

Volunteer Job Description – Early Childhood Education Volunteer

To discuss this position or apply to be a volunteer at the GDMBG, please contact Susan Cory, Volunteer Coordinator, 515-323-6293, scory@dmbotanicalgarden.com

Position: Story Sprouts / Petals & Pages Volunteer

Time Commitment: Approximately 1 ½ hours

- Story Sprouts:
 - 10:30-11:15 am (+ set up and tear down)
 - Fridays
 - Sessions: February - April, June – August, October- Mid-December.
- Petals & Pages:
 - As requested by pre-schools/K-1st classrooms
 - To be scheduled Mon. – Thurs. and last approximately 60 minutes (+ set up and tear down).

2 Volunteers per session, asked to commit 4 or more times per session if possible.

Activities:

Volunteer support is essential to offering a quality experience that introduces young children to our mission of “Exploring, explaining, and celebrating the world of plants.”

Both Story Sprouts and Petals and Pages will offer activities that combine the themes of plants, nature and seasonal changes with early childhood education practices. Activities will include themed stories, followed by skits/songs/chants/or puppet play and a motor skill activity, such as a craft, game or other movement. The Petals & Pages program includes an additional plant related activity.

Volunteers will be responsible for greeting children and parents, helping with sign-in and leading one or more of the program components described above. Volunteers are welcome to designate a specific part of the program that they are most comfortable with (reading the story or leading the song or craft activity) and volunteers can be partnered based on these preferences.

Story Sprouts will be offered exclusively for families where the adult chaperone will participate with their child in activities. Petals & Pages is available to pre-K to 1st grade programs and schools and large groups of children and their chaperones. A ratio of at least one adult to every eight students is required. Instructors and chaperones are given guidelines for expectations prior to their arrival and are asked to assist in guiding children through activities as well as addressing any behavioral concerns.

Training:

- Reviewing program materials with the school programs education coordinator.
- Shadowing staff and/or program volunteers.

Requirements:

- Enjoy being around young children (under the age of 7) and an interest in interacting with them.
- Interest in one or all of the following: reading aloud (with enthusiasm), acting out/singing songs/skits/chants or puppet play, leading craft/motor skill activities.
- Comfort with working with groups with a maximum of 20 children (with assistance of staff, parents and co-volunteers).
- All volunteers are asked to attend an informal meeting before each 8-week session to discuss responsibilities, program themes and review the schedule.

Additional Information:

Two persons (volunteers and/or staff) will be present for each Story Sprouts or Petals and Pages.

During the pre-season meetings, volunteers will help with the selection of the stories (always nature, plants, & seasons), chants and craft/motor activities. Final selections will be approved by staff, but volunteer ideas and input on stories and activities is greatly valued.

(1/6/16)