

Johnny Morris
WONDERS OF WILDLIFE
— NATIONAL —
MUSEUM & AQUARIUM

Wonders of Wildlife Job Shadow Program





WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in job shadowing with Wonders of Wildlife. Carefully review all information in this Job Shadowing Program Guide to learn policies and expectations for job shadowing experiences at Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Job shadowing will allow you to experience a “day in the life” of a professional, gain valuable insight through real and relevant learning, as well as a glimpse of daily operations within Wonders of Wildlife. Explore opportunities with professionals in administrative roles, aquarist and biology jobs, education positions, hospitality roles, zookeeper careers and everything in between.

- Opportunities are available for students 16 years or older - open to high school juniors, seniors, college students, or new professionals
- Students interested in a job shadow experience submit applications via wondersofwildlife.org/volunteer
- Job shadow experiences are a minimum of a 3-hour commitment
- Job shadow opportunities are offered on these pre-scheduled dates for 2025 - 2026:
 - Tuesday, September 23, 2025
 - Wednesday, November 19, 2025
 - Thursday, January 29, 2026
 - Tuesday, March 24, 2026
 - Tuesday, April 28, 2026

APPLICATIONS

Students interested in a job shadow experience will apply at wondersofwildlife.org/volunteer. Information collected from students during the registration process will be used to identify the best opportunity match possible.



APPLY

Applications are accepted year-round for prescheduled dates and available on a first-come-first-served basis.



DEADLINES

Applications must be received at least 3 weeks prior to preferred shadow date. Select applicants will be contacted for further screening. Not all applications will be selected.



SCREENING

Applicants will be required to submit a motivational essay. Applicants will select their preferred interest, though no guarantees for placement will be made.



CONFIRMATION

A Wonders of Wildlife volunteer program staff member will reach out to the first 10 applicants to confirm their shadow date and to communicate policies and expectations.

EXPECTATIONS

To get the most out of this exploratory experience, students should come prepared to meet the following expectations and to follow all safety measures outlined by staff members.



ENGAGE

Come prepared to learn and talk with team members of all backgrounds and experiences.



DRESS CODE

Represent yourself, and your school, professionally and confidently.



ARRIVAL

Show respect by being punctual and ready with all necessary materials and resources.



SUPERVISION

Come with a positive attitude, ready to take initiative and learn from experienced staff members.



Engage

When you participate in a job shadow, you are expected to actively engage with staff members asking questions about their jobs, education, and career experiences. Students should come prepared with at least three questions to ask their team. Be prepared to answer some questions about your own goals and career path as well.

- Open-ended questions regarding necessary education, preparation, workplace culture, work-life balance, flexibility, demand or opportunities help students get the most out of their job shadow experience. For examples, view the Appendix.
- Avoid using your phone while shadowing and consider leaving it in your car or in a locker in the breakroom to prevent distractions. There are limited opportunities for taking photographs during your shadow experience.
- While shadowing, keep an open mind about the job and industry and look for learning opportunities in every task.

Dress Code

Wonders of Wildlife strives to maintain a family-friendly environment. Students are a representation of their respective schools and should model courteous and respectful behavior along with a professional appearance. Students exploring animal care careers should be prepared to get dirty. Temperatures vary widely within the facility, so a light jacket is recommended.



Shirt/Tops

- Business casual clothing is appropriate, which can include button-front shirts, henleys, polos, etc.
- T-shirts are permitted, if they are without holes, stains, offensive language or imagery.



Footwear

- Shoes must be closed toed with secure heel.
- Sandals, slides and clogs are not permitted.
- Floors are concrete and can be slippery, so comfortable walking shoes are recommended!



Pants/Bottoms

- Khaki or black pants (including shorts, slacks, and capris) or blue denim jeans.
- Jeans must be in good condition with no rips, tears, holes, stains, or excessive design



Appearance

- Students should maintain good grooming habits to convey a professional image.
- Hair must be neat, clean, and well groomed.
- Earrings and jewelry may be restricted for safety precautions.

ARRIVAL

A Volunteer Services staff member will meet students in front of the Marlin Fountain outside of the Wonders of Wildlife Aquarium lobby entrance, located at 500 W Sunshine St.



ARRIVAL

Please arrive 10 minutes prior to your confirmed start time. Volunteer Services staff will check students in before introducing students to their job shadow professional.



CANCELLATION

If you will not be able to make your appointment due to a sudden conflict or illness, please call Volunteer Services as soon as possible at 417-709-3900.



RESCHEDULE

We will attempt to reschedule shadow experiences, as needed, to an alternate date. Please note that if all opportunities are full, rescheduling may not be possible.



MISSED DATE

If you are a no show for your job shadow, you will need to wait until the following school year to apply again. Students who do not show up at their scheduled time may be disrupting business or animal care operations.



SUPERVISION

- While shadow experiences may allow students to work near our animals, applicants for these positions should not expect direct animal contact, handling, or training.
- Students will remain with, and be supervised by, a Wonders of Wildlife staff member for the entirety of the shadow experience.
- Any job shadower who violates Wonders of Wildlife policy, including dress code violations, or presents behavioral or safety concerns will be sent home and disqualified from future job shadowing experiences.



CONTACT US

Wonders of Wildlife is excited about the opportunity for students to explore and gain insight into potential careers, learn about the importance of conservation, and see how our non-profit organization works together to create a one-of-a-kind experience. Contact us for more information and see if there's an opportunity for you!



wondersofwildlife.org/volunteer



417-709-3900



wow.volunteers@wondersofwildlife.org

APPENDIX

Suggested questions to ask during your shadow experience. Feel free to come prepared with additional questions of your own.

- What are some of the routine aspects of your position?
- How did you get interested in this field?
- What advice would you give to someone who wants to do this kind of work?
- How did you prepare for this field?
- Did you have to receive any additional certifications, or complete an internship or apprenticeship for this position?
- How often do you work past 6 p.m. and on weekends?
- Are there other things you are expected to do outside work hours?
- What creates the most stress with this job?
- What percentage of time do you spend interacting with people (staff and public)? Working independently?
Working with a team?