

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Native American Student Employment Project, phase 2

Type of Project: Education
Discipline: Interdisciplinary
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Montana
Effective Dates: 5/1/2013 - 12/31/2015
Funding Amount: \$18,525

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: Developing a workforce and recruiting employees that reflect the diversity of the American population is vitally important to the National Park Service. The National Park Service recognizes workforce diversity as a sound business practice; success in achieving workforce diversity will enhance the Service's ability to more successfully connect with park visitors who represent America's diverse population and the Service is directed to develop partnerships to improve workforce diversity (NPS Management Policies 2006, Sec. 1.9.1.5) Recruiting and retaining Native Americans in the workforce is of special importance to Yellowstone National Park due to its government-to-government relationship with 26 affiliated Native American tribes.

The University of Montana, through the Native American Natural Resource Program (NANRP) in the College of Forestry and Conservation, has made a commitment to recruit, tutor, advise and mentor Native American students. Some of the services provided by NANRP include academic and financial aid advising, internship and seasonal job placement, and providing Native American students with the services and resources they need for a successful academic experience at the University of Montana. The mission of NANRP is to provide Native American students enrolled in the College of Forestry and Conservation with educational opportunities and support that will assist and guide them as they earn their undergraduate degrees. The NANRP provides specialized services and support to Native American students in the College of Forestry and Conservation, but the University of Montana has a deep commitment to recruiting and mentoring Native American students in all departments of the University. Complementary programs to the NANRP include American Indian Student Services (AISS) and the TRIO Student Services. The NANRP works closely with these programs, as well as the Native American Studies Department to provide comprehensive services and resources to Native American students at the University of Montana.

The objective of this project is to maintain and further develop a program to recruit, train, and retain Native Americans in the NPS workforce. The University of Montana, through the NANRP and other programs, has developed expertise in advising and mentoring Native American students and placing them in internships and summer employment positions with federal agencies. The NPS is benefiting from the experience and expertise of University of Montana staff in recruiting, training, and retaining Native American employees. The first summer of the program, 2010, the park hosted one student in natural resources who returned to the park in summer 2011 in a seasonal government position as a student hire. In summer 2011, the park hosted two interns, one in cultural resources and one in interpretation. During summer 2013 two additional Native American students will be recruited to work in Yellowstone NP.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

- Identify positions; provide Position Descriptions and Performance Criteria May 1 2013
- Recruit students May 1 2013
- Advise, orient, mentor students (initial) May 2013
- Summer employment season (see University schedule) summer 2013 or 2014
- Follow up interviews; written report by students Nov 2013 or 2014
- Draft report of year one January 2014
- Final Report NLT December 31, 2014

Keywords: Native American, student intern, diversity, Yellowstone National Park, University of Montana