This spring: PAL Partners work two half-day weekend shifts per month, for 6 weeks beginning in March and one half-day special event shift March, April or May. Interviews will be held the week of February 16, and those accepted must attend an orientation and training. Application deadline for spring: Monday, February 10th by 5 pm.

This summer: PAL Partners work one half-day shift per week for 10 weeks beginning June 14 and one half-day weekend or one Tuesday evening shift per month for June, July and August (exceptions can be made for family vacations). Interviews will be held the week of May 17, and those accepted must attend an orientation and training. Application deadline for summer: Monday, May 11 by 5 pm.

This fall: PAL Partners work two half-day weekend shifts per month, for 6 weeks beginning in September and one half-day special event shift September, October or November. Interviews will be held the week of August 16th, and those accepted must attend an orientation and training. Application deadline for fall: Monday, August 10 by 5 pm.

PAL Partners have fun, engage with their peers, staff and guests while carrying out a variety of responsibilities in the Lena Meijer Children’s Garden:

- Assist PALS (Play and Activity Leaders) with Discovery Carts and other engaging activities—monitoring toy boats in the Great Lakes Garden, creating clay sculptures with real artists’ tools, painting kanji characters with water, reading alongside sculptures to guests, matching animal tracks to pelts and many others.
- Gather materials for and monitor special presentations by artists, musicians, scientists, and story-time presenters.
- Straighten and maintain the Rock Quarry, Tree House Village, Beaver Lodge, Log Cabin and Story-Telling Hut and assorted materials.
- Work with Children’s Garden staff to provide fun and memorable experiences for all guests.

Application process:

1. To be eligible, applicants must be at least 14 years old OR entering 9th to 12th grade in the fall.
2. Fill out an application by downloading it from our web site at MeijerGardens.org/volunteer. Only one application is required for spring, summer and fall volunteering.
3. Include three letters of recommendation (teacher, volunteer or work experience) and a paragraph written by you explaining why you want to be a PAL Partner. Make sure your application is complete and turned in by the deadlines listed above.
4. After we review your complete application, you will be contacted. Interviews will take place after school. You will be notified of program acceptance via email/phone call the same week. Accepted applicants are required to purchase a PAL Partner T-shirt ($12).

Become a Lena Meijer Children’s Garden PAL Partner this spring, summer or fall. You choose!

Work in all ten themed areas of the Children’s Garden, gain valuable experience, make new friends, fulfill school requirements, add to your resume and have fun. Become a PAL Partner!
PAL Partners have said:

“This year I helped children with visual impairments create sculptures with clay and helped an exchange student group make leaf rubbings. It was difficult but rewarding.”

“I love being a kid again—it’s a great experience.”

“It started out as something I did for college applications and to fill my volunteer requirements, but it turned into something that I looked forward to each week.”

“I had an awesome time each time I volunteered!”

“The kids are so cute and have so many questions.”

“This experience has taught me so much about how the little things we do can make a child’s day and that’s a beautiful thing.”

“The coolest part of being in the Lena Meijer Children’s Garden is the feeling that you helped out.”