

31 August 2009

Good Day,

It's hard to believe that summer is over and that school is in full swing. The staff at Wichita Festivals, Inc. is busy making plans for Riverfest, which will take place May 7th – 15th, 2010. A part of that process includes the Prairie Schooner Mate selection process.

The purpose of the Prairie Schooner Mate Program is to highlight area youth leaders and their high schools by providing youth ambassadors for this important cultural city event. The students help create interest for future generations to participate in an event that boasts attendance of over 250,000 people each year.

Enclosed in this packet you will find a job description for the Prairie Schooner Mate Program, a list of selection criteria and application forms. Please submit the names of 4 junior students (2 male and 2 female) who you feel would represent your school, community and their peers in a fun loving, diverse and respectful way. As ambassadors of the 9-day Festival, applicants must be responsible, outgoing, friendly and comfortable speaking in public. Nominated students should also have excellent time management skills and be studious, as the Prairie Schooner Mate Program requires a serious time commitment. Due to the time commitment, we strongly discourage spring athletes from applying.

Each student and school official will need to fill out the application, checking off the satisfied criteria, attach the letters of recommendation and return them to the Wichita Festivals, Inc. office postmarked or faxed no later than 5:00 pm on **Friday, October 9, 2009**. The Prairie Schooner Mate selection committee will set up panel style interviews with the candidates in late October and early November. The selection committee will select one student from each school to serve as Prairie Schooner Mate. Final selection for the 2010 Prairie Schooner Mate program will be made in late November.

The Prairie Schooner Mate program is not just about 9-days of fun, but a lifetime of friends, community celebration and civic pride. Please feel free to contact me at 267.2817 or at kimw@wichitafestivals.com with any questions you have regarding the program. Thank you for taking the time to help offer this wonderful opportunity to your juniors. I look forward to working with you and your students in the future.

Sincerely,

Kim Wickliffe
Volunteer Manager
Wichita Festivals, Inc.

Selection Criteria School Administrator's Copy

The mission of Wichita Festivals Inc. is "Community Celebration". With this mission in mind, we are looking for responsible students to participate in the Prairie Schooner Mate program. Students should represent the diversity in our community and be willing to project a positive enthusiasm for their school, community and for Riverfest. The Prairie Schooner Mate program is designed to highlight the talented youth leaders of area high schools while increasing youth enthusiasm and participation in Riverfest events.

The Prairie Schooner Mate selection committee consists of the Volunteer Manager, Prairie Schooner Mate chaperone, a past Admiral Windwagon Smith and a Past Prairie Schooner Mate, they will interview and select one candidate to represent each school.

We respectfully request that each school submit at least four candidates for consideration (two female and two male). As you are making selections from your school, please keep the following criteria in mind. Students should:

- ☞ Have a GPA of 2.75 or above
- ☞ Be Responsible and have a friendly, outgoing personality
- ☞ Have the ability to express themselves comfortably and confidently in front of people
- ☞ Be highly skilled in time management
- ☞ Have a low absenteeism rate (total of 4 or fewer absences within a semester)
- ☞ Be highly motivated
- ☞ Have a strong sense of civic pride and community involvement
- ☞ Have strong customer service/people skills

Due to time conflicts, we strongly encourage student candidates who are NOT participating in Spring sports.

In addition, students will need to **submit two letters of recommendation. One from a school official and one from a personal contact.** This letter should address how the candidate satisfies the above criteria and any other pertinent information as to why he/she would be a successful Prairie Schooner Mate.

Deadline for applications: **5:00 pm on Friday, October 9, 2009.** Please mail or fax the application and the letters of recommendation for each of the **four** students to:

Wichita Festivals, Inc.
PSM Candidates
1820 E. Douglas
Wichita, KS 67214

Or fax to
316-267-5901
Attn: Kim Wickliffe

PRAIRIE SCHOONER MATE JOB DESCRIPTION

Prairie Schooner Mates are the Youth Ambassadors of the Riverfest. Students will help create excitement and interest about Riverfest events at their schools, within their peer groups and at festival events. This will be accomplished by the Prairie Schooner Mates enthusiastic participation in Riverfest events; through appearances and volunteering at Riverfest events and visitations to hospitals, nursing homes and schools. Additionally, Prairie Schooner Mates are expected to encourage purchasing buttons and attending Riverfest events within their schools.

Process for Selection

- October 9th: Deadline to Apply for Prairie Schooner Mate Program. All application forms with letters of recommendation due to Wichita Festivals, Inc. by 5:00 pm.
 - Be sure to include two letters of recommendation, one from a school administrator and one from a personal contact.
- October 12th – 16th Prairie Schooner Mate candidates to call the Wichita Festivals, Inc office (267-2817) to schedule their interview with the Selection Committee.
- October 19th – 30th: Interviews with the Prairie Schooner Mate Selection Committee. Panel style interviews with the prospective candidates; please dress as though interviewing for a job.
- November 2nd – 5th: Second interviews conducted if needed.
- November 13th: Final selection for 2009 Prairie Schooner Mates will be made.
- November 20th: Prairie Schooner Mate candidates will be notified of their acceptance in to the program.
- December 1st: Last day for students to withdraw from the Prairie Schooner Mate Program.

