



Education Director

Department: Education

Supervisor: Amber Parker, President & CEO

Position: Full time; Exempt

Position Overview

The Education Director is a visionary leader responsible for shaping, advancing, and overseeing all educational programs at Ijams Nature Center. This role is pivotal in ensuring that educational offerings are mission-aligned, innovative, and impactful. From strategic planning to program execution, the Education Director leads with creativity and purpose, fostering a culture of excellence in environmental education. This position is a key member of the Leadership Team, collaborating across departments to inspire connection with nature and empower community stewardship.

Ijams Nature Center is a 318-acre nature center located approximately 2 miles from downtown Knoxville, TN. It is a cornerstone of Knoxville's Urban Wilderness and receives around 620,000 visitors annually. Ijams Nature Center has an incredible diversity of programs, events, and partnerships, making it a highly impactful organization in our community.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership & Team Development

- Lead, mentor, and manage the education team, including hiring, training, and performance evaluation.
- Supervise staff roles such as Lead Naturalist, Program Coordinators, Preschool Lead Teacher, and seasonal educators.
- Foster a positive, collaborative work environment that promotes autonomy, accountability, and professional growth.

Program Development & Oversight

- Oversee the design, development, and enhancement of education programs, including:
 - School Programs
 - Summer Camps
 - Adult & Family Programs
 - Nature Preschool
 - Homeschool Programs
 - Community Outreach Initiatives
 - Volunteer Programs
 - Animal Ambassador Programs
 - Exhibits and Special Events
- Develop new programming and long-term strategic plans to advance Ijams' educational mission.
- Ensure programs meet high standards of quality, accessibility, and relevance.

Operational Management

- Establish departmental policies, procedures, and best practices.
- Manage budgets, staff schedules, and resource allocation.
- Collaborate with internal teams (Development, Visitor Services, Operations, Natural Resources) to integrate educational goals with organizational objectives.
- Build and maintain strong partnerships with local, state, and national educational and environmental organizations.
- Oversee the maintenance of educational facilities and resources in partnership with the Operations Manager.

Community Engagement & Collaboration

- Serve as an educational ambassador, strengthening community connections and promoting program visibility.
- Collaborate with the Development Director to support program marketing and funding initiatives.
- Engage with external partners such as universities, local governments, and conservation organizations.
- Lead community-based education initiatives and represent Ijams in relevant forums.

Program Evaluation & Continuous Improvement

- Monitor program outcomes and implement strategies for continuous improvement.
 - Ensure staff are trained in current educational and safety best practices.
 - Maintain knowledge of trends in environmental education, nature programming, and animal care.
 - Teach classes and workshops as needed to support program goals.
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Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in Education, Environmental Education, Natural Sciences, or a related field (Master's preferred).
 - Minimum of five (5) years of experience in education program development and management, with at least two (2) years in a supervisory role.
 - Proven success in curriculum development, program evaluation, and staff leadership.
 - Strong skills in natural history, outdoor education, and inquiry-based science methods.
 - Exceptional communication, organizational, and problem-solving abilities.
 - Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Google Workspace, and database management.
 - Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a dynamic environment.
 - Must hold a valid Tennessee driver's license.
 - First Aid or Wilderness First Responder certification is a plus.
 - Comfort working outdoors in all weather conditions.
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Compensation & Benefits

- Full-time, exempt position requiring occasional evening and weekend hours.
 - Salary range - \$63,000 - \$67,000 annually
 - Health benefits include medical, dental, and vision insurance.
 - 403(b) retirement plan match.
 - Paid vacation, holidays, and sick leave.
 - Flexible work arrangements available.
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Core Competencies

- **Strategic Thinking:** Ability to develop and implement forward-thinking education strategies.
 - **Leadership & Teamwork:** Proven ability to lead diverse teams, foster collaboration, and encourage innovation.
 - **Communication:** Excellent written, verbal, and presentation skills.
 - **Adaptability:** Flexibility to manage shifting priorities and changing environments.
 - **Problem-Solving:** Skilled in analyzing complex issues and developing creative solutions.
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Physical & Environmental Requirements

- Ability to lift and carry materials up to 40 lbs.
 - Comfortable working in outdoor settings with exposure to varying weather conditions.
 - Capable of engaging in physical activities such as walking, hiking, kneeling, and operating small boats.
 - Ability to perceive environmental sounds, visual cues, and communicate effectively.
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Equal Opportunity Statement

Ijams Nature Center is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against employees or job applicants on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, mental or physical disability, veteran status, or any other status or condition protected by applicable state or federal laws. These anti-discrimination policies also apply to volunteers and program recipients. Ijams Nature Center provides reasonable accommodations to all applicants and employees. Applicants with disabilities may request reasonable accommodation at any point in the employment process.

Send resume, cover letter, and three references (*will not be contacted without notice*) to contact@ijams.org

This position will be open until April 4th, 2025.

Join our team and play a pivotal role in inspiring environmental stewardship and connecting people with nature!