

**DATE:** October 5, 2016  
**TO:** Senior Docents  
**FROM:** Debbi  
**RE:** Jr. Docent Mentoring Program

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Thank you for your important work as a mentor to a junior docent. We are sending you this memo to outline the process for the second year of training and mentoring. You will be instrumental in helping junior docents experience working with children as they follow your tours and begin to present objects on their own. During your tours, please do the following things:

- Clearly state the theme for your tour and reinforce it with your transitions
- Model open-ended inquiry (including VTS questions, where appropriate)
- Paraphrase comments from the group
- Use age-appropriate language
- Model good group management and other important skills for working with children

**It is the responsibility of the junior docents to let you know when they are ready to begin following tours.** We are asking them to begin as soon as they can. After your junior docent calls you, **it is your responsibility to keep her/him informed of when you will be doing children's tours.**

To give the junior docents a positive experience observing and participating in children's tours, we ask that you follow these guidelines:

1. Each junior docent is required to follow and participate in at least four tours. On the first tour, the junior docent will observe. By the fourth tour, s/he may present about half the objects. Please allow time before the tours to explain touring logistics. Always allow some time following the tours for questions and to give juniors constructive feedback if they presented objects.
2. It is up to the junior docent to decide when s/he is ready to present objects. You will decide together which object(s) those will be. Juniors will be able to do most anything they have studied in docent training up to this point. In the first year we covered world art through the 1600s; from September through December we are discussing art from the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Islamic world (Age of Empire), China (through Ming and Qing dynasties), Japan (through Edo period), Europe (through Academic Realism), and Euro-America (through colonial period and early U.S.).
3. The junior docents are eager to do tours! If you have any questions regarding your role as a mentor, please contact Kara ZumBahlen, junior docent training assistant.  
Phone: 612-870-6459  
Email: kzumbahlen@artsmia.org

We have included the sheet of instructions that the juniors were given. Thank you for your help and have fun!

## Following Children's Tours with your Mentor

Due December 14\*\*

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You are required to follow at least four children's tours with your mentor over the next few months. Your goal is to gain experience working with children, along with knowledge of suitable tour topics. Ideally, each tour you follow would have a different subject. Safari, The Magic of Myth, Mysteries in the Museum, Off the Wall: Sculpture at Mia, and Why is the Sky Yellow? Artist's Choices are possibilities, but by far the most common children's tour is Absolutely Fabulous: Highlights of the Museum's Collection.

For the first tour, plan to just observe. By the second or third tour (whenever you feel ready), you may present an object or two. By the fourth time, you may wish to do half the tour. You and your mentor will work this out together. After each tour, record what you did on the Touring with Your Mentor form.

You may follow more than four tours, in fact we encourage you to follow as many as you like. We ask you **not** to follow tours during scheduled class time. We encourage you to follow tours with other docents besides your mentor, as well—provided that you **let them know in advance**.

**It is your responsibility to contact your mentor** to let her or him know when you are ready to begin. Your mentor is responsible for letting you know when s/he is giving children's tours. We have also attached a copy of the letter sent to the mentors.

You will receive 1 tour credit for this assignment. Please let Paula or Jennifer know the date, time, and person you toured with for the last tour.

**Let us know early in the process if, for any reason, your touring relationship is not working, and we will assign you a new mentor.** This is a crucial component to your training and we want it to be a positive experience for all of you. Enjoy!

\*\*If possible, turn in Touring with Your Mentor forms by **December 14**. Because of the Luther exhibition, we will adjust the due date for those who are unable to follow school tours with their mentors by this date.