

Museum of York County Junior Interpreter Program

INFORMATION & APPLICATION PACKET

What is the Junior Interpreter Program?

The Junior Interpreter Program allows tenth through twelfth grade students to volunteer at Museum of York County.

What does a Junior Interpreter do?

- Gains natural history knowledge, leadership skills, customer service experience, & practice with public speaking.
- Provides educational activities for visitors to Museum of York County.
- Participates in select programs at Museum of York County.

How is the program structured?

The Junior Interpreter Program allows participants to advance through levels of training.

- **First Level** Junior Interpreters will learn the museum's history and mission statement. They will learn about the museum's collections and how to properly handle and maintain them. An introduction to interpretation and working with the public will be covered along with resources to help them learn about natural history and/or planetarium topics. After completion of the first level, the Junior Interpreter will be assisting with program presentations and be able to comfortably speak with visitors.
- **Second Level** Junior Interpreters will go out into the field on our nature trails to learn plant and animal identification and help monitor Dutchman's Creek. The second level Junior Interpreter will be able to independently lead a program with staff assistance, and will be able to comfortably interpret the museum's collections on their own. Planetarium Junior Interpreters will develop and lead their own live sky programs.

What are the requirements for the Junior Interpreter Program?

- The desire and ability to work in a museum setting, learn natural history or planetarium knowledge and skills, and share information with the public in a professional manner.
- The ability to work independently and follow rules and directions - this program is designed for youth to volunteer without direct parental supervision.
- A time commitment of at least 40 hours per year.
- Attendance at an orientation and training session.
- Junior Interpreter families are encouraged to be CHM members.
- Must be in the 10th through 12th grade.
- Payment of a one-time \$20 program fee for the purchase of training materials and t-shirt. Scholarship funds are available on a case-by-case basis and requests should be discussed with the Volunteer Resource Manager.

What are the benefits of the Junior Interpreter Program?

- Get involved in the community through volunteering.
- Gain fantastic experience for a science, teaching, or museum career.
- Build your confidence and skills in public speaking.
- Impress your teachers, families, and friends with your new knowledge.
- Discover what it's like behind-the-scenes at a museum.
- Make new friends.
- Have lots of fun!

Timeline for Applications:

- Applications are accepted each spring and are due by March 30th.
- Interviews will take place during the month of April.
- Accepted Junior Interpreters will be notified by May 1st.
- Orientation and training will take place in May so that Junior Interpreters are in place and ready to fully participate in the program in advance of our summer programming season.

How do I apply? Space in the program is limited, so the application process is competitive. Students apply through a written application, letter of reference, and a group interview. Send completed applications to wcole@chmuseums.org.

Questions? Please reach out to wcole@chmuseums.org or apurcell@chmuseums.org.



JUNIOR INTERPRETER APPLICATION

Equal access to programs, services is available to all persons. Those applicants requiring reasonable accommodation to their application and/or interview process should notify the Volunteer Resource Manager.

Name _____ Date _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail Address _____

The Junior Interpreter Program is designed for rising 10th to 12th grade students.

Are you within this range? (circle one) YES NO

Please indicate your 2026 - 2027 grade level: (circle one) 10th 11th 12th

APPLICATION PROCEDURES – WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

Complete Essay: Be creative and submit a one-page essay related to one of the prompts on page 3.

Arrange for Submission of a Letter of Reference: Please provide a letter of reference from an adult who is not a member of your family but who knows you well. Examples include a teacher, a counselor, a troop leader, or a youth group minister. Please ask them to return their letter directly to CHM at the address listed below.

Complete Attached Forms & Waivers: Applicant and parent/guardian should review, sign, and submit all attached forms with application materials.

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening _____

Cell _____ E-mail address _____

We have read and understand the requirements of the Culture & Heritage Museums (CHM) Junior Interpreter Program and agree that the applicant meets the requirements outlined. A parent/guardian signature is required for any CHM volunteer under the age of 18.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Please return your completed application and letter to:
Windy Cole, Volunteer Resource Manager
wcole@chmuseums.org or 4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill, SC 29730

Thank you for your interest!

Essay Requirement

Instructions: Write a one-page essay on one of the prompts below and submit with your completed application packet.

1. Describe your favorite memory of visiting Museum of York County, or another museum, and how that visit has impacted you in a positive way.
2. Describe how becoming a Junior interpreter aligns with your skills, activities, hobbies, and interests. Specifically elaborate on how this alignment would make you a great Junior Interpreter.
3. Describe what you most want to learn from your participation in the Junior Interpreter program and how you feel it will positively impact your future.

MYCO Junior Interpreter Code of Conduct

Museum of York County (MYCO) Junior Interpreter Program is a volunteer program which seeks to encourage an interest in the natural history of the Carolina Piedmont and/or planetarium and to help participants develop skills in leadership, public speaking, and teamwork.

To that end, Museum of York County will:

- Provide accurate information, training, and assistance.
- Ensure supervision and provide feedback.
- Respect your skills and needs.
- Communicate upcoming opportunities in a timely manner.
- Maintain a safe and welcoming environment.
- Provide opportunities to advance and grow within the Junior Interpreter Program.

