

Franklin Park Zoo Volunteer Program



Team



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Agenda

- Zoo's mission statement and goals
- Qualitative Research
 - Personal experiences
 - Customer experiences
- Key Areas of Improvement
- Volunteer Program Insights
- Solution
 - College Volunteer Programs
 - Co-op

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Zoo New England's Mission Statement

Zoo New England's mission is to **inspire** people to protect and sustain the natural world for future generations by creating **fun and engaging experiences** that integrate wildlife and conservation programs, research, and education.



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Personal Experiences & Qualitative Research

Observations and anecdotes from our time spent at the zoo



Observed Strengths

- Unique experience that differs from anything else in Boston
- Family-friendly environment
- Employees, although few, present were friendly and knowledgeable
- Animals were active
- Well-kept grounds
 - Especially Tropical Rainforest





Observed Shortcomings

- Difficulty navigating zoo during off peak seasons
- Desired more interaction with staff to learn about the animals and exhibits
- Limited number of volunteers distributed across zoo
- Wanted up to date information on signage



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Customer experiences

Excerpts from online customer reviews of the zoo



Customer Reviews

- Variety of animals
- Family friendly fun
- Educational
- “Gem” in a city
- Reasonable prices

★★★★★ 6/25/2018

Five stars is not enough for this review! Had an absolute blast here a few weeks back with a surprise visit. We actually fed sloths! I was so happy and excited I cried like a two year old feeding the sloths.

The staff were so friendly and very educated about the zoo itself and the animals.

The zoo is definitely a small zoo..But, we had a blast. The zoo is very well kept and perfect for a few hours. Loved it!

Was this review ...?



Gina Sandelli ★ recommends Stone Zoo.

December 30, 2018 · 🌐

We took our youngest child for a private tour of the sloth exhibit as part of her Christmas gift today. It was fantastic! **Katie was wonderful and informative.** Our daughter thoroughly enjoyed the experience. She was able to feed both Nero and Lunesta for a half hour! It was an unforgettable experience for sure!



Customer Reviews

Increased Staff Can:

- Educate customers
- Answer questions
- Fix misunderstandings
- Create deeper relationship with visitors
- Help achieve goal of creating conservationists
- Help create a consistent experience among customers



Denise Colon reviewed Franklin Park Zoo — 4★
August 6, 2018 · 🌐

I was there sunday August 5 th I had a great time. The only thing i didn't like was that theres not enough zookeepers or workers to ask questions when they come up. Like I was wondering and a little bothered by was that certain animals they weren't at there habitat. It says that's were there located and I waited with my

“Only saw 2 employees actually walking around the zoo”

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Volunteer Program



Why the **Volunteer Program?**

Provides help for the Franklin Park Zoo by acting as a support system for customers during their visits.

- Close Performance Gap
 - Resolve staff/recruiting issues
- Close Service Design and Standards Gap
 - Implement Systematic Design when interacting with customers → Enhance their Experience → Satisfaction



Why is this important?

**Increase Customer
Engagement and
Satisfaction**

**Low Cost Way to
Grow Workforce**

**Create
Consistency in
Customer
Experience**

Current **Volunteer** Program

Staff

- ◉ 60 Volunteers
- ◉ 3 Full Time Employees

Peak Days

- ◉ 6-8 Interpretive Volunteers
- ◉ 2-4 Education Interns
- ◉ 3 Hour Shifts

Individual Volunteer Positions

- ◉ Zoo Ambassadors
- ◉ Education/Naturalists
- ◉ Keeper/Petting Zoo Aides





Strengths of **Volunteer** Program

- ◉ Dedicated and motivated staff with great ideas to help improve the program
- ◉ Variety of opportunities available
- ◉ Effective training for individual volunteers
- ◉ Volunteers often turn into employees or volunteer in other positions
- ◉ High frequency of corporate/school volunteer groups



Areas of Improvement

Awareness

Access information about program outside of website and reaching new audiences
(Ambassadors, more website postings, flyers)

