

Isaiah Hunt

Aspiring Zoologist



My summer internship experience was amazing! I completed my internship at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens. I completed an extensive 3-day training process even before the experience began. The training sessions cover everything from customer service and safety protocols to relevant conservation topics and teambuilding. During the actual experience I worked with my two mentors Ms. Knowlton and Mr. Turner to learn and educate people about animal conservation. Throughout the Zoo, there are multiple stations, known as conservation stations, dedicated to informing guests about different endangered animals.

I was fully submersed into zoo life at the start of this program. I learned public speaking skills and how to engage guests of all ages with their conservation messages and fun facts about zoo animals. All these skills were relatively new to me when I began my internship experience. I had some general animal knowledge but there is nothing like being surrounded by it for a whole summer really learning everything.

Over the course of the internship I was placed at each station learning about the different animals in need of conservation and methods to help preserve them. I also learned about the many threats that these animals face on a regular basis such as poachers, illegal trade, deforestation, etc. and reasons for their conservation along with their importance to the environment.

Through this internship I was able to come to the conclusion that I still carry the aspiration to become a Zoologist. I would just like to say, thank you to the entire Annie Ruth Foundation Team for believing in me and giving me such a great opportunity to venture into my future career field. I am overflowing with gratitude and appreciation and I just want to say again thank you for not only giving me this opportunity but also setting me up with the knowledge and tools to succeed and benefit from this experience.