

Environmental Issues

Environmental Studies Program

Denison University

Volume 5, Issue 1

Fall 2005

Mellon Foundation Supports Final Summer of Student Internships

Thanks to the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 36 students have had the opportunity to gain internship experience in non-profit organizations over the past six summers. Covering the globe from South Africa and Yugoslavia to Washington DC and Newark, OH, students have worked with numerous organizations supplementing their curricular education with real-world experiences.

Summer 2005 marked the final round of Mellon sponsored internships. Six students were selected and each came back to report impressive and worthwhile experiences. Here's what they did:

Katherine-Rae Cianciotto ('06) interned at the Finger Lakes Institute, a non-profit research and education center associated with Hobart and William Smith Colleges located in Geneva, NY. Katherine took part in several community outreach and educational programs and maintained the FLI clearinghouse which serves as an information database for students and community members.

Katie Connelly ('08) interned with Helping Hands: Garden of Hope, a non-profit organic garden program in Newark, OH. Katie had the opportunity to work with teenagers in the Licking County Court system as they grew and harvested produce for the local food pantry.

Tiffany Finley ('06) interned at the Alliance for Sustainability, a non-profit organization located in Minneapolis, Minnesota with a mission to promote ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just and humane behavior. Tiffany was involved with promoting sustainability and environmental awareness throughout the state and nation. Tiffany had the chance to gain experience in grant-writing, event coordination, membership management, and invaluable knowledge about sustainable living and positive movements throughout the country.

Matt Hoffman ('07) interned with the Alaska Volcano Observatory, a joint program of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the Geophysical Institute of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAFGI). Matt assembled volcano monitoring equipment that was installed on volcanoes throughout the Aleutian Islands and worked in a tephrochronology lab, helping to analyze samples of past eruptions from Augustine Volcano.



Matt Hoffman enjoying an afternoon in Katmai National Park

Chris Seigel ('06) interned this summer with Helping Hands: Garden of Hope in Newark, OH. He worked alongside three Denison interns as well as girls doing community service through the court system. Chris planted, tended, and harvested vegetables organically on their small garden plot. He described the experience as "incredibly educational."

Breanna Shell ('06) coordinated the Helping Hands: Garden of Hope Summer Program in Newark, OH. Helping Hands Garden works with young women ages 13-17 who have been mandated by the Licking County Court to do community service hours. The participants aided in the design, planting, tending, and harvesting of an organic garden plot; the harvest was donated to a local food pantry. The summer program entails field trips, speakers, hands-on gardening experience and reflection about the work accomplished.

--Caiti Schroering ('09)

ENVS Welcomes Two New Members to the Program



Dr. Tom Schultz
Program Director

Howdy! I come to the program from the Biology department where I have often taught ENVS students in Introduction to the Science of Biology, Ecology and Evolution, and Conservation Biology. In the past I have also taught Introduction to Environmental Studies and a course on Biodiversity and the Endangered Species Act, and advised the research of several ENVS majors, involving biodiversity assessments as indicators of environmental quality. Some of this research has been conducted at the D.U. Biological Reserve where I served as Director for eight years.

My own scholarship has two avenues of inquiry. As a behavioral ecologist, I study how insects (e.g. damselflies) utilize color as signals. I am also an insect ecologist who studies habitat requirements of insects and their utility in environmental assessment. I have done consultant work for the Nature Conservancy, Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I have also recently begun a project to monitor the colonization of mitigation wetlands by dragonflies at Dawes Arboretum.

I assume the role of Program Director as a long time member of the ENVS program committee and a former Chair of the Biology Department. I look forward to working with the passionate students and faculty that comprise the ENVS program and helping to shepherd the program to meet its aspirations.

Greetings! After graduating from Denison this past May, I am back on the hill for one more year to serve as the final Environmental Studies Program Manager through the Mellon Grant. Over the past several years, ENVS enjoyed the creativity, organization and spirit that each of its P.M.s have brought to the position.

Through the grant from the Mellon Foundation, Lindsay Mason, Sarah Baird, Sarah Beazley and Sasha Chetyrkina each took on the position in turn. They each worked closely with students, administration and faculty to carry out the grant initiatives, and greatly improved Denison's campus environment.

As the final P.M. under the auspices of the Mellon Grant, I have some big shoes to fill, but I look forward to the challenge. Over the summer I began working and brainstorming for the year ahead. At this point, the ENVS website has been overhauled (check it out at www.denison.edu/enviro), Fireside Chats are back, plans for the revitalization of Hibbs Library and the Student Study Room are under way, and there are many more projects to come!

I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the Environmental Studies program and to work closely with our talented students and faculty. Please feel free to contact me with any ideas or suggestions you have for our program!

--Tom Schultz and Lindsay Michael ('05).



Lindsay Michael
Program Manager

Alumni Spotlight: Robyn Scofield ('96)

After graduation, Robyn stayed on at Denison as Program Manager for ENVS where she helped facilitate the Green Renovation of Barney-Davis, while teaching a 1-credit service-learning class called "Earthwork."

The next year, Robyn left our "fair college on the hill" for the west where she worked in environmental education, with jobs ranging from Interpretive Park Ranger to Naturalist for Yellowstone National Park.

When she'd had enough of the cold weather, Robyn moved South to volunteer for a winter at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida. It was there that she became interested in planning and sustainable development issues and decided to pursue planning as a career.

In 2003, Robyn graduate from the University of Oregon with a masters degree in Community and Regional Planning. She moved back to Florida where she works now in green building and development consulting at Trifecta Construction Solutions in Naples.

Robyn's education at Denison shaped her environmental ethic in addition to teaching her solution-oriented thinking and skills. She continues to put her ENVS education to use in her work (the interest in which came about from her work on the green renovation of Barney-Davis Hall).

