



MOSAICS IN SCIENCE DIVERSITY Internship Program

2020 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

NPS UNIT: WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK	PD #: 2020503
<p>Position Title: Education Assistant Position Type: MIS Intern Primary natural resource discipline: Geologic resources Project keywords: cave, geology, interpretation, education, interpretive program, resource manual Park or Program Website: www.nps.gov/wica Location: Hot Springs, South Dakota</p>	
<p>MOSAICS IN SCIENCE INTERN OVERVIEW</p>	
<p>The Mosaics in Science Diversity Internship Program is focused on persons who are under-represented in STEM fields. Students and recent graduates who are African American, Latino/Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native American are encouraged to apply for these internships. In order to be eligible for a MIS intern position, applicants must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent legal resident (“green-card-holder”) between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, inclusive, or veterans up to age 35.</p> <p>A Mosaics Intern within the Mosaics in Science Diversity Internship Program is an entry level natural resource science internship that focuses on career exploration and building fundamental natural resource science skills. Each Mosaics Intern will receive a weekly stipend of \$400, park-provided housing or a housing allowance and paid travel expenses. Interns who successfully complete 640 hours of work in one or more eligible internships and are under the age of 30 will be eligible for the Public Lands Corps Non-Competitive Hiring Authority for two years following the completion of the internship. Successful completion of a Mosaics in Science internship does not guarantee that the participant will be hired in to a federal position.</p>	
<p>PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND WORK PRODUCTS</p>	
<p>Position Description: The internship will be within the Interpretation & Education division at Wind Cave National Park. This position will make substantial contributions to the park’s interpretative operation in two critical ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conduct frontline interpretive services, including leading multiple interpretive cave tours daily. Tours routinely explain the geologic and natural history of one of the world’s most complex cave systems (70%), and; 2) Produce an interpretive training manual about the park’s geologic resources. This product will help future interpreters understand and convey geologic resource information to park visitors accurately and engagingly (30%). <p>The cave is the park’s primary resource and can only be seen by guided tour. Each year thousands of visitors are unable to experience the cave because tours routinely fill to capacity and no other staff are available to lead additional tours. By leading interpretive tours the candidate will conduct up to 90 tours, enabling up to 3,000 visitors to directly experience Wind Cave. The intern will engage daily with diverse audiences (e.g., families, seniors, international travelers, junior rangers, visitors with disabilities) while providing frontline services at the visitor center desk and other informal settings.</p>	

They will also become adept at public speaking by communicating both basic park information as well as complex geologic and natural and cultural history topics for park visitors. This work will help them distill and organize into one resource manual the park's geologic story from current scientific documents.

By providing regular interpretive services for the visiting public this internship directly supports the NPS mission of visitor enjoyment and encourages the preservation of nationally significant resources for future generations to experience. Wind Cave National Park's Foundation Statement (2011) identifies Wind Cave's primary significance as "...one of the longest, oldest, and most complex caves in the world and contains the largest concentration of boxwork, a rare cave formation first described at Wind Cave." Interpreting the formation of the cave and its associated formations is a central component of interpretive programming at the park. By leading cave tours and communicating the geologic stories effectively the intern's work will directly contribute to this park management goal. Finally, development of a resource manual for interpreting the park's geologic resources will contribute to this goal even after the internship is complete.

This position is offered through the National Park Service's Mosaics in Science Diversity Internship Program in partnership with Environment for the Americas.

Work Products: The internship will produce two key deliverables:

- 1) The intern will provide guided cave tours of Wind Cave for the visiting public, directly interacting with up to 3,000 park visitors. Cave tours are the only way for the public to directly experience the park's primary resource. One intern will deliver up to 90 formal interpretive programs, reaching nearly 3,000 park visitors over the course of the internship. With no other funding source available to support this position, this is work that would otherwise go undone, meaning 3,000 fewer visitors being able to experience Wind Cave. Cave tours provide visitors with opportunities to understand and appreciate the cave's unique geologic and cultural history. Approximately 70% of the intern's time will be devoted to these programs and associated frontline interpretive services, putting them in regular contact with a visiting public that spans national and international audiences.
- 2) The intern will produce a training manual about the park's geologic resources by the end of the internship. This resource manual will be written by, and for, park interpreters. Currently the interpretive division uses multiple scientific reports, resource documents, and secondary sources to train new staff on the park's geologic resources. These documents can be difficult to learn from due to their often technical nature as well as the complex subject matter. By synthesizing into one document all currently available resources, the intern will produce a thorough, yet understandable, resource manual for future park staff to learn about the cave's complex geology. By regularly giving tours, the intern will become effective at relaying complex geologic information to diverse audiences, and incorporate that knowledge in the resource manual deliverable. Approximately 30% of the intern's time will be spent developing this product.

QUALIFICATIONS

Coursework:

- Geology coursework or undergraduate degree
- Environmental education

Skills:

- Effective writer and speaker
- Graphic design
- Familiarity or interest in caves/caving
- Ability to walk up to 4 miles/day and traverse several hundred stairs while conducting tours.

The applicant must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent legal resident ("green-card-holder") between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, inclusive, or veteran up to age 35. Prior to starting this position a government security background clearance will be required.

VEHICLE AND DRIVER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Applicant does not need a valid driver license. A valid driver license is not required, but desirable. Work may periodically require travel to different areas of the park.

A personal vehicle is RECOMMENDED but not required for this position. Housing will be provided within easy walking distance of their duty station. Nearest services are 12 miles distant, so a personal vehicle is helpful for getting groceries, recreational opportunities, etc. If the intern does not have a vehicle rides will be readily available from roommates and/or neighbors.

HOUSING

Park housing is available and will be provided at no cost to the participant. Park housing will be a shared house or apartment with common living/dining/bathroom areas. Private bedrooms will be sought but not assured, and are dependent on the demand for in-park housing. Major furnishings (i.e., couches, tables, beds, dressers, etc.) and appliances (i.e., refrigerators, stoves, etc.) are provided. The intern will need to provide food, cleaning supplies, towels and bedding, dishes, silverware, and specialty appliances (i.e., coffeemaker, toaster). The park has a limited supply of extra pots/pans and similar items. The supervisor would work with the intern to assure basic cooking tools are available and provided for.

INTERNSHIP START/END DATES

Start Date: 5/18/2020

End Date: 7/31/2020

Eleven weeks of the internship will be in the park. A mandatory Career Workshop will be held in Washington, D.C. from August 2 – 6, 2020.

Are these dates flexible? No

STIPEND PAYMENT

\$4,800, all travel and housing costs will be covered

NATURAL & PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

Natural Environment: Wind Cave National Park is located in the Black Hills of southwest South Dakota and is home to the seventh longest cave in the world. Considered two parks in one, the park hosts 120,000 cave visitors annually while bison, elk, coyotes, and prairie dogs roam the park’s 33,000 surface acres, comprised mostly of rolling prairie and ponderosa pine forest. Park headquarters is at 4,000’ above sea level. Summer weather is generally sunny and dry, punctuated by periodic thunderstorms, with temperatures in the 80s and 90s F.

Extensive recreational opportunities exist throughout the Black Hills and surrounding region, and include hiking, camping, biking, fishing, and hunting. Medical and dental services, K-12 schools, groceries, and churches of most faiths are available in Hot Springs (12 miles) and Custer (20 miles). Full services and shopping opportunities are available in Rapid City (65 miles).

Physical Work Environment: Most frontline interpretive work is performed in the visitor center or the cave. Work in the visitor center includes standing at an information desk, greeting visitors, and providing information about visiting the park. Visitor interactions are often repetitive in nature. Interns can expect to lead up to three tours daily. Trails in the cave are paved, include up to 450 stairs, and are lit with an electric lighting system. Tours last from 60 to 90 minutes and cover up to 1 mile each. Cave passages are generally narrow and require stooping or turning to avoid contact with cave walls. The cave temperature is 54 degrees F year round. Occasional surface field work could include hiking up to 4 miles during hot (90 degree F), dry conditions. Work on the resource manual would take place in an office setting.