

Where
the past
is present

DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUNTEER DOCENT

LOCATION:

Detroit Historical Museum on Woodward Ave. Detroit, MI 48202 **and** Dossin Great Lakes Museum on Belle Isle, Detroit, MI 48207

PURPOSE:

As a volunteer docent, you'll help teach all our adult and student groups, pre-K to university level by offering group tours of special exhibitions and permanent collections, at both the Dossin Great Lakes Museum and the Detroit Historical Museum. You can also expect to expand your understanding of Detroit's history and be challenged by new ideas and perspectives.

Docents are Society ambassadors for the thousands of visitors who engage in our galleries each year!

DUTIES:

- Greet and welcome tour groups upon their arrival at the museums;
- Conduct museum tours of approximately 1-1 1/2 hours in length;
- Conduct specialty programming and gallery guide opportunities within the galleries during public events;
- Facilitate workshops at the Detroit Historical Museum and the Dossin Great Lakes Museum;
- Be comfortable speaking to and engaging with small and large groups of people of all ages.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULING:

We ask that candidates are willing to commit to a minimum 12 months of volunteer service to the Society and have the ability to volunteer a minimum of eight tour hours per month. Additional hours vary depending on each week's tour scheduling.

Docents meet on the third Monday of the month from 10:00am-12:00pm from September through June. No meetings are held after the second week of December through the first week of January, in honor of the holiday season.

DHS will coordinate with each volunteer docent to assign tours that are a best fit for our needs and each individual interest level.

PREFERRED SKILLS:

- Have a background in education and American history with an overall love for the city of Detroit and its history;
- Maintain working knowledge of ongoing Society-related programs and events;
- Possess excellent interpersonal, communication and organization skills and have a high comfort level speaking in public spaces;
- The ability to communicate respectfully with persons of diverse cultures and backgrounds;
- Ability to respond to patron inquiries in a timely fashion;
- Ability to represent the Society in a friendly, courteous and professional manner;
- Maintain the ability to work individually and as part a team environment.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Volunteers should expect a moderate to high noise level, varying on peak tour hours and museum events. Most work will be performed onsite in our public gallery spaces.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Position will fluctuate between standing and walking for up to 2 hours at a time.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions required of this volunteer role.

TRAINING & SUPPORT:

The first two orientation sessions typically take place on Mondays; sessions are usually two-hours long and offered to accommodate a variety of schedules (morning sessions: 9:30-11: 30 am; afternoon sessions: 2:30-4:30pm). These trainings cover facilitation and touring techniques, museum education, museum information, and historical content; with classes taught by museum staff, educators, and fellow seasoned docents.

All Trainees are required to spend time in the museum, observing docent interpretation, co-interpreting, with the completion of in-gallery evaluations. This training/evaluation period concludes with final test tours presented by provisional docents and evaluated by education staff.

All docents will also receive training on the Society's artifacts, galleries and research areas, along with techniques for conducting effective tours. Docents continue their education throughout their service by attending docent meetings, participating in study

groups, attending gallery talks and taking trips with fellow docents to other regional museums and tours.

NEXT STEPS:

Complete and submit online application. Applicants will be contacted within 48 hours.

CONTACT INFO:

Arletha Walker, Volunteer & HR Coordinator arlethaw@detroithistorical.org. No phone calls, please.