Wyoming Dinosaur Center Internship Information

Thermopolis, Wyoming is located in north-central Wyoming about 2 hours east of Yellowstone National Park. It is located in the Big Horn Basin and has a population of about 3,300 people. Thermopolis is famous for its hot springs which are the largest in the world and includes 3 public pools. The hills around Thermopolis yield many dinosaur bones and many Mesozoic marine vertebrates and invertebrates. The closest city is Riverton, Wyoming which is about 45 miles south east and has a population of about 9,000 people. This is where the closest Wal-Mart is for shopping. Transportation for personal use is not provided by the WDC.

HOUSING

We offer free housing in sight of the museum. Up to 9 beds are available for use plus all utilities are paid by the WDC. The house is fully furnished with 3 baths, pots and pans, silverware, plates, washer and dryer, dishwasher and a 2 car garage are also provided. Downtown and shopping is only minutes away.

WHAT TO BRING

Hiking boots, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, water bottles, pants are recommended but shorts are ok, short or long sleeve shirts (tank tops are not allowed during work hours), toiletries and bed sheets. Field equipment will be provided by the WDC but your own field pack is recommended. If ANY prescription medication is needed, it must be in the original container, with the original label, and in the individual's name.

INTERNSHIP

The internship is a stipend of $100 dollars a week, during a 6 week period with free housing. As an intern you will be required to work 3 days in the field (Dig for a day with families), with the two remaining days reserved for your research project. The requirements for

your research project will be determined by your university. No prior experience in paleontology is required but any type of science background is welcome.

Here is a description of what you will be doing over your 6 week internship. You can also receive certification in the areas described below.

FIELD WORK

Here you will be taught how to excavate and identify dinosaur bones in the field. Please consider the extremely hot and dry weather and that the field work may be strenuous and hazardous. Participants must be in good physical condition, ready for unpredictable weather changes, steep slopes, falling rocks, insects, scorpions and rattlesnakes. Closed toe shoes are required at all times. Ice water is provided on location.

DIG FOR A DAY PROGRAM

The Dig for a day or DFD program provides the general public the chance to dig dinosaur bones in an actual dinosaur quarry. Here you will teach the families proper techniques for excavating, jacketing, mapping and data collection. This will usually be an all day activity starting at about 8:00 am till about 4:30pm. There will be a short break at noon for lunch down at the museum. Interns may order lunch from the WDC for a small fee each day and you will be asked to remain with the family during this time. The end of the day usually consists of giving the family a short tour of the museum and possibly the preparation lab. Our main concern for the Dig for a Day program is the safety of our guests.

PREP LAB

Here you will be taught how to remove the matrix or rock from real dinosaur bones. Several methods that you will become familiar with are the air abrasive units (sand blaster), air tools (mini jackhammers), dental picks and tooth brushes. Conditions in the lab are very dusty

so be prepared to get dirty. Closed toe shoes will be required at all times. Other personal protection will be provided such as goggles, ear plugs and face masks.

MOLDING AND CASTING

Here you will assist in the process of making replicas of real dinosaur bones. You will be working with several different chemicals so we suggest that you wear clothing that you do not mind getting dirty. Closed toe shoes will be required at all times. Other personal protective equipment will be provided.

COLLECTIONS

Here you will assist in the proper storage of real dinosaur bones. This will include data entry, placing bones in storage units and proper documentation of each bone. Some heavy lifting will be required, and close toed shoes will be required at all times.

RESEARCH

Research through the WDC/BHBF comes in all shapes and sizes. The WDC/BHBF continues to sponsor projects including: description of middle Cretaceous crabs from the Mowry Formation; gut contents of Jurassic marine reptiles; posture and biomechanics of sauropod necks, and dinosaur limbs; taphonomy and paleoecology of Morrison dinosaur sites; and diplodocid phylogeny and morphology. Interns also get a chance to conduct research on foundation and WDC specimens. This often provides them with their first project that is intended for peer-review publication. There are few opportunities for undergraduate research; we pride ourselves on supporting and encouraging undergraduate participation from idea to press.