



NEWS RELEASE:

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Docent and Volunteer Open House at the Hermitage Museum

Norfolk, Virginia - The Hermitage Museum and Gardens will hold two *Docent and Volunteer Open Houses* in August. The first *Open House* will be held Saturday, August 8th and the second will be held Monday, August 10th. Those interested in learning more about the volunteer program can visit the Hermitage at any time between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. for an informal talk with the Museum's Volunteer Coordinator. Brief informational tours will occur every half hour.

Volunteer opportunities include but are not limited to the following positions: Museum Docent, Garden Docent, Greeter and Reception Attendant, Garden Team, and Exhibitions Assistant. **While the Hermitage welcomes volunteers to fill all positions, the need for Museum and Garden Docents is highest at this time.**

The Hermitage's *Docent Training Program*, unveiled in 2007, has been a huge success. The first two classes have graduated and are currently providing tours and educational programs of the museum and wetlands to the public. One of the program's newest graduates, Sheila Jamison-Schwartz, had this to say about the program: "I saw joining the Docent Program as a chance to learn more about this place that has intrigued me for years and years. I love the professional atmosphere, the dedication, and the excitement of everyone I've met at the Hermitage."

The key role of Museum Docents is to lead tours through the Hermitage, focusing on both the history of the site and Sloane family, as well as a world renowned art collection that spans over 5,000 years. Garden Docents continue to focus on the Hermitage's recently restored Wetlands, providing tours and programs for both school and community groups.

With ever increasing public request for tours, the Hermitage needs community involvement to meet that demand. Becoming a Docent gives individuals the opportunity to gain and share information about art, art history, and horticulture and to meet others with similar interests. Additional benefits include free admission to the Museum, free admission to Museum sponsored lectures and programs, and advance notice of Museum programs, workshops, and classes.

For more information on the *Docent and Volunteer Open House*, visit www.thfm.org, or contact Beth Usry, Tours & Events Manager and Volunteer Coordinator, at 757-423-2052 x 300 or bu@thfm.org.

The Hermitage offers 45-minute guided tours, on the hour, of fifteen galleries filled with the Sloane family world-wide art collection, furniture, and history. The Visual Arts School houses classrooms, a complete ceramics studio, and darkroom photography facilities. Open daily 10-5, Sundays 1-5—closed Wednesdays. Free for Museum Members, children under 6, and Active Duty military. Admission: \$5 for Adults, \$2 for ages 6-18, and \$3 for students. For more information on the museum and membership offerings call 757-423-2052 or visit www.thfm.org.

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