

WHAT IS EDUCATION STAFF DOING DURING THE CLOSURE?

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When the coronavirus outbreak first began across the globe, the Racine Zoo education team was still present in schools teaching the students of Racine County about animals and conservation. However, when the governor announced the closure of schools across the state, and the Racine Zoo closed to the public, that came to an end. Since educating students is this AmeriCorps program's main objective, the team had to come up with a creative way to stay active in our service while the schools are out of session.

AmeriCorps members serve not only in schools, but also at Racine Zoo itself in the animal care department to be better prepared for careers down the line. Since



the animals still need to be cared for, those AmeriCorps members still go into the Zoo for their scheduled animal care shifts. During these shifts, AmeriCorps members help the animal care staff with day-to-day tasks and any additional tasks if necessary. Some education staff are also trained in care of animals, and have been training in additional tasks to be able to help should keepers get sick.

For the majority of educators, this has been utilized as a time to catch up on projects. Preparing to launch new distance learning options, developing new programs in conjunction with other organizations and schools, and preparing things for camps and this summer is keeping everyone busy!

For AmeriCorps, this means serving "teleservice" hours from home. Our supervisor, Elise Olmstead, delegated tasks for each member to do at home and we have been able to communicate with each other through Google Hangouts, which is great because it is a very easy way for everyone to instant message each other. Some of the tasks that were asked of us include working on the AmeriCorps blog website, figuring out how to recruit for AmeriCorps next year, going through each one of our education programs and making edits for the following 2020-2021 school year, and creating a plan for volunteer recruitment. We are still serving strong during this time!