

Member Position Description 2025-2026

An important update regarding the 2025-2026 program year: The Racine Zoo AmeriCorps Program is contingent on the approval and allocation of government funding. Applicants may continue to apply, interview, and prepare for upcoming programmatic year. While we are optimistic about the program's continued work in our local community, please be aware that any delays or changes in government funding could directly impact our ability to proceed as planned. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and keep you informed of any development.

The Racine Zoological Society, Inc. is a non-profit entity with a mission to foster an enlightening and affordable wildlife experience that improves the bond between people and nature. The Society will provide for the recreation and education of the people, the conservation of wildlife and wild places, and the advancement of science.

Through AmeriCorps, individuals of all ages and backgrounds address the nation's education, public safety, environment, and/or human needs through service. The main focus areas of AmeriCorps include: getting things done, strengthening communities, encouraging responsibility, and expanding opportunity. Racine Zoo AmeriCorps members contribute to this effort by delivering high-quality conservation education to students in public schools throughout Racine County. Members will receive training in a variety of areas to support and enhance the member's service to the students, including, but not limited to, proper animal handling and husbandry, classroom behavioral management techniques, and engaging students with conservation messaging.

It is against the law for organizations that receive federal financial assistance from the Corporation for National Service and Community Service and the State Service Commission to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, age, political affiliation, or, in most programs, religion.

A. AmeriCorps Member Qualifications

Members will have the following qualifications

1. 18 years or older
2. U.S. citizen, or U.S. national or lawful permanent resident of the United States
3. Have a high school diploma/GED
4. Commitment to community service and ability to provide service for the complete 10 months of service
5. Required to pass a criminal background check

B. Essential Functions

All of the following duties and responsibilities are essential position functions subject to reasonable accommodations. All position requirements listed indicate the minimum level of knowledge, skills and/or ability deemed necessary to perform the duties proficiently. This position description is not to be construed as an exhaustive statement of duties, responsibilities, or requirements. Individuals may be required to perform other position-related instructions within the scope of their normal service activities as requested by their supervisor (AmeriCorps Program Director) in alignment with the grant and not unallowable or prohibited activities and subject to reasonable accommodation.

1. Provide direct services to Racine Zoo AmeriCorps program participants via educational interpretive programming, as well as effective delivery of pre- and post-intervention assessments
2. Assistance in creation and delivery of educational interpretive programming
3. Animal handling and assist in maintenance of trained behaviors
4. Facilitate volunteer recruitment and training
5. Write reflections on service for Zoo and AmeriCorps publications
6. Act as a positive role model to students in the Racine Zoo AmeriCorps program

C. Non-Essential Functions

Individuals may be required to perform other position-related instructions within the scope of their normal service activities as requested by their supervisor (AmeriCorps Program Director) in alignment with the grant and not unallowable or prohibited activities and subject to reasonable accommodation.

D. Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Negative TB test required
2. Current tetanus booster required
3. Ability to independently present educational programming and live animals to program participants in a variety of settings including, but not limited to, classroom, outdoor, virtual, and zoo settings, as determined by the interview and application. Prior educator experience is preferred.
4. Ability to work with a variety of animals, including small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. Prior animal handling experience is preferred.
5. Willingness to learn and attend all AmeriCorps and zoo trainings
6. Enjoy serving with children and/or adolescents
7. Ability to follow protocol while serving regularly around live animals
8. Ability to work outdoors, lift heavy objects, and risk periodic exposure to fairly predictable and controllable hazards associated with wild animals and zoonotic diseases
9. Proven ability to interact with other staff, members, guests, and volunteers and to maintain an energetic and positive attitude
10. Ability to maintain professional boundaries with students, peers, and supervisors
11. Requires strong writing, speaking, and organization skills including the ability to multi-task
12. Experience and/or interest in addressing issues within our community
13. Willingness to be an active team member, and ability to serve in a diverse team
14. Good organizational skills and ability to follow through with assigned tasks
15. Flexible and enjoy service to the community
16. Willingness to serve toward a sense of community with team members and the school community

E. Position Details

Members will report directly to the Racine Zoo AmeriCorps Program Director. The incumbent is a three quarter-time AmeriCorps position serving 1,200 hours (about 32 hours per week) over a 10-month term

Incumbent will work with and serve public school students in Racine County through the preparation, instruction, and evaluation of environmental educational programming. Additionally, incumbent will spend 4-16 hours per week (to be included in the total 32 hours) assisting in the Racine Zoo Animal Care department with animal husbandry, animal training, and any other service activities as requested by their supervisor falling within the scope of allowable activities. Schedules will vary depending on a changeable program schedule, but scheduled hours will typically be 4 days a week and 8 hours a day, typically falling between Monday-Friday. Members will also be required to serve in the Racine Zoo Animal Care Department on either Saturday or Sunday on a rotating basis. Members will receive a living stipend of \$954/month paid bi-weekly (dependent on approved funding) and an education award of \$5,176.50 (subject to change dependent upon federal funding) upon completion of service.

Members are required to serve for the full 1,200 hours service term in order to successfully complete the Racine Zoo AmeriCorps Program and become eligible to receive an education award.

F. Service Projects and Training Requirements

Members are required to participate in monthly AmeriCorps program meetings. If a member is unable to attend, they must contact the Racine Zoo AmeriCorps Program Director.

All AmeriCorps members are required to participate in at least one National Day of Service. If a member is unable to participate in one of the National Days of Service, they must arrange an alternative service project with the Racine Zoo AmeriCorps Program Director.

G. AmeriCorps Logo

Members are required to wear appropriate uniform at all times while serving hours that includes a shirt with the AmeriCorps logo and Racine Zoo logo featured prominently. Members will be provided t-shirts, sweatshirts, and hats with appropriate logos. Members are responsible for providing close-toed shoes and khaki pants, shorts, or skirts.

H. Principal Professional Relationships

Members are expected to serve productively and effectively with other Racine Zoo AmeriCorps members, Racine Zoo staff members, volunteers, and interns, and school staff.

I. Service Conditions

Members serve in elementary, middle, and high schools. By serving in a school environment, all Racine Zoo AmeriCorps members have recurring access to vulnerable populations. School environments are very structured and members must be able to adapt to school schedules and other requirements.

School day schedules may change unexpectedly due to assemblies, substitute teachers, etc. Members must be flexible in the face of these changes. Passing of a background check will be required before the start of term of service.

J. Vehicle Use

Racine Zoo AmeriCorps members will be required to drive Racine Zoo fleet vehicles. A valid driver's license is required to serve. Personal vehicle use may also be required as needed for transportation to and from educational programs. Members will be held to the Vehicle Use Policy outlined in the Handbook.

K. Equipment Used

Computers, laminators, copiers, projectors, assorted craft supplies, and other teaching related equipment typically found in school settings. Experience with Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel is a plus.

Non Discrimination Policy: This program is available to all, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, religion, age, national origin, genetic information, disability, military status, familial status, political affiliation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Questions regarding the application process, interview procedures, or AmeriCorps related materials may be directed to Brooke Richardson, AmeriCorps Program Manager.

Brooke Richardson

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