



Internship Program – Animal Department

The Internship Program at Mill Mountain Zoo offers individuals a unique opportunity to become actively involved in the mission of Mill Mountain Zoo. Internships are available for motivated individuals that have completed at least one year of college course work, or college graduates seeking on-the-job experience. Internships provide practical experience in a zoological environment while gaining valuable knowledge related to their career goals. This exciting and challenging atmosphere offers the opportunity to supplement and apply classroom knowledge.

Goals

This position contributes to the success of Mill Mountain Zoo by training individuals in job skills and practices relevant to animal husbandry/welfare while focusing on sound science. Individuals will also have the opportunity interact with zoo guests, helping to improve guest experience, facilitate guest connections with animals, and educate guests on the importance of wildlife conservation through zoological facilities.

Interns can expect to develop:

- General understanding of Mill Mountain's Zoo dedication to fostering awareness and appreciation for wildlife.
- General understanding of Mill Mountain Zoo's commitment to advancing public education on the need for wildlife conservation and preservation.
- General understanding of the importance of zoos regarding endangered species survival and habitat preservation.
- General knowledge of animal husbandry, behavioral training, enrichment, and dietary requirements of animals housed at Mill Mountain Zoo.
- General knowledge of animal behavior and disease prevention for animals at the zoo.
- General knowledge of proper animal handling and restraint techniques.

Duties/Responsibilities

Under the supervision and direction of Mill Mountain Zoo staff, interns will learn skills and techniques necessary to provide care for the animals at Mill Mountain Zoo. They will participate in the upkeep of exhibits/enclosures, as well as zoo grounds, and interact with the visiting public during operating hours. The following duties and responsibilities are typically associated with the internship program. However, an intern may be called upon to do additional tasks not listed.

- Animal Care: Daily husbandry, exhibit maintenance, supervised animal training, animal observations, diet preparation, animal enrichment, record keeping.
- Guest Interactions: Formal and informal interactions with Zoo guests through animal encounters, chats, tours, etc.
- Conservation Initiatives: Become familiar with Species Survival Plans (SSP and SAFE) and other zoo population management strategies as well as natural history, current research, and conservation studies related to animals within the scope of an internship.
- Other related duties as assigned.

Animal Department Internship Requirements

Animal care internships are physically demanding. Interns may be working in small spaces or in awkward positions that require bending or stretching. Interns must be able to safely lift 50lbs. Animal keepers work in extreme weather conditions so interns must also be able to tolerate heat, cold, snow, wind, and rain. They must also be able to tolerate exposure to strong odors and allergens produced from hay, dust, and animal hair/feathers/dander.

- Interns must have a strong desire to learn and be able to accept constructive feedback. They must have a basic, positive interest in animals, and have good interpersonal skills.
- This is an unpaid internship, and interns are responsible for providing their own housing. If college credit is desired, it is the responsibility of the intern to coordinate this with their academic institution.

Spring session: March – May, materials due by December 31

Summer session: May/June – August, materials due by March 31

Fall session: September – November, materials due by June 30

Winter session: December – February, materials due by September 30

PART-TIME INTERNSHIP:

The part-time position requires a commitment of between 24-32 hours a week for 12 weeks. This can be accomplished in three or four, 8-hour shifts per week. Applicants must be able to work any day of the week, including weekends. Work times are from 8 AM until 5 PM.

FULL-TIME INTERNSHIP:

This position requires a commitment of 40 hours a week for 12 weeks. This can be accomplished by working five, 8-hour shifts per week. Applicants must be able to work any day of the week, including weekends. Work times are from 8 AM until 5 PM.

Considerations may be made for students attending classes that have conflicts with the internship start and end dates, or who are attending college and require a reduced internship length. However, interns must be flexible with their schedule and are expected to work weekdays, weekends, and holidays. Interns will be added to the Animal Department schedule and adherence to that schedule is mandatory.

If you are interested in applying for an Animal Department Internship please submit an internship application, letter of interest, and resume to Erika Banter, Animal Department Manager, at ejoseck@mmzoo.org.

Internship Application – Animal Department

Name: _____ Age: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Date of last tetanus booster: _____ Please be prepared to provide documentation if requested.

