

General Information

The Edith J. Carrier Arboretum's mission is to promote native species, encourage research, and educate about the natural world to inspire outdoor engagement. We are seeking interns to work with our education and field trip programs at least 4 hours per week.

Become an Arboretum Education Interpretive Intern!

Arboretum interpretive interns explain nature concepts to learners. The arboretum's Interpretive Intern is a JMU student who works with the Education Coordinator to lead guided tours at the arboretum for school field trips, assist with education programs, and pursue an independent project related to environmental education and the students' interests. They develop an understanding of watershed concepts, ecosystem connections, seed dispersal and plant life cycles, lead school tour groups independently, and help children engage outside with nature. This internship builds competencies in leadership, education planning, public speaking, and environmental awareness.



Credit: Credit may be available through your major. See your advisor for credit requirements.

Availability: This internship requires 4 hours per week. Those taking the internship for credit must work the corresponding hours to credit load. Interns must be available on weekday mornings in blocks of at least 2 hours at a time for a minimum of 4 hours per week.

The training sessions and guided tours interns will lead or assist with are scheduled between 9am and 1pm on weekdays. Other projects may be completed M-F, 8am-4pm.

Application dates: Applicants are encouraged to apply by May 1 for Fall semester; Nov. 15 for Spring semester; and March 1 for Maymester or Summer opportunities.

Start Date: 1st week of semester, any semester

Employment Term: 1 semester with option to continue

Benefits of Becoming an Interpretive Intern

Our Interpretive Intern will learn, work, and develop professionally through developing and presenting programs to children and adults to achieve learning objectives and event or program planning. Interns will gain valuable direct experience communicating with a variety of stakeholders, problem-solving, leading, and showing discretion in a beautiful, positive outdoor setting.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Receive basic training in and apply general interpretive techniques. Content will include:
 - Effective ways to engage with early elementary students
 - Specific interpretive tour route and activities
 - Understand basic Arboretum history and current programs
 - Learn horticultural information about the living collections.
- Serve as docent for guided tours during the tour season
 - 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:
 - Develop and execute citizen science programming, including possible observational research.
 - Develop a local field guide or self-guided materials 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 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 the nature topic of your interest for the age range you desire.
 - Assist with developing our annual summer Explorer Day Camp programming.
 - Assist with developing and executing our annual Harvest Fest.

Qualifications

- Have an interest in advancing the arboretum's mission and an enthusiasm for working with elementary-aged students.
- Ability to relate and interact with individuals in both one-on-one and group settings.
- Ability to accept direction and respond well to feedback.
- Willingness to work in a team setting and build rapport with other arboretum staff.
- Demonstrate professional communication when working with supervisors, coworkers, students, and external stakeholders.
- Successful candidates must be eager to learn, dependable, and reliable.
- Be able to negotiate outdoor terrain and stand/walk for a period of one hour

Additional Posting Information

As a result of working as an Interpretive Intern, a student will gain experience in the following competency areas of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Career Readiness Standards.

- Reflect on their growth in leadership, communication, and education, and articulate how this experience prepares them for future opportunities (**Career & Self-Development**).
- Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of the organization (**Communication**)
- Demonstrate verbal, written, and non-verbal/body language abilities and communicate in a clear and organized manner so that others can effectively understand (**Communication**).
- Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals (**Technology**)
- Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities (**Teamwork**)
- Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information (**Critical Thinking**).
- Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve goals and demonstrate effective work habits that act in the interest of the larger community (**Leadership, Professionalism**).
- Serve as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude (**Leadership**)
- Plan, initiate, manage, complete, and evaluate projects (**Leadership**)



**Arboretum Education
Interpretive Internship
[unpaid]**

**Designed as a Work-Based
Learning Experience
(WBLE)**

ARBORETUM INTERPRETIVE INTERN APPLICATION

Send the information requested below to the internship supervisor:

Kelli Hertzler
Education Coordinator
Edith J. Carrier Arboretum
540.568.3194
GDXC5J@jmu.edu

Name:

Phone:

Email address:

Undergraduate graduation date (past or planned):

Major(s)/minor(s):

1. Please describe your experiences working with children, if any.
2. Why are you interested in environmental education or nature interpretation?
3. Which independent project(s) interests you, and why?
4. What do you hope to gain from this internship experience?
5. Describe your weekday availability during the internship.

Thank you for your interest in interning at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum!

We strive for at least two interns in this position each semester. Applicants are encouraged to apply by May 1 for Fall semester; Nov. 15 for Spring semester; and March 1 for Maymester or Summer opportunities. Applications received after these dates will be considered on a rolling basis.