Welcome These New Volunteers!

Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida Cultural Plaza
P.O. Box 112710, Gainesville, FL 32611-2710, www.flmnh.ufl.edu

Volunteers recognized for 100 hours or more of service

Please congratulate these 67 volunteers who reached 100 hours or more of service during the second quarter of 2009. Each volunteer received four coupons for free entrance into fee-based exhibits. The total number of hours (rounded) served since 4/1/05 is listed in parentheses. Junior volunteers are indicated by “JV.”

Florida Museum of Natural History volunteers contributed 8,047 hours during this quarter.

Mark Your Calendar!

Oct. 2 – Amazon Voyage Docent Training 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., Classrooms | For all current docents and any new volunteers interested in becoming a school program docent and/or exhibit docent for Amazon Voyage. Call (352) 273-2030.

Oct. 3 – Amazon Voyage: Vicious Fishes and Other Riches Public Opening 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. | Investigate the seven perils of the Amazon River and discover the biological diversity of this unique eco-system. Join Museum staff in celebrating the opening of our newest exhibit, Amazon Voyage. Call (352) 273-2064.

Oct. 6 – Amazon Voyage Discovery Cart Training 4:30 - 5:30 p.m., Classrooms | For anyone interested in interpreting at the newest Discovery Cart to visitors and for school groups, this training will give you the fun and interesting activities on the cart. Call (352) 273-2055.

Oct. 22 – Butterflyfest 2009 Volunteer and Staff Training 2 – 4 p.m., Classrooms | For everyone working the festival; please attend if possible. Call (352) 273-2055.

Oct. 24 –25 – Butterflyfest 2009 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. | A can’t-miss event, the largest of its kind! Come volunteer to simply visit with your family and friends or join us to learn about the importance of pollinators through family-friendly activities and events. See www.flmnh.ufl.edu/butterflyfest for more information, including volunteer registration information. Call (352) 273-2055.

Nov. 26 – Thanksgiving Holiday – Museum CLOSED

Dec. 3 – New Volunteer Orientation 10:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Classrooms | For any adult interested in becoming a Florida Museum volunteer. Call (352) 273-2055.

Dec. 11 – Volunteer Winter Potluck Noon – 2 p.m., Classrooms | For all current Florida Museum volunteers. No RSVP necessary; bring a favorite covered dish to share. Drinks provided. Call (352) 273-2055.


Dec. 25 – Christmas Holiday – Museum CLOSED.

The Volunteer Newsletter of the Florida Museum of Natural History • FALL 2009

Volunteer Interns Michael Collins and JV’s Diego Pozaire, Ashley Wilt, Victoria Hilton, and Maggie Cuppsta (left to right)

Photo by Eric Zamora

Volunteer Enrich Summer Programs and Exhibits

By Tessa Velton, Volunteer Program Intern

Over the summer, museum staff and visitors enjoyed the presence of more than 100 middle- and high-school volunteers. Junior volunteers helped teachers run camp classes, led crafts for and played games with young children in the Discovery Room, helped guests enjoy the Butterfly Rainforest and the Amazing Butterflies temporary exhibit, and taught visitors of all ages about fossils, owls and butterflies with the Discovery Carts. This year’s program set a new record with 11 junior volunteers selected from 148 applicants.

While many of these junior volunteers seek service hours for school, not all volunteer for enjoyment. Minja Zhong, a first-time volunteer who served for two weeks, said she definitely wants to work a lot more next summer. Elizabeth Lipham led the junior volunteers with 288 hours over the past year and nearly 1,000 hours total. Elizabeth mentioned all the “awesome” people she met and experiences she had working in various areas of the Museum. Elizabeth commented that helping at the camps is “just about always fun,” while Sveta Livingston preferred interacting with children in the Amazing Butterflies exhibit.

