



Urbana Park District

Environmental Program Intern



Overview

Each year over 50,000 visitors explore the Urbana Park District's Anita Purves Nature Center and nearby Busey Woods. Programs, events and services are offered to public throughout the year. During the school year over 10,000 preschool through college age students participate in programs that are offered on site and at local schools. Each summer hundreds of campers explore the world around them while participating in five different nature day camp programs.

The Anita Purves Nature Center opened in 1979 and was renovated in 1995. The addition created four classrooms, a field station, a wildlife observation room, and the Audubon Nature Shop. The existing building was remodeled into a

workspace and an educator resource room. The exterior of the building and its grounds also underwent a metamorphosis. Volunteer groups helped relocate prairie plants, small shrubs, and woodland flowers to create new habitat gardens that better meet the educational goals of the center. These gardens demonstrate ways to attract wildlife such as butterflies, hummingbirds and songbirds. The Busey Woods Gateway Trail is planted with native Illinois species and includes a variety of wildlife feeding stations, a rain garden, small pond and interpretive elements.

Internships at Anita Purves Nature Center are designed to provide students an opportunity to develop programming and leadership skills in environmental education activities. Interns gain practical experience by working with students, park district staff, and cooperating organizations.

Experiences Offered

Anita Purves Nature Center offers environmental programs to all age groups from preschool to adults. Over 5,000 students visit the Center during the school year. Programs are also held at area schools. There are also year-round programs for the public. Interns will gain experience in the following areas:

- Developing curricula for school groups and/or nature camps.
- Providing leadership for on and off-site school and/or camp programs, environmental public programs for all ages, birthday party programs and special tours.
- Recruiting and training volunteers.
- Participating in workshops and special events sponsored by the Urbana Park District.
- Developing environmental education activities for Scouts and other groups.
- Assisting with development of displays and exhibits.
- Assist with the planning, implementation and evaluation of Park District special events.
- Assisting in management of a 59-acre woods, 80-acre prairie, 20+ acre oak-savanna, 35-acre wet prairie.

Responsibilities

1. Work 30-40 hours per week; evening and weekend hours are expected.
2. Participate in staff and volunteer trainings.
3. Provide leadership for environmental education programs.
4. Complete an independent project. This project will be of value to the district and suitable for addition to the intern's credentials file.
5. Assume other responsibilities assigned by the intern's university or by cooperating staff from the Center.
6. Complete evaluation forms and submit a written summary report to the district and to the intern's college or university.

Qualifications

Applicant must have a genuine interest in working with people of all ages and intend to pursue a career in environmental education or related field. Student must have completed at least a two years of college, and have an interest in environmental education, interpretation, and resource management. Course work in biology, ecology, environmental science, forestry, recreation, wildlife management, and/or education are required.

Enrollments, Credits, & Compensation

Internships are available to college students in their junior or senior years of study or who have completed a bachelor's degree. Students are encouraged to register for college credit at their home institution. Students are responsible for making arrangements for credits. Duration is a minimum of three months. The intern is expected to work 40 hours per week – however the schedule can be adjusted to adapt to course schedules. Interns are compensated \$50/week.

Application

Interested applicants are to contact Ellen Kirsanoff, Development Manager:
erkirsanoff@urbanaparks.org or 217-367-1536.