ECO Internship Program

Helping Diverse Teens Find Their Niche within PP&R!

The Environmental Career Opportunity (ECO) Internship Program connects diverse youth to careers with PP&R City Nature and other departments. This is the school year component of our pipeline of career builiding opportunities, which includes the Greenspaces Restoration & Urban Naturalist Team (GRUNT), the Youth Conservation Crew (YCC) and Summer Nature Day Camp.

Quick Stats:

- 34 teens worked 1340 hours in 2012 at 19 different internships
- 48 PP&R staff members mentored teens
- Each teen wrote a resume & cover letter, applied for internships, and worked 18 - 200 hours.
- Program has connected diverse teens to PP&R careers since 2009
- Funded by the Office of Youth Violence Prevention in 2011 and 2012

Who are the Teens?

The 118 graduates of the GRUNT program and select participants from the YCC are invited to particpate. Teens can work each year until they turn 22, after which we provide resources and networking for employment within PP&R.

- 37% were referred to us by the Office of Youth Violence Prevention
- 82% are eligible for the Free & Reduced lunch program
- 76% speak English as a second language

This is Why We Do It.....

Our goal is to diversify the environmental field and PP&R by getting urban teens interested in nature and providing the job skills and work experiences they will need to be successful. The ECO Internship Program is part of a pipeline of experiences which includes long-term mentoring, work/internship opportunities and skills training. Teens are encouraged to try out a variety of career fields. If teens are not into rain & mud, we're committed to helping them find their niche in an indoor PP&R job.

PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION
Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

SNAPSHOTS FROM THE FIELD

Office of Commissioner Fish

"In addition to all the great projects that I worked on and all the interesting stuff I learned, I met great people that I totally admire and respect for all the great work that they do for the City of Portland."

~ Beatriz
GRUNT '09, Nature Day Camp '09, '11, '12, Peninsula Park Intern '10, Teen Environmental Adventures, '11, '12

PP&R Urban Forestry

"Because of this work, I discovered that I really want to be outside working with nature. I feel better, I can say way better, than working inside or doing an easy job."

~ Jaime, GRUNT '10, YCC No Ivy League '10

PP&R Horticultural Services

"This is it. This is what I want to do.."

~ Pedro, YCC No Ivy League 2009

PP&R Peninsula Park Community Center

"The thing I liked best about my internship was that you [Josh Green] always put a smile on peoples face. This internship was important because now I have you as a reference for summer jobs because I really like to work with kids and I want to apply for Nature Day Camp." ~ Alberto

Peninsula Park Interns:
Alberto, GRUNT'11, YCC Trails Crew '11, '12, Urban Forestry Intern '11
Keisha (above left), YCC No Ivy League '09, '10, '11

PP&R Environmental Education
Amphibian Research Program

"I want to thank you for the chance you gave me to learn more about the amazing world of amphibians. The most important thing I learned was how to record my findings on a data sheet which was a challenge."

~ Miguel, GRUNT '11, Nature Camp '11, '12

SNAPSHOTS FROM THE FIELD

PP&R Community Relations

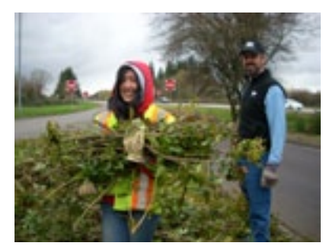
"Going from being completely clueless to getting the hang of it, learning about Public and Media Relations with PP&R was quite an eye opener. It's not just one person who takes the responsibilities of maintaining the websites created, or virally spreading the works of the daily things going on, but a whole team."

~ Mary, GRUNT '10, Nature Day Camp '10, '11, Amphibian Research Intern '11

THANKS TO MENTORS FROM OTHER PP&R PROGRAMS, INCLUDING:

- Mt. Tabor Yard Office Team
- Community Relations Team
- City Nature Environmental Education Office
- City Nature Teen Environmental Adventures (T.E.A.)
- City Nature Nuts About Nature Preschool
- Mt. Scott Community Center
- City Nature Jr. GRUNT program
- City Nature Urban Forestry Education

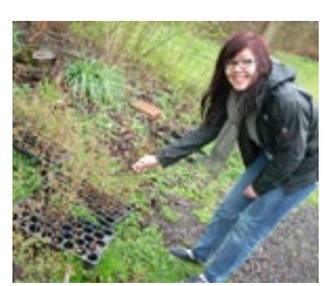
THANKS TO MENTORS FROM PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:



Oregon Travel Experience

"Learning about your career path and background resonated with me because I find myself in a similar situation, so it was very helpful. While the work was hard, I am proud to say that I was able to do it and I feel great. I will never forget how to sharpen a saw or fix a tire hole again or how to mop. This experience provided me with many firsts so thank you."

