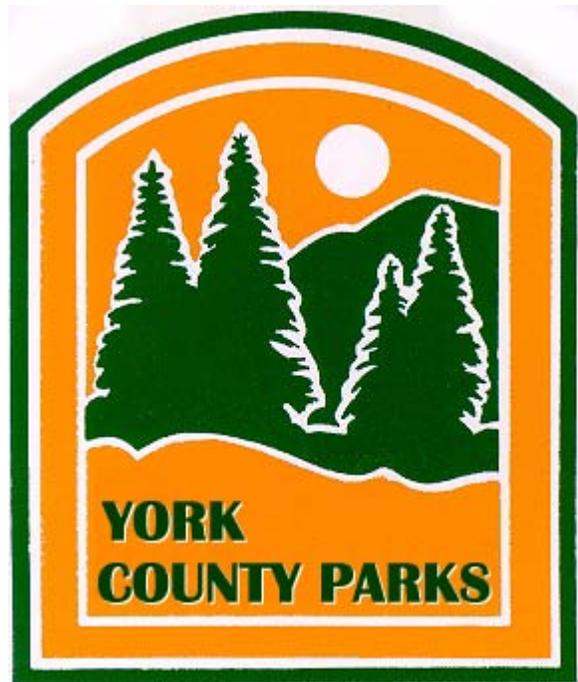


# **York County Parks**

## **Internship Manual**



# **INTERNSHIP/ PRACTICUM MANUAL**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The York County Department of Parks and Recreation has existed since 1968 and takes great pride in the facilities and programming it offers to York County residents and visitors. We believe that our parks are an integral part of what makes our community special and livable.

This manual will help you get to know the York County Parks and your responsibilities as an intern. Each internship is designed to provide the best experience possible and to prepare you for your future career.

York County Department of Parks and Recreation is an award-winning Department, receiving state,

local and national awards for its work. There are five major departments, security, maintenance, natural resources, administration and education - programs, each lead by a senior manager. Since its founding 1968 when it accepted its first park it has now grown to include over 4,000 acres and serves an estimated 1,000,000 visitors per year.

We want to make your internship a rewarding experience and firmly believe that the internship is a true partnership between, you, your college or university, the staff, and the volunteers that you will work with during your internship.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

We believe that our organization should provide on a consistent basis the highest quality lands for traditional forms of recreation while keeping pace with changing market needs and keeping in the forefront the founding principle of planning for future generations.

### **Department Mission**

The mission of the York County Department of Parks and Recreation is “York County Department of Parks and Recreation enhances the quality of community life acting as a steward for the environment. In this capacity, it acquires, conserves and manages park lands and offers a variety of recreational and education opportunities.”

## Department Vision

“York County Department of Parks and Recreation strives to be the County leader in environmental conservation, preservation and education. Programs and projects in these areas reflect sound management and stewardship principles and a strong organizational commitment to innovation and public service.”

We Value ...

- Customer friendly environments
- A diversity of natural areas to promote passive recreation
- Conservation, and interpretation of natural and historic park features
- Listening and responding to park users
- Maintenance of the highest level of professionalism
- Encouraging and honoring volunteer participation
- Entering into partnerships and collaborative efforts

## Department Overview

York County Department of Parks and Recreation is a community and regional leader in recreation services and will celebrate 50 years of serving the York community in 2018. Through our programs and facilities, we are an integral part in the quality of life enjoyed in York County.

A variety of public programs are offered by the staff and volunteers, ranging from: Nature Story Times for 4-7 year olds, school field trips to the nature center, nature programs for families, outdoor recreation for all ages (hunting, biking, fishing, horseback riding, canoeing, mountain biking) and

large community events including “Christmas Magic - A Festival of Lights.” The department maintains four museums, ten nationally listed historic sites, 60+ miles of trail, 8 miles of stream and 290 acres of open water. Three times per year a newsletter is published with a program calendar and news from throughout the park system.

