

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **CURATOR OF EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

Museum of the Southwest  
Marian Blakemore Planetarium  
Midland, Texas

#### **Definition and Distinguishing Characteristics**

The Museum of the Southwest's Marian Blakemore Planetarium is seeking a dynamic and motivated individual to serve as its first full-time Curator of Education. Responsibilities include developing and implementing all educational and scientific programs, presentations and exhibits at the Planetarium, including curriculum that contributes to the efforts of educators of both youth and adults.

The Planetarium Curator has the primary responsibility for general public and school programming. This includes writing and producing original programs and; obtaining or adapting other programs for presentation within the Planetarium theater environment.

#### **Typical Examples of Work Performed**

Presents live & pre-recorded planetarium programs, star shows & provides AV services in the theater and classroom.

Serves as a team leader, curatorial content voice or education voice in the development of new planetarium shows or exhibitions.

Ensures that all shows and programs are age-appropriate and fulfill current curriculum standards and learning theories.

Ensures accuracy of all content in planetarium & related science programs.

Ensures high quality of presentation in all planetarium shows & related programs.

Develops teacher packets, & training materials for all shows & related programs as applicable.

Meets with superintendents, principals, college professors, and public school educators in order to cultivate collaborative relationships between the Planetarium, school districts, and community educational institutions

Works collaboratively with other museum personnel to complete intra- and inter-departmental projects.

Works collaboratively with staff of Mc Donald Observatory in the development of collaborative programs.

Answers public and media inquiries about astronomy, earth-space science, and space exploration.

Participates and leads in planning and implementation of technology upgrades.

Initiate study and research projects related to Astronomy and Space Science, prepares copy for interpretive/instructional materials, writes articles for publication in Museum reports, newsletter, and press releases.

Type own work load and maintain all correspondence, records and files relevant to the operation of the department.

Organize and coordinate classes, lectures and special events related to children and families, and in conjunction with development efforts.

Work with development department to raise funds for planetarium projects and programs through grant writing.

Prepare and monitor requisitions, supply inventory, and budget related items for the Planetarium.

Supervise the daily activities of the Planetarium including those duties necessary to open and close the building to the public. (Turn Key and alarm operations are responsibility of security staff).

Supervises schedules and evaluates the day to day work performance of part-time staff, interns and volunteers as applicable.

Perform other related duties as required by the director.

### **Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities**

Excellent time management skills.

Strong interpersonal, diplomacy and negotiation skills. Ability to work effectively with a variety of personality types, and maintain friendly and courteous relationships with the staff, board, patrons, and public.

Ability as a speaker to make presentations to general museum and public audiences.

Writing skills sufficient to prepare clear, accurate and compelling text.

### **Minimum Requirements of Education and Experience**

Master's Degree with at least 18 graduate hours in physics or astronomy required.

Experience operating digital planetarium star projection equipment, preferably Spitz.

Teaching experience a plus.

### **Necessary Special Qualifications**

Possession of or ability to acquire within three months of employment a valid Texas driver's license.

Ability to lift 40 lbs.

Genuine love for science, children and interactive learning.

### **Background**

The Museum of the Southwest is located in the downtown historic district of Midland, Texas. The Blakemore Planetarium is a department of the Museum of the Southwest. The campus also includes an art museum and sculpture park.

After nearly 38 years of heavy public use, the Planetarium closed its doors for its first comprehensive renovation and expansion. This ambitious project renews the Planetarium's ability to pursue its public astronomy mission. The new Planetarium will reopen in the fall of 2009.

Five goals guided all planning for the project:

- Renovate all elements of the existing building including furnishings, fixtures and ADA compliant facilities.

- Develop a state-of-the-art, immersive planetarium environment. with a resurfaced and tilted dome, new star projector (Spitz) with 360 degree image projection, tiered seats, sound system, and lighting.

- Expand public space to improve the visitor experience to include a science education classroom with teleconferencing capabilities and service kitchen.

- Design and develop a 1,500 sq. ft. permanent interactive space science exhibit. Malone Design, Atlanta, GA.

- Design and develop an inspiring new educational program to further enhance public understanding of astronomy, space science and technology.

The Curator is the department head of the planetarium responsible for the supervision of 1 part-time AT person and volunteers provided through the local Astronomy club. The Curator reports to the Executive Director of the Museum of the Southwest.

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