



Latino Heritage Internship Program

LATINO HERITAGE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Diversity Internship Program



NPS UNIT: JOHN MUIR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE	PD#: 14
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Position Title: Historical Research Intern
Position Type: LHIP Direct Hire Authority Resource Assistance (DHA-RA)
Primary natural resource discipline: Interpretation/Education
Location: 4202 Alhambra Ave, Martinez CA 94553

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Position Description: This internship will provide needed research for John Muir National Historic Site that has been identified as a park priority since the Park Foundation Document was prepared in 2015. The 2015 Foundation Document, approved by the Regional Director, identifies the Park Purpose, Significance Statements, Fundamental Resources and Values, and Interpretive Themes of the park. Significance statements express why a park’s resources and values are important enough to merit designation as a unit of the national park system. There were six significance statements prepared for JOMU, one of which is key to understanding the need for this internship, “Given John Muir’s pivotal role in the founding of the national park system, John Muir National Historic Site is uniquely positioned to explore how societal biases were woven into the system from its very origins in Muir’s time and why they continue today.”

Fundamental resources and values were also identified in the foundation document, one of which is also key in demonstrating the need for this internship, “John Muir’s Legacy: John Muir National Historic Site provides many opportunities for the public to connect with and critically examine Muir’s life, stories and evolving legacy firsthand. John Muir played a pivotal role in the establishment of the national park system, and as a historic conservationist continues to inspire environmental stewardship and civic engagement today. Along with other founding figures of the National Park Service, Muir belonged to an exclusive echelon of society that benefited from the same social divisions and inequities that have historically shaped the development of the National Park Service. The site’s resources and stories enrich our understanding of this multifaceted legacy.”

Finally, the Foundation Document included Interpretive Themes, based on the significance statements and fundamental resources and values. There are five interpretive themes for JOMU, one of which is key to understanding the need for this internship. “National Park System Inclusion: Inequities of race, class, gender, and ethnicity from Muir’s time influenced the composition of the modern conservation movement as well as the development of the national park system; understanding this history and its ramifications is critical in helping the National Park Service to chart a just and egalitarian direction for the future.”

As further background for this internship, this past summer, during a time of national discussions centering around race and privilege, the Sierra Club’s Executive Director, Michael Brune publicly acknowledged and apologized for the Sierra Club’s racist history. Brune stated, “[it is] time to take down some of our own monuments.” ... “[John Muir] made derogatory comments about Black people and Indigenous peoples that drew on deeply harmful racist stereotypes, though his views evolved later in his life ...As the most iconic figure in Sierra Club history, Muir’s words and actions carry an especially heavy weight. They continue to hurt and alienate Indigenous people and people of color.” Although the Sierra Club’s public acknowledgement of, and apology for Muir’s words was met with considerable backlash from die-hard Muir fans and long-term members of the

conservation community; and diminished by others who attributed Brune’s words as an example of “cancel-culture,” the John Muir National Historic Site is seizing the opportunity to research, discuss, and bear to light these more troubling components of Muir’s work and legacy in order to have a fuller understanding of the entirety of Muir’s impact and legacy. The Sierra Club offered us the opportunity and impetus to begin research on these elements of the Foundation Document that were identified five years ago. John Muir NHS is dedicated to researching, interpreting, and sharing all aspects of Muir’s life and career—his family life here in Martinez, California which afforded him wealth and access, the breadth and magnitude of his conservation work all over the world, as well as his negative views on people of color, and how those views may have influenced the American conservation movement.

SCOPE:

- This internship will center around conducting primary and secondary research on Muir’s writings and manuscripts to help shed light on Muir’s racist past.
- The intern will work with park interpretation and cultural resource staff to develop a research plan, which will likely include research at University of the Pacific (where the largest collection of Muir’s private manuscripts are housed) and Yosemite as well as here at John Muir NHS historic archives. The research plan will be developed the first week of the internship.
- The following weeks will include focused research at the John Muir NHS, UOP, Yosemite, and with the Sierra Club library.
- The final weeks will require synthesis of the research into a final report and a final presentation to park staff (the two required deliverables).

HOW RESEARCH WILL BE USED: This research will help the park fill an important gap in its research: research that is fundamental to our significance (per the Foundation Document). The research will be used by interpretive staff in interpreting a more complete account of Muir’s life, work, and ongoing legacy. Specifically, the results of this research will be used by our interpretation rangers in their daily programs to visitors. Additionally the research will be used by interpretive rangers in other National Parks with deep ties to John Muir, such as Yosemite National Park—discussions with Yosemite have already begun and this internship will be a part of discussions with Yosemite and other parks that we are planning for next summer. As the park and the NPS continue to prioritize Relevancy, Diversity, and Inclusion, this research will positively impact our ability to tell a more complete history of Muir, and to thereby directly connect our RDI priorities with park research.