The over 4,000 acres in the eleven county parks encompass a variety of habitats. The parks include William Kain County Park with two lakes located just south of York City. Heritage Rail Trail County Park runs 28 miles from the John Rudy County Park to the

Maryland border, where it joins Maryland's 20 mile Northern Central Rail Trail. John Rudy County Park houses the administrative headquarters and maintenance complex, and was designed for active recreation including regulation softball fields, soccer fields, and a 5K cross-country route. Nixon County Park, nestled in a southern York County stream valley, is the site of the Richard Nixon Nature Center where over 6,000 school children participate in field trips. Rocky Ridge County Park, located east of York houses 13 picnic pavilions and is a site for a hawk migration count. A stocked trout stream runs through Spring Valley County Park, which also holds the equestrian center with three regulation Olympic horse rings. Apollo County Park along the

bluffs of the Susquehanna River offers secluded hiking, including a portion of the Mason-Dixon Trail. Raab County Park is the site of the historic York County Iron Mine and a hibernacula for four species of bat. Highpoint Scenic Vista and Recreation Area provides a spectacular view of the Susquehanna River. Native Lands County Park sits amid the rolling river hills and was the site for the last Susquehannock Indian Village, circa 1675. Wallace Cross Mill Historic Site is a restored grist mill along scenic Rambo Run in southern York County.

In addition the York County Parks partners with a wide variety of agencies, departments, community groups and non-profits to accomplish our mission.

*VISIT us [www.yorkcountyparks.org](http://www.yorkcountyparks.org)*

## **Department Goals for Internship**

York County Department of Parks and Recreation has designed an internship/practicum opportunity that will provide you with a well-rounded experience which introduces you to a diverse parks and recreation program. It will provide you with a "hand-on" experience that reflects what recreation and park professions do on the job on a daily basis to serve the community.

Our goals are to provide you with the following opportunities:

- To apply academic course work to a hands-on practical experience
- To problem solve in a work environment
- To exchange ideas with professionals in the field
- To gain pride and appreciation in the field
- To expose the student to projects and opportunities that will provide practical experience for future job opportunities and which support the mission of the York County Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks’).

### **Guidelines for Students**

Parks’ provides two levels of work place experience - Practicum’s and Internship’s. Students partaking in any of these must be enrolled in or graduated from an accredited four-year curriculum in Parks and Recreation, Leisure Study’s, Education, Public Administration, History, Marketing, Biology, Natural Resources or related field.

- **Practicum** students should have completed 28 credit hours. Practicum is to provide a student with an overview of different areas of park and recreation with an initial exploration of potential careers. Usually unpaid.
- **Internship** students should have completed 64 credit hours. An internship is to provide a focused pre-service work experience in one area of parks and recreation. Usually unpaid.
- **Environmental Education Internship** This unique internship is a stipend position, established through an endowment honoring park volunteer Ralph Brooks. Applicants should have completed 64 credit hours. The Environmental Education Internship provides intensive training in environmental and conservation education and nature programming.

In addition to the minimum credits, students should have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 and a minimum GPA in their field of study of 2.75 or demonstrate exceptional field experience.

Job descriptions are included in the Appendix of this manual.

### **Application Process**

Upon receiving an inquiry from a student regarding a department internship, or practicum the student will receive an application, located in the Appendix. The application should be completed along with the items listed below:

- A current resume
- Transcript noting cumulative GPA and Field of Study GPA
- A letter of interest including your goals and objectives for the internship
- The completed application form

Application should be received by the following deadlines:

Winter/Spring:	November 20 <sup>th</sup>
Summer:	March 15 <sup>th</sup>
Fall:	April 15 <sup>th</sup>

Once the Parks' has received this information an interview may be arranged in person or via phone.

## **Compensation**

While with the department, Interns and Practicum students are considered volunteers. It is our belief that the student and department have a partnership. The department provides the student the required knowledge, experiences and access to mentors to fulfill the internship standard of the school or university. In exchange the student enhances the Parks' by providing fresh new ideas, professional skills, talents and suggestions. Parks' does not financially compensate practicum students.

Interns have three possible scenarios. The intern receives no financial compensation. The intern is able to complete the internship requirements within the parameters of an existing seasonal position and receives pay as a seasonal employee of the county (if funding is available). The Ralph Brooks Environmental Education Internship Fund provides a stipend to the intern, see attached job description.

