



POSITION DESCRIPTION
COLLECTIONS VOLUNTEER
The Descendants Project

ABOUT THE PROJECT

On June 19, 2020, Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Site (VHP) in West Columbia received a grant from the 400 Years of African American History Commission in Washington, DC for a year-long project to create a digital repository of photographs, letters, recipes, diaries and more to document African American history in Brazoria County. The goal of The Descendants Project is to foster stronger connections with descendant communities throughout the region and to work with those communities to use items in the newly created collection in educational programs and interpretive spaces at Varner-Hogg Plantation and Levi Jordan Plantation State Historic Sites.

For the past year, community donors have brought materials to Varner-Hogg to be documented, scanned, and returned to them on-site. The Descendants Project will continue to welcome donors by appointment only to ensure that we are able to process materials effectively.

ABOUT THE POSITION

Collections volunteers will be essential in creating a welcoming environment for all community donors and successfully documenting artifacts under direction of site staff.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Accurately complete donor forms, including describing artifacts in writing.
- Properly handle, photograph, number, and store artifact materials under direction from site staff.
- Operate digital scanners and cameras.
- Follow all THC and VHP policies and procedures.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDED

- Knowledge of or a desire to learn about the African American experience in Brazoria County and Texas; experience in museums or libraries; and customer service experience is highly advantageous.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to follow verbal directions and to read and follow procedural manuals.
- Willingness to learn museum best practices.
- Enjoy working as part of a team and independently.
- Ability to print, copy, and scan documents.

- Ability to use a digital camera and download images.
- Proficiency in Microsoft desktop operating systems especially Word and Excel helpful.
- Good organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Must pass a background check.

TIME COMMITMENT

Volunteer shifts are available Wednesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and on specific Saturdays as designated by the regional collections manager. A commitment to volunteering at least 24 hours over the course of the project is appreciated. Collections volunteers are required to attend a two-hour orientation.

COVID-19 GUIDELINES

Under the direction of site staff, volunteers are encouraged to practice universal infection control precautions.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

While volunteering in this capacity, the volunteer may have to regularly bend down, stand up, and occasionally, lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include color vision and close vision.

BENEFITS

- Learn about and help preserve African American material culture and history in Brazoria County.
- Opportunity to develop new skills, especially, for those interested in careers in museums, archives and libraries.
- Working with a team of knowledgeable and dedicated people.
- After completing 25 hours of volunteer service, you will be entitled to unlimited free admission for you and one free visit for up to 2 guests each month.

HOW TO APPLY

For more information or to receive a volunteer application, please contact Mark Osborne by email at mark.osborne@thc.texas.gov or leave a message at 979-345-4656 ext. 31.

All public programs of the Texas Historical Commission and Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Site are conducted without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, genetic information, or disability.

Revised July 2021