Tuberculosis prevention: You will be notified if a TB test is required - this is based on the current species within the animal collection.

Applying for: _____ Full-time (5 days/wk) _____ Part-time (4 days/wk) _____ Part-time (3 days/wk)

_____ Spring (Mar-May) _____ Summer (May/Jun-Aug)

_____ Fall (Sep-Nov) _____ Winter (Dec-Feb)

What date would you be available to start your internship? _____

What date would you need to end your internship by? _____

Preferred days of the week to complete internship: _____

Do you have any prior obligations that might affect your schedule as an intern? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please let us know what day(s)/date(s) you would not be available to work.

College or University Information

Are you a high school graduate or equivalent? _____ Yes _____ No

Are you currently enrolled in a college or university? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Graduated

If yes, what year (e.g. Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Graduate Student)? _____

Name of College or University _____

Major Area of Study _____

Expected Graduation Date _____

Are you applying for credit through your college or university? _____ Yes _____ No

Does your school require a report/response from Zoo Staff? _____ Yes _____ No

Would you be interested in completing an independent project? _____ Yes _____ No _____ School requires

Future career goals: _____

What do you wish to gain from this experience? _____

In your own words, what is the purpose of a zoo? _____

What excites you most about this internship position? _____

What exotic species do you have previous experience with? _____

Reducing disease transmission: What species (if any) would you be in contact with while completing the internship (livestock, poultry, wildlife)? _____

Please read and answer the following yes or no questions. The answers will not affect your acceptance into the program, but this information allows us to make sure you understand what your duties as an intern will entail.

Do you mind contact with various diets (insects, rodents, fish, etc.) or fecal matter? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you mind being out in the rain? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you understand that working as an intern is a privilege? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you understand that all internships are unpaid? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you mind getting dirty or sweaty? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you understand that ALL animals at Mill Mountain Zoo are considered wild and dangerous?
___ Yes ___ No

Can you tolerate the heat or cold for extended periods of time? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you understand that you will not touch any animals in the Zoo other than (possibly) some of the animals in the Education Department? ___ Yes ___ No

Are you uncomfortable around any specific type of animal? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, which one(s)? _____

Please Read and Initial

In exchange for and in consideration of being allowed to enter the Mill Mountain Zoo's property to participate in internship activities, I acknowledge and agree to the following:

- _____ I am only to take part in duties for which I have been instructed and will only enter areas I have been given clear permission to be in.
- _____ I will not enter restricted areas unless accompanied by a staff member or given clear permission to do so.
- _____ I will maintain, at minimum, a 10-foot distance from any animal enclosure when working in non-guest areas.
- _____ I will not breach the boundaries of any animal enclosure, nor will I attempt to touch an animal without clear permission to interact with said animal and only under the supervision of an animal department keeper.
- _____ I will not take any photos and/or videos of zoo animals, areas, or property from areas outside of guest areas unless given clear permission to do so. Any photos and/or videos taken with permission from non-guest areas will be for personal use only and will not be shared on any social media formats.
- _____ I will not smoke or vape on zoo grounds.
- _____ I will not intern at the zoo under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- _____ I will alert my supervisor before I leave grounds.
- _____ I will not show up to the zoo unannounced to intern; I will show up on the date and time that the animal department manager has advised me of.
- _____ I will always have a radio on my person while working and will return the radio before leaving zoo grounds.
- _____ I understand the risks and dangers involved with being an Intern for Mill Mountain Zoo in the heat, cold, and mountainous terrain, and I expressly assume the risk of injury or death, whether foreseen or unforeseen.

- _____ I hereby release and hold harmless the Mill Mountain Zoo and all its officers, agents, and employees from any and all claims, demands, and liabilities to me on account of any and all injuries, losses, and damages to my person or property, or death arising out of or related to participation in its internship opportunities.
- _____ I give my consent to Mill Mountain Zoo to photograph, film, or otherwise record my appearance, voice, statements, and activities, and for use, in whole or in part, by Mill Mountain Zoo without restriction or limitation in and/or through any and all media formats now existing, or hereafter developed. Mill Mountain Zoo, in its sole discretion, may identify me by name in connection with the use of my image and the promotion and advertising of the same.

I, _____, hereby agree to the foregoing.