Junior volunteers learn a lot through their service and enjoy interacting with the visitors. Marie’s favorite part of volunteering is “watching peoples’ eyes light up as they learn something new.” Joshua Alexander Hull loves to see guests learning about the butterflies on his Discovery Cart. Butterflies aren’t the only subject learned by junior volunteers. Merrill Robins, who has volunteered in various places but decided the Museum is his favorite, said his experience with the Discovery Carts taught him to better communicate with people, which he is sure will help later in school and life.

The Museum held a party junior volunteers Aug. 14, the last day of summer programs. More than 40 junior volunteers, nominated by the Museum staff members with whom they worked, received awards for outstanding quality of service and 10 were recognized for serving more than 100 hours in the past year.

Letter from the Coordinator

Dear Volunteers,

We’ve finished another great summer with the junior volunteer program, which has become extremely popular in our community and beyond. We even had a JV from out of state and one from out of the country this year! In September, I will present a session titled “Keeping It Real: Junior Volunteer Program Basics” at the Florida Association of Museums annual conference. It’s an honor to represent our program and share the news about our great young volunteers with the rest of Florida.

Summer is now “in the can” and we’re heavily involved in fall programs, exhibitions and collections work. If you are thinking about adding a new volunteer position, or perhaps switching jobs, please let me know and I’ll share a list of current opportunities. Three of these, (ButterflyFest, docent programs, and a fossil dig) are advertised in this newsletter.

Wherever you serve, be assured that your work is appreciated by the staff, visitors and program participants, all of whom enjoy a richer museum experience because of your service.

Julie Crosby
Volunteering at the Florida Museum...

**VOLUNTEER PROFILE: Mike McCowan**
By Ashley Valdes, Volunteer Program Intern

You might find volunteer Mike McCowan surrounded by clusters of colorful orchids in the Herbarium, or sorting through a collection of moths from Papua New Guinea in the McGuire Center. Mike has served 1,192 hours since January, 2009. In that time he has seen the start of negotiations to move the orchid greenhouse to a larger, 8,000-square-foot facility. “It’s kind of anxious to see how events transpire,” Mike said. “The Herbarium greenhouse could easily graduate into orchid conservation work and possibly attract grant funds for doing so—something for which we don’t currently have the space. There’s also interest in our becoming a plant rescue center and/or broadening the focus of our live plant collection to amass a research collection that emphasizes diversity.”

Mike was drawn to the Museum both because he had pre-existing interest in museums and collections, and because his volunteer work complements his academic interests. He is currently interested in infectious disease biology, ethnobotany and medicinal plant chemistry as it relates to tropical medicine. “My decision to return to school and ambition to become an MD is the Herbarium: “The diversity you see in floral structure, growth habits and unique adaptations among plants, especially those that exist in extreme habitats like deserts and tropical rain forests, is just astounding.”

In his free time, Mike enjoys hiking, cooking and gardening. He grows cacti, succulents and bromeliads, and also experiments with plant propagation techniques. He says “Going to the museum is always an adventure. You learn so much more by getting out of the house and experiencing educational exhibits compared to just staying at home, trying to find a good TV program to watch.”

**ButterflyFest 2009, Fossil Dig, and Amazon Voyage Volunteers Needed!**

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**The Fossil Dig is a unique opportunity to be a paleontologist for a day (or more)! Each Saturday through Tuesday, October through November 24, staff, graduate students, and volunteers will be digging in this fossil-rich Gilchrist County site which has produced many great specimens. For more details and registration, go to the dig website: www.fmlnh.ufl.edu/vertpaleo/fall_2009.htm.**

**Amazon Voyage Docents** will educate visitors on the Amazon River and its fishy inhabitants. School Program docents introduce exhibits and facilitate classroom activities related to programs for groups of school children. Exhibit docents interact with visitors of all ages inside the exhibit. They interpret the exhibit, share information and answer general questions. To sign up, call (352) 273-2030 or 273-2026.

**VOLUNTEER PROFILE: Craig Samuel**
By Trudy McDonald, Volunteer Program Intern

Three years ago, Craig Samuel met Invertebrate Paleontology Collection Manager, Roger Portell. Ever since, Craig has volunteered in the Invertebrate Paleontology collection, collecting, identifying fossils. He also assists with fossil echnoid preparation. This presents the challenge of carefully and meticulously cleaning invertebrate echinoids like sea urchins and sand dollars.

