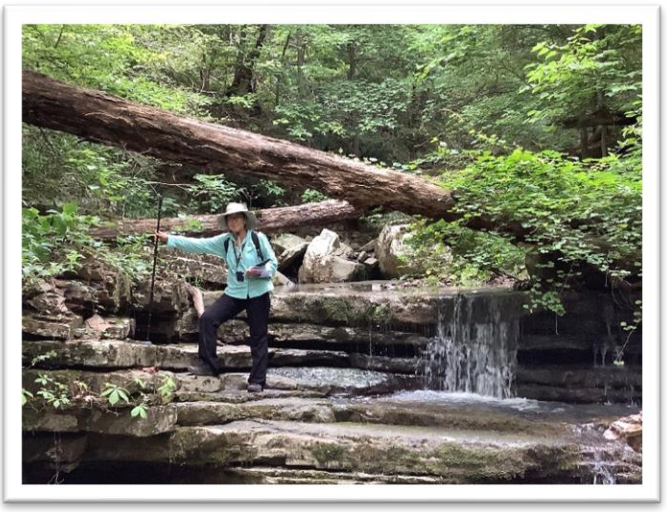
USGS 2021 Cooperative Summer Fellowship Program



The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Cooperative Summer Fellowship Program is the longest continuously running internship program in the Earth sciences. Over the past 56 years, over 2,600 students have participated in this program, with many participants continuing on to distinguished careers with USGS, academia, and industry.

The cooperative program was launched at the Geological Society of America meeting in Kansas City, MO in early fall of 1965 when William “Bill” Pecora, then the newly appointed Director of the USGS, held a meeting with a small group of distinguished professors and officers of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers (NAGT). Pecora suggested that the USGS would provide support through internships for outstanding newly graduated geoscience majors, while NAGT would solicit outstanding student nominations from the directors of the nation’s geoscience field camps. In this way, students with excellent training in skills needed at USGS could take their next professional step with an internship putting those skills into practice.

In recent years the USGS has expanded our partnerships in this program to include the Ecological Society of America (ESA) and the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) to support our scientists in geography and biological sciences.

Although some modifications have been made over time, the USGS Cooperative Summer Fellowship Program operates today much as it did in the beginning. With active participation and support from the highest levels of all organizations (including the Director of the USGS), a joint committee oversees the program. The program year begins in September when field camp directors (now numbering over 120), ESA, and GISCI are provided nomination information. NAGT and ESA solicit nominations of exceptionally qualified students for their affiliated field training programs. GISCI submits a list of students with appropriate GIS certifications for consideration. Nominated students apply by sending a resume, letter of interest, and transcripts to the USGS. At the same time, USGS scientists interested in working with an intern submit a proposal about their research projects. A science panel then reviews and matches candidates by their course work, skills, and interests with up to five projects. Interviews and selections proceed from there. The program endeavors to place as many of the nominated students as possible. In the last few years, between 68 and 95 percent of the nominated students who applied and stayed connected through the interviews have been placed in internships.

Interdisciplinary science training is a cornerstone of the USGS mission, and as such, all science disciplines are encouraged to take advantage of the intern program. Former student interns continually receive outstanding reviews from both scientists and supervisors.

The Program continues Pecora’s vision of greater educational involvement, providing a first-rate professional experience to students early in their careers. The program today is a multidisciplinary collaboration that influences the career paths of future scientists in positive and exciting ways.

