

DOCENT JOB DESCRIPTION

The word docent is derived from the Latin word “docere,” meaning “to teach.” At the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, a docent is a volunteer who guides visiting groups through the Museum’s collections and exhibitions. An individual who wishes to become a docent should be prepared to make a long-term commitment (approximately 35 hours of teaching—not including training time—per academic year for two years or longer). Those chosen to take part in the docent program will be provided with training and invited to two special docent luncheons and one optional field trip.

Docents also receive the following benefits as complimentary individual members of the Museum:

- Twice yearly Members’ newsletter
- Invitations to special events
- Discounts on Museum classes and workshops
- Connections to a network of 16 New York State museums
- Discounts on cards, catalogues, and T-shirts

Training

In the initial phase of the training program volunteers will learn about the Museum’s permanent collections and several special exhibitions from members of the education department staff, Museum curators, and visiting lecturers. Participants will not only learn information about the art collections, but also discuss teaching methods, presentation techniques, and strategies for managing tour groups. You will also be expected to do some independent research and tour preparation. Some docents may also travel to schools to do presentations.

Before giving tours to the public, docents will be required to:

- Attend training sessions and selected public programs that highlight the Museum operations, collections, exhibitions, educational philosophy, and teaching strategies.
- Shadow at least two tours by staff or experienced docents.
- Give a practice gallery presentation or tour to a member of the education staff.

Leading Tours

After the satisfactory completion of these requirements, docents will be requested to give tours. You will be responsible for keeping up with the frequently changing exhibitions and occasional changes to the permanent collections in the following ways:

- Continue to attend training sessions that highlight the ongoing events and exhibitions at the Museum.
- Read materials related to the exhibitions and tour-giving methods. The Museum’s library of catalogues, art journals, books, and special exhibition information is available to docents anytime during Museum hours.
- Stay in contact with the education department’s docent coordinator (Hannah Dunn). She will be glad to work personally with you to help you prepare for your tours. Contact her if you have any questions or special needs at (607) 254-4616, or by e-mail at hd78@cornell.edu

**Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art
Docent Application**

Thanks for your interest in becoming a volunteer at the Johnson Museum. Please complete this form and return it to the front desk in the Museum lobby, or mail to Coordinator of Community and Adult Programs, Johnson Museum, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853-4001.

Name _____ Today's Date _____
Address _____ PHONE NUMBER _____
DAYTIME _____
EVENING _____
E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

ARE YOU CURRENTLY A STUDENT OR NON-STUDENT (please circle)

If you are a student, what year are you? _____
When will you graduate? _____

What days of the week are you available? (For the docent program you need to have some availability between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM on weekdays)

S M T W TH F S

Briefly describe why you want to volunteer at the Johnson Museum, including what you'd like to gain from the experience (feel free to attach a separate page):

What do you feel are your qualifications (include any information about your education, your work experience, any special skills or talents, special interests, and languages you speak)?

Please list two (2) references and phone numbers:

For Education Staff:
Interview Date and Time _____ Application Reviewed _____
References: