2020 Forest Preserve Experience Program

The Forest Preserve Experience program (FPE) is a five-week conservation service-learning experience. Selected individuals will participate on crews that will consist of 14 high school students and two adult Crew Leaders and an adult Assistant Crew Leader.

As a team, the crew will perform ecological restoration projects and litter removal in the Forest Preserves of Cook County for five weeks. A large focus of this program will also be dedicated to environmental enrichment and exposure activities. See below for FAQ!

Q: What are the requirements to participate in the program?

A: All crew members must be a House Authority of Cook County resident or voucher holder. Students must be 14-19 years old by program start and enrolled in high school or be a 2020 high school graduate.

Q: How do I apply?

A: Visit www.fotfp.org/fpe and apply online or download a printable version. The application will open on February 28, 2020 and will close on April 30, 2020.

Applications must be submitted electronically by April 30, 2020. Late applications will not be accepted, no exceptions.

Q: What is the time commitment?

A: The program will run from June 22 to July 24, 2020. Students will work Monday - Friday. They will work 25 hours/week and receive a wage of $10 per hour. If a student misses more than 3 days of work, they will automatically be dismissed from the program and will forfeit the remaining pay. There are no exceptions for family vacations or summer school. July 3 will be observed for the Independence Day and no programming will occur on that day. Crew members will work on site from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. each day. Crew members will meet at their designated location Monday - Friday by 7:30 a.m. and will be dropped off at the same location at 12:30 p.m.
Q: What exactly do students do and where do they work?

A: Students will spend three orientation days learning job skills that will prepare them for the program and give them skills that they can use in the future. They then engage in rewarding and valuable physical work outdoors on conservation and restoration projects in the Forest Preserves of Cook County including invasive species removal and litter clean-ups. Throughout each week, time will be devoted to learning about the local ecology and environment and students will have the opportunity to participate in a number of environmental enrichment activities, such as hiking, canoeing, and other recreational opportunities. Once a student is hired, they will usually be placed at the forest preserve work site that is closest to their home.

Q: How can I improve my chances of getting into the program?

A: We highly encourage you to volunteer at a forest preserve to learn more about what you will be doing this summer and to see if you like the work. Applicants that come out for two volunteer events removing invasive plants or helping out at a Nature Center have a better chance of securing a position for the summer (see below for information). We also encourage you to spend time thinking about and answering the essay section of your application.

We receive many applications and are looking for students that are excited about working in the forest preserves and helping our environment.

Q: Where can I volunteer in the Forest Preserves of Cook County?

A: The FPE program encourages applicants to attend two volunteer events at a nearby forest preserve. However, volunteering is not a requirement to apply. We encourage volunteering because this will give you a better understanding of what you will be doing during the summer. Volunteer events happen almost every Saturday or Sunday. Events are led by certified leaders who instruct you on how to remove invasive species among other activities. To find an event go to fpdcc.com/volunteer.

To receive program credit for volunteering you must complete the forms on the following page. Forms must be included with your application, NO EXCEPTIONS.

Q: Whom do I call with additional questions?

A: For more information, please contact: Melissa Agarwal, Program Manager, Friends of the Forest Preserves, 312-356-9990 ext. 306 or at Melissa@fotfp.org
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Applicant Name ____________________________________________________________

Forest Preserve Name ____________________________ Date of Event ________________

Please have the volunteer Site Steward or workday leader complete the following:

Steward Name __________________________________________________________________ Steward Signature ________________________________

Steward Phone __________________________ Email ________________________________

The volunteer arrived at the workday at ____________ and left at _________________

This form is for volunteering only and should not be submitted unless you have volunteered at a forest preserve.