

# Career Discovery Internship Program

## *Growing Conservationists*

The goal of the Career Discovery Internship Program (CDIP) is to attract a culturally and ethnically diverse group of students to conservation in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), build a diverse applicant pool and prepare them to successfully compete for conservation careers, and to provide opportunities for Service staff to work and train with them. As part of the Youth in the Great Outdoors initiative, this program gives full-time students the opportunity to experience a variety of careers within the USFWS.

Interns attend a one-week orientation to learn about the USFWS, Department of the Interior, environmental stewardship, problem solving, work culture and cultural and intergenerational awareness. During the following 10 – 12 weeks, interns work at various sites throughout the country, gaining valuable experience in conservation.

### Benefits of the Program

■ **Service-wide:** High-performing interns will have the opportunity to be exposed to widespread geographic locations, a variety of work assignments and tasks, as well as, have the opportunity to be enrolled in USFWS student hiring programs.

■ **Accomplishments:** Managers will provide a meaningful work experience by providing assignments that embrace environmental learning goals. Interns will develop skills and experiences to prepare them for future employment.

■ **Guidance:** Each intern will be assigned a trained mentor who can advise, listen, guide, and encourage interns to learn from their experiences

■ **Make a Difference:** Staff have the opportunity to develop future employees, while increasing the number of qualified diverse individuals seeking careers in conservation.

■ **Capstone Project:** Interns complete a reflective assignment documenting their growth and experiences. Students can be creative with this assignment, which could include a video, a journal, or a blog.

■ **Reflection:** Each intern will receive feedback, which will be used as an evaluation at the end of his/her internship. Interns also evaluate their experience to improve the program for future participants.

**To learn more about this exciting new program, contact Michelle Donlan, National Conservation Training Center, [Michelle\\_Donlan@fws.gov](mailto:Michelle_Donlan@fws.gov)**



Lamar Gore/USFWS

*Habitat Restoration - Interns learn what hands on habitat restoration is like (Transplanting Saltmarsh Grass)*



Lamar Gore/USFWS

*Understanding Ecosystems - Learning the dynamics of an ecosystem is an important aspect to restoring habitat, as well as, educating our public.*



Lamar Gore/USFWS

*Problem Solving - Students work as a team to produce solutions to conservation challenges*