

HOUSTON ARBORETUM & NATURE CENTER

Outdoor and Community Accessibility Internship

Reports To: Patti Bonnin, Senior Naturalist

Employment Status: Seasonal

Rate of Pay: \$12 per hour, 30-40 hrs per week, paid bi-weekly

About the Arboretum

Houston Arboretum & Nature Center is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide education about the natural environment to people of all ages, and to protect and enhance the Arboretum as a haven and sanctuary for native plants and animals. Located on the western edge of Memorial Park, this 155-acre urban nature sanctuary encourages visitors to slow down and enjoy the natural world. One of the first nature education facilities for children in the state of Texas, the Arboretum proudly welcomes over 10,000 school children and 600,000 visitors annually.

Arboretum visitors can enjoy a walk along the trails, visit Field Stations, explore the Discovery Room, or attend one of our environmental education programs or community events. Additionally, we have a large group of dedicated volunteers who work in all areas of our organization including assisting in education programs, working special events, helping our Conservation Team on the grounds, and behind the scenes program preparation.

Please visit our website for more information on the history, people, and programs of the Arboretum.
<http://www.houstonarboretum.org/>

Job Description

The Outdoor and Community Accessibility Intern will work with key staff members to evaluate and support the Arboretum's efforts to ensure we are welcoming to people of all abilities. The Intern will rotate through the various departments to learn more about the Arboretum's current procedures, environmental education programs, conservation activities, and volunteer opportunities. The internship will culminate in a final project in the form of a presentation to Arboretum Staff members representing your findings and suggestions for opportunities of improvement.

We believe everyone benefits from exploring the natural world and want to ensure our visitors have a positive experience regardless of their own abilities. An ideal Intern will be enthusiastic, engaging, be able to work with staff as well as independently on projects, and have a passion for wanting to create an outdoor environment that is accessible and inclusive.

Expectations & Opportunities

- Review our physical site to ensure that ADA standards are currently being met in the designated areas (parking, entrance, restrooms, and designated trails)
- Make recommendations for site repairs and maintenance and create a maintenance schedule for trail systems and other ADA areas.

- Review existing educational programs to determine how to adapt current activities or instructional methods to be more inclusion.
- Compile a list of resources for accessibility (for instance: interpreters for the deaf, special needs organizations) for staff to utilize in the future.
- Research accessible nature-related equipment that can be used for educational programming.
- Work with Volunteer Manager to plan, develop, and implement a training program for current and incoming volunteers.
- Design a Disability-friendly Guided Hike for staff and volunteers to utilize.
- Access current volunteer opportunities and make recommendations for modifications or suggestions for potential opportunities.
- Review current marketing materials for accessibility and inclusion and give suggestions on verbiage for marketing specific programs that are disability friendly.

Requirements

- Must be recent graduate or currently enrolled in Therapeutic Recreation, Community Recreation Therapist, Outdoor Recreational Therapist, or similar program.
- Available to work May 30 – August 11, 2023.
- Genuine interest in working to make outdoor programs and public spaces accessible and inclusion to people of all abilities.
- Comfortable with exposure to outdoor weather such as heat, humidity, and rain.
- The ability to lift to 25 pounds, move safely over uneven terrain, climb stairs, and work frequently outdoors.
- The ability to follow all procedures, regulations, and safety measures put in place related to COVID-19.
- Responsible for housing and transportation to and from the Houston Arboretum.

Timeframe and Additional Details

- 200 hours to be completed between May 30 – August 11, 2023
- Work schedule to be determined, but 30-40 hours a week depending on availability.

How to Apply

Submit the documents below to Senior Naturalist Patti Bonnin at pbonnin@houstonarboretum.org. Please send as PDF files and title all documents with your first and last name.

- One page resume with work history, relevant coursework, and any other relevant information
- One page cover letter explaining why you are interested and qualified for this opportunity and what experiences you hope to achieve through the internship.
- Unofficial Transcripts
- 2 professional or educational recommendations