

DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN

Internship Description

Job Title: Seeds of Success Intern

Department: Research, Conservation and Collections

Reports to: Seeds of Success Lead and Conservation Collections Manager

Status: Unpaid part-time position. Average of nine (9) hours per week, with flexibility to align with specific academic programs.

PURPOSE OF POSITION:

The Desert Botanical Garden is a major cultural institution in the Phoenix metropolitan area with a multi-faceted mission: conservation, education, research and exhibition of desert plants. It welcomes 315,000 visitors annually – roughly 50% local and 50% tourists.

The Research, Conservation, and Collections (RCC) Department is tasked with understanding and conserving the desert's unique plant life, and revealing intricate relationships that exist among the plants, environments and people in our desert region. We gain our knowledge through investigations conducted in four areas of research: conservation biology, plant systematics and evolution, ecology and ethnobotany. We achieve conservation outcomes through our "Garden to Global" conservation strategy, which includes convening the Central Arizona Conservation Alliance and active engagement in the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The RCC Department at the Desert Botanical Garden offers year-round internships for undergraduate students, graduate students, and recent graduates interested in Plant and Seed Ecology. The internship is offered at least one time per year during one of the following three-month periods: spring (January to April), summer (May to July) and fall (August to December).

Seeds of Success is a national program, run by the Bureau of Land Management, to collect seeds from wild populations of plants for conservation, restoration, and research. The Seeds of Success Intern will work as part of the Seed collecting crew to collect and conserve seeds for the Seeds of Success Program. The activities conducted as part of the internship should be integral to the intern's course of study and future educational and career goals, as described in the intern's self-description of their learning objectives (see "To Apply" below).

The purpose of the internship experience is to provide the intern with the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real work experience, develop valuable contacts in the field by networking with professionals, evaluate his or her commitment to the field while it is still relatively easy to change, identify technical and/or theoretical competencies that need further development, develop motivation, independence, and self-confidence, observe and develop the values/ethics of professionals, and assume professional responsibilities and substantive tasks.

Duties & Responsibilities:

With training and support from the RCC staff, the SOS Intern will:

- Use GPS and topographic maps to find and record potential collecting sites
- Use the Seeds of Success protocol to find and sustainably collect seeds from priority species
- Use dichotomous keys and field guides to verify the identity of plant species
- Work with SOS volunteers
- Prepare reference plant vouchers
- Other administrative tasks, as assigned and agreed upon at the start of the internship

Evaluation:

- Meet weekly to set goals for tasks to be accomplished and check on status of previous goals
- Go over strengths and weaknesses observed in the field setting
- Discuss problems encountered and how they were resolved
- Perform a mid-term and end of term evaluation using the Garden's performance evaluation system

Job Requirements:

Applicants should have a basic understanding of plant anatomy and physiology and an interest in doing fieldwork. Ability to work extended hours in potentially rough and remote terrain and extreme weather conditions is necessary, as well.

To Apply:

Please send a cover letter outlining your qualifications, desired learning objectives for the internship, and how these objectives relate to your course of study or future goals; a resume/C.V.; and names and contact information for two references to Kara Barron kbarron@dbg.org and Steve Blackwell sblackwell@dbg.org by July 14th to be considered for a Fall 2017 intern position.