

## Tips for Internship Success

### Before the Interns start

- **Settle on the non-negotiables and review the rules before the interns start the season.** Policies from zero tolerance of harassment in any form to when and where to wear a hat and what a uniform consists of are important to be able to present to interns at the very beginning. Leads should be on the same page for these.
- **Have seasonal calendar prepared & ready to share with interns early in internship.** Be ready to highlight divisional work, activities & meetings of which they will be part. Details down to work location and start and stop times are extremely helpful.
- **When work planning, leverage existing partnerships to expose interns to a variety of work.** Collaboration with state parks with common goals to provide housing in exchange of work, work trade with local conservation non-profit, work and learn exchange with another national park to complete meaningful work projects and share experience of large NP with interns. Collaborate in all park youth workdays at tribal sites and partner sites.
- **Order nametags & uniform pieces – right clothes for the job & the weather.** Remember that this is developmental position, they may need help procuring the right footwear or apparel.
- **Designate workspace and right tools for jobs & weather.** Even if this is a field job, having a “landing place” helps people feel like they belong. A closet, a bench, or an area they can place their things.

### Onboarding & Training

- **Reconfirm name spelling, pronunciation, and preferred pronouns.**
- **Collect all forms and store in safe & secure place.**
- **Share contact information & ask permission to include on park contact lists**
- **Share communication styles & methods early** – between you as supervisor and the interns, between interns and peers. How do they prefer to receive instruction and how to ask for help? Group text, email, notes on the door, is there a designated time for the intern to check in.
- **Involve interns in all-park seasonal training in June & individual division trainings.**
- **Take time to show interns entire park, trail system, buildings, etc.**
- **Demonstrate the right clothes and tools for the job and the weather.**
- **Create a safe, comfortable space for interns to participate in.** Group agreements with field crew or team –have all members & supervisor sign it and post it in a communal area as a reminder; writing work plans including conversation early on about future career goals and how the internship can meet some of those goals; gathering feedback from interns to improve program.

### Work & Learn Season

- **Involve interns in all parts of park life**– extend the invitation to all safety meetings, trainings, cross-divisional work, Allies for Inclusion facilitated dialogues, park wellness offerings.
- **Budget time for paperwork**, attending weekly webinars, journaling at the end of the day to process what they have learned and track work progress. Also educate self as supervisors to be familiar with intern paperwork. Build rapport to share and advise on resumes.
- **Reflect informally, assess, and evaluate more formally.** Check in daily – weekly – monthly. The season goes quickly. Journaling is great. Thumbs up, thumbs down assessment during daily work, roses and thorns and buds, etc.
- **Build in time for fun & play.**
- **Adapt to interns needs and desires for growth.** Be flexible in allowing some changes to the plan as the intern develops their passion for the projects. This allows them to feel autonomy over their work.
- **Plan and support capstone presentations for interns** – poster session for C&NR interns, interpretation program presentation for VS interns. Make time for interns to attend each other’s sessions & promote to all staff for additional attendance and support. Celebrate!