

Name  
Address  
Email  
Phone

Date

Name of Potential Employer  
Address

Dear Insert Name Here,

I am writing in regards to the Behavioral Husbandry Keeper position posted on the Association of Zoos and Aquariums website. I am seeking employment in a position that requires a reliable, self-sufficient individual with an understanding of operant conditioning training, and an ability to engage an audience of all ages. I believe that my contagious positive attitude, previous experience in Child Development and AZA accredited institutions, and my ability to make a lasting impression on guests by evoking fascination, excitement, and admiration for all taxa makes me an excellent candidate for the position.

Over the past two years I have completed internships in the Elephant Departments of Zoo Miami and Cheyenne Mountain Zoo. Through this experience, I quickly discovered my passion for guest interactions and education. At Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, I exhibited such enthusiasm and confidence with guest interactions that by my third day of work I was able to perform an hour-long keeper talk on microphone to a standing-room-only crowd.

During both internships, I was able to swiftly master the daily routine of proper diet, exhibit and enrichment preparation. I observed the training of new behaviors and obtained a thorough understanding of training procedures through operant conditioning and positive reinforcement. My detail-orientation and organizational skills were put to great use by recording behavioral observations, keeping proper records, and planning ahead to request diet and enrichment items. Moreover, due to the nature of Elephant Departments, I expect and enjoy strenuous physical work and have a deep respect for safety measures such as protected contact protocols, communication with team members, and the importance of repeatedly checking locks.

In addition to internship experience, my employment and volunteer background has instilled qualities in my character that can be directly applied to the Behavioral Husbandry position. Five years of employment in child development has sharpened my ability to connect with children and young adults enhancing my strength in maintaining an engaged and enthusiastic audience during keeper talks. Time spent volunteering in a hospital emergency room and veterinary clinic has polished my ability to remain calm and follow protocol in emergency situations. As a Zoology Research Assistant, I was able to implement problem-solving skills and knowledge of the animal's natural history to develop a behavioral assay protocol in which I recorded detailed behavioral observations and performed data analysis.

What has recurrently set me apart from my peers is that I approach challenges with enthusiasm and determination to exceed expectations. My performance as a Behavioral Husbandry Keeper at the Nashville Zoo would fall nothing short of this professional and personal expectation. I am graduating with high honors and a B.S. Zoology degree from Michigan State University in May. I would welcome the opportunity to personally discuss my qualifications and desire to become a part of your team. I will be available at your convenience. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name

# Name

Address  
Phone / email

## Education

- Michigan State University**; East Lansing, MI August 2010 – May 2014  
**Bachelor of Science, Zoology**
- Honors College member and Academic Dean's list 2010 – Present
  - GPA: 3.97/4.00
- Relevant Coursework:**
- Animal Behavior, Mammalogy, Herpetology, Zoo & Aquarium Science, Ecology, Comparative Anatomy & Biology of Vertebrates, Conservation Biology, Brain & Behavior Psychology, Evolution, Statistics

## Work Experience

- Michigan State University Museum**; East Lansing, MI August 2013 – Present  
**Vertebrate Collections Student Assistant**
- Practicing delicate care in cleaning, labeling, and cataloging research and teaching specimens
  - Assisting in a study examining morphometrics of carnivore ontogeny by digitizing and measuring skulls
  - Using investigation skills and acute attention to detail to properly identify specimens and verify data
- MSU Zoology Department**; East Lansing, MI August 2012 – May 2013  
**Student Research Assistant**
- Provided routine care of two salamander colonies (*Ambystoma mexicanum* and *Taricha granulosa*)
  - Developed and conducted behavior study of odorant response in *A. mexicanum*; Performed data analysis
  - Implemented problem-solving skills during frequent troubleshooting with behavior protocol
- Building Blocks Developmental Daycare**; Flushing, MI June 2006 – August 2011  
**Child caregiver**
- Coordinated and supervised daily intellectual enrichment activities of children ages 4 weeks to 12 years
  - Developed exciting methods of teaching to encourage learning and participation in group activities

## Internships

- Cheyenne Mountain Zoo**; Colorado Springs, CO May 2013 – August 2013  
**Elephant and Rhino Department Intern**
- Care and husbandry of 0.4 African Elephants and 1.0 Black Rhinoceros in a protected contact setting
  - Duties included cleaning, preparing diets, conducting keeper talks, fabricating enrichment
  - Observed the training of new behaviors through operant conditioning and positive reinforcement
- Zoo Miami**; Miami, FL May 2012 – July 2012  
**Elephant Department Intern**
- Care and husbandry of 1.2 Asian and 1.2 African Elephants in a protected contact setting
  - Prepared diets, exhibits, and enrichment, collected browse, assisted in bath routines and keeper talks
  - Gained understanding of current training proceedings and various veterinary procedures
  - Kept proper record of detailed behavioral observations in night reports and enrichment calendars

## Volunteer Experience

- Abbot Road Animal Clinic**; East Lansing, MI August 2013 – December 2013  
**Veterinary Clinic Volunteer**
- Shadowed veterinarian during exams and emergencies, and assisted in duties such as animal restraint
  - Promoted ease of appointment flow by cleaning exam rooms, drawing vaccines, filling prescriptions
- Hurley Regional Medical Center**; Flint, MI May 2011 – August 2011  
**Pediatrics and Emergency Room Volunteer**
- Transport of patients, lab specimens, and pharmaceuticals from pediatric and emergency floors
  - Assembled patient discharge paperwork, charts, and filed documents

- Engaged in conversation and encouraged patient morale to promote a comfortable stay

**Capital Area Literacy Coalition; Lansing, MI**

August 2011 - December 2011

**Read to Succeed Tutor**

- Mentored and tutored an elementary student twice weekly in reading and writing
- Prepared weekly lesson plans accommodating the students progress and needs
- Developed exciting methods of teaching to encourage motivation of struggling students

**Xanadu Horse Farm; Flushing, MI**

September 2008 - April 2009

**Animal Care Volunteer**

- Assisted in diet preparation, grooming, and stall cleaning for approximately fifteen horses

**Memberships**

- Association of Zoos and Aquariums January 2014 – Present
- Zoological Student Association of MSU August 2012 – Present
- Michigan State University Honors College August 2010 – Present
- Michigan State Student Literacy Corp December 2011 – Present

**Skills**

- Competent in Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe Photoshop, J.Watcher, TPSdig
- Exceptional communication abilities via formal presentations and informal interactions
- Extremely detail oriented with strong organizational skills
- Outstanding work ethic and enthusiasm, able to learn and adapt in a fast paced environment