

## **Field Project Experience – Fall 2009**

Each student in Field Interpretation 3341 is required to complete a field experience as a part of the course requirements. The goal of this placement is to provide students with a hands-on perspective of informal interpretation (non-captive audiences) in our community; further, these experiences will help to develop student understanding of a variety of NE MN/Lake Superior natural and cultural history topics. The field experience options are detailed below:

### **Hawk Ridge**

Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory is one of America's best sites for autumn hawk watching. Hawk Ridge is seeking volunteers to assist with a variety of duties, from released banded raptors to helping answer visitors' basic questions about hawks. Both your 3341 class experience and training at Hawk Ridge will provide you with the skills and knowledge you will need. This field site is a great one for anyone interested in spending lovely autumn afternoons outdoors and has an interest in this unique aspect of MN natural history. Specifics:

- Attend the scheduled training session.
- Volunteer 12 hours between early Sept. and Oct. 31—you will be required to set a schedule of 2/3/4 hours per week for 6/4/3 weeks so that Hawk Ridge has a solid understanding of your commitment; further, the staff at HR cannot have students trying to earn their 12 hours during the final week of the "raptor season". **Thus, you must earn 1/2 of your hours before October 7**
- Write an experience critique (see below)

### **Great Lakes Aquarium**

GLA is a place dedicated to educate the public about Lake Superior and freshwater. GLA uses the global importance of freshwater, an in-depth look at Lake Superior and the wonder of live exhibits to raise the public awareness of the importance of our precious freshwater resources. Volunteers at GLA will get a chance to learn more about a number of LS topics, gain a better understanding of informal public interpretation, and develop basic interpretation skills. Specifics:

- **Attend a training, Monday, September 21, 6-8pm**, at the Aquarium – meet at the ticket booth. If you cannot attend this training, you must contact Mary Pensak at the Aquarium to find out times of other trainings that are occurring ([mpensak@glaquarium.org](mailto:mpensak@glaquarium.org)). If no other trainings are occurring, you need to contact Tim (your inability to participate is not the problem of the Aquarium).
  - **Bring your calendar** to the training and sign up for shifts at that time.
- **Volunteer 12 hours** (2-6 hour shifts, flexible scheduling) before Dec. 1 at an interpretive cart station. NOTE: Only Saturdays and Sundays will be an option (plus Thursday and Friday of Thanksgiving weekend). Do not schedule to work on November 21 (we have a Saturday class on that day).
- The carts are geared to engage aquarium visitors in one of the following topics: Touch Tank (Lake Sturgeon/Sting Rays), Sea Horses, Otters, Aviary (birds & turtles)
- This is a para-professional opportunity. You will be required to wear khaki pants and a white shirt.
- Write an experience critique (see below).

### **Experience Critique**

Write a two page (dbl. space/Times or Arial font) overview of your field experience, specifically:

- Duties—what did you do?
- Significant learning experiences—what did you learn?
- More—what more do you want to learn about interpretation based on this experience?
- Concerns—what would you change?

This critique is due in class on Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> for Hawk Ridge volunteers and by Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> for GLA volunteers.