COVID ACCOMMODATIONS

No

LEARNING GOALS

The intern will learn how to locate primary and secondary sources and how to research and write basic narrative histories. The intern will gain an understanding of the available research repositories pertaining to Muir and his legacy. He or she will gain skills in gathering historical materials and data and determining the relative importance of historical evidence. It is expected that the intern will hone her/his skills in writing clear and concise, research-driven documents. Through working with the public, the intern will also hone her/his public speaking skills.

MENTORING

The intern will be guided by the primary supervisor, the lead interpretation ranger at John Muir NHS, who will work with the student within the first few days of his or her arrival to develop a detailed work plan based on the

individual's specific skill set and professional interests. The intern will have access to other park staff such as the Chief of Resource Management and Planning, the Supervisory Curator, the Chief of Interpretation and Education and our Interpretive and Education specialists—often working in a team environment with plenty of guidance. Together, these staff will be available to help guide the student throughout the internship. Field trips to University of the Pacific, John Muir Center will be arranged to provide the opportunity to research the largest collection of Muir's manuscripts and personal papers. A field trip to Yosemite, and exposure to Yosemite's staff who are also exploring John Muir's past may also be possible during the course of the internship.

PROJECT RESULTS

The intern will prepare a 15-20 minute (likely virtual) presentation to be delivered to Park staff at the end of the internship summarizing the research methods, findings, and recommendations for continued research. The written report will be provided to park staff, and UOP -John Muir Center staff.

LEADERSHIP

The supervisor will work closely the first few days with the intern to assess individual strengths, skills, and interests and together, with the intern, the supervisor will establish a clear week by week plan for completing the research and for other activities like field trips, training, and assistance at visitor center. Every week, the intern and supervisor will meet and assess progress according to the workplan. The supervisor will work with the intern to discuss time management, project priorities, work through issues/road blocks and will guide and adjust the workplan with the intern as needed. Throughout the internship, the candidate will work with a broad range of park staff from every discipline: facilities, resources, interpretation/education, planners, and managers. Additionally, the candidate will likely meet and work with staff from the University of the Pacific- John Muir Center, and staff from Yosemite. The supervisor will coordinate the introductions, and will assist the intern in developing these professional relationships.

DHA-RAI OUTCOMES

A written report documenting all primary and secondary sources researched, an assessment of the relative importance or materials researched, results or preliminary conclusions of research, data gaps, and recommendations for ongoing/future research.

NATURAL & PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

Physical Work Environment: The small City of Martinez is located within the much bigger metropolis of the San Francisco Bay Area. Both Martinez and the greater Bay Area have diverse populations including 15% of the Martinez population and 23% of the Bay Area population who self-identified as "Hispanic or Latino" in the 2010 U.S. Census. In the summer, Martinez usually has warm days in the 80s and 90s, cool nights, and virtually no rain and very little humidity. The park itself consists of outdoor historic landscapes and open space, historic structures, a small visitor center, and office space. Grocery stores, restaurants, and other amenities are accessible by public transportation from the site.

Work Environment: The intern will mostly work in an office or visitor center environment, but may be asked to work virtually part of the time depending on Covid 19 protocols. The intern will likely drive to other sites such as University of the Pacific in Stockton CA and Yosemite National Park where he or she will work in indoor research centers and/or outside with interpretative rangers. Some of this driving will be on busy, traffic-bound freeways. The intern may also assist with field activities at John Muir NHS, outdoors in the hot (exposed to the sun), steep, uneven terrain of Mt. Wanda. In this part of the park, it is common to see native wildlife such as deer, squirrels, birds, insects, etc. Less common encounters with bobcats or rattle snakes can occur, but are unlikely. There are areas with poison oak, but these areas are easily avoided once the employee is able to identify the plant. The

bulk of the work will be in an indoor research environment. The John Muir NHS is managed with three other national park units. The other three parks will also intend to host interns through ACE and the HBCUI programs.

VEHICLE AND DRIVER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Yes, there will likely be the need to drive between John Muir NHS and University of the Pacific. Additionally, there is no park housing, so the intern will likely need a vehicle to get to the duty station.