



2024 Forest Preserve Experience Program

The Forest Preserve Experience program (FPE) is a five-week conservation service-learning experience. Selected individuals will participate on crews that will consist of 12 high school students, two adult Crew Leaders, and an adult Assistant Crew Leader.

As a team, the crew will perform ecological restoration projects and litter removal in the Forest Preserves of Cook County. A large focus of this program will also be dedicated to environmental enrichment and recreational activities. See below for FAQ!

Q: What are the requirements to participate in the program?

A: All crew members must be a House Authority of Cook County resident or voucher holder.

Students must be 14-19 years old by program start and enrolled in high school or be a 2024 high school graduate.

Q: How do I apply?

A: Visit <https://fotfp.org/fpe> for more information and to apply online by clicking "2024 Crew Member Program Application" form. The application will close on **April 30th**.

Applications must be submitted electronically April 30th. Late applications will not be accepted, no exceptions.

Q: What is the time commitment?

A: The program will run from July 1 to August 2, with July 4-5 off, unpaid. Students will work Monday - Friday. They will work 25 hours/week and receive a wage of \$15 per hour. If a student misses more than 3 days of work, they will automatically be dismissed from the program and will forfeit the remaining pay. There are no exceptions for family vacations or summer school. Crew members will meet at their designated pick-up locations Monday - Friday by 8:00 am and will be dropped off at the same location at 1:00pm. **There must be flexibility in drop off and pick up times.** Some days may start or end later than our regular schedule or there may be Saturday workdays.

You will be provided a calendar at the beginning of the program showing any changes in the regular program timing.

Q: What exactly do students do and where do they work?

A: Students will spend three orientation days learning job skills that will prepare them for the



program and give them skills that they can use in the future. They then engage in rewarding and valuable physical work outdoors on conservation and restoration projects in the Forest Preserves of Cook County including invasive species removal and litter clean-ups. Throughout each week, time will be devoted to learning about the local ecology and environment and job readiness skills, and students will participate in a number of environmental enrichment activities, such as hiking, canoeing, and other

recreational opportunities. Once a student is hired, they will usually be placed at the forest preserve work site that is closest to their home.

Q: How can I improve my chances of getting into the program?

A: We highly encourage you to spend time thinking about and answering the essay section of your application. If you are able to, consider visiting or volunteering at a local forest preserve or nature center to learn more about the work and setting of the program. We receive hundreds of applications, and select students who are excited about working in the forest preserves, interested in helping our environment, and committed to giving their best effort in performing job responsibilities.

To find out more about volunteering visit <https://fpdcc.com/volunteer/>

Q: What kind of support will I receive from staff?

A: Students will have a lot of support from various program and partner staff this summer. They will be with the same adult crew leaders and assistant crew leader for the summer, who will be there leading and working alongside them. We will also have a Career Readiness Coach/HR

Generalist providing professional development learning opportunities over the summer to help prepare the members for future career opportunities and to help with all HR needs. In addition, we have 3 Program Assistants roving around to different crews each day providing any necessary support to leaders and members. The Program Manager and Coordinator will be present all summer managing the program, working with the crews and will be available for any of the participants' needs. Below is a list of all adult Friends' staff for the FPE Program.

- **1 Program Manager**
- **1 Program Coordinator**
- **3 Program Assistants**
- **1 Associate Director of Human Resources**
- **2 Crew Leaders per crew**
- **1 Assistant Crew Leaders per crew**

Q: Whom do I contact with additional questions?

A: For more information, please contact:

Hannah Miller

Program Manager

Friends of the Forest Preserves

Hannah@fotfp.org

or

Joy Bailey

Program Coordinator

Friends of the Forest Preserves

joy@fotfp.org