

AMBASSADOR ANIMAL INTERNSHIP

The Houston Zoo is offering opportunities to participate in unpaid internships with our Ambassador Animals! The Ambassador Animal collection is based out of the John P. McGovern Children's Zoo and includes a diverse collection of birds, mammals, reptiles, invertebrates, and amphibians.

During this internship, interns will experience the day to day husbandry of Ambassador Animals. In addition to that, interns will deliver keeper chats, handle animals, learn and implement basic operant conditioning techniques, and provide animal enrichment.

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 species
- Animal handling
- The fundamentals of modern animal training techniques
- 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
- Development and implementation of public speaking skills through the development of keeper chats

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 during 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 in a husbandry-related field
- Some knowledge of animal husbandry is preferred but not required
- Interns are required to complete a minimum 240-hour commitment; internship can go up to 400 hours if amenable to both parties.
- This internship is structured for a minimum of 24 hours/week. This is usually scheduled in 8-hour shifts per week (minimum 3 days/week, no more than 5 days/week). Applicants must be able to work any day of the week, with at least one of the days being a weekend day.
 - Shift times are 6:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.
- Must provide a current negative TB test result prior to starting date
- Compose and present an educational presentation at the end of internship
- Previous experience volunteering or working in an animal related field is a plus
- Coursework in biology or zoology-related field is preferred but not required