



Her words changed the world.

HISTORIC INTERPRETER

Position Description

Scope of Responsibilities:

The Historic Interpreter bridges the present and the past with tours of the Harriet Beecher Stowe House, Katharine Seymour Day House and the Stowe Center's Victorian-style gardens, providing visitors with an understanding of the people and issues that give the historic site meaning. The Historic Interpreter is a member of the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center staff team and carries out the Center's policies, procedures and mission. The Interpreter is responsible for creating a welcoming environment for visitors and providing excellent customer service.

Specific Duties:

- Conduct engaging, accurate and informative tours that provide visitors with an understanding of Stowe's life and wider context of 19th century America, the historical and cultural impact of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and her other writings, and the site's historic architecture, gardens and decorative arts
- Perform duties needed for effective visitor services, such as assisting at the Front Desk and in the Museum Shop, and various administrative and interpretive duties
- Continually improve interpreting skills. Use available Stowe resources (staff and library) to increase related knowledge
- Maintain flexible work schedule and be able to work one weekend day per month and special events when needed
- Complete one independent project, per year, that supports mission, training and programs. (For example: assist with curriculum development, research content for a new thematic tour or write an article for the Stowe Center newsletter.)
- Attend scheduled all-staff and guide training meetings
- Be prepared to give more than one kind of tour of the Harriet Beecher Stowe House
- Help keep museum shop neat and tidy (occasional vacuuming, cleaning glass fixtures and doors, and light dusting)
- Support Education and Visitor Services Department as needed
- Must be available to work on Harriet Beecher Stowe Birthday in June and at least one National Holiday

On-the-Job Training:

The trainee uses selected readings, tour observations, and other information and techniques to prepare a tour that includes interpretive themes. Guides engage in professional development activities sponsored by the Stowe Center and self-initiated such as readings and field trips to similar sites.

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Qualifications:

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Enjoy dealing with public of all ages
- Ability to assimilate and organize large amounts of information and present it accurately and in an engaging manner
- Interest/background in American studies, African American history, Women's Studies, architecture, or decorative arts
- Ability to move among three buildings on site (Visitor Center, Stowe and Day Houses) and between floors within these buildings
- Ability to conduct multiple tours per day

Hours:

This is a part-time position and the hours vary. All Interpreters work some scheduled weekend hours and attend monthly guide meetings/training sessions.

Benefits:

- 20% discount on Museum Shop purchases
- Benefits of the Stowe Center Membership in the Greater Hartford Association of Historic House Museums (GHAHHM)
- Ongoing training, lectures and professional development field trips

The Harriet Beecher Stowe Center preserves and interprets Stowe's Hartford home and the Center's historic collections, promotes vibrant discussion of her life and work, and inspires commitment to social justice and positive change.

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