

Lake Superior Zoo Internship Description

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Animal Care Internship

Supervised By: Lead Zookeeper and Zookeeper Staff

Dates

- Spring: Mid-January through April (application deadline December 1st)
- Summer: Mid-May through August (application deadline March 15th)
- Fall: Mid-September through December (application deadline August 15th)

Time Commitment

Minimum of 30 hours per week for summer session and 20 hours per week for spring and fall sessions, with weekday and weekend shifts. Internships are unpaid and do not provide housing.

Overview

At the Lake Superior Zoo we care for over 300 animals of a variety of taxa. Animal care interns work primarily in one or two of our four animal care areas, while also having opportunities to learn about primates and raptors:

- Main/Australia routine: ambassador animals (reptiles, amphibians, birds, small mammals) and Australian animals
- PCC/Nocturnal Building: nocturnal mammals and amphibians
- Barn routine: native mammals, Asian hoofstock, and domestic farm species
- Carnivore routine: large carnivores (primarily cleaning, diets, and enrichment-no shifting)

Internship sessions are approximately three and a half to four months long though qualified interns may request to extend the internship to a second session on a case by case basis. The Lake Superior Zoo expects motivated and passionate interns that promote our mission to “inspire connections to wildlife and action towards conservation in our region and around the world.” Spring, summer, and fall internship sessions are available.

Learning Opportunities and Responsibilities

- Best practices in animal welfare
- Cleaning animal enclosures and holding areas
- Diet preparation and distribution with general nutrition
- Environmental enrichment and its role in animal management
- Practical skills in guest interaction and keeper talk development
- Behavioral observation and proper animal handling and/or interaction
- Orientation to daily recordkeeping and medical care
- Overview of positive reinforcement training and its application
- Overview of best safety practices in a zoological setting
- Additional seminars and learning opportunities that may include: medical procedure observation; animal weighing; enrichment construction; orientations to various taxa; USDA and AZA regulations; and resume review/job-finding assistance.

Qualifications

- Currently enrolled or recently graduated in a degree program in biology or a related field
- Comfortable with public speaking
- Comfortable working with people of all ages, abilities and cultures
- Dependable, cooperative, and self-motivated
- A negative TB test is required before beginning the internship

Work Environment

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an intern encounters while performing the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this internship, the intern is regularly exposed to outdoor weather conditions, and occasionally exposed to adverse environmental conditions such as dirt, dust, pollen, odors, fumes, temperature and noise extremes, toxic agents, disease, pathogenic substances, airborne particles, and animal waste. The intern is frequently in direct contact with exotic animals and is occasionally exposed to work near moving mechanical parts; and work in high, precarious places, and in close quarters. The noise level in the work environment varies. Occasional loud noises from visitors, animals or equipment are experienced.

Physical Demands

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an intern to successfully perform the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this internship, the intern is regularly required to stand; walk, reach with hands and arms, use hand handle or feel, and talk or hear. The intern is occasionally required to sit, climb or balance; stoop, kneel, bend, crouch, or crawl. The intern must be able to lift and move up to 50 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close, distance, and peripheral vision, depth perception and the ability to adjust focus. Evaluating animal health, diet, or environment requires hearing and smell. Interaction with staff, guests, and animals requires talking and hearing.

For further inquiries contact Emily Perala, Lead Zookeeper by email: eperala@lszoo.org or phone: (218)730-4500 ext. 104