

Internship Announcement

Interpretive Naturalist

June 2022 - May 2023



ABOUT DUNES LEARNING CENTER

With a mission to inspire lasting curiosity and stewardship with nature, Dunes Learning Center is the nonprofit education partner of Indiana Dunes National Park. Since 1998, more than 144,000 students from diverse communities and backgrounds have participated in our programs to discover, learn, explore, and reflect on the science and wonder of nature. For many, Dunes Learning Center is the gateway to Indiana Dunes National Park and the beginning of their environmental science education. These experiences support students on the pathway to science-based careers, inspiring the next generation of scientists, environmental advocates, and educators.

Looking back on 20+ years of exploration and investigation in nature's classroom, Dunes Learning Center is proud to be at the forefront of environmental education in the Indiana Dunes. We serve a diverse community and seek a diverse workforce. Dunes Learning Center is an equal opportunity provider and does not discriminate.

SUMMARY

Dunes Learning Center is proud to carry on a tradition of learning in the dunes that dates back more than 100 years ago by the "Father of Ecology in North America," Dr. Henry Chandler Cowles. Our residential programs provide a critical and beneficial connection to nature for learners of all ages—inspiring curiosity, scientific literacy, and environmental stewardship.

Interpretive Naturalists are key members of the Dunes Learning Center team and are responsible for providing meaningful experiences for children and adults regarding the diversity of ecosystems and cultural history of the Indiana Dunes all year long. They help students create connections, build confidence, and develop a sense of place by providing opportunities to explore, ask questions, reflect and work together as a team.

Our Interpretive Naturalist Internship program provides an opportunity for next generation leaders to receive training and coaching to develop their naturalist, outdoor education, and resource interpretation skills and techniques. Interpretive Naturalists often work in pairs during the summer to give each the opportunity to shadow peers and provide/receive feedback. During the school year, Interpretive Naturalists have opportunities to extend their professional development through workshops, in-services, and shadowing National Park Service staff.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

- Prepare for and lead educational/interpretive programs in natural and cultural history, inquiry-based science, and resource stewardship for a diverse community of students; ages 6-17.
- Maintain a Positive Mental Attitude and serve as a role model for responsible environmental behavior and literacy.
- Ensure safety and well-being of program participants using sound judgement and applying appropriate decisions by following safety protocol and reporting incidents, near misses or possible hazards.
- Attend program staff training workshops and regularly scheduled staff meetings.

- Assist in the maintenance of all program supplies, equipment, and facilities.
- Actively participate to support fundraising efforts.
- Comply with all Dunes Learning Center policies and represent DLC in a professional manner at all times.
- Perform all assigned duties critical to the operation of the Dunes Learning Center.
- Assist with other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

To qualify for the Interpretive Naturalist Internship program, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty. Dunes Learning Center aims to make reasonable accommodations to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions. All Dunes Learning Center employees must submit to a background check and possible drug screening.

REQUIRED

- Bachelor's degree preferred or some formal education with equivalent experience, by June 2022
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Commitment to equity and inclusion
- Physically able to perform duties outdoors, in all weather conditions, and hike several miles over dunes terrain while carrying a 25-lb backpack
- A willingness to be coached and to receive feedback
- Ability to work independently as well as on a team
- Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings and occasional weekends
- Official government identification

DESIRABLE

- Experience with environmental education and/or interpretation
- Knowledge of the natural history of the Calumet Region
- Ability to speak Spanish
- Possess valid driver's license and have reliable transportation for local travel

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Interpretive Naturalists are required to regularly stand for long periods of time and walk up to 5 miles per day on sandy dune terrain while carrying a 25-lb backpack in all weather conditions. Naturalists must be able to verbally communicate and have visual abilities that allow them to deliver programs safely.

COMPENSATION

- \$300 weekly stipend (average 40 hours per week)
- Shared housing (private bedroom)
- Professional development opportunities
- Meals and weekly s'mores when groups are in residence

To apply send a cover letter, resume, and 3 references to Erin Crofton, Education Director at employment@duneslearningcenter.org