a variety of tasks which promote the fulfillment of the Zoo’s mission to “connect people to the natural world through goals of a modern zoo: recreation, conservation, education, and research.”

Ellen Trout Zoo (ETZ) is a City of Lufkin department and is an Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited zoo. The zoo houses over 800 animals and plants in Lufkin, TX and participates in the AZA’s Species Survival plans along with many other conservation organizations.

Why intern at ETZ?

● Diversity of your experience - ETZ has a very diverse collection of animals in their care, so interns will gain experience with mammals, birds, and reptiles. Interns can rotate through all 4 animal sections to see a variety of husbandry, training, and safety procedures.
● Education and Horticulture Internships available
● Hands on Animal Care experience
● Shadowing knowledgeable supervisors
● Flexible scheduling - the zoo is open 9 am - 5 pm every day of the year (including christmas) to the public, our staff is here every day from 8 am - 5 pm, with an hour break for lunch.

Eligibility Requirements:
Submission of completed application
Pre-service interview with Zoo’s Education Department
Signed Liability Release form
Dependable transportation
Positive attitude and strong work ethic
Attend open house & orientation

If you would like credit hours for your internship there are additional requirements:
Letter of reference from a professor/ professor for education staff to communicate with
Availability of at least 6 hours per week / 12 week minimum preferred* *Summer interns must be available at least 20 hours per week. Preference will be given to college juniors and seniors.

Education Interns:
Public speaking skills and interest in working with children and the public
Must be willing to handle animals when necessary for programming purposes
These internship experience is most appropriate for individuals with the following qualities:
Passionate and curious about the natural world and environmental issues.
Outgoing, good communication and organizational skills
Enjoys working interactively with a variety of age groups
Dependable, cooperative and self-motivated
This is an unpaid internship.

Duties and Responsibilities may include the following:
Animal care: diet preparation, daily cleaning and maintaining habitats for the animals, habitat maintenance, enrichment projects for the animals, conservation projects, and keeper chats with the public.

Education Dept: Assist with the teaching of on-site and off-site programs for children and adults, Assist with research and development of educational materials, Assist with summer camp programming and special events.

Physical Requirements: Must be able to lift 50 pounds
Must be willing to work outdoors in all types of weather

Intern Benefits: Discount at the Zoo Gift Shop

Supervisory Relationship: The Director of Education serves as the internship coordinator for the Ellen Trout Zoo and is responsible for communication with the participating university supervisor and contract agreements with students.

Failure to fulfill expectations may result in dismissal from the program. Interns should realize that the internship program is in many ways equivalent to holding a paid position and that excessive tardiness, missing shifts, and continuous scheduling problems are not viewed positively by Zoo staff and may result in removal from the program.
1st - oral warning
2nd - written warning copied to course instructor
3rd - formal notification to the intern’s advisor of unacceptable work performance and possible dismissal from the internship.

In event that a student fails to meet acceptable standards of conduct the Zoo reserves the right to discharge any student from participating in the program.

Contact Information
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