

Summer Internship Report 2017

Garrett Lucey, C'19

Hometown: Scottsdale, Arizona



New York Botanical Garden Bronx, New York

Provide an overview of the organization/research project and a summary of your responsibilities, tasks, and/or projects.

As part of my internship, I worked with a team of full-time employees that managed a 50-acre, old-growth forest located in the heart of the New York Botanical Garden, as well as participated in research on the Bronx River with the Bronx River Alliance. Everyday responsibilities included plant care, invasive species management, and trail maintenance.

During your internship, what did you accomplish or how did you make a difference? In what ways did you grow in your professional and technical skills?

One of the ways that I made a difference was by participating in research on the Bronx River. By doing research and cleaning the Bronx River, we helped improve the water quality of the river. The hope is that, by improving the water quality, the Bronx River will be able to support more fish and wildlife as well as become safer for the general public.

Describe a problem that you helped to solve at your internship. What skills or knowledge from your education at Sewanee helped you address the problem?

One problem that I helped solve at the internship was that the seeds of a type of invasive species that we were removing were at the top of the plant and would explode and spread when they were touched. I suggested that we cut the tops of the plants off and placing the seeds in buckets before we pulled the plant out of the ground.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

My teamwork skills were definitely strengthened this summer because I worked as part of a team of full-time employees. One task that surely strengthened my teamwork skills was when we had to fix

boundary fences on trails in the forest, which is something I had no experience doing. In order to fix the fences, we had to dig holes, cut wood with handsaws, as well as lift heavy objects. This helped me strengthen my teamwork skills because I had to work with my coworkers, who had much more knowledge and experience doing our assigned task, to learn something completely new.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

My internship greatly affected my current career plans. Because of this experience, I have decided to switch my major from Natural Resources to Geology. This summer I learned that working in a forest may not be what is best for me in my future and that is why I have decided to change my major.

In what ways did your internship cause you to encounter people of different backgrounds from your own? What steps did you take to communicate effectively with such persons? What did you learn from such persons' perspectives?

My internship caused me to encounter people of different backgrounds in many ways. Given that I worked in the northeast region, many of my coworkers had lived there their entire lives while I have spent pretty much all of my life in the southern region of the country. This caused me to have a very different upbringing compared to many of my coworkers. In order to get along with them I tried to find things in common like baseball so that I could converse with them. One thing that I learned from my coworkers' perspectives was that there are many reasons to be passionate about doing outside work for the benefit of the environment.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

Dear donors: Thank you so much for allowing me to work and live in New York City this summer. Without your help, I would not have been able to experience the greatest city in the world.