In return, and to ensure a safe, fun environment for all, we ask that all Junior Interpreters adhere to the following Code of Conduct:

- Be respectful and friendly to staff, other volunteers, and the public.
- Obey the rules and follow directions.
- Dress appropriately - see the attached dress code.
- Commit to volunteering at least 40 hours within a year.
- Honor scheduled volunteer commitments, arrive on time, and give prior notice when unable to volunteer as scheduled.
- Accurately record volunteer hours.
- Have a positive attitude about assignments and responsibilities.
- Sign up to volunteer by announced deadlines.
- Notify the Volunteer Resource Manager or Senior Interpreter in writing if withdrawing from the program.
- Be honest, honor commitments, and accept responsibility for actions.
- Follow all health and safety requirements and guidelines related to Junior Interpreter activities.
- Refrain from using a cell phone, or other electronic devices during volunteer shifts.
- Refrain from personal conversations on the exhibit floor or in the presence of visitors.
- Do not take photos of guests, staff or other volunteers without staff authorization.
- Irregular attendance, poor performance, or failure to cooperate with museum policies will not be accepted.

Any violation of the Code of Conduct will be reported to the parent/guardian of the Junior Interpreter involved, and will result in consequences which may include (but are not limited to):

- Sending the Junior Interpreter home.
- Meeting with the Senior Interpreter & any other staff involved, to discuss how the Junior Interpreter can learn from what they've done and develop an improvement plan to address area of concern.
- Giving the Junior Interpreter a warning, or removing them from the program.

Junior Docent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____



JUNIOR INTERPRETER DRESS CODE

It is essential that you exhibit a professional appearance which communicates respect, competence, and personal pride. In addition, dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards affect the image MYCO presents to the community. No dress code can cover all contingencies so volunteers must exercise a certain amount of judgment. If you have questions or are uncertain about what is acceptable, professional, museum attire, please ask the Senior Interpreter or Volunteer Resource Manager. We request that you wear your MYCO issued T-shirt when volunteering, unless you are volunteering more than once during a given week.

Some examples of acceptable attire are: MYCO issued T-shirt, T-shirt that represents your school; polo shirts, blouses, jeans, capris, slacks, skirts, dresses.

Some examples of unacceptable attire are: T-shirts with branding representing anything other than your school or MYCO, mini-skirts, shorts, tank tops, crop tops, sweat suits/pants; flip flops; and spandex leggings or similar form fitting pants except when worn with a long tunic or dress and/or any clothing that does not reflect a positive or professional image.

Volunteer nametags are to be worn at all times during your shift.

Junior Interpreter Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Junior Interpreter Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We are excited about your child's interest in volunteering at a Culture & Heritage Museums (CHM) site. All volunteers under 18 years of age must have the written consent of a parent or legal guardian to volunteer for the CHM. The following guidelines apply:

- I understand that my child will be provided with any training necessary for the safe and responsible performance of his/her duties.
- I understand that he/she will be expected to meet all the requirements of the position, including regular attendance and adherence to Culture & Heritage Museums policies and procedures.
- I understand that he/she will not receive monetary compensation for the services contributed.
- I release Culture & Heritage Museums and York County Government from any and all liabilities related to or arising from my child's service as a volunteer. I further agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless the CHM and all its agents, officers, employees, representatives, successors, and assigns from any and all damages, claims and/or liability arising out of my (or my child's) activities as a volunteer participant in the program.
- My child knows that if they feel uncomfortable in any situation that are to contact the Volunteer Resource Manager or another staff member.
- I understand that I am responsible for making sure that my child is picked up on time.

Please initial how CHM may use images of your child:

_____ I do hereby give permission to Culture & Heritage Museums or any of its media partners to use my child's picture, portrait, photograph, image, or voice in any or all forms of marketing and advertising, including the CHM website, social media, brochures, bulletins, and displays.

_____ Culture & Heritage Museums does not have my permission to release my child's photograph publicly regardless of the media type.

My signature on this form acknowledges that I consent to my child volunteering at Culture & Heritage Museums. I have read, understand, and accept the terms.

Youth Volunteer: _____ Age: _____
Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____
Relationship to Volunteer: _____
Email Address: _____ Phone: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

CHM Youth Release Policy

Culture & Heritage Museums release policy for volunteers under the age of 18 is to allow the volunteer to check themselves out and to leave the museum and grounds without a parent/guardian or authorized person.

No Culture & Heritage Museums employee or adult volunteer is allowed to transport a volunteer under the age of 18.

All volunteers must be picked up on time. Staff members cannot be expected to stay past operating hours to wait with your child, so please plan to arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to closing time.

I agree that my child may check themselves out and leave the museum grounds without parent/guardian or authorized person and I accept full responsibility for my child's actions. Parent Initial _____

If you prefer the volunteer to be checked out by an authorized adult, please complete, and initial all below:

	Volunteer Initial	Parent Initial
My child must be checked out by an authorized adult.	_____	_____
I understand the authorized adult MUST come into the Museum to pick up Volunteer.	_____	_____
I understand that the authorized adult must sign-out the Volunteer at the end of every shift.	_____	_____

Please provide the name(s) of each person authorized to pick up your child, including the names of parents, friends, and relatives you authorize.

Authorized People	Phone Number
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please sign to acknowledge that you have read and agree to this Volunteer Agreement and you have had the opportunity to ask questions.

_____	_____	_____
Volunteer Name	Volunteer Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Parent Name	Parent Signature	Date