



Shenandoah Valley DISCOVERY MUSEUM

Volunteer Handbook

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum. You are carrying on a tradition of volunteer involvement that began in 1993 when the Discovery Museum was just an idea. This museum was designed and built by a dedicated volunteer corps came together with a unity of vision and dedication to children and our community. The result of their collaboration still thrives today.

We need your time, your ideas, and your fun-loving sense of play. Those are the things that make people want to visit the Discovery Museum over and over again, and we bet those are the characteristics that make you want to work here.

We Need You!

- Spend a few hours of your free time in a wonderful, creative environment.
- Work as an exhibit docent to assist visitors in exploring and understanding exhibits.
- Lead art projects in Leonardo's Corner
- Help with programs, special events, birthday parties.
- Aid us in keeping the Museum and our exhibits in tip-top shape for our daily visitors.
- Work as many or few hours as you have available.

Contact Volunteer Coordinator Lia Mendez for more information

540-722-2020

info@discoverymuseum.net

Museum History

In 1996, few if any opportunities existed where children of the Shenandoah Valley could learn through play, simulation, experimentation and exploration. That was the year the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum opened its doors to the children, their families and the entire Shenandoah Valley Community. Established in 1993 as an independent, non-profit educational organization with 501(c) (3)-tax status, a Board of Directors was appointed to fulfill a regional need through the following mission:

Mission Statement

The Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum will ignite creativity, spark curiosity and inspire learning in patrons of all ages by providing a rich variety of interactive, hands-on exhibits and programs that focus on the sciences and mathematics, the humanities and the arts.

Job Descriptions

➤ **Exhibit Docent**

Supervisor: Lia Mendez; Daryl Bell

Duties: Exhibit Docents circulate through the Museum when large groups are anticipated. Their goal is to facilitate both children and chaperones in having a field trip experience which is both safe and fun. Their responsibilities include maintaining exhibit integrity, visitor safety, providing supplemental information on exhibits and serving as a “go-to” reference person on the gallery floor.

➤ **Museum and Exhibit Maintenance Volunteer**

Supervisor: Rick Mabe

Duties: A Museum maintenance volunteer should be good with power and hand tools and able to complete small repairs of exhibits and of museum property. Everything from changing light bulbs and fluorescent tubes, to small carpentry, electrical and plumbing jobs.

➤ **Off-Site Events Volunteer**

Supervisor: Lia Mendez; Mark Lawson; Daryl Bell

Duties: The Off-Site Events Assistant represents the Museum off site, providing programming, informing the public of the broad scope of offerings the Museum provides to the community, and generally serving as a “good will ambassador” for the Museum. Examples would be the biannual plant sales at the Virginia arboretum, and community/family events on the downtown mall.

➤ **Leonardo’s Corner Volunteer**

Supervisor: Lia Mendez

Duties: The Leonardo’s Corner Assistant is responsible for presenting projects from one of the already established art kits, and/or assisting the Presenter with his/her art project. He or she helps children and their parents to understand the project’s objectives, demonstrates the project, and assists children with the project when needed. Studio assistants are responsible for cleaning up the studio at the end of their work time and restocking the supply bins for general studio use.

➤ **Marketing Assistant**

Supervisor: Ryan Hall

Duties: The Marketing Staff volunteers work on office projects including bulk mailing (labeling, sorting and delivery), and database management. They also assist with planning and staffing yearly special events.

➤ **Rentals and Special Events Assistant**

Supervisor: Ryan Hall

Duties: The Rentals and Special Events Assistant volunteers at after-hours rentals and events (weddings, reunions, rooftop parties, etc.). They assist with setup, cleanup, and event staffing. Help may be needed at the front desk receiving guests, assisting with table setup and take down, distributing food and beverages, and collecting and disposing of trash.

