Urban Ecology
Teen Internship

Get Green, Get Smart
Get Active, Get Paid

Summer 2020
Urban Ecology Teen Internship

If you are a Bronx high school student who is interested in the environment and willing to work hard academically and physically – this may be your calling!

Students entering their Junior and Senior year in Fall 2020 are eligible to take a tuition-free, 4-credit college course in Environmental Studies at CUNY Lehman College. Returning interns will participate in a special research project. In addition to the academic study, students work in the park with natural resources professionals.

Summer Session

This 7-week PAID program is a chance to engage in educational activities that focus on forest ecology, urban environmental science, and job skill readiness. Our Urban Eco-Teens will also work outdoors with foresters, horticulturists, water ecologists, and trail builders. The group takes field trips to other green institutions such as the New York Botanical Garden and Wave Hill, and meets with green professionals such as Park Rangers and arborists.

**Dates**  Wednesday, July 1 – Friday, August 14, 2020
**Hours**  9am – 4pm, with 1 hr. lunch
**Days**  Mondays: Lehman College Interns. Schedule TBD. Tuesdays-Thursdays: All interns will meet at Van Cortlandt Park for outdoor field work and field studies.

**Location**: Upon acceptance into the program, all interns will receive a schedule and location information.

**Compensation Wages:**
- First-Year Interns: $15.00 per hour
- Returning Interns: $15.50 per hour
- Junior Crew Leader: $16.00 per hour

School Year Session

After the summer introductory experience, students can apply to return during the school year to become Leadership Interns and take on more responsibility by assisting with weekend programming.

*Schedule is subject to change.
**CUNY Lehman classes are credit-bearing college level courses & time in class is unpaid.
Program Ladder

First-Year College Prep Interns
(eligible rising 11th & 12th graders)

First-year interns will attend class at CUNY Lehman College, where sessions focus on the impact of human activities on natural resources and environmental quality. Topics will include soils, forest ecology, water, wildlife habitats, outdoor recreation, and energy resources. Further exploration of these subjects occurs during field studies in the park.

Leadership Training
(available to high school program participants during the school year)

The Leadership Training component directly follows the summer internship and runs through the following spring. Leadership Training will include field trips and workshops designed to build professional skills, effective leadership style, confidence, and the ability to resolve conflicts. Interns will lead small groups of volunteers in forest restoration activities that encourage the ecological health of the park.

Returning Research Interns:

The VCPA Field Scientist and Research Coordinator is conducting multiple research projects throughout the park in order to better understand patterns of species diversity and composition within Van Cortlandt Park. Over the summer returning interns will focus on helping to complete these research projects through field labs and analytical work. Specifically interns will work on trapping invertebrates throughout the park using different methods of capture, collect numerous environmental variables at sampling locations, identify captured invertebrates, organize and curate specimens, and analyze data for reports and scientific publication.

Junior Crew Leader

One returning intern will be hired to work as a Junior Crew Leader. The Junior Crew Leader will serve as a role model for high school students by demonstrating ethical and successful work habits in and out of the field as well as assisting the Crew Leaders in daily job functions. Through special projects and mentorship the Junior Crew Leader will teach basic plant identification, specialized field techniques in the areas of restoration and gardening, and assist students in the Lehman College course. Junior Crew Leaders will also assist the Program Director in implementing field study lessons, event preparation, and pre- and post-program wrap up.
Crew Leaders
(eligible only to college students)

College students who have an interest in the natural sciences and/or youth development can apply to become a summer Crew Leader. Crew Leaders play a very important role as they are second in command to the Program Director and serve as role models to interns. Program alumni are strongly encouraged to apply. Job posting can be found here: vancortlandt.org/programs.
Outdoor Field Work

In the field, students receive specialized “hands-on” training in four disciplines that serve a critical purpose in greening the park.

Forest Restoration

Urban forests require ongoing management using proper ecological restoration techniques. Interns will learn basic ecological principles that include taxonomy, soil science, hydrology, and forest dynamics. Invasive plants need to be removed and native species planted in order to keep an ecological balance that will support wildlife. To this end interns learn to identify these plants, use specialized tools to remove weeds, and plant supportive species.

Trail Building

Van Cortlandt Park has over 20 miles of beautiful trails which regularly need care and improvements. Water bar installation, edging, erosion control, and weeding of overgrowth are needed for well kept trails. Interns will gain an understanding of the relationship between geology and topography while engaged in managing the park’s complex and historic trail systems.

Lake Management

Interns learn about lake management restoring the delicate aquatic system at the 16 acre Van Cortlandt Lake by removing the highly invasive water chestnut that floats on the surface.