## **Working Hours**

A schedule is worked out between the student and staff members. Schedules can range from 8 to 40 hours per week both of which may include weekends and evenings.

## **Assignments**

Prior to beginning each internship or practicum, staff members cooperatively produce a schedule of assigned areas and projects for the student. Assignments are based on the interns stated interests and desired areas of growth. Projects of long and short-term nature will be assigned. Additionally, you will be assisting staff in completing work assignments in a wide spectrum of areas.

## **Weekly Journal & Hour Log**

The student will be required to keep a weekly log of hours worked during the practicum/internship, which will be due at the end of each week. A parks' supervisor at the site will sign off on the log and review the week past and upcoming with the student. The journal is an excellent place for note taking, jotting thoughts, writing program reviews and questions as they arise. In addition you will need to complete the appropriate paperwork required by your school or university.

## **Evaluation**

According to each schools procedures your supervisor will compete your evaluations. The evaluation will include verbal and written feedback from your supervisor. The weekly review of the student's hour log/journal will provide informal opportunities for the supervisor to provide guidance and instruction. This is also a scheduled opportunity for the student to discuss any questions or concerns so that there are no surprises at the evaluation. The student will have the opportunity to review the written evaluation, which is turned into the university/school. The intern is expected to evaluate his or her experience and performance in writing and to discuss them with his or her supervisor.

## **Internship & Practicum Responsibilities**

The Department will assist you in learning as much as possible from this experience.

You will need to:

- Familiarize yourself with procedures/guidelines for internship
- Create goals and objective for your internship
- Be timely with all required written communication
- Communicate effectively with you assigned supervisor
- Seek opportunities to complement your work and educational experiences
- Assist parks and recreation staff on projects and assignments
- Plan in advance for each area/project you are assigned to; ask questions if in doubt.
- Practice excellence in you work
- Be flexible by working the times and dates assigned to you. You will have to work some evening and weekends
- Notify your supervisor in advance of any anticipated absence from work
- Be appropriately dressed for all assignments
- Be friendly, courteous and treat everyone in all circumstances with dignity and respect as you are a representative of the York County Department of Parks and Recreation.
- Ask for advice from your supervisor, staff members and volunteers regarding any problems that you cannot solve yourself
- Become involved in any opportunity presented to you
- Show initiative and creativity, offer ideas and suggestions on program improvements
- When you have free time, use that time to learn more about the operations of the department and subject areas where you have an interest or weakness.

## **Internship Supervisor Responsibilities**

The York County Parks' staff has specific responsibilities to the intern. They include, but not limited to:

- One staff person shall be designated as overall supervisor, responsible for all required paperwork, scheduling and evaluation of intern.
- Any staff directly involved with the intern will make a commitment of time, energy and resources necessary to provide a quality intern experience
- Supervisor will work with intern and staff to develop scope of work, schedule and program of study for intern prior to arrival. This will be reviewed with intern during orientation
- Supervisor will conduct periodic performance reviews, and handle formal evaluations, providing feedback and alternative solutions and ideas.

- The supervisor will consult with the student's internship facility advisor concerning any issues relevant to the intern that cannot be resolved within the Parks' policies and influence the intern's performance.

This manual was adopted by:

York County Parks Foundation Charitable Trust	January 2005
York Count Advisory Board of Parks and Recreation	February 2005
Updated	January 2007, 2012

# Practicum Job Description

## York County Department of Parks and Recreation

- Job Title:** York County Parks' Practicum
- Purpose:** To provide students in Recreation and Park academic programs the opportunity to explore and overview of various areas of park operations. To add professional experience to the understanding you have gained through course work.
- Essential Duties:** Practicum students will assist with various Parks' related duties. Also they will survey other areas of operations including, administration, maintenance and facilities, security and programming. A short and long-term project will be assigned.
- Compensation:** Practicum students receive no financial compensation.
- Qualifications:** Must be a student in an accredited undergraduate program (should have completed 28 credit hours) in parks and recreation, education, biology or related field, who has met the practicum criteria for both the university/school and the York County Department of Parks and Recreation.
- Time Commitment:** Hours as required by college or university, but not less than 120 hours
- Training and Benefits:** Requirements fulfilled for degree, evaluations completed by professional staff, information, contacts and materials gleaned from experience, feedback and hands-on training in a diverse parks system.