Additionally, Robyn is pursuing a rock star career in her free time and hopes to perform at Denison before long!

--Caiti Schrioring ('09)

ENVS alum are doing great things all around the world.
Let us know what exciting things you're up to. We want to stay in touch!
email: franksb@denison.edu

Denisonians Rally for ANWR in Capital

On Tuesday, September 20, 2005, five Denison students participated in the Arctic Refuge Rally Day in Washington, D.C. to protest drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Jake Henkle ('09), Haley Miller ('07), Skyler Mosenthal ('09), Megan Ogle ('08), and Laura Smith ('06) traveled to DC with fifty-six students from other local Universities as well as political and environmental activists from the Columbus area.

ANWR has become a very popular topic over the past few weeks as the protection of the refuge has entered its final hour. In recent years, leaders of the GOP have tried to open the Arctic Refuge for oil drilling. These attempts failed due to an inability to rally the 60 votes necessary to stop a filibuster.

However, this past March the GOP put the drilling provisions on the federal budget. Bills regarding the federal budget cannot be filibustered and only require a majority vote to be passed, so as a result the U.S. Senate opened the Arctic Refuge for oil drilling with a vote of 51 to 49. The leaders of GOP plan to keep the pro-drilling provisions on the final budget which will be voted on in late October.

The group, along with an estimated five to seven thousand other protesters from around the country, arrived in the nation's capital early Tuesday morning for the rally which took place on the west lawn of Capitol Hill.

"The scene on the West lawn was great, there were people dressed as polar bears! Walking around in a T-shirt that matched hundreds of others made me feel like a very large family" said Smith.

Throughout the day, musicians and speakers, including indigenous Alaskan groups, took the stage. Speakers included Senators Kerry (D-MA), Clinton (D-NY) and Lieberman (D-CT) as well as Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

The main objective of the Denison group was to speak with Senators Voinovich (R-OH) and DeWine (R-OH) and Representative Ney (R-OH). "A lot of people from Ohio really care passionately about the Arctic refuge," said Sean Babington, field organizer for the Alaska Coalition of Ohio. "The Arctic refuge really is the big issue in this budget bill."

Throughout the day, the group was able to meet with both Senator DeWine and Senator Voinovich's personal

assistants. While the group was assured by DeWine's assistant that he planned to vote "no" in October, Voinovich's assistant showed less support for the cause. Voinovich has sided with the GOP and believes that the process of opening the refuge would cause little harm to the wildlife and the native Alaskans and would lessen the United States' dependency on foreign oil.

The group expressed frustrations upon leaving the meeting. "I don't understand how he can be so naïve. There is clear, sound proof that drilling in the refuge would cause more harm than Voinovich is willing to admit," noted one student upon leaving Voinovich's office.

Later in the day, the group had the opportunity to meet with Denison alumnus, Senator Lugar (R-IN). Despite the fact that he supports the drilling provision, Lugar agreed to take the group's thoughts and ideas into consideration.

The meeting wasn't all business. A photo op with the Senator and "Denison talk" made the agenda before the Denisonians left to meet up with the other Ohio activists for a long trip home to reflect on the activities of the day.

Henkle, a particular articulate first-year student noted that "...the rally against drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Preserve was a spectacular opportunity that I will never forget. The drilling issue brings forth a precedent that could radically affect conservation practices for the future. If anything, my attendance at the rally was a great privilege that gave me a first hand look at everyday workings in our government and the constant battle being waged in the name of environmental science and future interests of mankind."

--Haley Miller ('07)



The group enjoys some "Denison Talk" with alumnus, Senator Richard Lugar ('54)

Environmental Issues
 Newsletter of the McPhail Center for Environmental Studies
 Denison University, Granville, Ohio.
<http://www.denison.edu/enviro>
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 Haley Miller ('07), Caiti Schroering ('09) and Tom Schultz
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Senior Fellows Announced for 2005-2006

ENVS fellows were announced a short month ago, and already they are hard at work on exciting projects for the year. Here is an all to brief introduction to each of them and their academic interests and after D.U. plans!

Sarah Edwards comes from Medina, OH and loved studying Conservation Biology which she has found applicable to many classes and life. Sarah recently studied abroad in Tanzania and is unsure of her post-Denison plans, though hopes to travel and ultimately work in conservation or environmental education.

Tiffany Finely hails from Minneapolis, MN and found Conservation Biology to be one of her favorite courses due to its real-world applications. Tiff spent last semester in Australia where “the biodiversity was phenomenal, the people were friendly, and the scenery breathtaking.” She plans to study the environment globally and work on greening programs after Denison.

Meagan Coneybeer, from Uniontown, PA, loved studying Ecosystem Management with Dr. Spieles because of its pertinence to current mitiga-

tion issues. Next year she hopes to “experimenting with sustainable living,” working on a farm before heading to graduate school.

Chris Seigel's hometown is Indianapolis, IN. This year Chris enjoys being “less academic and detached from the real world” through Sustainable Agriculture. Chris spent last semester abroad in Costa Rica. After graduation, he hopes to get involved in reforming the American agricultural system after attending graduate school.

Anne Rogers, from Ann Arbor, MI, enjoyed both Conservation Biology and Sustainable Ag. and the insight into how humans alter the earth and the complexity of food issues. Next year, Anne hopes to travel and then work for an environmental non-profit organization.

David Strong hails from Cincinnati, OH and enjoys studying Sustainable Ag which allows him “to meet awesome, local farmer activists.” After graduation, David hopes to get involved in the urban local food movement and consult with school gardens.

--Sarah Edwards ('06)



ENVS Fellows enjoy a bonding moment at the Welcome Back Picnic

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