Acquisition

Potential to have even more volunteers onboard to help turn them into loyal conservationists

Retention

1 of 5 volunteers not staying their term

Increasing manpower to help with retention initiatives (events, surveys, volunteer appreciation)

TWO STEP SOLUTION



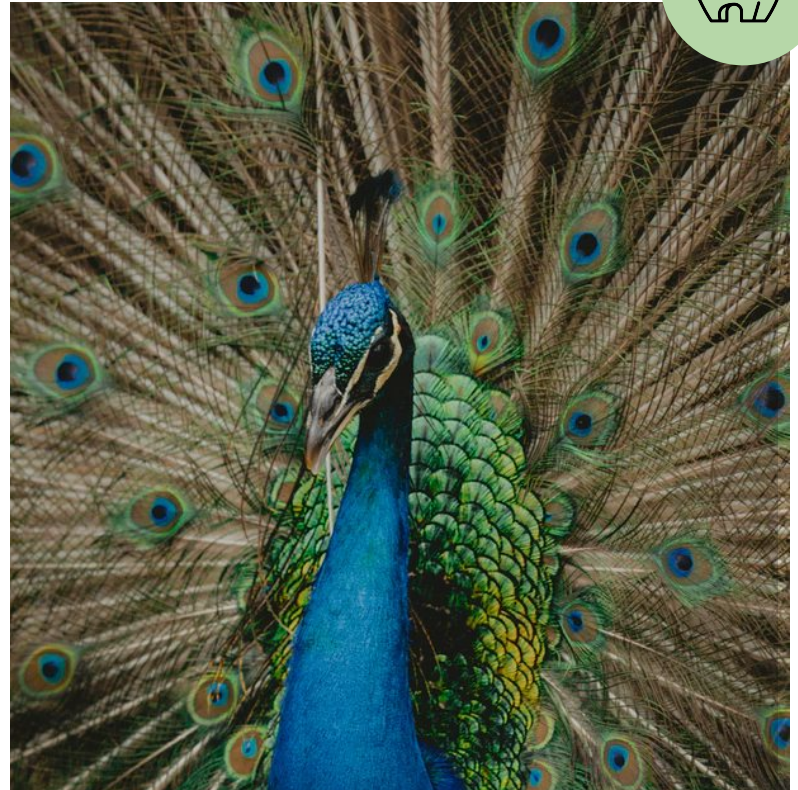
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College Programs

Center of **Community** Service

Facilitates partnerships between community organizations and university resources (students, staff, faculty)

- 3,854 students engaged
- 250 community partners





Organizations within CCS

Husky Volunteer Team

3-10 students work with a community partner for a semester (4 months)

Service Finder

An online portal that anyone in the Northeastern Community can use to look for service opportunities.

