INTERN POSITION DESCRIPTION—Summer 2019

INTERNSHIP TITLE: Decorative and Industrial Arts Collection Intern

DEPARTMENT: Collections
STATUS: Unpaid Intern (non-employee)

ACTIVITY SUMMARY: The Chicago History Museum (CHM) seeks two (2) Decorative and Industrial Arts Collection Interns to work with the Collections Department to assist with collections storage inventory backlog, research, and processing. This outstanding collection contains over 100,000 objects related to Chicago and American history. Materials include furniture, metalwork, ceramics, glass, agricultural and military equipment, musical instruments, toys, vehicles, and numerous other products, tools, and household and industrial objects. Of particular interest are objects related to Abraham Lincoln, including the bed on which he died, and pieces by Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and other well-known Chicago designers. This opportunity will allow the interns to gain practical, hands-on experience working directly with museum artifacts and to learn proper preservation techniques and handling of 3-dimensional artifacts. The Collections Interns will work with Collections Management staff on special projects related to the Decorative and Industrial Arts Collection, and will work directly with collections, curatorial, and other museum staff while learning about the day-to-day operations of managing museum collections. Current graduate students or recent graduates in the fields of museum studies, public history, history, art history, or related disciplines are encouraged to apply.

Note: this internship position exists for individuals willing to volunteer their services without expectation or contemplation of compensation.

POSITION SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES AND CORRESPONDING EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

• The interns will work within the Decorative and Industrial Arts Collection assisting with the inventory backlog of objects in storage, conducting provenance research, as well as building object storage mounts and other housing as needed. The interns will also assist with updating records in the Museum’s collections management system, The Museum System (TMS), and photographing works in the collection for internal use.

• The interns can expect to gain a practical working knowledge in the area of collections management. The interns will gain valuable collections management experience by helping inventory the collection, developing provenance research skills, learning to work with collections management database systems, and gaining object handling experience. The interns will also become adept at basic cleaning techniques for collection materials on display and in storage.

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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>EDUCATIONAL GOAL</th>
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<td>Collections Inventory: The interns will assist with inventorying the Decorative and Industrial Arts Collection.</td>
<td>The interns will receive an excellent opportunity to handle objects, while learning relevant and applicable museum collections</td>
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management skills. The interns will practice precision in research, data entry in TMS, and organization. The interns will learn about a wide variety of materials and how they are stored, handled, and organized in a museum collection. Additionally, the interns will become familiar with CHM’s collection, as well as aspects of local and American history.

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<th>Gallery Maintenance: The interns will assist Collections staff with regular cleaning of collections objects on display in the galleries.</th>
<th>The interns will have the opportunity to learn proper cleaning methods for collection materials on display. Under the supervision of Collections staff, the interns will learn basic cleaning methods for museum objects. Through these activities, the interns will encounter staff from other departments, which will offer chances to practice communication skills, as well as some experience with other areas of the organization. The interns will learn transferable skills that will be relevant to future job applications and opportunities working with museum collections.</th>
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<td>Collections Processing: The interns will help with the organization of storage spaces and assist in moving, documenting, housing, and labeling new acquisitions coming into the collection as well as working with existing items in the collection.</td>
<td>The interns will have the opportunity to learn about objects housed in CHM’s Decorative and Industrial Arts Collection directly. The interns will also have chances to practice and improve organizational and problem solving skills. Additionally, the interns will learn practical and relevant museum management skills that will transfer to future opportunities for working in museums and cultural institutions.</td>
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**ADDITIONAL INTERN ACTIVITIES:**

- The interns will assist in duties related to acquisitions backlog, research requests, artifact donations, and relocating artifacts within the building. The interns will also help with preparing objects for photography and/or exhibition as needed.
- Intern will be given opportunities to attend organizational events such as staff meetings and other meetings such as brown bag lunches to gain a broader understanding of the workplace and its initiatives. In addition, opportunities for networking and informational interviews with staff will be available at the intern’s request.
- Other activities as assigned that will further the intern’s learning, knowledge, and experience.

**GENERAL GOALS:**
The Intern’s activities help fulfill the Museum’s mission and purpose which is “To help people to make meaningful and personal connections to history” and will serve a civic, charitable, and humanitarian purpose consistent with our nonprofit status.

- This internship will provide training similar to that which would be given in an educational environment and which is primarily for the benefit of the intern;
- This internship will also provide the intern with close supervision by regular employees qualified in the intern’s field of study.
- CHM will cooperate with educational institutions to ensure that the internship is academically oriented for the benefit of students;

SUPERVISOR: Senior Collection Manager

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS:
The Collections interns will work collaboratively with collections management staff and other department interns. As projects warrant, interns will work with staff in Curatorial, Conservation, Rights & Reproduction, Research & Access, and Properties departments.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- MA, MS, or BA in museum studies, public history, history, art history, or a related discipline.
- Ability to lift, carry, or otherwise move and position equipment weighing up to 40 pounds.
- Ability to meet deadlines and manage projects effectively.
- Ability to function independently as well as on a team.
- Attention to detail and exceptional organizational skills a must.
- Commitment to follow the rules and guidelines contained in the Chicago History Museum Internship Program Handbook.
- Agreement to submit to a background screening and provide 2 recent references.
- Commitment to the mission, values, and programs of the Chicago History Museum.

CHM VALUES:
These are the values of the Chicago History Museum as an institution, our “Collective Values.”
- Service, Collaboration, Discovery, Creativity, Empathy, authenticity, Integrity, and Stewardship

These are the values that the staff members of the Chicago History Museum seek and hope to inspire in ourselves, our “Individual Values.”
- All-In: Taking and sharing responsibility for the Museum, its mission, and our future.
- Welcoming: Demonstrating every day that the Museum is for everyone.
- Forward-looking: Anticipating needs, spotting opportunities, and solving problems with determination and ingenuity.
TIMEFRAME OR COMMITMENT:

While negotiable, this is to be a 10-week commitment during the summer term for 12-20 hours/week, depending on the academic requirements of the student’s educational institution.

CHM interns will be asked to attend enrichment programming which is planned as part of the CHM internship program. Programs will consist of themed panel discussions led by CHM staff and will occur during July. Interns will be notified well in advance of program dates.

*This internship description is not intended to be an express or implied contract between CHM and anyone. CHM reserves the right to change or assign other duties to this intern position as necessary. CHM is an equal opportunity institution.*

APPLICATION DEADLINE

March 18, 2019

HOW TO APPLY

A complete internship application consists of the following:

- A completed [internship application form](#)
- A one-page personal statement describing your reasons for seeking an internship at CHM and what you hope to gain from the experience
- A résumé outlining your educational, professional, and volunteer experiences
- Contact information for two references

Every effort is made to match the skills and interests of prospective interns with the needs and priorities of the department and the institution overall. The application materials will outline the specific qualifications requirements for individual projects. The Chicago History Museum does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.