



AmeriCorps Project Conserve 2019 – 2020 Service Description



AmeriCorps Position Title: Citizen Science Educator [Two Positions]
Host Site: The North Carolina Arboretum Society

Service Term: September, 2019 – July 31, 2020

Supervisor Name: Trudie Henninger
Supervisor Title: Citizen Science Coordinator
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Host Site Mission Statement:

The mission of the Youth Education Division at The North Carolina Arboretum is to deliver educational experiences that create a purposeful, engaging, and experiential approach to science and outdoor education.

This is achieved by providing every student with:

Adventure: Enjoyable, physically active, healthy experiences that get young people moving, outdoors and immersed in the unique natural heritage of our biologically diverse region.

Exploration: Hands-on investigations that challenge youth to make observations, examine data, and draw conclusions about the natural world of which they are a part.

Awareness: Learning experiences that foster an environmental consciousness in youth that will aid in shaping their personal and professional life.

The vision of the Youth Education Division is to cultivate students who are equipped with the skill, knowledge, and ability to achieve in the 21st century fields of sustainability, conservation, and environmental sciences by fostering a value of natural resources and an understanding of their human impact on the world around them.

Summary of Position:

This position is great for environmental education enthusiasts with a passion for working with children and doing field research! The purpose of this position will be to assist with citizen science education efforts at The North Carolina Arboretum. The AmeriCorps member will primarily be responsible for delivering citizen science programming by educating students of various ages and backgrounds including leading environmental field trip programs, off-site outreach programs in Western NC schools, assisting with seasonal family events, leading afterschool/library programs and leading environmental awareness-based programs for our summer day camps. Additionally, the Citizen Science Educator will supervise, recruit, retain and train a core of volunteers for data collection at the NC Arboretum and will assist in the care and maintenance of all live collections.

Qualifications – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Completion of the first two years of college with a focus on education, environmental studies, outdoor education, biology, ecology or a related field.
- Skill and ability in the identification of local plant and animal species is strongly desired.
- Youth leadership experience and good people skills are required; experience working with children in an outdoor setting is strongly desired.
- Knowledge of field ecology equipment and methodology, in particular those used in citizen science projects.
- Applicants must be able to hike at least 5 miles on uneven trails and be able to lift 50 pounds.
- Applicants being considered will submit to a background check.
- Eligible applicants must be at least 18 years of age, be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States, and consent to a criminal history check.

Preferred Service Hours / Weekly Schedule:

Monday-Friday 8 am-4 pm, occasional weekends

Time off: 1 week Thanksgiving week, 2 weeks during December/January, 1 week during May, 1 week during June/July and an additional 20 hours TBD.

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to fulfilling host site service responsibilities, all Project Conserve members are required to fully participate in team trainings, service projects and statewide AmeriCorps events. Project Conserve team events will occur approximately twice per month in locations throughout the service area and may require up to three overnight stays.

Position Responsibilities and Duties:

CONSERVATION EDUCATION (75%)

- Assist with instruction and development of Project EXPLORE – School outreach initiative that engages in environmental monitoring at the student's own schoolyards.
- Assist with instruction and development of ecoEXPLORE – an incentive driven science enrichment program that engages third through eighth grade students in guided and self-directed citizen science activities.
- Lead outdoor field trip programming for K-8 Grade students based on established curriculum.
- Develop curriculum and deliver afterschool/library programming.
- Instruct Discovery Day Camp programs for children in grades kindergarten through eight.
- Assist in developing and delivering seasonal community citizen science events.
- Assist with all live collections. Development of online/print outreach materials that complement citizen science education activities

VOLUNTEER INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (25%)

- Recruit and coordinate volunteers to collect data at various ecosystem monitoring sites including mole salamanders and eastern box turtles.
- Coordinate volunteer orientation and training.
- Recruit volunteers to assist with seasonal citizen science events.
- Upload, interpret, and distribute data collected back to volunteers in a meaningful matter.
- Maintain volunteer Citizen Science project plots and materials.
- Document volunteer efforts.
- Implement Effective Volunteer Management practices including but not limited to: creation of volunteer manual/training/curriculum, written policies and job descriptions for volunteer involvement, recognition activities. Coordinate and develop our high school volunteer program including recruiting, training, and celebrating!

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Equipment / Software Used: MS Office programs (especially publisher and Excel), Internet browsing (including reporting citizen science information to publicly available databases online)

Physical Demands: Must be able to walk 5 miles on uneven trails with a backpack; stand for 1.5 hours at a time; lift 50 pounds; travel

Transportation Needs: Needs reliable transportation to and from The NC Arboretum for regular schedule. May also be required to drive personal vehicle to local schools to lead outreach lessons.

Setting/Location of Service Activities: Schools across western North Carolina, The North Carolina Arboretum trails and educational facilities

Other Considerations: Ability to interpret natural science concepts to a wide audience in an informative and engaging way. GIS experience preferred

- Using computer software and online programs for conservation-based education and outreach initiatives, including social networking, written articles and press releases
- Leading, coordinating, and interacting with diverse individuals in field-based and office settings (ex. landowners, students, low-income residents, partner organizations).
- Developing and implementing educational programs and events for groups (presentations, workshops, educational hikes and outings, etc).
- Training, supporting, coordinating, and recognizing volunteers for conservation-based volunteer opportunities.
- Conducting field-based monitoring, assessment, and management of conservation properties, public lands, and/or water quality monitoring sites.
- Using mapping software and other computer programs to create quality reports, management plans, maps, and/or analysis, based on field data