SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER SWCS
INTERNSHIPS IN CONSERVATION

INTERNSHIP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must:
1. Be willing to participate in Internship Program.
2. Be currently enrolled in a South Dakota educational institution.
3. Have completed at least one full year of study (two semesters) in an accredited university, college (including tribal colleges), or technical school in South Dakota. For example, if the student graduates from high school in May of 2018 and enrolls in college in the fall of 2018 as full-time student for the 2018-19 year, the student could apply in the spring of 2020. For students enrolled in a 2-year technical school, the internship may be awarded post-graduation, based upon the time of application review and monetary disbursement.
4. Have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.8 (on a 4.0 scale).
5. Be an undergraduate enrolled in an agricultural or natural science conservation related major/curriculum.
6. Show reasonable need for financial assistance.
7. Be involved in natural resource conservation activities (including leadership activities).
8. Not have received a prior SD SWCS scholarship.

Past applicants have majored in agronomy, soil science, precision ag, agricultural systems technology, range science, forestry, ag journalism, ag education, biology, botany, environmental management, horticulture, and wildlife and fisheries science. Other majors related to conservation also qualify.

Selection Criteria
1. Demonstrated commitment to natural resource conservation (30%)
2. Scholarship/academic record (20%)
3. Written student narrative on application (20%)
4. Natural resource conservation leadership activities (10%)
5. Financial need (10%)
6. Quality and completeness of application (10%)
Internship Program Guidelines

Internship recipient (student) enters into agreement with SD SWCS to job-shadow with a mutually agreeable conservation professional(s) for 40 hours, to be completed within 6 months of signed agreement, in exchange for a total internship payment of $1000. When the student is selected, he or she will be contacted by the Scholarship Committee Chairperson to arrange an internship location, with consultation with conservation professionals, to tailor the experience to the student’s interests. Examples include: Natural Resources Conservation Service, SDSU Extension, Voices for Soil Health, Agronomy Co-ops. The 40 hours may be completed in 8 hours per week for 5 weeks, or 40 hours in one week, for example, as mutually agreeable to the student, host location, and on-site supervisor. The time will be completed in blocks of no less than 4 hours.

If an extension to the 6-month requirement is needed due to medical or family emergency, or due to a prior academic commitment such as studying abroad, the student can request an extension at their earliest convenience by contacting the Scholarship Committee Chairperson prior to the end of the 6-month period. The Chairperson will consult with committee members to determine if an extension is warranted.

All payments will be credited to the student’s financial aid account at their higher education institution. After student completes 20 hours of interning, the on-site supervisor will notify the Chairperson, and the student will receive $300 of the internship amount. After the student completes the remaining 20 hours of interning, the on-site supervisor will notify the Chairperson, an exit interview will be conducted, and the student will receive the remaining $700, for a total of $1000.

If the student fails to complete the entire 40 hours within 6 months, the student will be granted a prorated payment of $15/hour for every hour completed, with a required minimum of 16 hours. For example, if the student completes 30 hours, student will receive payment of $450. If total internship time within 6 months is less than 16 hours, no payment will be made. This agreement encourages the student to complete the entire 40 hours in a timely manner.

The goals of this program are:
- To introduce students to potential career opportunities
- To connect employers to future job candidates
- To educate students on current issues and evolving technologies in natural resources
SD SWCS Internship Program Agreement

Between Student: ______________________________________

and South Dakota Chapter of Soil and Water Conservation Society

In exchange for a total scholarship amount of $1000, the student agrees to complete a total of 40 hours
of internship or job-shadowing with a conservation professional mutually agreeable to both parties.
Refer to Program Guidelines for details.

Student acknowledges that the selected employer or job site location may require them to sign a waiver
of liability or additional paperwork, as required. For example, with NRCS, the student may be required
to sign up as an Earth Team volunteer.

At the end of the Internship and before the last payment is made, a Scholarship Committee member(s)
will conduct a phone interview with the student, lasting not more than one hour, to evaluate the
experience and gain input for future internship job sites.

Selected job location:

______________________________________  ______________________________________

______________________________________  ______________________________________

______________________________________  ______________________________________

On-site administrative supervisor:

______________________________________  SD SWCS Scholarship Committee Chair:

Michelle Burke

520 Third Avenue, Brookings, SD 57006

Michelle.burke@usda.gov

605-692-2344

Technical point of contacts:

______________________________________

______________________________________

Date of Signed agreement: _________________________

Date for 40 hours of internship to be completed: _________________________

__________________________________________   _______________

Signature of Student       Date

__________________________________________   _______________

Signature of on-site administrative supervisor   Date

__________________________________________   _______________

Signature of SD SWCS Scholarship Committee Chair  Date

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