Guidelines

- Prairie Schooner Mate responsibilities begin in January 6th with the photo shoot for the festival guide.
- Prairie Schooner Mates are expected to attend all scheduled events and appearances. (See Estimated Time Commitments below)
- Prairie Schooner Mates are expected to be punctual. The schedule that we follow is very tight and sometimes five minutes can make the difference between appearing at an event or not.
- Prairie Schooner Mates are expected to conduct themselves as a true ambassador of the Festival and of their school. This means no abusive language, no public displays of affection and no drinking or smoking.
- Cell phones: While you are representing your school and Wichita Festivals, Inc. as a Prairie Schooner Mate, cell phones are to remain off.
- Prairie Schooner Mates are expected to wear the designated uniform for the day. Shirts will be provided by Wichita Festivals.
- As an alumnus the following year, Prairie Schooner Mates are also expected to help with the recruiting and interview process for the next year's Prairie Schooner Mates.

Estimated Time Commitments for Current Prairie Schooner Mates

Early January 6 th :	Photo shoot for the Riverfest Guide
January 19 th :	Prairie Schooner Mate Parent Orientation
February 15 th :	Prairie Schooner Mate team building day (location to be determined, expect an 8.5-hour day) this is also President's Day when most schools will be out of session for the day.
Early March:	Press conference announcing Admiral and Prairie Schooner Mates (high school journalism and yearbook departments should plan to attend this press conference)
Early March:	Riverfest Button Packaging begins
Early March:	Prairie Schooner Mate Family Night – button packaging.
March 15 th -19 th :	Prairie Schooner Mate to assist with United Way Youth Days of Caring Project at the WFI office
April 2 nd or 9 th :	All day civic tour to various organizations/hospitals
May:	Pre-festival set up
May:	RIVERFEST! (All times subject to change. Final schedule provided to students in April)

First Friday:	5:00 pm to 10:00 pm
First Saturday:	7:30 am to 10:00 pm
Sunday:	11:00 am – 10:00 pm
Monday – Thursday:	4:30 pm – 10:00 pm
Second Friday:	4:30 pm to 11:00 pm
Second Saturday:	7:30 am to 11:30 pm

This is a big commitment. Prairie Schooner Mates will log well over 80 hour of community service during the year with a majority of those hours occurring during the nine-day festival.

A Note About Safety:

Wichita Festivals, Inc office located at 1820 E Douglas is the "home base" for the Prairie Schooner Mates. Their day begins and ends at our office. They travel to & from festival events by bus. During the festival they are accompanied by the "PSM Mom's", the Admiral and the bus driver. When they have free time in a specific area they are to remain in groups of 4 or 5. No student is ever allowed to be by themselves at our events. Parents can reach their students by contacting the "PSM Mom's".

PRAIRIE SCHOONER MATE APPLICATION FORM

*Deadline: mailed or faxed by 5:00 pm, Friday, October 9, 2009
1820 E. Douglas, Wichita, KS 67214 · phone 267-2817 · fax 267-5901*

High School Information (please use blue/black ink and type or print clearly):

School Name

Address City Zip

School Administrator First Name Last Name Title

Email Phone Fax

Nominated Student Information (please use blue/black ink and type or print clearly):

Male _____ Female _____ Shirt Size _____ Shoe Size _____

First Name Last Name

Address City Zip

Email

Home Phone Cell

GPA _____

Number of Absences _____
Fall 2008 Spring 2009 Fall 2009

Parent Contact Information (please use blue/black ink and type or print clearly):

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Home Phone _____ Cell _____

Checklist:

- High school junior
- Attach Letter of Recommendation from School Administrator/Teacher
- Responsible, friendly, outgoing personality
- Ability to speak and express themselves comfortably and confidently in front of people.
- Highly skilled in time management.
- Low absenteeism rate. (total of 4 or fewer absences within a semester)
- Highly motivated.
- Strong sense of civic pride and community involvement.
- Strong customer service/people skills.
- Not** participating in Spring sports.

Suggested School Announcement for Prairie Schooner Mate Program

ATTENTION ALL JUNIORS! Do you love meeting new people? Are you outgoing, enthusiastic and motivated? Then you should apply for the 2010 Prairie Schooner Mate Program!

Experience Riverfest, as you never have before; see what it really takes to put on the biggest party in Wichita and one of the largest special events in the state of Kansas. This is a great opportunity to represent your school, meet business professionals and network with area juniors. You can even earn community service hours for your involvement!

If you are interested, stop by (junior class counselor or principal's name) office to learn more about the program and pick-up an application.

Don't miss out on this amazing volunteer opportunity, only **one** junior from each school will be chosen to participate. Deadline for submitting an application is by 5:00pm on Friday, October 9, 2009.