



---

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

JOB TITLE: Docent – Full Garden Docent

DATE: October 2009

DEPARTMENT: Education & Volunteers

CLASSIFICATION: Volunteer

### **WHAT IS A DOCENT?**

The word docent comes from the Latin word "docere" meaning to teach. During the 1800s it was used to describe lecturers who were not on the salaried staff of an institution or a private/volunteer tutor. Today the term is used by many museums to describe the trained volunteers who provide educational services for the museum visitor. Other terms include tour guide, interpreter, and volunteer educator.

A docent in the Full Garden program will serve as an interpreter while taking visitors through the greater gardens of The Huntington in an hour and a half walking tour.

The interpretive or educational role of the docent is the most important and challenging aspect of the job. An effective docent does not lecture to an audience. Docents must actively involve visitors in the interpretation, giving them the tools of visual literacy. A docent helps the visitor attain some sort of "ownership" of the gardens, and helps them to find relevance to their own lives.

As interpreter, a docent is careful not to force value judgment or opinions on a visitor. In addition, a docent is sensitive to visitors' differences – in learning styles, cultural backgrounds, age level, and special needs. Today's Huntington audience is as varied as the plants in the gardens and requires open-mindedness, flexibility and respect.

### **SUMMARY**

The Full Garden Docent works under the direction of the Volunteer Programs Manager, Full Garden Co- Chairs , Full Garden Dayheads ,and closely with other volunteers and pertinent botanical staff. The Full Garden Docent is an outgoing, people-focused individual primarily responsible for guided tours through the greater gardens of The Huntington, thereby enhancing visitors' experiences. Duties include greeting visitors, orienting them to The Huntington and walking them through the gardens. Docents will be answering questions about the gardens and The Huntington Estate within an hour and a half time frame.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

1. Greets and orients visitors in a courteous, prompt, and professional manner.
2. Enhances visitors' experience of the garden, including monitoring for safe use of facilities.
3. Conducts 90 minute walking tours of the Huntington Gardens.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Interest in visitor-centered education.
2. Professional attitude and appearance.
3. Ability to work both independently and within a team.
4. Strong communication skills.
5. Sensitivity to working with diverse audiences.
6. Commitment to volunteering for/the Full Garden Docent program a minimum of eight hours per month for two years. This eight hours a month commitment is completed by providing one tour a week.



REQUIREMENTS

1. Completes all appropriate Full Garden Docent training.
2. Attends monthly meetings and workshops and other program meetings as necessary. Monthly meetings are held the second Monday of the month , 9:00- 11:30am
3. Available for a minimum of four tours per month.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Volunteer will work in the Full Gardens under year-round weather conditions. This position requires standing or walking for up to two hours at a time. Docent must be physically able to get around a 200-acre site.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this job. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required of volunteers in this position.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Docent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Docent Name – please print