



# GUEST ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST

<b>Manager:</b>	Exhibitions Manager		
<b>Department:</b>	Education & Exhibitions	<b>Job Category:</b>	Category 1
<b>Location:</b>	Henrico, VA	<b>Travel Required:</b>	Local
<b>Level/Salary Range:</b>		<b>Exempt/Non-exempt:</b>	Non-exempt
<b>Contact:</b>	ellynparker@lewisginter.org	<b>Position Type:</b>	Full-time (37.5 hours/week)
<b>Date Posted:</b>	October 10, 2018	<b>Posting Expires:</b>	Until Filled

## **Garden Overview**

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden was founded in 1984 as a community oriented, non-profit garden. After 34 years, the Garden now encompasses 82 acres, four lakes, 5,500 unique taxa of plants within 15 distinct outdoor gardens, 11 major buildings including a conservatory and greenhouse, plus an 80-acre branch site, the Lewis Ginter Nature Reserve. Open year round, in 2017 we welcomed, taught, energized, and engaged over 400,000 guests with stunning botanical displays, inspiring exhibitions, entertaining activities, and over 800 formal and informal education offerings. We embarked on new and promising community engagement initiatives through the Beautiful RVA movement. We updated the strategic plan and continued priority project planning within the scope of the 2016 master site plan. Our 100 full- and part-time staff joined with 650 volunteers and 13,000 member households to live into the Garden's mission to connect people through plants to improve communities.

We accomplish our mission through a broad variety of mission related activities and auxiliary business services. We try to pattern ourselves on extraordinary programs and institutions nationwide, and where there are no examples, we intend to lead. We aspire to be a Garden that is representative in every way of the diverse community we serve.

## **Job Description**

As a member of the Education and Exhibitions team, the Guest Engagement Specialist contributes to an excellent visitor experience through the development, coordination and implementation of both formal and informal engagement initiatives that invite, welcome, and celebrate individuals from diverse communities. This includes, but is not limited to, special events, group tours, formal and informal programs, and off-site festivals/presentations that interpret the Garden, complement seasonal exhibitions (ex: M&T Bank Butterflies LIVE!, Dominion Energy GardenFest of Lights, and Origami in the Garden), and enhance guests' learning and enjoyment.

The position is full-time (category 1), and contributes to the advancement of the Garden's educational mission and excellence in guest services. The successful candidate will be smart, intuitive, creative, resourceful,

**LEWIS  
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BOTANICAL  
GARDEN**

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innovative, team-oriented, and flexible with a proven record of success in designing and managing events, projects, or programs.

### **Responsibilities**

- Research, analyze, and propose potential guest engagement initiatives that are mission appropriate, innovative, cost-effective and likely to resonate with our diverse community.
- In coordination with staff and volunteers, create and implement educational, experiential, and/or multi-sensory programming for all ages related to seasonal exhibitions (Ex: National Pollinator Week celebration, Toro Nagashi Floating Lantern Evening, and GardenFest nightly activities).
- Working with staff leadership, colleagues and assigned staff and volunteers, create and implement single-day events that further Garden's mission and invite expanded community visitation (Ex: Día de los Muertos, World Water Day, and Play Day RVA).
- Coordinate with external partners and vendors, including negotiating and writing MOUs/agreements, processing fees/payments, and facilitating day-of details.
- Ensure the design, content, and production of guest engagement-related materials including, but not limited to, written program descriptions, interpretive signage, blog posts, and training guides for staff and volunteers.
- Guide the ongoing growth and development of the volunteer-based Garden Guide interpretation program:
  - Work closely with the volunteer Garden Guide leadership to coordinate monthly meetings, develop and evaluate tour content, facilitate the production of seasonal Bright Spots Garden highlights, and pursue innovative and evolving opportunities for visitor engagement both on and off-site.
  - Oversee the continuing education of Garden Guides, including training curriculum, maintenance of Garden Guide manual, recruitment and orientation of new volunteers, coaching and evaluation of tour techniques. Complete guided tour training to serve as backup, if needed.
  - Coordinate and process group tour reservations using the Active Network database; field all group tour requests; manage payments, complete daily payment reporting, and prepare deposits as needed.
  - Manage the group tour presence on the webpage using WordPress.
  - Facilitate group tour package components (food, catering arrangements, hands-on activities, educational demonstrations) in coordination with other departments.
  - Coordinate Garden Guide scheduling.
  - Monitor policies and procedures for group tour reservations, including advance scheduling, fee structures, cancellations, and refunds.
- With staff and volunteer support, coordinate and facilitate off-site guest engagement opportunities, including festivals, special events, and presentations.
- Collaborate with PR/Marketing department on promoting guest engagement initiatives through social media platforms.
- Track and monitor essential expenses to support guest engagement initiatives.
- Evaluate and document all events and programs; track and run monthly group tour attendance numbers and provide follow up reporting to staff leadership.