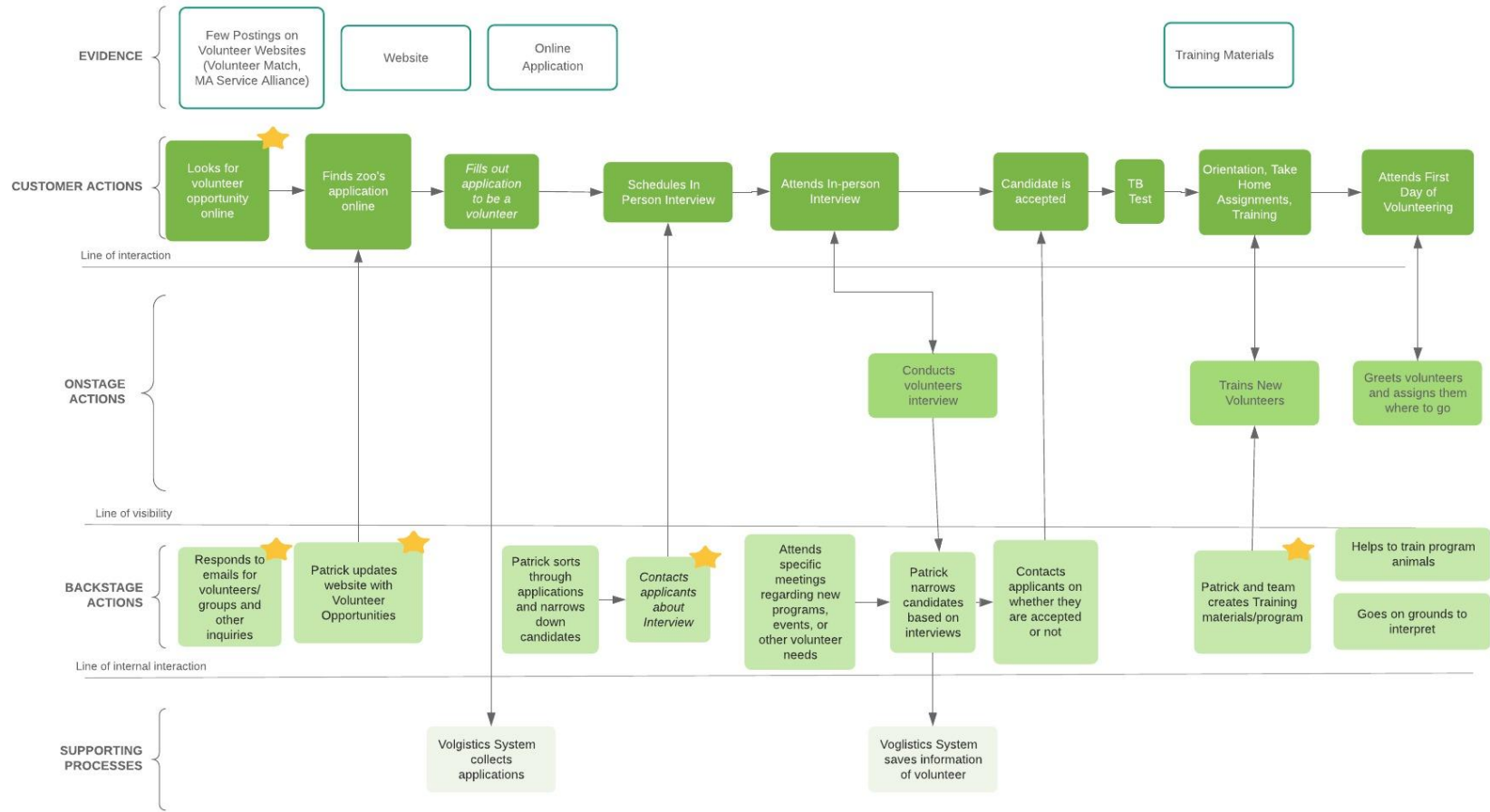
Fall Volunteer Fair

Networking event where representatives from Non-profit organizations can share information on service opportunities.



Alpha Phi Omega

- Nationally Recognized Co-ed Service Fraternity
- 90 members
- 20 hour minimum/semester but many exceed
- Work with over 50 organizations set up as either weekly volunteers or hold one large event with community partner





Patrick's day-to-day



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Northeastern Co-op



Northeastern Co-op Program

Leveraging the co-op program will help with expanding the zoo's staff presence and also increase word-of-mouth and raise brand awareness with college students.



Why the Co-op Program?



