

**Skokie Public Library
Community Engagement Department**

Position: Dog Therapy Programming Assistant

Major Objective:

To assist library patrons in the Rainbow Therapy Time program by facilitating child-dog interaction with the goals of overcoming anxiety, strengthening motor skills, building social skills and practicing verbal skills.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Help participants rotate to different stations and stay actively involved in the activities (e.g. brush the dog, walk the dog, give a command)
- Work with the dog handlers to build and nurture the relationships between participants and the dogs
- Assist with behavior management of participants
- Communicate participants' progress and experience to parents/caregivers
- Document participants' experiences each month

Qualifications and Requirements:

- Experience with children with disabilities, including autism and Downs Syndrome
- Awareness of various behaviors and ways to effectively respond
- Knowledge of redirection and comfort techniques
- Background in education, special education, therapy or nursing preferred
- Strong communication skills with children and adults
- Good problem solving skills
- Comfort around various types of dogs

Supervisor:

The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for administrative supervision of the volunteer. The librarian planning and conducting the program is responsible for direct supervision of the volunteer during the program.

Orientation and Training:

- A mandatory training session led by Rainbow Animal Assisted Therapy staff to explain the volunteer's specific duties and responsibilities

Work Schedule:

The Rainbow Therapy Time program is held one time per month (October through May) on the third Sunday of the month from 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. Volunteers are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to the start time of the program and remain 15 minutes after the program to debrief with parents and library staff.

Commitment Required:

Because consistency with participants is important and a special training session is required in order to assist with the program, a volunteer is asked to commit to attend all 8 sessions.