



Portland Children's Museum

## Information for Wonder Academy Volunteers

The Wonder Academy Volunteer (WAV) program is for students in their eighth grade through senior year in school who want to gain experience working in a Museum setting and with children. Volunteers serve in a variety of roles (listed below) depending on their interests and the Museum's needs. Participants must commit to serving in the program for a minimum of 60 hours or six months. During their time in the program participants will receive training on business and customer service skills, and working with children.

All WAV applicants are required to send the completed application and essay along with two completed references directly to the Museum in one packet, and go through an interview process. All applicants have the opportunity at the end of their commitment to obtain a letter of reference if requested.

### **WAV job descriptions:**

#### **Greeter**

Welcome and introduce families to the Children's Museum and answer visitor questions. Be the first character they meet before they explore the exhibits and the one who wishes them a great day as they leave. A friendly smile! A Greeter has experience working with children and is interested in the ways they play and learn.

#### **Play Guide**

Make a difference in the creative play experience by encouraging children to explore exhibits and interacting with them, modeling appropriate use of the exhibits, playing, and having fun! Help staff in set up, clean up, organization, and cleaning of play areas. Inform and encourage visitors to attend scheduled programs such as story time and special workshops.

#### **Studio Assistant:**

Have an interest in the arts? Provide positive feedback and encouragement as children experiment creatively with a wide variety of art media. Support studio staff by prepping materials and helping with basic cleanup. Positions available in the Clay Studio and in the Garage Studio which features recycled materials and power tools.

#### **Glazing Workshop Assistant:**

Share the excitement as children's clay art comes to life with vibrant color! Help children choose colors to decorate their creations and walk them through the glazing process. Glazing Assistants are outgoing, patient, resourceful, friendly and reliable.

#### **Special Event Volunteers:**

Individuals are needed to help with one-day events or event series and activities, such as members-only events, a variety of community fairs and First Free Fridays. Ask to be notified of event dates and opportunities! This is the perfect opportunity for those unable to commit to regular volunteering schedules who still want to be involved and those who thrive on variety as no two events are ever the same.

## **Overview of WAV Program:**

### **Portland Children's Museum will provide WAVs with:**

- Training necessary to perform in volunteer role
- Teach youth leadership, responsibility, and communication skills
- Recommendation upon completing minimum volunteer commitment
- Opportunities to give back to local community and build service hours
- Free membership to Museum if you volunteer 100 hours
- 10 % discount in Gift Shop
- Social events to get to know other volunteers and staff

### **WAVs MUST:**

- Adhere to Museum policies and procedures
- Arrive on time and complete agreed upon shifts
- Notify Museum as soon as possible if unable to make agreed upon shifts
- Sign in for volunteer shifts and track time using volunteer timesheet
- Follow Appearance Guidelines
- Represent the Museum in a friendly and positive manner
- Be willing to learn and have fun!

### **Shift and schedule information:**

The Museum is generally open Tuesday-Sunday from 9AM-5PM during the fall and winter and seven days a week from 9AM-5PM in the spring and summer. We ask that you arrive five minutes before your scheduled shift to allow you time to check in. There are a variety of volunteer shifts depending on the job you are interested in. Regular volunteer shifts usually occur in a minimum of two hour blocks. Shift blocks can be combined to create longer shifts if you wish depending on shift availability. Some volunteers prefer to assist with special events such as our First Free Friday evening event held once a month. Length of special event shifts is dictated on an event by event basis. Breaks are provided during your shift. Shifts will be determined with the Volunteer Manager.

### **WAV Program Policies and Procedures:**

**WAV Conduct**-WAVs are expected to uphold the following standards while volunteering:

- Provide friendly greetings and smiles to all visitors and offer good customer service to our guests. This includes answering questions whenever you can or finding a Museum staff member to help a visitor if necessary.
- Always be professional. As a volunteer you are representing the Museum so we ask that you refrain from using profanity or having inappropriate conversations during your time at the Museum.
- Please do not bring your family or friends to the Museum during your shift. Our visitors appreciate your undivided attention.
- Treat other volunteers and staff members with courtesy and respect. If you ever have a problem with another volunteer or staff member, please report it immediately to the Manager on Duty or Volunteer Manager.

**Unacceptable behavior**-is determined by Museum staff and includes, but is not limited to:

- Failure to adhere to policies and procedures
- Having two or more absences without notice
- Insubordination, abuse, or mistreatment of visitors, staff, or other volunteers
- Failure to perform assigned duties
- Possession or use of banned substances or alcohol
- Theft or property or misuse of Museum materials

- Portland Children's Museum has the right to terminate a volunteer at any point

#### **Interactions with Children:**

- **NEVER**, under any circumstances, be alone with or pick up a child. The three appropriate ways to make physical contact with a child at the Museum are: to place your hand on the child's shoulder, to place your hand on the child's back, or to hold the child's hand. **If you witness any behavior between adults and children, or between children that seems inappropriate or abusive, alert a staff member immediately.**
- When possible, be at child's level and speak softly.
- Introduce yourself and your role.
- Listen actively and with respect.
- Respect each child's right to choice and privacy when possible.
- Involve children in problem solving rather than always providing answers.
- Ask open ended questions that allow the child to think creatively, learn, and build confidence.

**Dress Code**-All volunteers are expected to present themselves in a professional yet comfortable fashion. Volunteers are expected to be well groomed and all clothing must be in good repair.

- Blue jeans in good condition are welcomed. Shorts, skirts, and dresses should be no more than four inches above the knee. Top of your pants/skirt must meet the bottom of your shirt (no midriffs showing)
- No clothing with slogans allowed. Please ensure any graphics on your clothing are appropriate.
- Low-cut tops, tank tops, and spaghetti strapped tops are not appropriate. Sleeveless shirts are permissible if material covers to edge of shoulder.
- To reduce the risk of accidents and injury shoes must be closed toed. For your safety you will be sent home if you wear sandals, flip flops, or open-toed shoes.
- Only ear piercings are permitted
- Always wear a volunteer apron and nametag during your shift

#### **Arrival and Departure Procedures**

- Arrive at least five minutes before your shift. Sign in for your shift and fill out your timesheet.
- Put on volunteer apron and nametag.
- Store personal items in lockers provided in the break room. Please note you will need to provide your own lock. Museum assumes no responsibility for loss or damage to your belongings.
- At end of shift, ensure your area is clean for the next shift.
- Sign out for your shift and complete your timesheet for the day. Return apron and nametag.
- You are expected to leave the building at the end of your volunteer shift.

**Schedule Changes:** If you are unable to make your agreed upon shift or need to change your schedule please notify the Volunteer Manager in advance at [volunteer@portlandcm.org](mailto:volunteer@portlandcm.org) or (503) 471-9906. If you need to cancel your shift the day of, please notify the Box Office at (503) 471-9923. If you are unable to fulfill your volunteer commitment and need to resign please notify the Volunteer Manager.