



Perspectives: The Summer College Volunteer Program

Each summer, the National Museum of Mathematics (MoMath) welcomes eight to twelve college volunteers into the *Perspectives* program. MoMath is highly selective in this process, requiring a high level of enthusiasm for math, a high degree of mathematical competency, and strong interpersonal and social skills. Students who complete *Perspectives* gain a strong level of knowledge and experience in what it takes to operate a successful business, as well as exposure to a variety of interesting events, lectures and people.

Perspectives is a full-time summer program, with an expected commitment of five days per week, for a minimum of eight weeks. Since the Museum is a seven-day institution, it is likely that some weekend days or occasional evenings will be included in lieu of some weekdays — but MoMath works hard to honor stated preferences in setting the schedule. The program typically includes time spent in three places: on the floor of the Museum, in the retail shop, and at MoMath’s administrative offices. Requests to focus on any one of those three areas will be seriously considered, but some amount of experience in each area is important in gaining the full value of the program experience. In the absence of any particular request, time spent on the floor of the Museum will be about twice the amount of time spent in either of the other two locations.

Previous students have worked on a variety of projects, including designing an attendance tracking report for the Museum, assisting in running a conference for over 300 people, working as counselors in MoMath’s summer camp, attending off-site festivals, and supporting several monthly presentation series. This is all in addition to the things one might expect from working in a museum: helping visitors on the floor interact with the exhibits; providing advice and assistance to those wishing to make a purchase in the retail shop; and participating in the administration of the Museum’s many programs and services. Note that the program considers the particular strengths of each student: those with a strong IT background may be asked to work on technical projects, those with camp experience may be asked to act as counselors, etc. There is also significant flexibility — the Museum staff provides a list of potential projects, and each student is given the opportunity to select the project or projects that will be most meaningful to him or her.

Approximately once per week, the students come together as a group, to share their experiences and to learn from each other. A member of the permanent staff or a visiting guest is often invited to share his/her own experiences and answer questions. MoMath staff members are a skilled team, including a number of math PhDs and others with impressive credentials in their fields; the weekly meetings are a high point of the program for most students.

MoMath believes *Perspectives* provides a valuable experience for college students and welcomes all candidates. Application forms are available at <http://momath.org/jobs>.

Note that participation in *Perspectives* is unpaid.