



# ALBUQUERQUE BIOLOGICAL PARK HORTICULTURE VOLUNTEER BIOPARK EDUCATION VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION 2008

- PURPOSE** Horticulture Volunteers assist the Albuquerque BioPark horticulture staff with routine garden maintenance and special plant projects at the Rio Grande Botanic Garden and the Rio Grande Zoo.
- REQUIREMENTS** Anyone over 16 years old is eligible. Skills needed to be a successful Horticulture Volunteer include enthusiasm for gardening, the ability to lift 20 pounds, the ability to stoop and bend and the ability to tolerate local weather. No gardening knowledge is required; all necessary knowledge is taught. As a safety precaution, all applicants are required to submit to a City of Albuquerque background check before they can begin volunteering and an annual security check thereafter.
- DUTIES** Horticulture Volunteers, playfully known as “Dirt Devils,” perform a variety of duties, depending on their interests. General duties include, but are not limited to weeding, general clean-up, dead-heading, sweeping, raking, planting, potting, plant removal, and pruning. Volunteers will not use power tools or chemicals.
- MINIMUM TIME** Horticulture Volunteers may work anytime the horticulture staff is on duty—usually Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm in winter and 7:00am-3:30pm in summer. A regular weekly schedule is highly encouraged. Horticulture Volunteers are asked to sign-up at least one week in advance on the sign-up calendar located in the Communications Room in the AQ/BG Ed building.
- A minimum of 60 hours a year is required to receive recognition as a BioPark Education Volunteer. At least 30 hours must be spent working as a Horticulture Volunteer; the remaining 30 hours may also be spent working in horticulture or doing support work (monthly meetings, continuing education classes, research and writing, event preparation, general BioPark projects, etc.). Volunteers are responsible for tracking their own hours on an honor system.
- If a Horticulture Volunteer is active in another BioPark Education Volunteer program, the minimum number of required hours does not increase. The total of 60 hours may be divided between both or all jobs.
- TRAINING** The BioPark Education Program/Volunteer Specialist provides a half-day orientation for new volunteers and matches them up with a member of the Horticulture staff, who provide task-specific training on-the-job. Orientations are held on the third Wednesday of most months: May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17 and October 15,
- UNIFORM** Volunteers must wear their BioPark ID and nametag. A hat, work gloves, and sun block are also suggested.
- Volunteers are encouraged to bring their own kneeling pad, small gardening tools (pruners, weeding tool, trowel, etc.) and water bottle. If a volunteer does not

have the tools needed for a task (especially larger tools), the garden staff will provide them.

## **BENEFITS**

BioPark Education Volunteers have the opportunity to do meaningful and gratifying education work with thousands of visitors to the BioPark, an important intangible benefit. Tangible benefits are also available. Upon completion of the training and a commitment to give the minimum number of hours, BioPark Education Volunteers receive an identification badge, which allows free regular admission to all BioPark facilities (Zoo, Aquarium, and Botanic Garden). While on duty, volunteers receive a discount at the food and gift concession stands. After the end of each calendar year, volunteers are awarded recognition items for their service. Volunteers are offered discounts to all fee-based BioPark Education programs and are invited to special volunteer-only events.

## **SUPPORT**

Resources exist throughout the BioPark to help volunteers fulfill their duties. Education staff can provide assistance, and small Education Libraries are available. Monthly education meetings are generally held on the first Thursday and first Saturday of each month, and all volunteers are encouraged to attend. The Aquarium/Botanic Garden meetings are at 11:00am in the AQ/BG Education Building. Current BioPark happenings and facility-specific information are discussed. Volunteers are also invited to attend monthly Brown Bag Seminars following the meetings. Mid-month, a written update is mailed to all BioPark volunteers. Information on current happenings is also available in the Volunteer Communication Room at the AQ/BG Education Building.

## **STRUCTURE**

When working, Horticulture Volunteers report directly to the Master Gardener with whom they are matched. The Master Gardeners report to the Curators/Horticulturist, who report to the Botanic Garden Manager.

Horticulture Volunteers can also contact the BioPark Program/Volunteer Specialist, Cathy Wylie, with questions or concerns at 848-71462. The Education Coordinator reports to the Acting BioPark Education Curator, Allyson Zahm. The AQ/BG Education Clerk, Kim Woodhouse, is also available to provide assistance.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Fill out the Education Volunteer application and return to Albuquerque BioPark Education, Attn: Cathy Wylie, 903 Tenth Street SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102. You will be asked to complete a separate background check form at the orientation session.

## **CONTACT**

For more information, contact BioPark Education:  
(505) 764-6245, [cwylie@cabq.gov](mailto:cwylie@cabq.gov)  
[www.cabq.gov/biopark](http://www.cabq.gov/biopark)



Martin J. Chávez, Mayor

The BioPark is a division of the City of Albuquerque's Cultural Services Department. For general inquiries, please call 311 (Relay NM, TTY 1-800-659-8331, or 711).