Signature _____ Date _____

Zoo Staff Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____
 Animal Department Manager

If you are under the age of 18, please provide the Parent/Guardian information below:

NAME _____
 Home Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Email _____
 Phone _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Release of Liability

Read Carefully – This Affects Your Legal Rights

In exchange for participation in the activity of Interning at Mill Mountain Zoo, organized by Blue Ridge Zoological Society of Virginia, Inc. d/b/a Mill Mountain Zoo, of Mill Mountain Spur, Post Office Box 8159, Roanoke, Virginia 24014, I, _____, of (Address) _____, acknowledge that I have voluntarily applied to participate in the internship program at Mill Mountain Zoo and agree for myself and for the members of my family, to the following:

- 1. Agreement To Follow Directions.** I agree to observe and obey all posted rules and warnings, and further agree to follow any oral instructions or directions given by Blue Ridge Zoological Society of Virginia, Inc. d/b/a Mill Mountain Zoo, or the employees, representatives, or agents of Blue Ridge Zoological Society of Virginia, Inc. d/b/a Mill Mountain Zoo.
- 2. Assumption of the Risks and Release.** I understand that my participation involves working around live animals, engaging in physical activities, and being present in an outdoor environment that may pose inherent risks, including but not limited to injury, illness, death or property damage.
- 3. Indemnification.** By signing below, I hereby release, waive, and discharge Blue Ridge Zoological Society of Virginia, Inc. d/b/a Mill Mountain Zoo, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and affiliates (collectively, “Released Parties”) from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions, or causes of action arising out of or related to any injury, illness, loss, or damage I may suffer while participating in internship activities, whether caused by negligence or otherwise.
- 4. Fees.** I agree to pay for all damages to the facilities of Blue Ridge Zoological Society, Inc. d/b/a Mill Mountain Zoo caused by negligent, reckless, or willful actions by me.
- 5. Applicable Law.** Any legal or equitable claim that may arise from participation in the above shall be resolved under Virginia law.
- 6. No Duress.** I agree and acknowledge that I am under no pressure or duress to sign this agreement and that I have been given a reasonable opportunity to review it before signing. I further agree and acknowledge that I am free to have my own legal counsel review this agreement if I so desire. I further acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding this Release of Liability and the associated internship agreement and that I sign this document knowingly and voluntarily.
- 7. Incorporation of Volunteer Application.** Furthermore, I understand and agree that this Release of Liability expressly incorporates and includes all sections of the internship application where I have initialed, acknowledging my understanding of and agreement to the terms outlined therein. By signing this document, I affirm that I have read, understood, and

voluntarily agreed to all such statements in the application, including but not limited to policies on safety, conduct, confidentiality, and commitment expectations.

- 8. Enforceability.** The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement, whether standing alone or as applied to a particular occurrence or circumstance, shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision of this agreement or of any other applications of such provision, as the case may be. Such invalid or unenforceable provision shall be deemed not to be a part of this agreement.
- 9. Dispute Resolution.** The parties will attempt to resolve any dispute arising out of or relating to this agreement through friendly negotiations among the parties. If the matter is not resolved by negotiation, the parties will resolve the dispute using the below Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) procedure:

Any controversies or disputes arising out of or relating to this agreement will be submitted to mediation in accordance with any statutory rules of mediation. If mediation does not successfully resolve the dispute, then the parties may proceed to seek an alternative form of resolution in accordance with any other rights and remedies afforded to them by law.

- 10. Emergency Contact.** In case of an emergency, please call _____
(Relationship: _____) at _____
(Day Phone #) or _____ (Evening Phone #).

I HAVE READ THIS DOCUMENT AND UNDERSTAND IT. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT BY SIGNING THIS RELEASE, I VOLUNTARILY SURRENDER CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this Application and Release of Liability to: **Animal Department Manager** via email to ejoseck@mmzoo.org or via U.S. Mail to:

Mill Mountain Zoo
Attn: Erika Banter, Animal Department Manager
Post Office Box 8159
Roanoke, Virginia 24014

Intern applications are reviewed according to the acceptance cycle. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance at least one month prior to the start of the session they are applying for. Please refrain from telephoning, writing, or e-mailing the Zoo concerning the review and decision process on the Internship application.