NAGT/USGS 2021 Cooperative Summer Fellowship Program Placements

Intern: Jennifer Battista
Field Camp: Southern Illinois University
Mentor: Walter Mooney
Location: Menlo Park, California
Project: Studies of earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, and tsunamis

Intern: Natalea Cohen
Field Camp: Fort Lewis College
Mentor: Michael Poland
Location: Vancouver, Washington
Project: Geodetic monitoring of volcanoes in the western United States

Intern: Ryan Foley
Field Camp: University of Michigan
Mentor: Michael Toomey
Location: Reston, Virginia
Project: Reconstruction of pre-historic storm events on Lake Michigan

Intern: Craig Gabrielson
Field Camp: Western Washington University
Mentor: Benjamin Pauk
Location: Vancouver, Washington
Project: Mt. Rainier lahar detection system and monitoring support of Cascade Range volcanoes

Intern: Rachel Jackson
Field Camp: George Mason University
Mentor: James O'Connor and Ralph Haugerud
Location: Pacific Northwest
Project: Mapping the Missoula floods

Intern: Charles Kershaw
Field Camp: Southern Illinois University
Mentor: Richard Nunn and Lindsay Powars
Location: Denver, Colorado
Project: Implementation of International Geo Sample Number (ISGN) unique identifiers in the NSF Ice Core Facility (NSF-ICF) collection

Intern: Dylan Kinser
Field Camp: Humboldt State University
Mentor: Scott Bennett
Location: Lower Colorado River
Project: GIS bedrock geologic map compilation along the lower Colorado river

Intern: Sarah Lapinski
Field Camp: Oregon State University
Mentor: Sara Peek and Shaul Hurwitz
Location: Menlo Park, California
Project: Volcano-hydrothermal systems: data compilation, water and gas sampling and temperature measurements

Intern: Haley Lind
Field Camp: University of Utah
Mentor: Denis LeBlanc and Timothy McCobb
Location: Northborough, Massachusetts
Project: Hydrology and water quality of Cape Cod's groundwater/surface-water system

Intern: Joshua Malone
Field Camp: Illinois State University
Mentor: Amy Gilmer
Location: Denver, Colorado
Project: National Geochronological Database compilation project

Intern: Hunter Martin
Field Camp: University of Houston
Mentor: Walter Mooney
Location: Menlo Park, California
Project: Studies of earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, and tsunamis

Intern: Priscilla Martinez
Field Camp: California State University Fullerton
Mentor: Jessica Rodysill
Location: Reston, Virginia
Project: Natural flood and drought variability in lacustrine archives

Intern: Elizabeth Ratajczyk
Field Camp: University of Michigan
Mentor: Lisa Stillings
Location: Reno, Nevada
Project: Chemical and isotopic characterization of geothermal waters in the USGS/DOE GeoDawn study area, Nevada

Intern: Lauren Sankovitch
Field Camp: Oregon State University
Mentor: Jaime Azain
Location: Lakewood, Colorado
Project: Analytical chemistry

Intern: Ashley Suarez
Field Camp: Lane Community College
Mentor: Kimberlie Perkins
Location: Menlo Park, California
Project: Effects of unsaturated-zone preferential flow on water resources

Intern: Jessica Wilder
Field Camp: University of Oregon
Mentor: Graham Lederer
Location: Reston, Virginia
Project: Deposit models for critical mineral resource assessment

ESA/USGS 2021 Cooperative Summer Fellowship Program Placements

Intern: Gavin Belfry
College: University of Tennessee
Mentor: Mike Duniway and Erika Geiger
Location: Moab, Utah
Project: Assessing impacts of aridification, drought, and land-use on drylands of the Colorado Plateau

Intern: Brittney Cleveland
College: California State University Dominguez Hills
Mentor: Jill Bourque
Location: Gainesville, Florida
Project: Community ecology of invertebrate communities in chemosynthetic habitats on the U.S. Pacific margin

Intern: Emily Cook
College: University of Oregon
Mentor: Joan Hagar
Location: Western Oregon
Project: Purple Martin use of BLM regeneration harvests and national forest restoration sites

Intern: Denise Del Rosario
College: George Mason University
Mentor: Matthew Conlon
Location: Southeastern Pennsylvania
Project: assessment of pesticides and characterization of groundwaters in Pennsylvania's Triassic lowland hydrogeologic setting

Intern: Hallie Dickerson
College: Austin College
Mentor: Andrew Waite
Location: Milford, Pennsylvania
Project: Surface water and ground water data collection