# **Internship Job Description**

## **York County Department of Parks and Recreation**

- Job Title:** York County Parks' Intern
- Purpose:** Provide students in wide range of academic programs the opportunity to enhance their course work and fulfill degree requirements, while benefiting the Parks' operations and programs.
- Essential Duties:** Interns will assist with a variety of Recreation and Park related duties in areas ranging from, youth activities, special events, development, administration, family programming, outdoor education to environmental education. Short and long term projects will be assigned, along with regional agency visitation.
- Compensation:** Student interns may receive no financial compensation or may receive pay (if funding is available) as a Parks' Seasonal if they fulfill school requirements.
- Qualifications:** An undergraduate in an accredited recreation, education, science, law enforcement, business program or any field of study (should have completed 64 credit hours) who has met the internship criteria for both the university/school and the York County Department of Parks and Recreation.
- Time Commitment:** Number of hours as required by the college or university, but not less than 300 hours.
- Training and Benefits:** Requirements fulfilled for degree, evaluations completed by professional staff, information, contacts and materials gleaned from experience, and extensive in-field hands-on training in a diverse parks system.

# **Environmental Education Internship**

## **Job Description**

### **York County Department of Parks and Recreation**

- Job Title:** Ralph Brooks Environmental Education Intern
- Purpose:** Provide students and graduates from an accredited university a professional immersion into environmental education primarily with elementary and middle school students, conservation education and nature programming to benefit the Parks' programs by providing an intern to assist staff.
- Essential Duties:** Interns will serve in this contract position with York County Parks Foundation Charitable Trust (under the direction of York County Parks) and will assist the Parks' staff in delivery of a wide range of programs, nature center operations, display design and curriculum development.
- Compensation:** Interns will receive a stipend of \$8.15/hour with monthly payments. Though no housing is provided, Park's is willing to offer suggestions on housing options in the community.
- Qualifications:** A student having completed 64 credit hours or a graduate of an accredited Recreation, Education, and Science or related program and meets Parks' Internship criteria. Candidates with previous related experience will be favored.
- Time Commitment:** Hours required by the university/school but not less than 300 hours.
- Training and Benefits:** skill and knowledge development, professional networking, information and materials gleaned from experience and extensive (in-field hands-on) training in nature center operations, program delivery, nature programming and environmental education within an active nature center. Requirements fulfilled for degree – if applicable.

# Application for Practicum, Internship and Environmental Education Internship

York County Department of Parks and Recreation

## **Please Print Legibly**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Education**

College/University \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Major(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative Grade Point Average \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Point Average in Field of Study \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Practicum/Intern Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

School Deadline Date for Practicum/Intern Acceptance \_\_\_\_\_

I am applying for a (circle one) **Practicum** **Internship** **Environ. Education Intern**

To begin approximately: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

And ending approximately: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Hours Required \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs \_\_\_\_\_

**The following information must accompany this application**

- A current resume
- Transcript noting cumulative GPA and Field of Study GPA
- A letter of interest including your goals and objectives for the internship

\*Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, give details and dates \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Do you have any pending charges against you \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, charge \_\_\_\_\_ Felony \_\_\_\_\_ Misdemeanor

\*This information will be verified. Affirmative answers will not necessarily exclude you from internship; however information will be considered insofar as it relates to the assigned areas of your internship. Limited openings are available each calendar year.

**Pledge: The information supplied by me is this application is complete and true to the best of my knowledge. I understand any misstatements; misrepresentation or omission of material facts shall cause forfeiture of all rights to internship or practicum in the service of the York County Department of Parks Recreation.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

***Return completed application and requested information to:***

York County Parks  
5922 Nixon Drive  
York PA 17403  
Attn: Francis Velazquez, Manager of Education

**Questions: call 717-428-0355 or e-mail parks-nixon@york-county.org**

***Thank you for your interest in York County Department of Parks and Recreation***