

ZOO TEEN VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

ZooTeens are young adults (age 13 to high school seniors) who share their passion for animals and conservation with Nashville Zoo guests, while gaining valuable volunteer experience and public speaking skills.

Program Requirements

- Applicants should:
 - Be age 13 to high school senior
 - Exhibit a strong desire to learn & teach others about the natural world
 - Be friendly, outgoing, dependable, courteous and able to follow directions
- Submit a program application, including a submission piece showing why you want to be a ZooTeen
 - Submission piece can be in the form of a 150-word essay, 3-5 minute video, PowerPoint presentation, original song, or art piece
- Provide two (2) completed recommendation forms
- Attend a 15-minute interview session
- Attend ALL scheduled training sessions
- Read, sign and abide by the ZooTeen handbook and the Youth Volunteer Waiver Agreement

Volunteer Commitment

- During summer break: one shift per week for at least 7 of 10 weeks, plus one full week of Zoo Camp
- During school year: 4 hours of interpretation and one special event **each** semester

Volunteer Shifts

- Interpretation: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
- Summer Camp: 8:00 am to 4:30 pm (selected during application)
- Animal Care: Half-day in an animal area, then a half-day interpretation shift

Service Areas

Zoo Interpretation | Teens will be partnered and stationed at various animal exhibits to provide educational talks to Zoo guests about animals, the environment and conservation efforts.

Croft Teens | Help share the story of how Grassmere Farm became Nashville Zoo through artifact encounters, leading out-building tours and assisting with house tours.

Camp Teens | Work alongside summer camp staff to monitor campers, supervise games and lead activities while gaining knowledge of wildlife, zoo careers and how to work with children.

Animal Care (limited to returning ZooTeens, ages 15+ only) | Learn how to care for exotic birds or mammals by assisting zookeepers with cleaning, feeding, enrichment and observations. Limited spots available; staffing determined by prior performance, availability & application.

Important Dates for the 2024 ZooTeen Season

Applications open **February 1**

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| • March 22 - Application & Recommendation Forms due | • May 18 - Orientation for First-Year & Returning ZooTeens |
| • April 6, 9 & 10 - ZooTeen interviews | • May 20 - ZooTeen schedules confirmed |
| • April 19 - ZooTeen selections made | • May 27 - Summer program begins + TB Tests required for returning ZooTeens in animal care only |
| • May 3 - ZooTeen schedules distributed | • June 29 - Mid-Summer Meeting |
| • May 11 - Orientation for First-Year ZooTeens | • August 10 - ZooTeen Wrap-up Party |