Intern: Kinsey Funk
College: Oregon State University
Mentor: Jeffrey Chaplin
Location: Central Pennsylvania
Project: Near real-time water-quality monitoring and modeling in York County, Pennsylvania

Intern: Simone Gibson
College: Oregon State University
Mentor: Meagan Eagle
Location: Woods Hole, Massachusetts
Project: Greenhouse gas cycling in managed coastal wetlands

Intern: Grady Jakobsberg
College: University of Vermont
Mentor: Walter Mooney
Location: Menlo Park, California
Project: Studies of earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, and tsunamis

Intern: Gavin Kellerman
College: University of California, Santa Cruz
Mentor: Susan De La Cruz and Isa Woo
Location: Moffett Field, California
Project: Habitat classification and change detection Willapa and Billy Frank Junior National Wildlife Refuges, WA

Intern: Bethany Lee
College: University of Louisville
Mentor: Noel Pavlovic
Location: Indiana Dunes National Park
Project: Landscape perspective in conserving the threatened Great Lakes sand dune endemic, Pitcher's Thistle

Intern: Jonathan Lessane
College: North Carolina State University
Mentor: Jaime Azain
Location: Lakewood, Colorado
Project: Analytical chemistry

Intern: Jackie Luu
College: George Mason University
Mentor: Andy Royle
Location: Laurel, Maryland
Project: Quantitative turtle analysis project

Intern: Kayleigh Maraziegos
College: Florida Southern College
Mentor: Michael Adams
Location: Corvallis, Oreon
Project: Oregon spotted frog recovery

Intern: Madison Panzino
College: California State University Fullerton
Mentor: Walter Mooney
Location: Menlo Park, California
Project: Studies of earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, and tsunamis

Intern: Kyler Plouffe
College: University of California, Santa Cruz
Mentor: Kristen Hart
Location: Davie, Florida
Project: Sea turtle movements and habitat-use, and American crocodile nest monitoring

Intern: Kassandra Rodriguez
College: California State University Fullerton
Mentor: Amy Symstad
Location: Hot Springs, South Dakota
Project: Examining the demographic and community response and recovery of northern Great Plains grasslands to droughts in the context of grazing and climate change

Intern: Andrew Shapiro
College: University of New Hampshire
Mentor: Nicholas Johnson
Location: Millersburg, Michigan
Project: Deploy and evaluate supplemental sea lamprey control tools

Intern: Lucca Sterrer
College: University of Vermont
Mentor: Andrew Waite
Location: Troy, New York
Project: Surface water and ground water data collection

Intern: Emily Xie
College: University of California, Berkeley
Mentor: Ralph Grundel
Location: Chesterton, Indiana
Project: Landscape connectivity and native bee conservation in the Great Lakes Basin

GISCI/USGS 2021 Cooperative Summer Fellowship Program Placements

Intern: Emma Boardman-Larson
College: Austin Community College
Mentor: Carma San Juan
Location: Lakewood, Colorado
Project: USGS Mineral Deposit Database (USMIN)

Intern: Connor Firat
College: University of Tennessee
Mentor: John Lane and Frederick Day-Lewis
Location: Storrs, Connecticut
Project: Hydrogeophysics

Intern: Jack Holbrook
College: University of California, Santa Barbara
Mentor: Samantha Oliver
Location: Madison, Wisconsin
Project: Process-guided machine learning for modeling water temperature in lakes and streams

Intern: Melissa Paulsen
College: University of Utah
Mentor: Nicole Herman-Mercer
Location: Denver, Colorado
Project: The sensitivity of Alaskan and Yukon rivers, fish, & communities to climate

Intern: Brandi Rethelford
College: Oregon State University
Mentor: Gregory Walsh
Location: Montpelier, Vermont
Project: Northeast bedrock mapping project

Geology and ecology field course directors can participate through our partnerships with the NAGT or ESA. Please visit the appropriate websites for additional information on how to nominate students. Nominations are due in early fall.