My Experience

• Spring/Fall research assistant at the United States Global Change Research Program (USGCRP)

• 1717 Pennsylvania Ave, Washington D.C. NW 20006
  • Less than a block from the White House!

• Legal Mandate
  • USGCRP was established by Presidential Initiative in 1989 and mandated by Congress to “assist the Nation and the world to understand, assess, predict, and respond to human-induced and natural processes of global change.”
Indicators of Climate Change

Indicators can be thought of as a way to measure or calculate the status, trend, or performance of a given system. As an example, many businesses look at the unemployment index to gauge the health of the economy. Similarly, climate-relevant indicators—whether ecological, physical, or societal—can help communicate key aspects of the changing environment, point out vulnerabilities, and inform decision making at local, state, and national levels. Indicators are an important part of the vision for the sustained National Climate Assessment (NCA).
What Was it Like?

- Duties:
  - Supporting research for the National Climate Assessment (NCA) Indicators of Global Change
  - Attending conferences in D.C. and across the country
  - Meetings with professional NCA staff
  - Uploading Indicator summaries into new website
  - Drafting abstracts for conferences
  - Wrote a literature review for an article in *Climatic Change*

- Open to all majors; will benefit all students
- Offered year-round
Lessons Learned?

• Skills learned:
  • Being detail-oriented in a fast-paced environment
  • Communication and interpersonal skills
  • Time management skills
  • Writing for scientific and non-scientific audiences
  • Insight into the science/policy interface
  • Engaging with scientists from 9 federal agencies (NOAA, EPA, NASA, etc.)

• Your supervisor is a key to more opportunities!
Advice for Applying to Internships

• I found my internship at Maryland Center for Undergraduate Research website: http://www.ugresearch.umd.edu/

• Have proper e-mail etiquette
  • Know the titles of those who you are contacting (Dr., Ms., Professor) and spell his/her name correctly
  • Have a specific subject in e-mails (Allison Bredder – Internship Inquiry for Fall 2014 instead of “Internship Request”)

• Write down your experiences and translate them into “buzz words”
  • E.g., “I did data entry” translates into “Updated 15 Indicators for the National Climate Assessment website”