



Chumash Indian Museum

Volunteer Orientation

Thank you for your interest in assisting with the mission of the Chumash Indian Museum. We have a number of different opportunities for you to be involved, depending on your interest and strengths:

Front Desk

In this role, you will be the first friendly face that museum visitors encounter. Front desk attendants should be personable and be ready to answer a variety of questions. You will collect admission fees and keep track of visitor attendance. You will also be the primary receptionist for taking phone calls and messages. During downtime, you may be asked to assist with preparing museum informational handouts and perform minor exhibit housekeeping.

Gift Shop

As the gift shop associate, you will be tasked with assisting visitors in selecting purchases and operating a cash register and credit card machine. Accuracy with numbers, tracking and a good knowledge of the shop's inventory are important skills. You will also need to keep the shop well-stocked, ensure all items have price labels and perform minor housekeeping of the displays. As the closest person to the main exhibit hall, you should also be prepared to answer basic questions about the exhibits.

Gallery Guide

If staffing allows, some volunteers may be positioned in the main exhibit hall or the outdoor replica village to provide informal talks to visitors and to answer questions. Gallery guide volunteers should have a good knowledge about Chumash culture and be engaging without overwhelming museum visitors. Minor housekeeping duties of the exhibits may also be required during downtime.

Hike Leaders

The museum will periodically offer docent-led hikes to museum visitors to explore the grounds, Lang homestead site, replica village and bedrock mortars that are found within our portion of Oakbrook Park. Hike leaders should have a strong voice for outdoor speaking and be comfortable in leading moderate walks, while recognizing visitor needs and limitations. Hike Leaders should also have a good knowledge of Chumash cultural and ethnobotany, and may be required to perform minor outdoor maintenance duties, such as trash pickup.

School Tours

As a volunteer with our popular school tour program, you will assist museum staff educators by helping to keep the group organized, providing hands-on assistance with craft activities, and being the "sweep" of the group during the walk to and from the village. Additionally, you may also be tasked with assisting students with purchases in the gift shop at the end of their tour.

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Exhibits and Curation

Although not a regular duty, the museum may periodically need assistance with installing new exhibits, and cataloging museum artifacts. Previous experience with museum work and collections will be particularly valuable for these tasks.

Events

The museum will be increasingly sponsoring events, such as lectures, workshops and our annual tribal gathering, where we will need extra helping hands collecting admissions and/or tickets, providing assistance to speakers, performers and visitors, or performing minor housekeeping. Additionally, we sometimes rent out museum space for weddings, group picnics or meetings and require that museum staff or volunteers be present to ensure activities are consistent with permit guidelines and to provide assistance to guests.

As a token of our appreciation and benefit to you for donating your time, the Museum offers volunteers free admission to museum events (even if you are not participating), a 20% discount in the gift shop, and periodic special recognition events. Volunteering at the museum can count toward community service credits for students, and provide valuable experience for your first, or next, career.

We welcome you and appreciate the opportunity to share in your talents!

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