Both Craig and his wife, Laurie also volunteer at the Museum’s warehouse with the DuBar Collection. When Craig and Laurie are not volunteering, they are working on their personal collection of fossils. They have gone to nearby locations like the Volcan Quarry to search strata for echinoids.

Craig’s love of fossils is not a recent phenomenon. A passion for natural history has been a constant throughout his life. For example, when Craig was living in New York, he found fossil brittle, which is very rare. Selflessly, Craig donated his findings to the Smithsonian Institute.

A retired hospital administrator, Craig has also lived in Ohio, and Louisiana. Currently, he lives in Michigan in the summer and Gainesville during the winter. While in Michigan, Craig works on his garden and practices natural planting which helps sustain local wildlife.

Craig has served 225 hours at the Museum since 2006. Roger Portell says “Craig’s enthusiasm and inquisitiveness is exactly what is needed to meet curation goals in Invertebrate Paleontology. He is the best kind of volunteer for our program.”

**STAFF PROFILE: Kendra Lanza-Kaduce, Public Programs Coordinator**
By Ashley Valdes, Volunteer Program Intern

Kendra Lanza-Kaduce has been the Florida Museum Public Programs Coordinator for four years. In that time, she’s overseen many children’s birthday parties, summer camps and public openings. The variety of events that she and her staff coordinate means they find themselves collaboratively volunteering with volunteers and specialists from all areas of the Museum. “We couldn’t do what we do in public programs without the amazing support of our volunteers,” Kendra said, “We appreciate their support and dedication more than they know.”

Kendra Lanza-Kaduce, Public Programs Coordinator
Photo by Jeff Gage.
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October 2009 Volunteers

Anca Agrinu 100 (100)
Andrea Allen 100 (100)
Jacqueline Amy 100 (100)
Joel Anderson 100 (100)
Christina Arcego 100 (100)
Diane Battiste 100 (100)
John Battey 100 (100)
James Bevilaqua 100 (100)
Shelley Bovill 100 (100)
Jane Blanchard 100 (100)
Pat Bowmen 100 (100)
Emily Bronson 100 (100)
Claudia Brown 100 (100)
Janis Cade 100 (100)
Alix Collins 100 (100)
Emily Harris 100 (100)
Frances Cordes 100 (100)
Jenniffer Cornell 100 (100)
Alexandra Crolla 100 (100)
Sarah Hoffman 100 (100)
Jennifer Hanesinger 100 (100)
Robert Koolse 100 (100)
Anthony Flanagan 100 (100)
Sarah Fritchen 100 (100)
Jackie Friel 100 (100)
Glenn Godfrey 100 (100)
Kendra Grooms 100 (100)
Darce Kemper 100 (100)
Marcie Kempker 100 (100)
Rose Kremen 100 (100)
Kathina Lane 100 (100)
Elizabeth Lingham 100 (100)
Mikey Louth 100 (100)
Alex McCaffrey 100 (100)
Mike McCaw 100 (100)
Sylvia Meyer 100 (100)
Briece Ogilvie 100 (100)
Karen Dansky 100 (100)
Vicente Gomoral 100 (100)
Jody Hallock 100 (100)
Mary Rhodes 100 (100)
Imra Riley 100 (100)
Barbara Ross 100 (100)
Dwayne Jacke 100 (100)
Anne Luth 100 (100)
Alex McGaffey 100 (100)
Mike McCaw 100 (100)
Barbara Nuss 100 (100)
Paul Roth 100 (100)
Craig Samuel 100 (100)
Erik Sattler 100 (100)
Frances Sekel 100 (100)
Ruth Sherman 100 (100)
Erica Simons 100 (100)
Briana Sweeney 100 (100)
Robert Smarz 100 (100)
Pajaree Thongvaree 100 (100)
Barbara Toonney 100 (100)
Matthew White 100 (100)
Ashley Welch 100 (100)
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