- Access to Boston's most competitive and qualified students for 6 month increments
- Joining a network of over 3,000 employers globally
- Utilize as a recruiting tool for full time staff
- Infusion of new ideas and perspectives



Co-op Job Description

- Acting as support to volunteer coordinators
- Developing a recruiting strategy
- Social media strategy for the volunteer program
- Establish feedback loop for the volunteer program
- Putting on programs for volunteers
- Applying for grants



Cost of Co-ops

Option 1 - Paid

- \$12/hr
 - Approx \$11k for 6 months
- Access to wider pool of students
 - Business and CAMD Students
- Higher commitment throughout the week
 - Typical 40 hour/week

Option 2 - Unpaid

- Able to flex co-op hours depending on the need
 - Part-time 20 hours or less
- Smaller pool of students
 - Eliminates Business school students as they must be full time and paid
- Makes position less competitive





Action Plan: Timeline and Growth Opportunities

Fall 2019

Start interviewing candidates for Co-op position

Reach out to Northeastern volunteer programs to prepare for the Spring term

Spring 2020

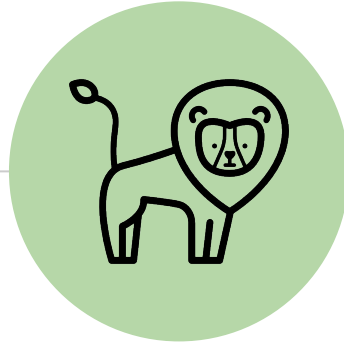
Center for Community Service and APhiO students begin volunteering

First Co-op has started and helped with establishing clear goals for the position

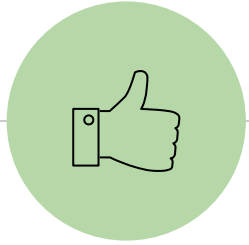
Fall 2020

Expand to other college volunteer Programs

Consider adding additional co-op positions (Event Planning and Marketing)



Final Thoughts



Thanks!

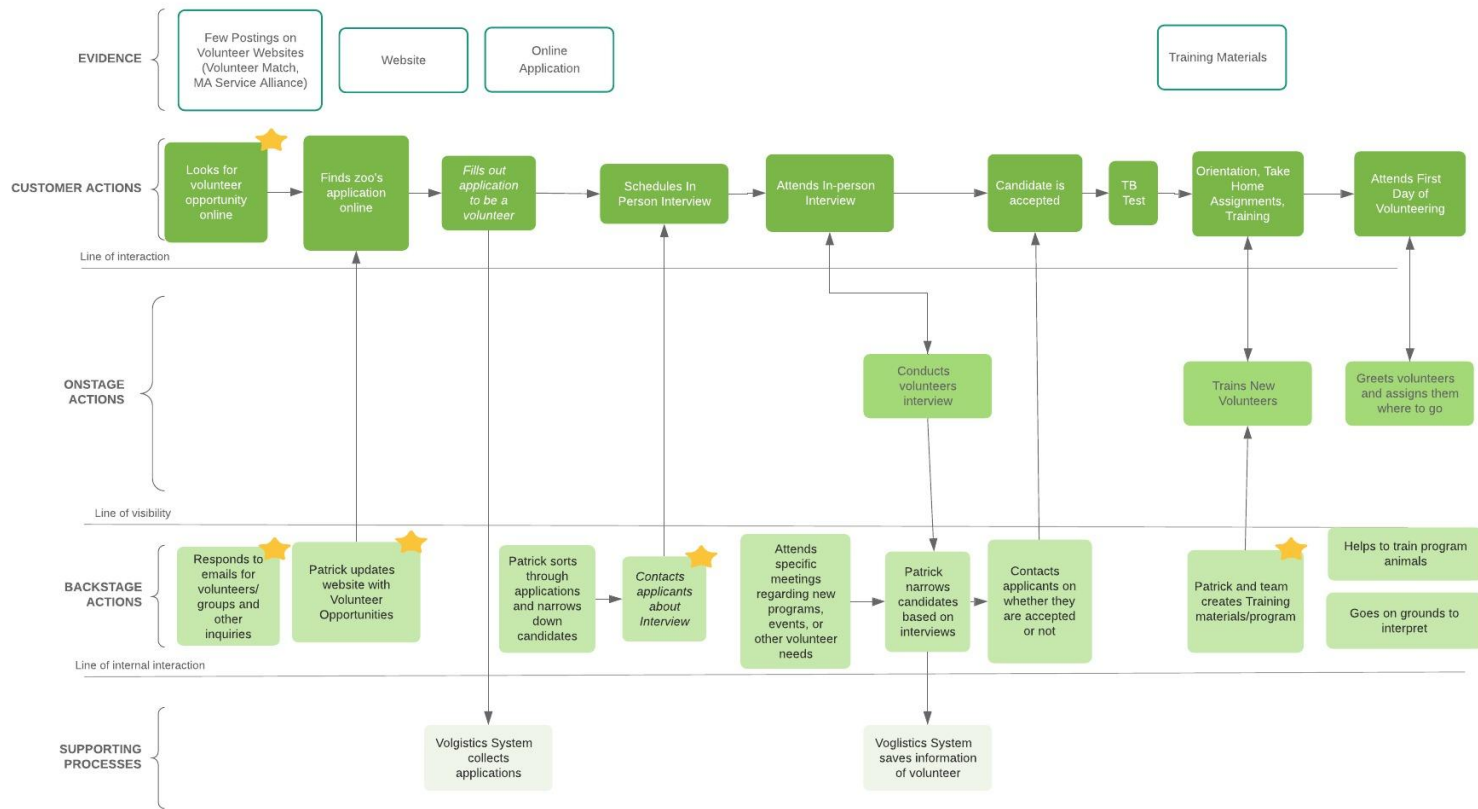
Any questions ?

