

Dr. Beatrice Beebe Volunteer Job Description NYS Psychiatric Institute Beginning April/June/September 2008

Our Lab is located in the Department of Communication Sciences, New York State Psychiatric Institute (NYSPI), 1051 Riverside Drive. NYSPI is a joint product of Columbia University and New York State. Joseph Jaffe, MD, is the chief of the Department of Communication Sciences, and Beatrice Beebe, PhD is his collaborator. The Lab has two components, (1) a basic research program on mother-infant face to face communication and its associations with attachment and cognition, and (2) a combination treatment and research project for mothers who were pregnant and widowed on 9-11 and their young children.

We run our lab with volunteers. Currently, we have 10 volunteers from various schools around the city. A volunteer position in our lab is ideal for students who are between college and graduate school, who are interested in research experience, and who want to get into a PhD program in Clinical or Developmental Psychology. We also would consider undergraduates with strong research interests.

Dr. Beebe holds teaching sessions for her PhD students and volunteers once or twice a month in her home. This is an opportunity to learn the basic research of the lab, new papers being produced in the lab, and the context of the work in the field.

As you will see from the job description below, these are difficult volunteer jobs and you will need to think carefully about whether or not they are right for you. I am looking for 2-year commitments, which will be difficult for many people, because I need the continuity. However, I will consider 1-year commitments in particular cases.

Our lab runs on Tuesdays from 12:30 to 9pm and Thursdays from 10am to 9pm. I'm looking for people who can give 6 hours on Tuesdays (anywhere from 12:30 to 9pm) AND who can work on Thursdays either (1) 10am to 6pm or (2) 1pm to 8-9pm. Some Tuesdays the lab closes at 7:30pm, and every other Thursday the lab closes at 6pm. There is some flexibility in these hours around conflicts with class times.

9-11 Mothers and Young Children Project

This project involves a mother-child and therapist-child split-screen face-to-face filming in our lab Thursdays, 10am to 1pm. Several of our 9-11 child therapists attend the filming. We also take sophisticated audio recordings for vocal rhythm analysis. The following week, the mother receives a therapeutic viewing of the videotape with the therapists in Dr. Beebe's downtown office.

We are seeking volunteers as members of the filming team. Experience with children is a plus. The 9-11 Project involves a particularly vulnerable group and requires a great deal of training. Once you are a part of the team, I need to rely on your expertise because the filming is so emotionally difficult. Thursday afternoon might be spent copying videotapes, writing up notes of the session and assisting with the administration of the 9-11 project, including fund-raising.

Volunteers need an easy temperament, the capacity to handle high emotional stress, a warm and engaging manner with people, good video and audio equipment skills (or able to learn), attention to detail and the ability to work closely with many other people in a small space in a high stress situation. This aspect of work is ideal for someone who wants to be a child therapist. You will see several skilled child therapists in action.

Basic Research Program

All our volunteers participate in our basic research program as well. We are conducting an NIMH-funded study of mother-infant interaction, stranger-infant interaction, and the prediction of infant attachment outcomes and communication patterns, as a function of maternal depression and anxiety.

In this aspect of the work, volunteers need to be able to work independently, to be highly organized, detail-oriented and patient; to have excellent computer skills and to work well with other people. Knowledge of Excel, SPSS, Powerpoint and Endnote are a plus. Duties include making tables, drawing illustrations of research findings for published papers and lectures, creation of reference lists in papers for publication, organization of big mailings, light photocopying and some administration of the office. This person works very closely with Dr. Beebe on a day-to-day basis, helping her to manage all research activities.

We are specifically hoping to find someone with a great deal of computer/technical knowledge who can troubleshoot routine computer glitches, maintain software/hardware, and AV equipment.

Please think carefully about whether these jobs fit your own lives right now because we cannot afford to have people drop out of these positions. I am very grateful for your interest. Please email me back. If you are interested, please ask 2 people from the academic community to email me with a short recommendation. Do not hesitate to email me with any questions (beebebe@pi.cpmc.columbia.edu).