~ Karen GRUNT '09, Nature Day Camp '09, '10, '11, USFS Intern '10, Teen Environmental Adventures Intern , '11

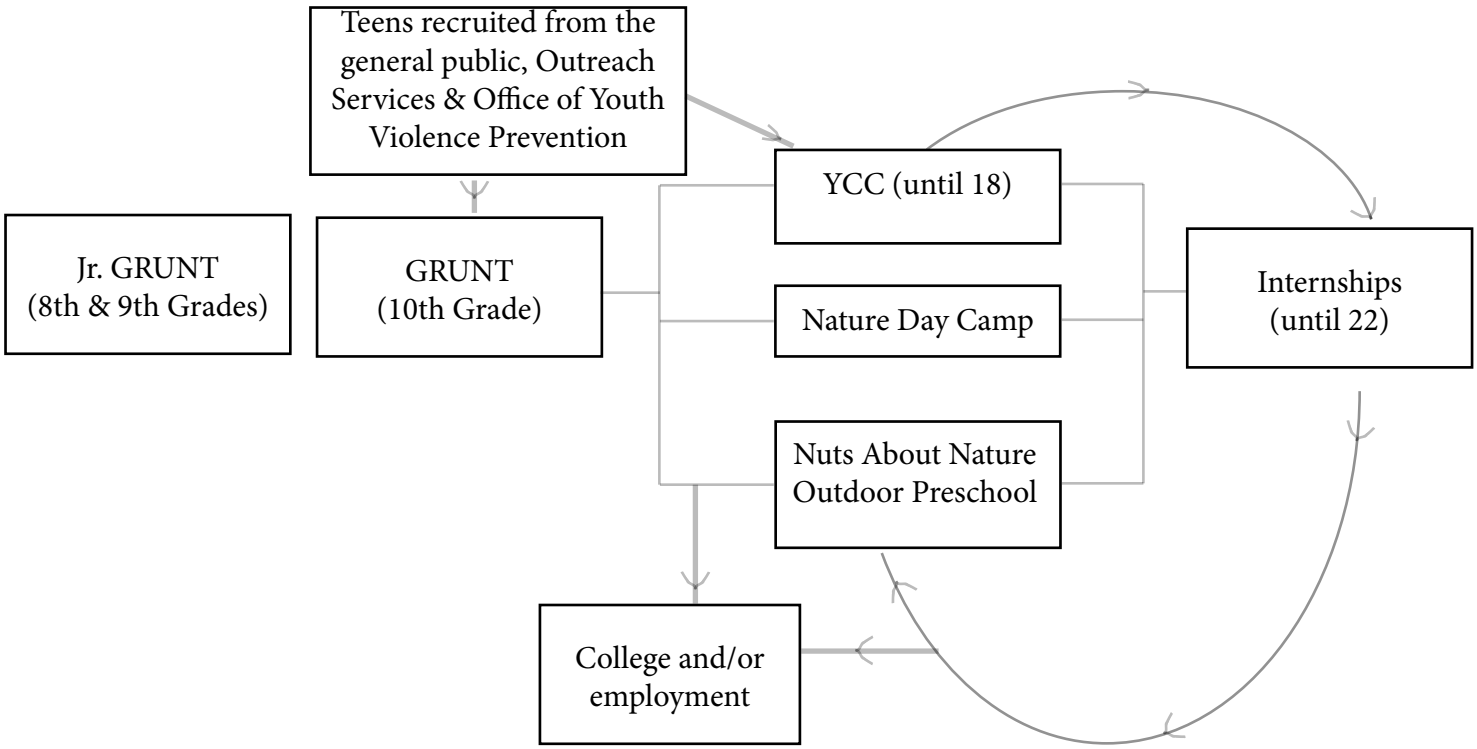


Columbia Slough Watershed Council

"Thank you for having me here to work with such an amazing team. I had great times working with Sheilagh, Jane, Michelle, Melissa and Sam. You guys are all amazing. I felt very comfortable the moment I stepped into the door. Thank you for always being there and support me."

~ Mai, GRUNT '10, Nature Day Camp '10, '11, CSWC Intern '11, 12, YCC '12

HOW DOES THE PIPELINE WORK?



IS IT SUCCESSFUL?

The oldest GRUNT graduates are now 21-22 years old and have been participating since 2008. Thirty GRUNT graduates worked for PP&R this summer and many are pursuing college degrees with an environmental emphasis. Several young adults are moving into leadership positions within PP&R City Nature including:

- Lead teachers with Summer Nature Day Camp & Nuts About Nature Outdoor Preschool
- Crew Leader for Jr. GRUNT (with the goal of being a YCC crew leader next summer)
- Youth Conservation Crew (YCC) crew members

"Now that I'm out of GRUNT, I realize how brilliant it was! [The organization I'm working for] is not diverse and the way the hiring is done, it excludes a lot of people. Because of my experiences with Parks, I am on an equal playing field.

~ phone call from Sonja,
GRUNT '09, Ampibian Intern '10, Nature Day Camp '10, '11, future PP&R Director