Appendix

Abstract

Our presentation focuses on strengthening the Volunteer Program regarding awareness, retention, and consistency. After talking to Patrick, the Volunteer Coordinator, and other past volunteers, we have identified some areas of potential improvement within the program. The Franklin Park Zoo is looking to have a larger volunteer force that can help each season, and for those volunteers to return the following seasons. Volunteers provide help for the Franklin Park Zoo by acting as a support system for customers during their visits. We want to work with Northeastern's Center for Community Service and other Northeastern volunteer groups to first reach a wider market of volunteers and encourage interaction among college students. We understand this will require a great amount of effort in coordinating more volunteers, so to account for this we are suggesting to hire a co-op to specifically focus on developing the volunteer program and aiding Patrick with administrative work. The co-op will strategize to increase awareness for the volunteer program, develop acquisition techniques, and manage retention efforts while Patrick and his team can focus their time on other important tasks.

Full Blueprint



Volunteer Program Contact Information

Alpha Phi Omega: Chapters in Boston

Northeastern University:

Email: northeasternapo@gmail.com

Boston University:

Email: apoterrier@gmail.com

Emerson College:

Email: emersonapo1880@gmail.com

Community Service Centers

Northeastern University: communityservice@northeastern.edu

Boston University: bucsc@bu.edu

FAQs for Co-Op

- Overview of D'Amore-Mckim Co-ops
 - <https://damore-mckim.northeastern.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/dmsb-coop-overview0317.pdf>
 - Contact Information
 - Elizabeth Larson
 - el.larson@northeastern.edu
- CAMD Co-op Contact
 - Dori Peleg Mazor
 - d.mazor@northeastern.edu
- Co-op Employer Handbook
 - <https://careers.northeastern.edu/app/uploads/Co-op-Employer-Handbook-Update.pdf>
- Employer Experiences
 - <https://careers.northeastern.edu/employers/>

Co-op Job Description

- Acting as support to volunteer coordinators
 - Allows management to focus on higher level projects
 - Delegating much of the nuanced day to day i.e. volunteer scheduling, filling in for no shows etc.
- Developing a recruiting strategy
 - Segmenting the volunteers into groups and creating a recruiting strategy for each
 - Segments will likely include: college students, retirees, high school students etc.
- Social media strategy for the volunteer program
 - Showcase daily excitements of being a volunteer
- Establish feedback loop for the volunteer program
 - Survey creation and analysis
 - Informal interviews
- Putting on programs for volunteers
 - Social gatherings
 - Informational programs
- Applying for grants
 - Securing funding to grow individual and group volunteer programs