### **Additional Duties**

- Embrace the Garden's commitment to excellence in all departments, willingly and cheerfully integrating necessary work with the numerous tasks already assigned other departments.
- Foster teamwork and mentor staff and volunteers by modeling best practices alongside them.
- Empower staff and volunteers by granting authority and autonomy whenever possible.
- Participate in staff trainings and Education/Exhibition departmental meetings as necessary.
- Stay informed on visitor engagement priorities of other cultural institutions.
- Work weekend, evening, and holiday hours, as needed.
- All other duties assigned by direct supervisor.

### **Each Employee of Lewis Ginter**

- Must comply with provisions of the current Employee Handbook, all published personnel policies and the requirements of their individual job descriptions
- Must conduct him/herself and perform all duties in a manner consistent with a public garden serving multigenerational families, and in accordance with directed practices and procedures
- Must be aware of surroundings, and vigilant to any possible threat to the safety of visitors, volunteers, and staff or to their property and ensures all concerns are reported promptly
- Must report all mishaps, injuries and incidents immediately and ultimately in writing to supervisor(s) and to the Executive Director
- Must ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations
- Must perform other duties as assigned by supervisor

### **Physical Demands/Working Conditions**

- Must be able to lift 30 pounds occasionally
- Must be able to move around garden in all weather conditions
- Must be able to handle appropriate educational materials and horticultural tools
- Must be able to work varying hours, including evenings, weekends, and occasional holidays

Note: Duties described above have been identified as essential functions as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **Skills and Abilities**

- Enthusiastic, energetic, quick-thinking, cheerful, courteous, capable, diplomatic, and solution-oriented.
- Demonstrated knowledge of informal education principles and developmentally appropriate practices for learners of all ages.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including public speaking and group facilitation.
- Must be able to initiate, build and sustain relationships with fellow staff and volunteers.
- Must be a positive and motivating presence who embraces change and challenge.
- Well-organized and detail-oriented, able to work independently as well as in a team environment.
- Must be able to actively participate in the creation of short and long-range plans.
- Must possess a commitment to the Garden's mission and its core values, particularly honesty and integrity.
- Technical proficiency with computers including Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Suite, social media platforms, and event and/or volunteer management databases.
- Access to a car on a daily basis and a valid state driver's license or ability to transport self as needed.

### **Education and Experience**

- BA or BS degree; a combination of education and equivalent experience will be considered.
- A minimum of 3 years of successful experience in managing programs, projects, or special events.
- Virginia Certified Horticulturist preferred, or willingness to obtain certification.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and work with peers, co-workers and volunteers.
- Experience and demonstrated sensitivity in working with persons of various ethnic and economic backgrounds on staff and within community.
- Other combinations of education/experience appropriate to the job will be considered.

### **To Apply**

Please submit cover letter, resume and completed Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden [Application for Employment](#) to Ellyn Parker, Exhibitions Manager, at [ellynparker@lewisginter.org](mailto:ellynparker@lewisginter.org)