



Director of Education

Position Description

Updated 10.01.2024

Riveredge Nature Center is located in Saukville, WI (30 minutes north of Milwaukee), on 485 beautiful acres of restored prairies, woodlands, and wetlands along the Milwaukee River. Riveredge has a remarkable 56-year legacy of creating joyful educational experiences in the outdoors. Our mission is to support conservation through education that awakens curiosity, engages the body, and explores connections to nature for all people. Riveredge achieves its mission by partnering with individuals and organizations across Southeastern Wisconsin. Our dynamic staff works to promote the strategic themes of nature-rich lifestyles for all, wellness in nature, nurturing the next generation, and putting conservation into action. Upholding a commitment to making environmental education more broadly accessible, we offer immersive, hands-on, and fun outdoor experiences within the Riveredge sanctuary and throughout the communities we serve—including Ozaukee, Washington, and Milwaukee Counties.

Position Purpose

The Director of Education provides holistic leadership and management to the array of Riveredge's educational programs both on-site and throughout Southeastern Wisconsin. In this role, the Director supervises a robust and talented staff, fostering growth and collaboration both within the education team and across departments.

Primary Responsibilities

Program Management

- Provide comprehensive leadership to education programs including visiting school trips, homeschool groups, family and adult programs, adventure programming, scientist in residence educators, k-12 summer/winter camps and community based programs.
- Supervise team of 16 full-time and part-time education staff
- Develop and manage the Education Department's annual operating budget in collaboration with the Executive Director and Associate Director of Education
- Guide the team in developing goals, creating work plans, and tracking program outcomes, ensuring alignment with organizational objectives
- Plan and lead regular meetings and building activities to strengthen staff cohesion
- Support hiring, onboarding, and development of staff ensuring a high level of engagement and performance
- Report and share data-based program results in a timely manner through evaluation summaries to funders, donors, and partners
- Implement and facilitate an evaluation plan for programming to assess impact of each program

Organizational Leadership

- Serve as a member of Riveredge's administrative leadership team, contributing to strategic decisions and organizational growth
- Support planning and activities for All Staff Summits
- Assist ongoing development of organizational policy and procedures
- Participate in monthly Board of Director meetings and provide annual presentation of program accomplishments
- Participate in the Education, Science, Research, and Stewardship Board committee
- Act as the primary spokesperson for education programs and represent Riveredge in a leadership capacity at public and internal events

Collaboration and Partnerships

- Develop and nurture impactful partnerships with community-based organizations, educational institutions, and other environmental educational and conservation focused organizations
- Attend professional conferences to network and showcase Riveredge's work through formal presentations, elevating the organization's presence within the field

Other Responsibilities

- Author newsletter articles 1-2 times a year to share program impacts
- Assist in staffing the Visitor Center approximately one weekend per quarter
- Assist in staffing major fundraising events at Riveredge including the Farm to Table Dinner, Frothy Forge, Autumn Acoustics, and Sturgeon Fest
- Assist in caring for any education animals
- Perform other duties as assigned to support the mission and operations of Riveredge

Position Expectations

In addition to the Primary Duties, the Director of Education is expected to meet the following expectations set forth to all staff members of Riveredge Nature Center:

- Meaningfully contribute to the Riveredge staff team. This includes helping with projects, programs, and events that may fall outside of the primary duties or departments of this position description
- Foster an inclusive and supportive environment through personal actions such as supporting and helping other staff members and volunteers
- Provide high quality customer service experiences to all guests and volunteers

Salary, Benefits, & Working Conditions

This is a full-time, salaried position and provides the below benefits. The salary range for this position is \$60,000-\$66,000/year. The specific benefits will be presented in the offer letter.

- Short and long term disability and group term life Insurance paid 100% by Riveredge
- Limited matching retirement contributions
- Paid holidays
- A generous Paid Time Off (PTO) allotment
- Optional participation in Health, Dental, Accident/Illness, and Life insurance programs

Additional working conditions include:

- Some evening and weekend hours
- Assume occasional travel within the state
- Occasional hours may be spent telecommuting from home

Physical Requirements:

- Sit and type for sustained periods of time indoors among an open concept office setting
- Hike outdoors on varying terrain, in all seasons and weather, with teaching equipment in tow
- Ability to lift up to 20 lbs. and climb stairs

Riveredge Nature Center is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion. Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and achievement as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

This position reports directly to the Executive Director.

Preferred Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in education, natural sciences, or a related field.
- Minimum of 3 years of experience in a leadership position including the supervision of staff and volunteers
- Minimum of 2 years teaching experience (K-adult) in a formal or non-formal education setting
- Knowledge of inquiry process, curriculum development, teaching methods, and data reporting
- Self-starter, motivated, and a well-developed ability to set and meet goals and outcomes
- Flexible, collaborative spirit, bringing out the best in staff members through an asset-based approach to leadership
- Interest in sustainability education and its connection to environmental issues and a community's well being
- Naturalist skills and knowledge of Wisconsin natural history, or willingness to gain such skills
- Experience successfully managing grants
- Strong, clear, and timely oral and written communication skills
- Proficiency in using G-Suite such as Docs, Sheets, Forms, Drive, Gmail, Calendar

Priority Deadline: Friday, November 15, 2024. Applications will be reviewed as they are received. Anticipated start date for this position is January 1, 2025.

Please send resume and cover letter, and contact information for three references (as one PDF) to Executive Director, John Rakowski, at jrakowski@riveredge.us. For questions, please contact John via email. **In your cover letter, please address the following question: *What specific leadership methods do you utilize (via communication, relationship-building, problem-solving, and other means) to result in a team's achievement of challenging goals?***

To Learn More

To learn more about Riveredge's mission, vision, core values, and recent mission impacts, please visit:

- <https://www.riveredgenaturecenter.org/the-mission/>
- <https://www.riveredgenaturecenter.org/history/annual-reports/>