



Director of Learning and Interpretation

Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest, a 16,000+ acre protected forest in Kentucky, about 25 miles south of Louisville, is seeking a dynamic, collaborative leader in education and interpretation programming.

Bernheim is home to a 600-acre arboretum, designated as Kentucky's official arboretum. The natural landscape features 40+ miles of hiking trails and extensive natural areas managed for conservation and research purposes. Its woodlands, prairies, and wetlands make up the largest privately-owned forest in the Eastern United States dedicated to education and conservation. Bernheim is a privately owned not-for-profit, relying on donations and memberships, whose mission is to connect people with nature. Annually, over 350,000 people experience Bernheim through visits, educational programs, field trips, and Bernheim festivals.

Bernheim's Director of Nature Interpretation and Learning will drive engaging, relevant, and inspiring programs designed to forge intellectual and emotional ties between people of all ages and nature.

Position Summary

The Director of Learning & Interpretation's core focus is leading and supporting the Department Learning & Interpretation staff in development and implementation of an innovative, integrated program of ecological education for Bernheim visitors and surrounding communities.

A major goal for the Director of Nature Interpretation & Learning is collaborating with all departments at Bernheim in developing robust and exciting interpretive programs – designed to facilitate curiosity and discovery, reinforce life-long learning, and a love of nature and science. Ultimately, these programs, activities, and associated communications inspire environmental stewardship through positive behaviors by individuals, corporations, and communities that mitigate biodiversity loss and climate crisis.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Lead, develop and implement programs for every stage of life from the cradle to the grave, on-site and beyond our borders, and a spectrum from informal to those meeting rigorous educational standards
- Supervise permanent and seasonal staff and related education volunteers. Engage in training to enhance skills, coach professional development, reinforce safety and business processes, as well as enhance the interface between the Learning & Interpretation team and the public
- Continually adapt and improve educational programs and materials that engage and meet expectations of all participants, while strengthening Bernheim's position as an ecological leader
- In partnership with departments across Bernheim, reinforce a culture of curiosity, discovery, learning, interpretation, and inspiration in all programs and public activities
- Work collaboratively with the Advancement Team to aggressively identify, pursue and manage funding opportunities to support and grow education programs, projects, and staffing
- Cultivate ongoing relationships with schools, community partners/organizations, and other strategic institutions

- Continuously elevate Bernheim’s Learning & Interpretation department and programs, achievements, and goals to the public through storytelling, creative writing, quantitative reports, and other creative media
- Create and maintain the annual budget for the department, with an emphasis on relevance, effectiveness, and expansion. Increase percentage of organization’s educational program revenue
- Track, manage, and report on educational reach and impact of Bernheim programs

Experience and Education

- Passion and curiosity for the outdoors and a strong respect and sense of stewardship for the environment. Knowledge of regional ecology, natural history, biology, conservation, horticulture, sustainability or related areas a plus
- Excellent interpretation skills in translating medium to complex subject matter for public consumption
- Demonstrated success developing and implementing education-based programs in multiple formats to wide variety of audiences
- Experience as a member of a high-performance, collaborative, constructive peer group
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, visioning and leadership. Effective, engaging public speaker
- Comfort and ability to teach in outdoor environments ranging from fully accessible spaces to wilderness areas without trails, in all weather conditions
- Project and grant management skills, resulting in measurable successes and program growth
- Ability to lead change and to adapt to the unexpected while still progressing toward core program objectives
- Ability to work independently and as a team is essential
- Minimum of a BA, MA preferred. At least 10 years of experience with three of those in a team and/or volunteer management role

To apply and for more information

Please send all inquiries and resumes to: HR@bernheim.org.

Competitive benefits package includes health/vision/dental insurance, retirement 403b match benefit and paid sick, holiday and vacation leave. Reports to Chief Operating Officer.

Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees. We recruit, employ, train, compensate, and promote without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, disability, age, veteran status, or any other status protected by law.