

HOOFSTOCK INTERNSHIP

The Houston Zoo is offering unpaid internships in our Hoofstock Department! Interns will assist in the care of all the animals in the hoofstock collection including giraffes, rhinos, okapis, zebras, tapirs, anteaters, warthogs, and more. From barn and exhibit maintenance to enrichment and training of the animals, this position will give real world experience in the field of zoo animal keeping. In addition to learning daily duties, interns will gain knowledge of anatomy, behavior, reproduction, and the conservation status of each species.

Candidates for this position should be self-motivated, dependable, positive, and show an interest in pursuing a career in animal care management. The internship is designed to provide students the opportunity to learn the following:

- Diet preparation and feeding
- Proper nutrition and care for a variety of hoofstock species
- Maintaining of animal exhibits and holding areas according to AZA regulations
- Observing and recording animal condition, social behaviors, and responses
- Designing and constructing of enrichment and related evaluations
- Positive and educational interaction with Zoo guests

PHYSICAL EFFORT AND ENVIRONMENT:

This position involves a lot of walking and lifting. Time outdoors can be expected, in all different weather conditions including heat, humidity, rain, cold, or dust. It may also involve considerable physical exertion such as climbing, reaching, assuming awkward positions, repetitive motions, and lifting and/or moving of heavy objects (up to 50 pounds) on a regular basis. Due to the nature of this environment, interns will have some public contact requiring considerable communication skills. Interns can expect to present keeper chats for the public towards the end of the internship.

REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS:

- Ability to multi-task and excel in a fast-paced environment
- Ability to work independently while being an important part of a team
- Exhibit strong professionalism and communication skills
- Possess a desire to gain experience and knowledge working with hoofed animals
- Some knowledge of hoofed animals is preferred but not required
- Interns are required to complete a minimum 300-hour time commitment, working no more than 5 days/week (minimum 3 days/week); shift times are 7 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Candidates do not need previous husbandry experience but working at other animal facilities is a plus
- Coursework in biology or zoology-related field is preferred but not required
- Compose and present an educational presentation at the end of internship