



CONNER PRAIRIE  
INTERACTIVE HISTORY PARK

Thank you for your interest in the Youth Interpreter Program! This volunteer program is open to young people between the ages of 10 and 18. The program benefits both Conner Prairie and the youth who participate. It teaches youth history in a hands-on immersion environment, making learning painless, personal and fun! It also teaches youth valuable life skills such as public speaking, people skills and the rewards of old-fashioned sweat and effort! We do demand hard work and excellent behavior from our youth. In return, we aim to make great young people even better through Conner Prairie's unique and enriching cultural environment.

The application deadline to join our 2010 program has already passed. It takes us most of the winter to select and train our youth interpreters to be ready when the grounds open in the spring. We will be sending out applications for the 2011 season in October. To be selected as a youth interpreter, applicants must turn in a written application and come to a short interview. The process is competitive. Typically we have spots available for 20-40% of the applicants. We have such GREAT kids apply! We only have room for 100 youth interpreters a year (including returning youth interpreters), so getting into the program is tough. However, we encourage anyone who is sincerely interested to apply. You may have what it takes – give it a try!

If chosen to participate, youth interpreters may work in all areas of the historic grounds. Examples include:

- Welcome Center: Youth help young children with crafts in Craft Corner and guide playtime in Discovery Station.
- 1859 Balloon Voyage: Youth work in our exhibit area. They explain the science and historic flight that inspired our balloon ride before guests load our tethered balloon.
- Animal Encounters: Youth care for our chickens, cattle, goats, ponies, donkeys, sheep and other rotating baby animals in the Conner Barn. They assist guests in interacting with the animals.
- Loom House: Youth card wool, spin and weave. Youth who work in the Loom House attend extra textiles trainings to earn this privilege and may be invited to participate in outreaches with our Youth Spinning Team.
- Conner House: Youth explain the architecture of this historic brick building as well as the fascinating life of William Conner, fur trader and politician.
- Lenapehoking: Youth lead hands-on activities in this 1816 Lenape Indian trading camp and trading post. They teach Lenape (Delaware) Indian history and culture.
- Prairietown: Youth in historic costume portray frontier life as fictional characters in this 1836 village. Typical activities include games, chores, crafts and trades.

Each youth interpreter typically works in several, though not all, of the above areas. All youth work in at least one "blue shirt" area, meaning an area where they wear a modern uniform. Any youth who wishes to also work in a costumed area may, but must provide his/her own historic clothing. The blue shirt areas currently include the Welcome Center, 1859 Balloon Voyage, Animal Encounters, Loom House, Conner House and Lenapehoking. The costumed areas currently include Prairietown and Lenapehoking. Both costumed and blue shirt posts are fun and challenging, and neither style should be viewed as "superior" to the other.

Throughout the year, youth assist with special events and programming like Glorious Fourth, Headless Horseman and Country Fair. They might also work behind the scenes helping with such tasks as preparing crafts for future exhibits and cleaning artifacts. Youth interpreters have the opportunity to participate in media initiatives such as commercial shoots and outreach programs throughout the state.

Conner Prairie will offer a series of both mandatory and voluntary training sessions for the youth interpreters covering a range of topics including sewing, tools, 19<sup>th</sup>-century life, guest service and more.

**Participants must work a minimum of 120 hours per year.** Most students achieve this by volunteering two-three days a month. Youth interpreters generally volunteer from 8:45 am – 5:00 pm Tuesday through Saturday and 10:15 am – 5:00 pm on Sunday. Our schedule varies slightly in the spring and fall, and some special programs do occur in the evenings. With the exception of a few required days, we work our schedule around your needs.

The primary focus of the program is learning. By the end of the year the youth should gain a basic knowledge of Indiana history and increase such skills as communication, teamwork, responsibility and leadership.

**If you are interested in applying for the 2011 program, you will need to fill out a 2011 application when it becomes available in the fall. If you send me your address, I would be glad to send you an application for 2011 in October.**

We do have other opportunities for young people at Conner Prairie. We provide a variety of summer camps. Check out our website [www.connerprairie.org](http://www.connerprairie.org) for more information about camp. We are also starting a Venturing program focused on the Civil War with the Boy Scouts. It will be open to both boys and girls ages 14 and older. For information on this program, contact Jim Willaert at [Willaert@connerprairie.org](mailto:Willaert@connerprairie.org).

Thanks, and don't hesitate to contact me with questions!

SARAH E. MORIN  
Youth Experience Manager

Morin@connerprairie.org  
13400 Allisonville Rd.  
Fishers, IN 46038  
317.776.6000 ext. 259  
317.214.4759  
fax: 317.776.6014

