



Position Title: Farmhands

About the Foundation:

By blending history, ecology, economics and conservation, the Accokeek Foundation strives to teach land stewardship and sustainable use of natural resources, as well as interpret the natural and cultural heritage of the Tidewater Potomac. The foundation's mission is to cultivate passion for the natural and cultural heritage of Piscataway Park and commitment to stewardship and sustainability. The National Colonial Farm and other Foundation activities exemplify the agricultural, preservation and conservation goals that are at the core of the Foundation's mission and serve as an outdoor classroom to further the educational programs that are key to its success. In partnership with the National Park Service, the Accokeek Foundation stewards a 200-acre portion of Piscataway Park and preserves the view directly across the Potomac River from Mount Vernon.

About National Capital Parks - East:

The administrative National Park Service unit of National Capital Parks – East (NACE) contains thirteen park units and parkways, including Piscataway Park. The overall unit consists of 98 locations and more than 8,000 acres of recreation areas, historic homes, natural areas, farms, parkways, historic forts, archeological sites, and private properties. The sites provide important green and recreation space amongst dense urbanization and educate visitors through stories and the historical information related to the area.

About the Heritage Livestock Preservation Program:

The heritage livestock program is part of the Accokeek Foundation's stewardship of Piscataway Park. We care for our livestock in a way that enhances the health and stability of the natural and agricultural ecosystems of this special place. The heritage breeds of livestock we manage are American Milking Devon Cattle, Hog Island Sheep, Ossabaw Hogs, Java Chickens, and Heritage Turkeys.

Position Summary and Purpose:

The Farmhands program was created to assist the livestock manager with feeding, barn maintenance, fence work, general animal care, and various other projects related to the success of our heritage livestock program. This position is a great opportunity to work closely with animals and other dedicated livestock volunteers to support our rare and heritage breeds.

Duties may include:

- Daily feeding/watering of animals
- Cleaning/organizing the barn

- Training/assisting with health care of animals
- Repairing livestock fencing
- Maintaining pasture and barnyard areas
- Interacting with the public visiting the site to teach them about our heritage breeds, livestock programming, and answer any questions they may have.
- Lifting loads up to 50 lbs (feed, hay, straw, etc.).
- Special projects (coop repair, deworming, hooftrimming, etc...) as assigned.

Qualifications:

This position is best suited for those ages 10 and up, and all minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian volunteering alongside them. Acceptance will be at the discretion of the Livestock Manager and Volunteer Coordinator. Training will be provided and performance evaluated after 2 full training shifts and again after 4 semi-independent shifts. This is a year round position taking place almost entirely outdoors and volunteers serving in this position are expected to perform shifts in a variety of weather. No previous experience with animals is necessary, but volunteers must be comfortable working around large animals and animals with horns. Volunteers should be able to read the chores list and follow written and oral instructions independently. They will be expected to complete tasks/chores independently of staff on a regular basis. Those serving in this position should be able to work well as part of a team, communicate with their supervisor to report issues/task completion, and demonstrate good problem-solving skills. Experience with 4H, animal husbandry, animal farming, and/or heritage breeds is a bonus.

Time Requirements:

This is a regular volunteer position. Shifts are weekly, and depend on activities/supervisor schedule. Scheduling is somewhat flexible, but the greatest need is for weekday mornings (between 8am and 10am) for daily feeding and animal care. Volunteer activities for each day may vary and be weather dependent.

Benefits:

Volunteers will receive a 10% discount at the visitor's center.

Volunteers will also be enrolled in the National Park Service – wide Volunteers – In – Park (VIP) program by signing Volunteer Service Agreements. The VIP program protects those volunteering on National Park Service land in case of accident or injury through the Federal Employees' Compensation Act and the Federal Tort Claims Act. Additionally, for every 250 hours served, volunteers are eligible to receive the America the Beautiful interagency pass which covers entrance fees to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites, including national parks and wildlife refuges, for one year.

Supervisor: Alison Bode, Livestock Manager.

To Participate: Please contact Kaylin Beach, at volunteers@accokeek.org.