



Student Opportunities in Climate Change

The George Melendez Wright Initiative for Young Leaders in Climate Change (YLCC) builds a pathway for exemplary students in higher education to apply cutting-edge climate change knowledge to park management while gaining valuable work experience, exploring career options, and developing leadership skills under the mentorship of the National Park Service (NPS).

Internship Program

The YLCC provides paid summer internships to highly accomplished undergraduate and graduate students and recent graduates to work on diverse issues related to climate change and its effects in national parks. The internship projects may occur in national parks or program offices and are designed by NPS staff to meet high priority needs.

Previous young leaders have worked on a wide range of management projects including:

- Modeling receding snow patches and human prehistory in the Central Brooks Range at Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve; AK.
- Analyzing the influence of rainfall on spring flow variation due to climate change at Hot Springs National Park; AR.
- Mapping climate change effects on archeology sites using legacy data for WASO Cultural Resources Archeology Program, Washington DC.
- Creating a web-based climate change communication toolkit for the Pacific West Region, Point Reyes NS, CA.

Internships run full time (40 hours/week) for 11 - 12 weeks, usually during the summer months. They pay \$15/hour plus benefits. Many positions come with free or subsidized housing in dormitories or other shared accommodations in parks. The projects involve rigorous and challenging work that demand high-level academic knowledge and skills affording interns with considerable autonomy and leadership under an effective mentor.

How to Apply

Eligible applicants are graduate or upper-level undergraduate students or recent graduates with a graduation date no earlier than the month the call for applications is issued (e.g. December 2017). This program is best suited to students in natural, social, and cultural sciences; education; communications; resource management; public policy; or other disciplines relevant to a public agency that manages diverse natural, cultural, and historic resources.

The YLCC accepts applications typically from early December to late January. For applications, information, and general requirements please visit the YLCC website: <http://parksclimateinterns.org/>



Jonathan Jones, a Young Leader in Climate Change Intern, examining a sample of intertidal species as part of his project to study the changes in tidepool species diversity at Olympic National Park. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Jones.

Becoming Climate Change Leaders

Career mentorship and professional development are core elements of the YLCC experience. The summer culminates in a Professional Development Symposium designed to expose interns to leaders in their chosen fields and provide them with useful tools and knowledge to launch federal careers. While recipients of the YLCC initiative are not guaranteed federal employment, interns who successfully complete the YLCC are eligible to be hired non-competitively into federal jobs through Direct Hire Authority Personnel Bulletin No. 12-15 once they complete their degree program.

The Legacy of George Melendez Wright

Despite his short life and career, George Melendez Wright was deeply influential in bringing science to the management of America's national parks. As a child he fell in love with the natural environments of northern California. He pursued that love by studying biology at the University of California and working as a naturalist in Yosemite National Park.

In 1930, he was appointed chief of the wildlife division for the NPS at the age of 26. As a result of his work, the NPS embraced science-based approaches to conserving species, habitats, and other natural conditions in the parks.

More Information

Melanie Wood

Project Manager
Climate Change Response Program

ph: (970) 267-2198
email: Melanie_Wood@nps.gov

Adrienne Karpov

YLCC Program Administrator
University of Washington

ph: (206) 616-5350
email: ylcc@uw.edu