

High Rocks Summer Internship

Hello all,

High Rocks for girls, a leadership program in the Allegheny Mountains of WV is beginning to look for our next team of summer interns. A successful applicant will have completed her sophomore year, and have the physical and emotional stamina needed for our intensive outdoor programs with teenage girls.

We post this internship opportunity at many campus career centers, but It is good for our program if people who understand our mission help spread the word among likely candidates. The positions are available to students with a variety of majors and interests. Interns have helped teach math, science, art, and writing. They have worked with our "Connected Riding" horse program, gone backpacking, whitewater rafting, and traveled to D.C. with our girls—plus learned a lot about teaching, working at a non-profit, Appalachian culture, and mentoring girls to be their "best-selves."

I have pasted below and attached a description of the internship and some quotations from last year's team of interns. We feel that our internship program has been a powerful, transformative experience for young college women, while their insights and energy have greatly enriched our work with girls. We help successful applicants procure a \$2000 stipend and offer housing and meals during trips and camps. The deadline for a letter of interest and resume submitted to High Rocks is March 18, 2008.

We appreciate you sharing this information with your students and colleagues who may be interested in working with High Rocks this summer.

Sincerely,

Erica

Erica Lipps
Co-Director
High Rocks for Girls
Hillsboro, WV
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www.highrocks.org

Educate. Empower. Inspire.

Mentor at High Rocks Summer Program for Teen Girls

High Rocks Summer Internship

The High Rocks is an award winning leadership development program based in Pocahontas County West Virginia. High Rocks mission is to support and strengthen young West Virginia women from all walks of life. Our purpose is to educate, empower and inspire girls, giving them the confidence to lead active lives and work towards the long-term betterment of our community.

High Rocks offers a summer internship program to college students and recent graduates. The High Rocks internship invites these women to become part of, in the words of a summer 2006 intern—“this community of activists, organizers, learners, teachers, scholars and visionaries” based in the mountains of West Virginia.

Internship Structure

The internship has two main components—seminars and hands-on experience working with teen girls. This two-part approach is designed to deepen the experiences of the summer interns so that they leave High Rocks with theoretical as well as practical knowledge about West Virginia, the challenges facing girls, ethical social change, and effective citizenship.

A group of four to six Interns complete a ten-week internship at High Rocks from late May to early August. Interns support staff in summer programs, work as mentors with individual teens, and complete an original curriculum of reading, reflection and discussion designed to enrich their teaching work.

Interns are provided with housing at High Rocks and with meals while summer camps are in session. Interns also receive a stipend for the summer, which is provided either by High Rocks or by their sponsoring school or program. Some past interns have been funded through the Bonner Scholars program at Berea and the Haverford College Center for Peace and Global Citizenship. Individual interns have worked with their colleges to secure academic credit for the internship in some cases.

Programming with Youth: Training Teachers and Encouraging Students

Interns receive experiential education as teaching apprentices, working with High Rocks staff to design and carry-out innovative curricula for teens. For example, last year interns co-taught courses in entrepreneurship, filmmaking, environmental science, and construction in a camp themed around non-traditional roles for women.

Empowering Activism through Exploration of the Appalachian Context

The High Rocks summer internship is designed to empower motivated young people with the background and the skills to work for effective social change throughout their lives. To achieve this, we have designed a series of seminars in which people can ask hard questions about the heritage and future of Appalachia and form their own opinions, ideas, and solutions.

The four-part series of daylong interactive seminars are held at High Rocks at intervals throughout the summer. We hand-select a volunteer staff that brings together scholars and field experts. Last summer’s seminar leaders came from the University of Texas, the Rural

School and Community Trust, WV Public Broadcasting, West Virginia State Senate offices, and the United States Senate offices.

Reflections and Testimonials

Weekly group meetings, reflective writing assignments, and informal counseling from High Rocks staff help these young women reflect deeply on their experiences. In the course of the summer, interns are asked to do the “outer” work of social change, working with girls and becoming educated about the region. Additionally, they are expected and supported to do the deep “inner” work required for authentic leadership—facing their prejudices and assumptions, investigating their reactions, and reflecting on how their work at High Rocks impacts their personal ethics, plans and worldview. Samples from 2006 interns’ evaluation writings demonstrate how powerful the experience was for these emerging leaders.

*I certainly feel differently about Appalachia – my eyes have been opened to so many issues that I had **no** idea were going on here, and my sense of American politics has definitely shifted by suddenly realizing that I wasn’t seeing the whole picture at all. It has made me more aware of my leadership potential and the kind of woman I want to be.*

(Natasha from Princeton, NJ)

I came at the beginning of the summer stuck in a guilt trip, and wanted to feel like I could do something to help the people in this state. After working at the High Rocks I have come to feel more energized and creative and perceptive to what West Virginian communities need. And more perceptive to the fact that not all West Virginians need the same things. The seminars were an amazing way to talk about issues that I thought I had “figured” out.

(Missy from Morgantown, WV)

I do it [advocate for social change] all the time without realizing it. At least that’s what I’ve found out through all of these seminars and putting the academics into practice. I now understand what it means to be advocating for social change. That’s something new. I want to be able to stay active in changing the world. (Yvette from Richwood, WV; High Rocks alum)

Application Procedure

To apply, send your resume (with references) and cover letter to: Erica Lipps, High Rocks, HC 64 Box 438, Hillsboro, WV 24946 or erica@highrocks.org. Questions? Email or phone (304) 653-4891. For more information visit www.highrocks.org.

Important Dates:

March 18: Letter of interest and resume received at High Rocks by this date

Week of March 31: Applicants interviewed

April 15: Interns Notified

May 27: Internship begins

August 5: Last day of Internship; final projects and reports due

Emma, NY City

I learned that a more honest, respectful and cooperative approach to leadership really makes a difference in the dynamics and quality of the outcome.

I have gained is a better knowledge of how to talk to people from very different cultural backgrounds than myself in a respectful and curious way, and how to talk about who I am and where I'm from in a way that makes sense.

I also feel much more confident in my ability to be an initiator, to start programs and to network with other interested people.

My summer here has felt so right, so fitting, and has perhaps felt like the closest thing I've ever done to what I want to do with my life. While I've been here, I've felt the closest to who I want to be that I've felt in a long time.

Sasha, NJ

I really liked the seminar about social change and art. It was a great combination of using two of my passions and combining them for a common cause. I loved it! It was amazing. The seminars on West Virginia were also so necessary for my being here. They taught me so much about stereotypes about Appalachia, history, women...all these things that I didn't know and would have never learned had it not been for my internship at High Rocks

My most challenging role this summer was being the only Latina in this area. I have never been so out of my element. Because my being Puerto Rican is such an essential part of me, I did not know how I would navigate being proud of my culture if others would not be accepting. I learned that regardless of what people may think about me I should stay true to myself and let others fall into line as they wish but I will never deny who I am for other people.

This new "me" is so much more comfortable in her skin and more knowledgeable about different people and more prepared to continue on my journey to change the world.

Samantha, WV

The first lesson that I have learned is that as with any job and particularly with non-profit work, the administrator wears many different hats. It is not particularly glamorous to weed-eat for hours or clean up the kitchen, but when hands are short a good administrator will always kick-in. [This model of leadership] encourages appreciation for each other's roles and allows all members of the team to be much attuned to the girls.

Ada, KY

No matter how often I wanted to give up on my goal, the girls showed me time and again how hard but wonderful it felt to force oneself to approach things in a different light. I feel as if I have gone through a camp of my own and have ended up at the end knowing who I am, what I need to work on, and how important keeping an often difficult but positive view of my situation can be.