

ZOO EDUCATION SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, assists in the development, coordination, implementation and presentation of specialized educational programs for the Santa Ana Zoo.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO

Assists in the development and presentation of community educational programs to instruct and inform the public about the Santa Ana Zoo and the animals it exhibits. Schedules and conducts zoo education programs. Receives and processes class registration documents and fees. Responds to customer inquiries regarding upcoming programs. Develops appropriate curricula, information sheets, posters and a variety of other class materials for child and adult programs. Prepares publicity flyers, brochures and articles to promote and market educational programs. Safely and effectively trains and cares for the zoo animals used in educational programs. Safely and effectively transports animals and equipment to off-site education programs. Participates in specialized in-service programs for zoo employees and volunteers. Uses current software applications such as Word, Excel, and Power Point to generate zoo instruction documents, reports, correspondence, animal identification graphs, and other documents as required. May make oral presentations as part of the participation in educational programs. Performs other related functions as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS

An employee in this entry-level class performs zoo education work as a member of a team responsible for developing and conducting educational programs for the Santa Ana Zoo. The Zoo Education Specialist reports to the Zoo Curator of Education, who is responsible for the overall direction, design and supervision of the zoo's education and information programs.

MINIMUM BASIC QUALIFICATIONS

Two years of full-time professional experience in the development and presentation of zoo or aquarium education programs, including one year in the handling, care and display of animals; or any equivalent combination of experience and education, which provides the knowledge and abilities listed below. Two years of college in education, zoology or a related field may be used in combination with experience to meet the minimum requirements.

DESIRABLE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of: environmental/conservation issues; natural history as it relates to zoo/aquarium biology, animal behavior and care; principles and practices of feeding and handling, including animal restraint, of domestic and non-domestic animals; safety practices related to handling domestic and non-domestic animals; educational psychology theories of teaching and learning; basic principles and practices of effective training and presentation methods; current software applications such as Word, Excel and Power Point.

Ability to: handle animals safely and carefully; develop, coordinate and present educational programs related to the zoo; successfully implement educational programs with a minimum of supervision; conduct effective oral presentations; ability to work well as part of a team or on an independent basis; communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with people of all ages; establish and maintain professional and cooperative working relationships with coworkers, special interest groups, civic organizations and the general public.

Skill in: the operation of personal computers and other modern office equipment; the use of word processing programs such as Word, Power Point and Excel as part of educational programs and presentations.

Special Requirements:

Must possess and retain a valid California Class C driver's license.

Special Working Conditions

Must be willing and able to work evenings, weekends, holidays and other shifts as needed; must be willing and able to work outside in a variety of climatic conditions.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL PERFORMERS

Successful performers are enthusiastic, creative, friendly individuals who enjoy interacting with people of all ages from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. These quick-thinking, flexible individuals quickly perceive the needs and interests of their listeners and adjust educational programs to respond to various audience levels. These effective public speakers have strong presentation skills, and are able to express themselves effectively both orally and in writing. They are also willing to perform basic animal care functions, and are able to safely handle a variety of animals, some of which occasionally behave unpredictably.

Class title established per Council Resolution No. 89-070,
effective 7-1-89

Revised: 8/93: 05/04
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