

January, 2010

Dear VolunTeen Prospect:

Thank you for your inquiry into the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden's VolunTeen Program. This very popular program, designed for teens age thirteen (**by May 31, 2010**) through seventeen, is an exciting and fun way to spend some of your summer.

Are you dedicated and responsible? Those are the qualities teenagers must have to work at the Zoo. You must also **commit** to working at least one four-hour shift per week **or** a full week of mornings as an Education T.E.A.M. Teacher's Aide or Leader.



ANIMAL HANDLERS: You must be at least 15 years old with at least 2 years of Zoo VolunTeen experience and be able to commit to a four hour shift per week. The animal handler program allows our visitors to get up close and personal with some of the smaller members of the Children's Zoo family such as snakes, chinchillas, hedgehogs and turtles. Teens will work with an adult volunteer and handle animals to allow the visitors to touch and learn more about our animal friends. **You must be willing to speak in public for this position.**



GARDEN AMBASSADOR: You must be at least 13 years old and be able to commit to a four hour shift per week. You will assist with hands on activities related to all that is botanical. You must be responsible and able to communicate with visitors and willing to handle small plants. You will help visitors with crafts and displays showcasing the Garden.



GARDEN ASSISTANT: You must be at least 13 years old and be able to commit to a four hour shift per week. The Garden Assistant Program is offered through the Horticulture Department. These volunteers help with garden maintenance which includes planting, weeding, watering and various other jobs throughout the garden. This is a unique opportunity to work in many areas of the Zoo.



LORIKEET LANDING: You must be at least 13 years old and be able to commit to a 3 ½ hour shift per week. Teens will interact with Zoo guests and help them feed the birds nectar and feed sticks. You will also assist with ensuring the safety of the birds in the flight cage by making sure they do not escape from the exhibit.



CHILDREN'S ZOO CONTACT YARD: You must be at least 15 and be able to commit to a four hour shift per week. You will interact with Zoo visitors by providing information about the animals, answering questions, and helping to keep the animals safe and the yard clean.

CHILDREN'S ZOO JUNIOR KEEPER: You must be at least 15 with at least one year Zoo VolunTeen Experience. You will assist Children's Zoo staff with routine animal care and interaction with Zoo guests. We are hoping to add llamas, alpacas and/or rabbits to the contact area this summer!

EDUCATION T.E.A.M. TEACHERS' AIDE: You must be at least 13 years old, but instead of choosing to work one day a week, you will be required to work a full week at a time, Monday through Friday. You may choose to work as many weeks as you like, but a minimum of 2 weeks is required. You are **strongly encouraged to work full day shifts, but a.m. and p.m. shifts are available.** Teen Educators And Mentors (T.E.A.M.) Teachers' Aides assist the Education staff with summer Zoo classes. They will help prepare for the daily classes, assist children with crafts and activities, and help keep children together during hikes in the Zoo. These classes are a great way to learn about animals in all areas of the Zoo.

EDUCATION T.E.A.M. LEADER: You must be at least 15 years old with at least 2 years Zoo VolunTeen experience. You will be required to work a full week at a time, Monday through Friday. You may choose to work as many weeks as you like, but a minimum of 2 weeks is required. You are **strongly encouraged to work full day shifts, but a.m. and p.m. shifts are available.** T.E.A.M. Leaders will perform all the same duties as the Teachers' Aides, and in addition will act as role models and mentors to other T.E.A.M. teens, be responsible for checking in/out other T.E.A.M. teens as they arrive/leave for the day, and assist the Education staff with the retrieval and return of education animal ambassadors used in summer programs.

We do not have enough opportunities to accommodate all who want to volunteer at the Zoo, so please don't be upset if you are not initially selected for the VolunTeen Program. We keep a waiting list and sometimes those on the list are brought into the program because others are unable to fulfill their commitment.

To apply for the VolunTeen Program for the first time, we need in one envelope:

- 1) The attached application, completed
- 2) Two written recommendations from adults who know you well such as a teacher, scout leader, or employer, not friends or relatives. Your recommendations should address the following: dependability, leadership abilities, ability to deal with people, willingness to learn, and self motivation.
- 3) A paragraph from you, in your own words, about why you want to be a Zoo volunteer.
- 4) A check in the amount of \$15.00 made payable to the Cincinnati Zoo. This is to cover the fee for your Zoo polo shirt to be worn on the days you volunteer. If you are not selected, the check will be returned to you. If this fee poses a hardship for you, please contact our office at 559-7736.

To apply to return to the VolunTeen Program, we need in one envelope:

- 1) The attached application **completed**
- 2) A paragraph from you, in your own words, about why you want to return to the VolunTeen Program.
- 3) A check in the amount of \$15.00 made payable to the Cincinnati Zoo. This is to cover the fee for your Zoo polo shirt to be worn on the days you volunteer. If you are not selected, the check will be returned to you. If this fee poses a hardship for you, please contact our office at 559-7736.

Send all of your completed paperwork, including the letters of reference for first time VolunTeens, together in one envelope by March 1st to:

**VolunTeen Program
Cincinnati Zoo Volunteer Services Office
3400 Vine Street
Cincinnati, OH 45220-1399**

We are not accepting applications after March 1, so be certain yours reaches us on time. If your **application is incomplete, it will not be considered**. You can expect to hear back from us by e-mail or letter (if you do not have an e-mail address) around the end of April. If you're ready to make new friends, learn more about the Zoo and interact with our many visitors, we want to hear from you. We hope you enjoy your experience here as a VolunTeen.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Longbottom and Connie Lightfoot
Cincinnati Zoo Volunteer Services Office
(513) 559-7736

Many times we receive applications from teens who are equally qualified and so we look at other factors in our selection process. We **strongly** encourage you to mail your applications into our office as soon as possible!

VolunTeens are needed every day of the week, including weekends. Please tell us your preferred day(s) and time of day (a.m./p.m. or all day). We prefer T.E.A.M. teens to sign up for all-day shifts.

Tell us the day(s) or week(s) you **cannot** work due to other commitments or vacations.

What date are you available to begin the Zoo's summer program? _____

What are your favorite school subjects? _____

List any previous employment or volunteer experiences: _____

List your hobbies and interests: _____

Tell us two or three things that you think are important when working with others: _____

This application must be completed by the applicant (if able), not by the parent, and **returned to us by March 1st**. Send your complete application papers, check for \$15 (to Cincinnati Zoo) and letter(s) **together in one envelope** to:

VolunTeen Program, The Cincinnati Zoo Volunteer Services Office
3400 Vine Street, Cincinnati, OH 45220-1399

To the parent or guardian: Please read and sign the following:

I give my permission for my child to participate in the Cincinnati Zoo's VolunTeen Program.

My child may be photographed for public relations purposes.



Signature: _____ Date: _____

In case of emergency, contact: _____

Relationship to teen: _____ Your daytime phone number: _____

List any physical or medical limitations, including allergies, of your teen: _____

Physician name: _____ Phone: _____

Dentist name: _____ Phone: _____

In an emergency, if the parent/guardian or designated Physician/Dentist cannot be reached, I authorize the Cincinnati Zoo to transport and/or obtain medical services from a hospital/doctor of their choice for my child.

Parent/Guardian signature: _____ Date: _____