Nursery Management

Seedlings and cuttings must grow hardy for success outside. Nursery structures protect and nurture these young plants before placing them into parks. Interns learn to assist in the basics of greenhouse management and propagation at the Arthur Ross and City-Wide Nurseries.
Eligibility

Requirements

1. CUNY Lehman College interns must meet the following academic proficiencies:
   a. A grade of 75 or higher in ELA Regents
   b. A grade of 70 or higher in Math Common Core Regents
   c. High School GPA of 80
   d. Pass all High School Regents

2. Interns must be able to work outdoors. The program requires lifting, pulling, digging, and hiking.


4. High School Transcript

5. Note: ‘Opt’ out interns: GPA of 75 or greater.*

Documentation Needed For Hire
(Must provide the documents below upon acceptance into the program.)

1. Non-citizens must submit a clear copy (front and back) of Alien Registration card OR U.S. citizens born abroad must bring a copy of naturalization papers.

2. Photo Identification (NYS I.D. or School I.D.)

3. 17 and under: Working papers (can be obtained at school)

Application Deadline: April 26, 2020

Selected applicants will be scheduled for an interview in one of our offices and an outdoor field work session in the park.

* First-Year interns can choose to opt out of the Lehman College course but must have a 75 or better GPA on their High School transcript to be eligible.
Urban Eco-Teens

Application Form

Urban Ecology Teen Internship

(Please print clearly.)

☐ First-Year  ☐ Second-Year  ☐ Third-Year

First Name ________________________________

Last Name ________________________________

Home Phone (___) _____ - ____________

Cell Phone (___) _____ - ____________

Parent/Guardian Phone (___) _____ - ____________

Parent/Guardian Email _____________________________ @________________________

Email _____________________________ @________________________

Street Address ____________________________ Apt _____

City ____________________________ State _____ Zip Code ____________

Date of Birth ____ / ____ / ____

The best way to contact you is (circle all that apply):

Home   Cell   Parent/Guardian   Email

What is the best time to reach you? ____:____ (am/pm)

High School ____________________________

In Fall 2020 I will be a:  ☐ junior  ☐ senior  ☐ HS grad

G.P.A _____

Parent or Guardian Name (Print)

__________________________________________

Parent or Guardian Signature

__________________________________________

Date ____ / ____ / ____
Application Q & A

On a separate sheet of paper, please provide all information requested below.

For All Applicants:

Previous Experience
Please list any paid and/or volunteer experience you have had. List each one as follows:
- Name of organization & address
- List specific tasks/responsibilities
- Start & End Dates

First Year Interns:

Short Answers
1. What is the greatest challenge you have faced as a high school student?
2. Describe a situation in which you were recently very proud of yourself.
3. Describe one aspect you wish to improve about yourself.

Essay (one page)
Why do you think you would be a good candidate for this summer internship and how would you contribute to the program?

Returning Interns:

Short Answers
1. As a returning student, how will you motivate and encourage new members of the program?
2. After your experience last year, how has this program made an impact on you?

Essay (one page)
Tell us why you want to return to the program.

CUNY Lehman College Requirements

The Lehman College STEP Program requires the self-reporting information below:

- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- White/Caucasian
- Asian/South Pacific Islander
- Other

Number of Children in the Home: _________
Household Annual Income $__________
Application Checklist

☐ Application form

☐ Q & A responses, including essay

☐ Most recent high school transcript, with English and Math regents scores

☐ Working papers and Photo I.D.

☐ Parent/Guardian signature

Mail Application and documents to:
Urban Ecology Teen Internship
Van Cortlandt Park Alliance
1 Bronx River Parkway, Bronx, NY 10462
or electronically to:
paulina.mohamed@parks.nyc.gov
Online applications can also be obtained at vancortlandt.org.

If you have questions or would like to schedule a recruitment presentation:
Please call 718.430.4687
or email the Director of Youth Internships:
paulina.mohamed@parks.nyc.gov
**CUNY Lehman College** is the only public senior college in the Bronx affiliated with the City University of New York. Located on an historic tree-lined campus in the northwest Bronx, the college is a cultural and recreational center for the region. STEP (Science and Technology Entry Program) is funded by the New York State Education Department and is designed to prepare under-represented or economically disadvantaged students for careers in science, technology and math fields.

For more information, visit [lehman.edu](http://lehman.edu).
Van Cortlandt Park constitutes 1,146 acres covering ridges and valleys of the northwest Bronx and is New York City’s third largest park. Athletic fields and playgrounds are scattered about the park’s edges, surrounding a verdant forest fed by Tibbetts Brook. Van Cortlandt was established as a park in 1888 and is home to the country’s first public golf course, the oldest house in the Bronx, and the borough’s largest freshwater lake. This park is the most important outdoor space for many working class, minority, and immigrant communities in the Bronx.

For more information, visit [www.vancortlandt.org](http://www.vancortlandt.org).
Mission Statement

The Van Cortlandt Park Alliance preserves, supports, and promotes the recreational, ecological, and historical value of Van Cortlandt Park.

Acknowledgements

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