



**Position title:** Director of Education and Visitor Studies

**Reports to:** Executive Director

**Status:** Full-time, exempt

The Seneca Park Zoo Society seeks experienced, enthusiastic candidates for the position of Director of Education and Visitor Studies to help fulfill the Zoo's vision of being a national leader in education and conservation action for species survival. The Zoo is presently undergoing a major capital expansion, adding more than four acres to its A Step Into Africa exhibit in 2018 and rebuilding the front of the Zoo, including creating a new Tropics Complex in the next four years. Its current education programs serve more than 65,000 school children annually, and feature strong programs for youth from toddler through teenagers, and has capacity to add more to its family, intergenerational, and adult education programming. This position also works closely with the Zoo's Docent Council and docent education programs, and coordinates Visitor Studies for the Zoo Society.

Interested applicants should submit cover letters and resumes **by September 8, 2017**, to [Education@senecazoo.org](mailto:Education@senecazoo.org)

**Hours:** The Zoo Society's business hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 – 5 pm. The Director of Education and Visitor Studies will also need to be available as needed for after-hours events, Docent Council meetings, and on weekends. During the busy season, this position will be required to work occasional weekend days to ensure senior staff coverage.

**Position Summary:** The Director of Education and Visitor Studies oversees three critical areas for the Seneca Park Zoo Society: education, volunteers, and visitor studies. The Director of Education and Visitor Studies determines, creates and provides content/direction for on-site classes and education programs tied to New York State standards; professional development for teachers; programs aimed at children from pre-K classes through ZooTeens, and creating and implementing educational programs for families and adults. In addition, this position is responsible for conducting visitor studies aimed at garnering a better understanding of how guests use the Zoo and learn while at the Zoo.

This position works closely with the Executive Director to strategize overall direction for education programs and creating meaningful partnerships with schools;

collaborates with the Programming and Conservation Action Department to ensure education curricula is consistent with organizational goals, and; collaborates with the Communications team to ensure marketing and media efforts have content needed to promote education programs. This position is also responsible for overseeing the Zoo Society's volunteer program, which includes a docent core of nearly 100 docents. The Director of Education and Visitor Studies oversees the Education Instructional Coordinator, Family Programs Coordinator, and the Manager of Volunteer Programs. Additional employees within the Education Department include a team of part-time year-round educators, part-time Zoo Teen Coordinators, and seasonal camp counselors.

### **Key Responsibilities include:**

#### **Leadership/Management**

- Effectively leads and manages the Education staff.
- Effectively communicates with and coordinates with Conservation/Programming staff to ensure all educational curricula and outreach efforts reflect conservation and sustainability messaging.
- Oversees creation of formal curriculum for all school-based programs and scouting curricula.
- Creates and manages department budget, ensuring revenue targets are achieved and expenses are maintained within budgeted goals.
- Effectively communicates with and collaborates with Communications staff to provide content for Zoo publications, website, and promotions.
- Sets the direction for visitor studies.
- Is a key voice in communicating educational messaging at the Zoo.
- Provides guidance and counsel to the Executive Director on education and volunteer issues.
- Participates actively in Directors meetings.
- Analyzes situations accurately, adopts an effective course of action, and maintains professionalism in all situations.
- Is primary contact for key stakeholders from school districts and in creating significant partnerships with schools, whether public or private
- Works actively to promote diversity and inclusion in programs, volunteer recruitment, and staffing.
- Manages a portfolio of leads for partnership and support of the Seneca Park Zoo.

#### **Content Creation and Oversight of Education Programs**

- **Professional Development for Educators:** Oversees development, marketing, and implementation of PDs for Educators, both in schools and on site.

- **Docent Education:** Works with the Docent Education Committee to create and update docent training and continuing educational units for docents
- **ZooTeens and ZooTeen Leaders Training:** Ensures content for ZooTeen training and ZooTeen stations is complete, accurate and appropriate, as well as the content for the year-round ZooTeen Leader curriculum
- **Field Trips and Expeditions for On-Site School and Group visits:** Oversees creation, marketing and implementation of meaningful visits from school groups, including field trips, animal programs, and expeditions.
- **Exhibitions:** Participates as a major voice in content for on-site interpretive signage.
- **Family and Adult Programs:** Creates and oversees new on-site programs aimed at intergenerational learning and adult learning.
- **Camps, Classes, and Special Programs:** Oversees creation, marketing, and implementation of summer camps and school break camps, classes and programs for pre-K audiences at the Zoo, Scout programs, overnights, and birthday parties.
- **Website content:** Creates and provides substantive content to build website as a go-to online resource for educators.

#### **Volunteer and Docent Training and Management:**

- Works with Volunteer Manager to ensure volunteers are appropriately recruited and effectively managed to assure volunteer satisfaction and retention while meeting the volunteer needs of the Zoo.
- Works with Docent Council to ensure docents are appropriately trained, deployed and supported.

#### **Visitor Studies and Evaluation:**

- Effectively evaluates all programs for success in delivering institutional messaging and inspiring participants to action on behalf of saving animals from extinction.
- Sets direction and implements Visitors Studies to assess guests' use of the Zoo and its interpretives.
- Uses results of Visitor Studies to advise Executive Director and senior staff on changes needed for improving impact on visitor learning and guest experience.

#### **SUPERVISORY DUTIES:**

- Oversees Education Instructional Coordinator, Family Programs Coordinator, and Manager of Volunteer Programs.
- Oversee hiring and training of seasonal staff, including Zoo Teen Coordinators, part-time educators, and camp counselors

## QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimum of an undergraduate degree and at least 7 years of relevant experience working in zoos and/or conservation organizations, or ten years of relevant experience. Master's degree preferred.
- Experience in developing and managing budgets.
- Experience working successfully and collaboratively with volunteers, senior management, and professional colleagues.
- Experience in creating and delivering content for interpretive purposes.
- Demonstrated ability to select, train, motivate, and inspire staff, while holding them accountable for their performance.
- Demonstrated ability to train staff and volunteers to engage guests in institutional mission.
- Experience in program evaluation and visitor studies.
- Excellent interpersonal, verbal and written communications skills – ability to build consensus across internal and external constituents.
- Highly organized strategic thinker. Experience in establishing clear direction, operating against objectives, and meeting deadlines.
- Strong management skills. Experience in both leading teams and in working collaboratively as part of a team.
- Interest and experience in conservation education and zoos.
- Energetic and enthusiastic leader, comfortable with both the creative elements and technical components of the role.
- High level of resilience and comfort managing strong personalities with patience and a sense of humor.

*The Seneca Park Zoo Society is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*