

Docent: Teacher, Guide, Interpreter

Be a part of UMMA's award-winning docent corps. UMMA is seeking volunteers who represent the diverse community we serve for our fall 2018 class. Everything you'll need to know about this program is detailed below, including how to apply. If you have questions, contact Grace Vandervliet at mdegroo@umich.edu.

What is a Docent?

As tour guides and gallery interpreters, docents bring art to life for thousands of visitors each year. Docents guide visitors toward a personal connection with art as they create an inviting and interactive environment where individual discovery and a deeper appreciation and understanding can occur. For docent perspectives on their work, [click here](#).

What do UMMA Docents do?

Tour Design and deliver tours for museum visitors of all ages, particularly young students in grades K–6.

Represent Serve as hosts to museum visitors. Docents expand the reach and influence of the museum by increasing public awareness and appreciation of the museum, its collections, special exhibitions, events, and programs.

Learn Attend workshops and training sessions to stay up-to-date on the collections, special exhibitions, and strategies for effective gallery teaching.

Volunteer Participate in project groups, serve on committees, and accept positions on the Docent Board.

What are the requirements for being a successful UMMA Docent?

You have an interest in art.

You enjoy working and interacting with people of all ages and background, especially young children.

You have access to and regularly use email.

You are physically able to perform tours which require walking, standing for long periods, climbing stairs, carrying baskets containing teaching materials, assisting small children, using good voice projection, and hearing the small voices of our patrons.

You work and play well with others. This includes having excellent communication skills, flexibility in a pinch, teamwork and creativity.

You pass a standard State of Michigan background check, facilitated by UMMA staff.

Do I have to be an art history expert?

No. A background in art, art history, or teaching is **not required**. Individuals accepted into the program will receive training that covers what they need to know in those areas.

What about training? How long will it take? How flexible is the schedule?

Docent training will be experiential, practical, and conceptual. Trainees observe experienced docents, learn the history of selected objects, and create sample tours. They learn the art and art history of the UMMA collections (strengths are African, American, Asian, and European art), age-appropriate touring techniques, gallery teaching strategies, a variety of learning styles, and museum operations as needed.

Docents are required to make a **commitment to three years of volunteer service**, the training year being the first year of commitment. Most docents remain in the program after the initial three years.

Year One New recruits are invited to the annual docent picnic in June, and begin formal training in September, 2018. Training sessions will be Mondays and Thursdays from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm, through May, 2019. Trainees are expected to attend **all** sessions.

Years Two and Three Docents join a core tour group which meets for about three hours, one day a week, September through May. During this period, docents give scheduled tours in the galleries, evaluate and document tour outcomes, and plan future tours. In addition, docents spend individual time preparing for tours (two to six hours a week), as needed. Also, **Continuing Education (CE)** sessions and workshops are scheduled September through May, usually on Monday afternoons, approximately twice a month. Docents are expected to attend all CE sessions during years two and three and for the duration of their docent career.

Year Three and Beyond After three years of service, docents may elect to work on adult tours for college students and members of the community. Some docents continue to work with children, others focus on in-depth preparation for special exhibitions or university student visits, while others elect to work with people with memory loss.

Vacations Trainees are expected to attend **all** training sessions. We do not schedule classes during the Ann Arbor Public School winter and spring breaks and encourage trainees to vacation at that time. After training is complete, additional vacation days can be scheduled by arranging for a substitute on the day(s) the docent will be away.

Are there any costs involved in becoming a docent?

Docents pay \$20.00 per year into a social fund. Docents in the program are responsible for their own transportation and parking expenses.

Why should I consider becoming a docent?

Most UMMA docents would say that the benefits they receive far outweigh the time they have put into the program and they describe personal rewards such as:

- the satisfaction of seeing a visitor connect with art and the joy that comes from working with children;
- the chance to make new and lasting friendships with others who share common interests;
- personal and intellectual growth. Docents are offered a myriad of learning opportunities every year that include guest speakers, workshops, lectures, activities, and events, often in interactive learning formats. This is a great program for those who love to learn.

Before you apply, ask yourself if you can satisfy the commitments of the program detailed above and summarized here:

Year One Trainees are required to attend **all** training sessions, September, 2018, through May, 2019, two days per week, Mondays and Thursdays, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Year Two and Three Docents are required to participate in weekly tours and meetings, September through May (approximately three hours per week plus individual prep time), and attend **all** Continuing Education sessions.

Application Timetable:

- February through March, 2018: accepting applications.
- April: interviewing candidates.
- May: selecting and notifying of candidates.
- September, 2018: training begins

If you are interested and can satisfy the requirements of the program, we welcome your application!

Docent Application Guidelines, 2018-19

If you have questions, contact Grace Vandervliet at mdegroo@umich.edu.

Please email your completed application (see below) with **UMMA Docent Application 2018** in the subject line, **by March 23, 2018**, to Grace Vandervliet.

In submitting your application, you acknowledge that you have read and you understand the commitments that are required of the UMMA Docent Program and that you are prepared to fulfill all the requirements of the training program and the commitment to the subsequent two years of touring.

Application

Please answer the following questions. Be thorough, but limit your submission to no more than three pages. Be sure to keep a copy for yourself.

1. Name
2. Street Address
3. Email Address
4. Phone: (cell, home, other and the best time/way to reach you)
5. Comment on why you would like to become part of the Docent Program at UMMA.
6. Provide a brief summary of your work experience and/or community involvement and how those experiences might be valuable to the UMMA Docent Program.
7. Summarize your educational background.
8. Share some of your interests and non-work related experiences.
9. Describe your current time commitments including work, volunteer activities, involvement in outside organizations, etc.
10. Describe anything else you would like us to know about you and your interest in the Docent Program at UMMA.
11. Please let us know where you first heard about the program and what sparked your interest to learn more.