

Early Childhood Engagement Team

Description – The Children’s Garden at the Arboretum & Botanical Garden at CSUF is a space for youth to explore nature using the senses of hearing, sight, smell, and touch. The garden also encourages youth to develop an understanding of what plants need to survive via the acronym LAWS (land, air, water, and sunlight). Additionally, the garden encourages visitors to learn about and appreciate sustainability. Sub-sections within the Children’s Garden include raised beds for fruits and vegetables, aromatic plants, bunch grasses, succulent plants, fruit trees, two environmental-themed topiaries and several potted plants.

Interns will use the Children’s Garden as an outdoor lab to gain real-world experience designing experiences that support the development of children (cognitive, emotional, physical, and social growth). They will also develop programming and interpretive content around the different themes within the Children’s Garden. Arboretum Horticulture Staff members and qualified Arboretum volunteers will mentor interns.

Responsibilities

- Assist in development of garden experiences for young children (ages 2-8) and their families
- Plan public-facing events that are centered around the Children’s Garden
- Develop interpretive signage and other content to encourage exploration within the garden
- Maintain the sensory garden and raised beds within the Children’s Garden
- Promote Children’s Garden and Arboretum on social media and through other avenues
- Create a presentation and/or poster at the end of the semester

Availability – This program is open to a group of up to 6 student interns in the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters. CSUF students in any major from freshman to senior class levels are eligible.

Time Commitment – Interns will be expected to work at least 8 hours per week for a total of 120 hours per semester. Work will take place on both weekdays and weekends. Time will consist of work/activity days, independent research and team meetings.

Student Learning Objectives

- Environmental education through development of a children’s sensory garden, with emphasis on interpretive signage and informal science education for children
- Program planning, coordination and implementation for events that engage the public
- Teamwork, team building, team management and leadership skills
- Learn horticultural practices and general ecological principles
- Experience in recruitment and interview process
- Building relationships with campus community members and a stronger connection to campus
- Students engaged in promoting sustainability and beautification of campus
- Develop cross-disciplinary skills and work with students from other majors
- Develop soft skills that are applicable to any workplace

Application Process – Register with the Center for Internships and Community Engagement. Provide the arboretum with a resume and cover letter explaining why you would like to participate in this internship program and what makes you a good candidate. Interns are responsible for arranging course credit with their adviser.