



THE WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA

P.O. BOX 1557 • WAYNESBORO, VIRGINIA 22980 • 540-942-WILD • FAX 540-943-WILD

Education Outreach Externship

JOB DESCRIPTION: The Wildlife Center of Virginia is a hospital for native wildlife, with the mission of teaching the world to care about and to care for wildlife and the environment. Each year, the veterinary and rehabilitation staff at the Wildlife Center treat an average of 2,500 patients. The Center's outreach department presents hundreds of programs in schools and libraries across Virginia and at the Center; the team also presents dozens of online classes through the Center's Critter Cam and moderated discussion. The conservation themes we emphasize in these programs are drawn directly from the stories of the animals that arrive at the Wildlife Center's doorstep every year in need of care.

Our outreach externships provide students with in-depth, practical experience in the fields of education and outreach. Students will learn about native wildlife, develop communication skills (public speaking, writing), and will learn handling procedures for education animal ambassadors. Students are trained and supervised by the outreach department.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist with on- and off-site education programs and hikes
- Share Center stories and information with supporters and the general public, including written updates about current patients and stories about education animals
- Assist with improving existing education programs and related activities
- Handle education snakes, turtles, and birds of prey
- Conduct research about relevant wildlife topics for online education programs
- Design and create display boards, kiosks, and other educational materials
- Moderate the Center's Critter Cam discussion
- Market education programs to libraries, schools, and other community organizations
- Assist with routine cleaning and maintenance of animals' traveling crates

SALARY: None. Housing will be provided for full-time spring/fall externs

DURATION: Both full-and part-time opportunities are available. Full-time externships are 12 consecutive weeks; part-time opportunities require 16 hours a week for 12 weeks.

Start dates are flexible. The general timeframes available are:

Spring: March-May

Summer: June-August (only part-time available)

Fall: September-November

QUALIFICATIONS:

The ideal candidate will be a self-motivated individual with a sincere interest in wildlife, educational outreach, and environmental conservation. The outreach extern must be punctual, professional, flexible, and detail-oriented. Strong writing skills are required. Applicants should be comfortable with public speaking. The position requires that the extern be able to sit, stand, and walk for extended periods of time. Must have reliable transportation.

This position has direct contact with children. Applicants must have a clean criminal record.

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS:

At least two years of college education. Most fields of study will be considered.

OBJECTIVES:

- **Enhanced communication skills:** During the course of the externship, students will develop a writing style that translates well in digital media by creating and editing content for the Center's website, discussion, and other digital outlets. Oral communication skills will be enhanced through public speaking to audiences of various ages. Students will learn presentation skills and how to communicate the Center's message effectively to both children and adults.
- **Gain a better understanding of wildlife and environmental conservation:** Students will learn the natural history of many species of native Virginia wildlife. Externs will have access to staff members with practical and academic knowledge of wildlife and environmental issues. Students may utilize the Center's physical library and digital subscriptions during their externships.
- **Exposure to wildlife rehabilitation:** Students will learn to translate veterinary medicine, rehabilitation practices, and related terminology into accessible terms for the general public.
- **Hands-on experience with wildlife:** Students will learn appropriate handling skills for some of the Center's education animals, including snakes, turtles, owls, and hawks. Handling privileges will be based on the staff's assessment of the students' abilities.
- **Professional experience:** The education outreach externship provides students with an opportunity to work in a professional setting. Externs will work directly with the outreach staff, and will coordinate efforts with the wildlife rehabilitation and veterinary staff. Professionalism and respect for colleagues is expected.

TO APPLY:

Please email application form, cover letter, résumé, and writing sample to edu@wildlifecenter.org.

Application deadlines: Spring externship, December 1; Summer externship, March 15; Fall externship, July 15. Applications deadlines may be flexible; please email with inquires.