2017 Science Communication Internship

Background

The Great Lakes Research and Education Center (GLREC), stationed at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, facilitates research and provides educational opportunities in 11 national parks in the western Great Lakes region. Information from scientific research in national parks is critical to park managers and enables them to make the best possible management decisions. The GLREC shares research findings with managers, incorporates science into park visitor and staff experiences, and creates effective science communication products that contribute to public understanding of natural and cultural resources in national parks. This internship is made possible with support from Dunes Learning Center, a partner of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

Internship Project Background

Scientists conduct research in 11 parks in the National Park Service (NPS) Great Lakes Network every year. Park rangers often share information about this research with members of the public who visit their sites, but there is a real need to reach out to the broader community and the nation to inform people about research activities in parks and the relevance of these activities to science and to park resources. This internship will develop content for multiple park websites and a variety of social media platforms.

Internship Project Description

The Science Communication Intern will help expand and enhance science communication efforts in NPS Great Lakes Network Parks. The intern will be stationed at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and will lead a multi-park effort to develop digital media content related to research conducted at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Keweenaw National Historical Park, Isle Royale National Park, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Grand Portage National Monument, Voyageurs National Park, Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, Pullman National Monument, and Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. The goal of this internship is to develop digital media content on a wide variety of research projects for national park social media platforms and websites and to cultivate a sustainable network of researchers, resource managers, and communicators in the Great Lakes Network who can work together to communicate science. Field work will largely be done at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, but travel to one additional park may be possible.
Internship Tasks & Products

- Organize calls with researchers, resource managers, and communicators.
- Develop a process for obtaining photographs and videos of researchers working at remote parks.
- Conduct interviews with researchers and resource managers.
- Film and edit short videos of researchers in action.
- Create social media posts for NPS social media (including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and others).
- Create content for websites at selected national parks and NPS program offices.
- Spend time in the field with researchers and resource managers collecting photographs of researchers at work and learning about their projects.
- Cultivate a sustainable network of researchers, resource managers, and communicators in the Great Lakes Network who can continue to work together to communicate science in the future.
- Present a PowerPoint summarizing work for staff at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.
- Assist with one public presentation on Bat Monitoring at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

Qualifications

This internship is intended for upperclassmen or graduate students pursuing degrees in communications, journalism, or photojournalism with some experience in science or natural resources, or those pursuing a degree in science or natural resources with a strong background in communication, journalism, or photojournalism. The successful candidate will be self-motivated, and will have proven written and oral communication skills, experience with social media and photography, and an interest in natural resources. The intern will need to provide their own transportation and laptop computer.

Leadership Development:

This internship provides outstanding leadership development opportunities. The intern will enhance leadership skills through:

- Writing and editing digital science communication products
- Coordinating with scientists and NPS staff
- Enhancing project management and communication skills
- Gaining exposure to park science, the National Park Service, Great Lakes Network parks, and university and agency cooperators
Dates of Position and Compensation:

Approximate start date is May 22, 2017, and end date is August 4, 2017. Start and end dates may be adjusted slightly based on the availability of the intern. Compensation includes a $3200 stipend.

Housing:

Lodging is available in shared INDU housing with two months advanced notice. INDU houses are furnished and include single bedrooms, kitchen facilities, and bathrooms. There is also off site rental housing in the nearby communities of Porter and Chesterton. Grocery stores and other services are located a few miles from the park. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is located at the southern tip of Lake Michigan approximately 50-60 miles southeast of Chicago, Illinois. Small towns and resort communities on the beaches of Lake Michigan and farms interspersed with large tracts of woodlands and wetlands surround the Lakeshore. An abundance of cultural and recreational activities are available year-round. Regular train service is available to Chicago, about 1 hour away.

Work Environment:

The intern will spend the majority of their time in the office with opportunities at least once weekly to join staff and researchers in the field to collect content. The intern’s office will be located at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore headquarters complex. Work at lakeshore field sites can involve long periods of standing and walking, light lifting, and exposure to extreme heat and sun, as well as ticks and mosquitoes. It is expected that the intern will spend approximately ¼ of their time in the field with researchers, staff, or park visitors. The remainder of the time will be in an office setting.

To Apply:

Please send the following information to wendy_w_smith@nps.gov:

- a letter describing what you hope to gain from the internship and how your previous experience makes you most suitable for this position
- a resume
- a writing sample and link to portfolio
- a letter of recommendation from a university professor familiar with your journalism/communication abilities
- a copy of your transcripts (unofficial copies are acceptable)

All applications must be received by February 6, 2016.