

Long Island Aquarium and Exhibition Center
431 E. Main Street
Riverhead, NY 11901
631-208-9200 ext. 120

Mammal Department Internship Description

Our expectations

Promptness

All interns are expected to arrive on time and stick to their predetermined schedule. If he/she cannot make it in one day, the intern coordinator and mentor must be notified a week prior. We understand incidents may arise suddenly (i.e. sickness, car issues, etc.) preventing the intern from attending their internship; in this case, the intern must call or email the intern coordinator and their mentor prior to 7am describing the situation. Chronic or habitual absenteeism or lateness and/or early departure from work will not be tolerated. More than three occurrences without a doctor's note will result in an immediate termination from the internship.

Professionalism and attire

Professionalism is a key attribute to have in the work force and is expected while at the Long Island Aquarium. A Long Island Aquarium shirt will be provided to each successful applicant, but he/she must provide their own pants. Acceptable pants include: jeans (no rips or adornments), khakis, and shorts (black or khaki and of acceptable/professional length). Boots are available to borrow daily but interns may wear their own sneakers or boots. Sandals, such as Tevas or Keen, are acceptable; however, no flip-flops are allowed.

Requirements

All interns must be able to work a full day each week (approximately 7:30am to 5:30pm), provide their own transportation and lodging, be 18 years of age or older, be currently enrolled in college or have completed 50 hours of volunteering with the Riverhead Foundation. To complete an internship with the animal training department qualified individuals must complete a minimum of 120 hours, fulfill an intern packet, and read the book Don't Shoot the Dog. The intern packet and book are provided by the animal training department.

What interns can expect

Training

All accepted applicants can expect to acquire knowledge of animal training, specifically through operant conditioning, and the care that goes into housing exotic animals. The animal training department is responsible for the care of sea lions, harbor seals, gray seal, river otters, porcupine, bats, marmosets, and snow monkeys.

Labor intensive

All interns will assist in the daily husbandry of animal care including food preparation, cleaning exhibits and kitchen areas, scrubbing algae, assisting with sea lion shows, and observing training sessions. Note: Cleaning plays a significant role in the animal care field and is reflected in the mammal department internship. Animal interactions are limited and are at the sole discretion of the animal training department.

General Duties

Mammal department interns have a variety of duties and experiences consisting of:

- Preparation of daily animal diets (handling frozen and thawed fish, weighing and chopping fruits and vegetables, and separating diets into individual feeds)
- Washing, cleaning, and disinfecting all buckets, utensils, and equipment used throughout the day to prepare and feed all animals
- Cleaning and disinfecting all kitchen areas used to prepare animal diets

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- Maintaining a clean and sanitary work environment in all areas of aquarium for animal and staff health and safety
- Mixing soap and disinfection solutions used to keep exhibits and kitchen areas clean
- Lifting, moving, carrying heavy fish boxes, totes, buckets, and heavy show props/equipment (up to 50 lbs)
- Picking up litter around all animal exhibits and ensuring facility cleanliness and animal safety
- Provide musical cues for sea lion presentations
- Cleaning animal exhibits (including using cleaning agents to disinfect animal enclosures, scrubbing algae from animal pools, cleaning foam fractionators, and animal life support equipment)
- Learning general information on animals species housed at the aquarium and learning individual information on each animal through the use of an informational packet provided by the aquarium. Each intern is assigned a mentor to guide the student through the packet and teach the student about becoming an animal care specialist or trainer.
- Observe water quality and processes related to it
- Public speaking opportunities through exhibit interpretation and formal presentations
- Create environmental enrichment and participate in enrichment sessions
- Observe operant conditioning in action through training sessions and feeds
- Maintain and train behaviors with animal training department's pet rats
- Monday interns have the opportunity to observe veterinary rounds with aquarium animals

Note: Direct animal interaction is very limited and is up to the discretion of the supervisory staff. It also depends upon animal behavior (due to seasonal changes, etc.) and the student's ability and achievement.

Resources

Each intern will get to work closely with all of the trainers, as well as specifically with their mentor, allowing further gain of knowledge. In addition to observing operant conditioning in action, and the supplied book and packet, all interns will have access to an array of books and articles to answer any other questions they may have.

Opportunities

There is opportunity for any intern to pursue an independent project that interests them. After discussion between the intern, trainer, and animal training director, resources may be provided to carry out their desired research. College credit may also be awarded, dependent on the intern's college or university.

The application for the mammal department assistant internship with the Long Island Aquarium can be found at:

<http://www.longislandaquarium.com/about-getinvolved-internship.html>

Any further questions can be directed to:

animalcare@amwny.com