Riveredge is more than a nature center. Its legacy as a pioneer in the areas of land restoration, research, and inquiry-based education throughout Wisconsin serve as strong foundation to its future initiatives. Today, Riveredge is redefining the role of the nature center in the community by empowering and supporting communities to live in harmony with their natural environment in a way that encourages exploration, adventure, and fun.

Scientist in Residence Program Description

In five years’ time, we see the students in the Cedarburg School District healthier, happier and more creative, and inspired by the world around them. We envision a school system where the outdoors is interconnected to the foundation of every day just as technology is interwoven through all subject areas. We witness schools that do not have to make the choices between less recess time and more reading time because teachers have learned ways of transforming their local outdoor spaces into classrooms. We see the evolution of the next generation of scientists.

The vision of this cutting-edge project is to work in a true partnership with local school districts to transform the cultures of our formal education system through the integration of outdoor learning experiences, environmental science learning, and the implementation of sustainability projects and initiatives. In its most basic description, the Riveredge Scientist in Residence Program will place a fully funded environmental educator into the school district four days per week to meet the needs defined by the school district in order to achieve this vision.

Position Purpose

The Riveredge Scientist in Residence will work as part of the Riveredge Nature Center and Cedarburg School District (WBSD) teams of staff and volunteers. This position is responsible for serving as the lead resource for inquiry-based outdoor learning programs at the schools and in the outdoor learning environments available within the CSD. In addition, this position will be responsible for curriculum development for school programming, assessment and evaluation of curriculum, and training and mentorship for the Pre K-12 teachers in the CSD. This position will develop innovative approaches to engage youth with our natural world.

Responsibilities

Management & Program Development Responsibilities

- Work as a partner with the school district teachers and administrators to provide support which will increase the amount of time students are learning in an outdoor setting.
- Develop innovative approaches to engage students with our natural world with an emphasis on science learning in the following ways:
  - **High School**: Develop an outdoor survival plan in conjunction with the English department and an overnight trip to Wyalusing; explore ways of utilizing nature photography as an enhancement to overall inquiry.
  - **Middle School**: Work with science and literacy teachers to incorporate outdoor learning experiences within a variety of science units; work with staff and students to improve forest and prairie areas that currently exist; increase usage of Webster Forest area, garden and prairie areas as a learning environment for other content areas.
  - **Elementary**: Connect with all three elementary schools and determine additional ways to foster outdoor learning through each school’s land, forest and outside learning areas. In our 4K program, partner with teachers to expand and enrich each student’s experience in unit #5: Garden Party.
● Develop and improve existing Riveredge Pre K-12 School curriculum to effectively deliver inquiry-based outdoor education that fulfills current Cedarburg School District curriculum requirements.
● Partner with Riveredge’s Director of Education and Educational Technology/Evaluation Specialist to develop and implement appropriate assessment methods to document the impact of Pre K-12 programming efforts on student learning and attitudes.
● Regularly review all classroom teacher school program evaluations and follow up with classroom teachers when necessary.
● Continually use information gained from student assessment and classroom teacher program evaluations to improve Pre K-12 School curriculum and teacher assistance efforts.
● Mentor, train, and coordinate professional development for Pre K-12 Cedarburg School District teachers so they are able to provide effective inquiry-based outdoor education and increase their knowledge of science concepts.
● Serve as a consultant for Cedarburg School District Teachers in creating effective inquiry-based outdoor education at their school sites. (For example, sharing techniques, activities, resources, professional development opportunities, and offering support and in-service trainings.)

Other Responsibilities:
● Work with the Educational Technology and Evaluation Specialist to integrate technology, as appropriate, into school program delivery.
● Work with Riveredge Land Manager and CSD Buildings and Grounds staff to improve and enhance the elementary schools’ outdoor learning areas and the outdoor space at Webster Transitional School (trail development, native plantings, invasive species removal, etc.).
● Regularly participate in staff meetings, in-services and professional development at the CSD and Riveredge.
● Teach evening and weekend public groups at the school outdoor learning areas when needed.
● Maintain educational program equipment and supplies for the school outdoor learning areas.

Position Expectations
In addition to the Primary Duties, the Riveredge Scientist in Residence is expected to meet the following expectations set forth to all staff members of Riveredge Nature Center. These expectations would also be relevant for the position scope of work at the Cedarburg School District.
● 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.
● Develop personal benchmarks and measures of success related to the yearly Riveredge Nature Center approved goals.
● Regularly participate in staff meetings and internal professional development trainings.
● Seek out professional development opportunities outside of Riveredge Nature Center and the Cedarburg School District to further expand and improve your skills, talents, thoughts and ideas.
● Strive for excellence and innovation.
● Identify opportunities and contribute to efforts to realize additional earned and contributed revenue such as, but not limited to, specialty programs, membership recruitment, in-kind donations, grants and gifts.

Performance Evaluation & Compensation
When we work together, Riveredge succeeds. When Riveredge succeeds, we all benefit. All staff members at Riveredge will have regular and consistent contact with their supervisor(s). All staff members will receive a yearly, formal performance review from his/her direct supervisor. Performance will be evaluated based on overall job performance, teamwork, and progress related to yearly goals. Pay increases will be given on a sliding scale based on job performance. Yearly pay increases are not guaranteed. When financially allowable, high performing employees will receive greater compensation based on performance that is consistently above expectations.
Benefits & Working Conditions

This is a seasonal, full-time, salaried position for nine months each year (end of August – early June) and, subject to success, will continue for five years. The Riveredge Scientist in Residence will spend one day each week at Riveredge, and four days each week working with students and staff in the Cedarburg School District.

Additional working conditions include:
● Work evenings and weekends occasionally.
● Assume occasional travel within the state.

This position reports directly to the Director of Education.

Compensation

Pay is determined by background and experience.

Preferred Qualifications

● Bachelor’s degree in the education, natural sciences or related field.
● Knowledge of scientific inquiry process, curriculum development, teaching methods and educational assessment techniques.
● Naturalist skills and knowledge of Wisconsin natural history.
● Flexible, creative teacher with a minimum of 2 years teaching experience (K-adult) in a formal or non-formal setting.
● Self-starter and a well-developed ability to set and meet goals and outcomes.
● Comfortable developing new sources of revenue and ability to understand revenue impacts on programming.
● Loves working with children of all ages and families.
● Enthusiastic, positive, motivated and likes to have fun on the job.
● Ability to work as a member of a team by sharing decision making while personally assuming and also asking for responsibility and accountability.
● Strong interpersonal skills, organized and professional demeanor, self-directed.
● Strong oral and written communication skills.
● Computer skills, comfort using email and internet. Must be proficient in using Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Power Point.
● Ability to physically traverse the outdoor trails with ease.
● Interest in sustainability education and its connection to environmental issues and a community’s wellbeing.
● Experience with Google docs, Google calendar and social media.

Timeline

We are currently seeking a pool of candidates for this position. Interviews will be conducted in early November. The position will begin on or before November 28, 2016.

Application Deadline: November 7, 2016

To apply: please send a letter of interest, resume and a list of three references in a single document to Sunny Knutson, Director of Education, at sknutson@riveredge.us.