

USGS Global Change Program FY 2009 - Internships for Tribes on USGS Climate Projects

Background Information

Tribes are currently faced with a wide range of problems related to climate change. Traditional ways of life are threatened by changes affecting water supplies, vegetation, wildlife, erosion, farming methods, subsistence hunting and fishing, and many features of the landscape. In this internship proposal, we seek to provide students with a learning experience that may add to tribal understanding of the causes and effects of climate issues and potentially help tribes in planning for adaptation to these changes. Students will be encouraged to share with USGS scientists their perspectives on climate change. This internship opportunity is being coordinated with the Haskell Indian Nations University (HINU), 35 other tribal colleges, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Objectives

Goals of this opportunity are to:

1. Provide American Indian and/or Alaska Native students, or other students, with a working experience to encourage them to pursue careers in geological, water, biological, or geographical sciences. Increasing GIS knowledge may also be an important aspect in this internship.
2. Encourage American Indian and/or Alaska Native students to provide Native observations related to climate, particularly if the project is based near their homeland area.

Funding Available

USGS Global Change Program will provide \$60,000 in funds to support this internship program. A total of 5-6 interns will be selected, with a maximum of \$10,000 per student. Funds will be sent directly to USGS cost centers.

Eligibility for Students

Students are not required to be American Indian or Alaska Native for this internship opportunity. They are, however, required to show how their internship experience will benefit a tribe. Applications including a letter of support from a tribal council, organization, academic institution, or other organization describing benefits of the student internship to a tribe are requested.

USGS Climate Projects – Eligibility

All USGS climate-related projects are eligible to apply for this internship opportunity. However, please note that most tribal college students will be available only during the summer months (from about the middle of May to early September).

Process

1. **January 16, 2009:** Deadline for application from USGS scientists seeking an intern for a USGS climate project. The attached “USGS Global Change Program - Project Application” should be submitted (email only) to Janet Cushing (jcushing@usgs.gov).
2. **Early January 2009:** The internship opportunity, along with a list of USGS projects seeking interns, will be advertised to tribal colleges.
3. **February 17, 2009:** Deadline for student applications. Students are required to submit the “USGS Global Change Program - Student Application”, with attachments (recommendation and college transcripts) through regular mail to Susan Marcus (see address on application). An email will be sent to each student applicant, to let them know that the application was received.
4. **March 15, 2009:** By this date, a panel consisting of representatives from USGS, HINU, NASA, AIHEC, and tribal colleges will have completed a review of all applications and will recommend the placement of student applicants on specific projects. The group will consult with students, student faculty, and project scientists to ensure a “best fit” for students and projects.
5. **Hiring Mechanism:** Students are expected to be hired as STEPs by the cost center of the USGS scientist seeking an intern. The cost center will handle all hiring and financial transactions for the student.
6. **Student Presentations:** Students will be encouraged to give a short presentation of their USGS work experience at the Haskell Climate Working Group at the Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, Kansas (date TBD).