



AmeriCorps Project Conserve 2026 – 2027 Service Description



AmeriCorps Position Title: Environmental Education Instructor [Two Positions]
Host Site: The North Carolina Arboretum Society

Supervisor Name: Rich Preyer
Supervisor Title: On-site Youth Education 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 Pre-K - 12th grade! The purpose of this position will be to assist with science education efforts at The North Carolina Arboretum. The AmeriCorps member will primarily be responsible for delivering environmental education programming by educating students of various ages and backgrounds including leading environmental field trip and weekly drop-off/homeschool programs, off-site outreach programs in Western NC schools, hosting programming for young families, assisting with seasonal family events, leading afterschool/library programs and leading environmental awareness-based programs for our summer day camps. Additionally, the Environmental Education Instructor 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.
- 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 one or two overnight stays.

Position Responsibilities and Duties:**CONSERVATION EDUCATION (100%)**

- Lead outdoor field trip programming for K-8 Grade students based on established curriculum.
- Lead instruction for Discovery Day Camp programs for children in rising pre-Kindergarten through eight.
- Lead instruction for Wee Naturalist program for 2-5 year olds
- Lead birthday party programming for 4-13 year olds.
- Deliver afterschool/library programming for local community members.
- Assist with instruction of ecoEXPLORE as needed – an incentive driven science enrichment program
- Assist with curriculum development and instruction for our onsite drop-off/homeschool OAK (Outdoor Adventure Kids) program (CB).
- Lead with curriculum development for Wee Naturalist program for 2-5 year olds (CB).
- Assist with curriculum development for new K-12 North Carolina Standard Course of Study (SCOS) Science Standards (CB)

Essential Functions:

Essential functions are the fundamental job duties:

- *Meaning the position exists to perform the function;*
- *There is a limited number of employees among whom the performance of the function can be distributed;*
- *And/or the incumbent is hired for expertise or ability to perform the function due to its high specialization.*

Equipment / Software Used: MS Office programs (especially publisher and Excel), Google Suite programs, 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 and libraries 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

- 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).