Student Caretaker Position at Nichols Arboretum

Summary:

**General Job Description:** Caretakers assist in the stewardship of the Nichols Arboretum property for at least **10 hours a week** in exchange for lodging at either the historic Burnham House/Reader Center at our Washington Heights entrance or at the Caretaker Cottage near the center of the Arboretum (depending on vacancy).

**Job Duration:** Immediate opening through August 2024. Positions may be renewed annually until graduation. Dates are approximate and can vary based on schedules.

**Compensation:** Expenses paid lodging and utilities at the Arboretum. *The fair market value of lodging is considered taxable income.*

**Who We Are:** University of Michigan’s Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum (MBGNA) stewards over 840 acres of land and water across four properties in and around Ann Arbor, with Nichols Arboretum and Matthaei Botanical Gardens serving as its two anchor locations. Click here to view our [Strategic Plan](#). With more than 500,000 annual visitors, MBGNA is committed to becoming a transformative force for social and ecological resilience through the lands and waters we steward. We put that commitment into action by:

- **Positioning** humans as active participants within the natural world and compelling the university community and our publics to negotiate the full complexity that entails
- **Advancing** partnerships, programs, user experience, and all that we steward to catalyze equity and justice in a radically changing world
- **Emerging** as University of Michigan’s premier partner for research, teaching, and public impact in sustainability, climate-forward practices, and biocultural diversity
- **Promoting** healthier communities, cultures, and ecosystems through active care and cultivation of the gardens, fields, natural habitats, and dynamic systems that sustain our world.

**Responsibilities:**

- Routine scouting of trails and grounds, invasive plant removal and herbicide application, trail maintenance, answering questions and informing visitors of rules, trash pick-up and collection, tool maintenance, garden and natural areas stewardship, clearing snow, lawn mowing, and other tasks as assigned.
- Assisting with special events, such as Shakespeare in the Arb and plant sales. Responsibilities may include set up, clean up, driving golf carts and parking lot/kiosk attendant for these events.
• Co-leading Eco-workdays with groups of 10 to 20 volunteers at both the Nichols Arboretum and Matthaei Botanical Gardens locations.
• Ability to live and work together with other Caretakers of diverse backgrounds, as well being able to work independently with minimal supervision.
• Able to perform manual labor including transporting over 40 lbs.
• Promptly and clearly communicate with supervisor, team members and other staff.
• Operate utility vehicles and various power equipment such as chainsaws, brush cutters etc. (training will be provided)

Required Qualifications:
• U-M Graduate student with previous experience as a Caretaker, or with outdoor work and/or environmental stewardship. Undergraduate students in their 3rd year or above may be considered.
• Knowledge of local ecosystems, and native and invasive plants. Skills in trail maintenance, experience working with volunteers, and with ecological restoration are also valuable.
• A valid driver's license
• Safety toe shoes are not provided but are required to operate certain power equipment

Other Considerations: Rooms are unfurnished. Vehicle parking is provided at the Field Office. Bicycles should be kept in the bike shed at the Reader Center next to the smoke house. Bike racks are located at the Washington Heights entrance, the Geddes entrance and the Nichols Drive entrance. Pets are not allowed.

Additional Information:
• Compensation: Expenses paid lodging and utilities at the Arboretum. The fair market value of lodging is considered taxable income.
• We believe diversity strengthens our ability to accomplish this mission. For more information about Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum, please visit mbgna.umich.edu
How to Apply:

Please send your cover letter and current resume with three references to: mbgna.human.resources@umich.edu with "Nichols Arboretum Caretaker 2023" in the subject line.

U-M EEO/AA Statement
The University of Michigan is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.