

2024 Zoo Crew Lead Conservation Mentor Position Description

General Summary

The Lead Conservation Mentor is an unpaid leadership position in support of the overall Zoo Crew Program, in which you will be responsible for assisting Teen Program staff with various aspects of the Zoo Crew Program focusing mostly on the Zoo Crew Explorers Conservation and Career Weeks activities.

The Lead Conservation Mentor will have the opportunity to hone their teaching/mentoring skills and build leadership skills as they take an active role on our Leadership Council and provide insight into how we can improve the Zoo Crew program. They will have an active role in helping Zoo Crew Explorers to understand the Zoo's culture of conservation and inspiring them to take action to save animals in the wild. The Lead Conservation Mentor will play an important role in igniting a passion for learning, conservation, and an understanding of the natural world in order to cultivate the next generation of conservation heroes.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Zoo Crew Lead Conservation Mentor is a leadership position within the Zoo Crew program. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Serving as a member of the leadership council and participate in meetings and activities throughout the year to prepare for the summer program.
- Lead activities for Zoo Crew Explorers during Conservation and Career Weeks including presentations about the Houston Zoo's conservation initiatives, conservation partners, animals, etc.
- Lead team building activities with Zoo Crew Explorers.
- Research and present about conservation hot topics to Zoo Crew Explorers during Conservation and Career Weeks.
- Complete a project to improve an aspect of the Zoo Crew Explorers program.
- May be asked to act as a fill-in in other Zoo Crew sections as needed
- Will act as a go-to if questions arise for first year Zoo Crew

Schedule

Pre-Summer Planning

These meetings are opportunities for the Leadership Council to get to know each other and prepare for the summer.

Mandatory

- **Saturday, March 2, 2024:** 9am-4pm
- **Sunday, April 7, 2024:** 9am-4pm
- **Saturday, May 4, 2024:** 9am-4pm

Summer

The schedule is approximate and can change at any time between now and the start of the program. It is only meant to provide applicants with an idea of what to expect going into this position. There will be several small duties that are not included in the following outline. This schedule is consecutive beginning on June 3-July 5 or July 1-August 2 (*Note that based on Conservation and Career Weeks Schedules, Session 2 dates overlap one week with the end of Session 1 and are therefore different than Session 2 dates for other TLC positions*).

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- **Daily Tasks:**
 - Lead team building activities with Zoo Crew Explorers.
 - Assist Teen Programs staff with leading presentations and activities during the Zoo Crew Explorers Career Weeks.
 - Assist with introducing speakers to the Zoo Crew Explorers.
 - Research and create a presentation about conservation hot topics of your choice.
 - Lead discussions about conservation hot topics.
 - Mentor Zoo Crew Explorers on their interpretation skills and share animals' stories with them.

*Please note, that accepted TLC members will be schedule for one 5-week session. If you would like to come in during weeks that are not part of your scheduled session, you are allowed, but you must participate as a Naturalist or Camp Mentor and not as a TLC member unless specifically asked by the current TLC members to assist or if there is a separate project or committee they are working on (ie Snake-Saving Campaign Committee). Additionally, to prevent burn out, you will only be allowed to participate in a maximum of 8 weeks during the summer.

Year-Round Zoo Crew

After the summer, Teen Leadership Council will have once monthly mandatory meetings. At these meetings TLC will be debriefing from the summer, planning for future events such as World Lemur Festival, and discussing future Zoo Crew projects.

Fall meeting schedule:

- September 7, 2024: 9am-4pm
- October 5, 2024: 9am-4pm
- November 2, 2024: 9am-4pm
- December 7, 2024: 9am-4pm

In addition to the monthly meetings, TLC will also be required to participate in either a leadership capacity or as a Zoo Crew in the events required for Year-Round Zoo Crew. Minimum requirements are as follows:

Fall (October– January)

- Two shifts of Zoo Boo
- One day of Camp Mentoring or Naturalist

Spring (January- May)

- Three shifts as Naturalist. This can include opportunities such as Naturalist station development, Spotlight on Species events, etc.

Qualifications and Requirements

- Have one year of Zoo Crew completed
- Be in good standing in the Zoo Crew program
- Be 15 years old by May 31, 2024
- Be between the ages of 15 and 17 *through* the end of your summer session
- Be able and committed to attend 3 mandatory meetings described above of meetings in the Spring
- Be able to commit to **ALL** 5 weeks of one of the Zoo Crew Explorers sessions in the summer.

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- Be able to continue through the Year-Round Zoo Crew program. Additional once-monthly meetings beyond the Year-Round Program commitment will be required for the members of the Leadership Council.

Preferred Skills

- A high level of energy and enthusiasm, creativity, flexibility.
- Flexibility with day to day routines.
- A high level of honesty.
- Works well with Zoo Crew and Zoo Staff, regardless of personality, age difference, etc.
- An understanding of the Houston Zoo's wildlife conservation initiatives and conservation partners.
- Comfortable speaking and presenting information in front of others and an interest in teaching and mentoring their peers.

To Apply

Submit application by Saturday, January 27th at 11:59pm. Interviews will occur between February 1-10, 2024. Applicants will be chosen based on their application, interview, and previous evaluations.

Parental/Guardian Agreement

Being part of the Teen Leadership Council is a significant commitment. We want to ensure that all TLC members and their parents/guardians understand and agree to commit to all required meetings/participation dates as outlined above.