



Career Discovery Internship Program


Presented By:

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The Players

- Student Conservation Association (SCA)
- Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Northeast Region (R5)
 - Southeast Region (R4)
 - Midwest Region (R3)
 - Alaska Region (R7)
 - Southwest Region (R2)  **New in 2014**

CDIP

- Introduces culturally and ethnically diverse college freshman and sophomores from all over the United States to careers with the USFWS
- Gives our staff the experience of working with culturally and ethnically diverse employees
- Improves the influx of culturally and ethnically diverse employees in Service applicant pools and within the Service ranks



Program Structure

- Train mentors and establish mentor/mentee relationships
- Pre-internship orientation (4-5 days) to introduce mentors and students, and provide a solid foundation for summer experiences
- Provide meaningful work experiences
- Engage supervisors
- Evaluate, counsel, and recommend interns for future positions



The History

- Two independently founded models: the Northeast and the Midwest (2008)
- National cohesion (2010) supported by the National Conservation Training Center
- Regional budget challenges necessitate differentiation (2014)

What Makes A Successful CDIP Program?

- Deliberate and passionate mentors
- Committed station managers and supervisors
- Sharing students' stories in their own words



Capstone Projects

- Tylar Greene – Region 5 Umbagog NWR 2010
<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/youth/video/2010/TylarGreeneVideo.html>
- Luis Anthony Ortiz – Region 7 Migratory Birds 2013
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZwoAJMv25A>
- Julie Gonzalez – Chincoteague NWR 2013
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWbRfLI9IUs>
- Victor Zhang – Blackwater NWR 2013
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQNne2gwjvl>
- Isaac Coleman – Bon Secour NWR 2011
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWit0EZwuJA>
- Full suite of capstone projects can be found at:
<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2C18C1CE6FEC3D40>

Intern Benefits

- \$400/weekly living allowance
- \$1000 travel allowance for travel to the orientation, site, and back home
- Eligible for an AmeriCorps Education Award
- Housing provided by site
- SCA uniform
- Access to SCA's 24 hour emergency hotline



Measuring Success

- Staff that have had the opportunity to work with and interact with CDIP participants, which may amount to a more inclusive work environment on several levels
- Students that have been introduced to conservation with the USFWS, and with whom they are sharing our story
- **Students that are converted to Service positions**
- Culturally and ethnically diverse students that are working in conservation today, because of their experience with CDIP



Tools for Measuring Success

- Orientation Evaluation
- Intern Evaluation conducted by the station
- Station evaluation conducted by the intern
- Data



Since 2008:

- 230 college students interned with the FWS
- 96 field stations in four Service Regions hosted an intern
- 51 Service employees mentored interns
- Recruited participants from more than 130 colleges and universities
- 25 program alumni placed in either permanent or Pathways positions
- 2008-2012 program alumni:
 - 40% of remain involved in conservation through internships, employment, or graduate education
 - 32% are completing their undergraduate degree



Challenges Moving Forward

- Perceptions within the agency
- Ever-present budget hawks
- Pathways Program
- Retention



Changing agency perceptions

- For years, our agency has perpetuated the mantra of “we are so great,” “everyone wants to work for us,” and/or “you are so lucky to have the opportunity to work with/for us.”
- The reality is that WE are the lucky ones! We are lucky to have an urban youth chose to step outside their comfort zone and spend a field season working with us.
- Time to switch up the mantra!

Questions?