Policies and Procedures:

Safety & Security

- Volunteers, along with the staff, are responsible for insuring that the Discovery Museum space is safe and secure for our visitors. If a safety hazard (wet floor, electrical wires, broken glass, sharp edges, loose rugs, etc.) is observed, please keep visitors away from hazard and either remedy the problem or notify staff immediately. If you observe a situation in which you believe a child to be at risk, either step in to stop the behavior or notify a staff member to do so. Please report concerns to a member of the staff.
- Volunteers should coordinate arrival and departure times with a staff member who is going to be present at the facility.

Identification

- While on duty, please wear a name badge, provided by the Museum, which identifies you as a Discovery Museum volunteer.

Tracking Hours

- Use the volunteer sign-in sheet provided by the museum to record your time spent volunteering. For every day that you volunteer, please note your time of arrival, departure, and total number of hours worked.

Facilities

- Volunteers are welcome to use all staff areas and restrooms. Please do not use Museum phones, computers, copiers, or fax machines for personal use. All electronic communications made on the Discovery Museum's computers or equipment are public, and must be disclosed upon request by your supervisor.

Liability

- Volunteers should report any injuries that result from their work at the Museum, regardless of the severity, to the Volunteer Coordinator, at which time an incident report will be completed.

Transportation

- Volunteers must supply their own transportation to and from the Museum and Museum related events.

Harassment Policy

- By definition, sexual harassment is any unwanted attention or action of a sexual nature by someone that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Harassment is unwanted attention or action creating an intimidating hostile or offensive environment. It will also be considered sexual harassment to harass an employee because of that employee's gender, even if the harassment is non-sexual.

- The procedure for reporting and dealing with this very sensitive issue is outlined in the policies and procedures manual of the Museum and is available upon request.

Drugs/Alcohol

- Drugs and alcohol are not permitted. If a volunteer is suspected of being under the influence of a drug or alcohol, he or she will be asked to leave immediately and the volunteer placement will be terminated.

Resignation/ Termination of Position

- Volunteer placement at the Discovery Museum is not considered permanent. The Museum Director, Volunteer Coordinator or the volunteer may terminate the volunteer placement at any time.
- Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator as far in advance as possible if you would like to terminate the placement or require an extended leave of absence. Advanced notice allows the Volunteer Coordinator to search for replacements or shift duties around as needed.

Guidelines for Volunteering

- Follow the same rules, regulations and standards as staff. These policies are recorded in the staff policy manual and are available upon request.
- Be prompt and reliable in reporting for duty and work the full time slot that you agreed upon with the Volunteer Coordinator. Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator in a timely manner if you will be absent, late or must leave early for your volunteer time slot.
- Wear appropriate clothing when volunteering; keep in mind that you represent the Museum every time you meet the public. *Examples of acceptable attire:* jeans or denim, athletic or tennis shoes provided they are neat and clean, dress sandals with no hosiery, loose fitting knee-length Bermuda shorts, T-shirts. *Examples of unacceptable attire:* clothing that is worn, torn, frayed, has patches or holes (including designer holes), sweat suits, beach sandals or shower sandals, bare midriffs, extreme mini skirts, halter or bra tops, sheer or see-through clothing, tank tops, muscle shirts, undergarments worn as outer garments, outer garments which allow undergarments to be visible, shirts with advertisements, rude slogans, or images depicting weapons or battles of any kind.
- Record hours worked on time sheets provided by the Volunteer Coordinator
- Remember to treat the public and staff in a professional manner. Our mission is to serve the public; excellent customer service is our mantra.
- Please protect any confidential information of the Discovery Museum.
- Volunteers will be required to undergo a Background Check after the first 20 hours of service.

Staff Guidelines

- Discovery Museum Staff will provide orientation and training to all new volunteers.
- Staff will provide supervision and leadership to volunteers during their time at the Museum.
- Staff will treat volunteers as respected members of the Museum team.
- Any policy changes that effect volunteers will be relayed to volunteers by staff in a timely manner.