



PenMet Parks

Gig Harbor, Washington

PENMET PARKS INTERNSHIP MANUAL

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MEMORANDUM

Dear Students, Educators, and Fellow Professionals:

PenMet Parks is pleased to present our Internship Manual for your review and consideration. Within this Manual, you will find information on all of the opportunities our internship program offers. Students and other considering a career in Park & Recreation are encouraged to apply as we offer internships that encompass an array of educational disciplines and backgrounds.

Interns will experience training and experience in all aspects of park and recreation government including the multitude of administrative functions, recreation, maintenance, and finance. With professional supervision and feedback from experienced and qualified supervisory staff, interns have an opportunity to gain exposure from a very diverse collaborative system.

We look at this as an opportunity for you and our district to grow in the search for excellence. The internship will be customized to meet your needs and will focus on areas of study and college/university internship requirements.

We look forward to working with you and having you assist us in our efforts to improve the quality of life for our citizens and visitors.

Sincerely,
PenMet Parks

Marc Connelly
Executive Director

Eric Guenther
Recreation & Special Projects Coordinator

PENMET PARKS INTERSHIP PROGRAM



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction _____	3
District Overview	
History _____	4
Departmental Overview _____	5
Guidelines _____	7
Goals & Roles _____	8
Policy and Procedures	
Procedures _____	9
Responsibilities _____	11
Internship Program Flow Chart _____	13
Appendix – Items filled out after Selection	
A.Orientation Overview	
B.Conduct Standards	
C.Liability Release	
D.Stipend Agreement	
E.Internship Agreement	
F.Timesheet	
G.Experience Evaluation	

PENMET PARKS INTERNSHIP MANUAL



Introduction

This document has been prepared to assist PenMet Parks employees, students, and (university) faculty advisors in understanding the goals, purposes, responsibilities, policies, and procedures of the PenMet Parks Internship Program.

The term, "Internship," is used throughout this manual and is defined as an instructional program that includes supervised pre-professional practice. Our program will act in unison with a university or college program to prepare students for professional positions in the development and management of recreation and parks programs and resources.



As an agency and steward of the leisure profession, we are obligated to ensure that our industry not only sustains but also increases its quality of service. As professionals we must embrace these opportunities to mentor the future leaders in our industry to maintain our continued success and dedication to improving the quality of life in our communities.

PENMET PARKS INTERNSHIP MANUAL



History

The Peninsula Metropolitan Park District was formed on May 18, 2004 by a vote of the people on the Gig Harbor Peninsula.

The 1994 Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula Comprehensive Park Recreation and Open Space Plan had recommended a metropolitan park district model for providing parks and recreation in the area. The original metropolitan park district law, enacted in 1907, had produced only one sustained metropolitan park district during the 20th century, Metro Parks Tacoma. State legislation was passed in 2002 enabling the formation of metropolitan park districts in unincorporated areas.

The Park District provides for the management, control, improvements, maintenance, and acquisition of parks and recreation facilities within the area of unincorporated Pierce County west of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge and east of the Purdy Bridge (excluding the City of Gig Harbor).

In 2004 the District managed one park and 12 acres of park property. The PenMet Parks District park system currently includes nine parks just under 400 acres of park land. In 2005 the District hired its first full-time employee, an Executive Director. Its first adopted budget was approximately \$250,000 funded entirely through zoo/trek/park sales tax. By April 2005, the District had its first administrative office and by September 2005, hired its second employee to help manage its financial operations. In 2006, the District began its first collection of property tax enabling it to fund capital projects and on-going maintenance and operations.

PENMET PARKS INTERNSHIP MANUAL



PenMet Parks is fortunate to reside in the scenic Pacific Northwest, located approximately 40 miles south of Seattle in Gig Harbor, Washington. PenMet Parks venues include forests, waterfront views of Puget Sound and Mt. Rainier, providing numerous outdoor recreation opportunities, including an trails, water front access, and outdoor programs.

PenMet Parks' mission is *enhance the quality of life on the Gig Harbor Peninsula by providing park and recreational opportunities for all of its citizens by crafting partnerships with volunteer and government organizations, acquiring assets, developing and maintaining high quality facilities, preserving open space, providing diverse recreational programs, and prudently managing District funds.*

PenMet Parks invites qualified intern applicants to join our team in the pursuit of these goals. Reviewing the following descriptions will help provide background to the structure of PenMet Parks

Department Overview

Recreation and Special Projects

The Recreation Department coordinates facility use with the public, and cooperates with a variety of community organizations to provide the recreation opportunities desired by the citizens of the District.

Recreation staff also work to produce events during the year such as the Spring Easter Egg Hunt and the summer Family Fun Fest. There are several other community events PenMet participates in such as Parks Appreciation Day in April, the Maritime Gig Parade in June and the Donkey Creek Chum Festival in the fall among others.

Additional areas of practice include marketing, donor contacts, volunteer coordination, and grant writing.

Parks, Buildings & Public Grounds



Parks and Building maintain the grounds and buildings owned and/or operated by PenMet Parks. Services include light construction, landscaping, custodial maintenance, play equipment, tennis courts, trails, picnic areas, ball fields, fencing. Facilities and signage are all maintained to the highest level of quality possible.

Budget & Finance

This department takes care of the financial and business side of running a multi-million dollar budget. There are functions that support the advancement of district goals and each of the programs and services.



Administration

This department implements the strategic and policy directions of the Board of Park Commissioners, manages the communications and records of the District, develops and maintains intergovernmental and interagency relations, prepares and manages the District's operations and capital budgets, oversees park planning and design, and oversees day to day operations.



What are our internship guidelines?

Internships are typically 8-20 week commitments made by persons interested in gaining employment experience as part of a course of study. The experience meets PenMet Parks needs as well as the educational needs of the intern and institution. The internship will be centered on a meaningful work experience that will add educational value and improve an interns job-seeking potential.

Interns should:

- Be connected with a two or four year educational organization.
- Be able to commit to the minimum internship of 120 hours.
- Provide PenMet Parks with all the guidelines required by their educational organization in advance.
- Meet the same screening requirements as any volunteer.

Compensation:

Interns at PenMet Parks are volunteers and serve without compensation.

PenMet Parks provides a stipend of \$440 per month to cover related expenses and support on-going educational expenses.

PENMET PARKS INTERNSHIP MANUAL



Goals & Roles

The Mission of this internship program is ***to provide quality learning experiences to pre-professionals to ensure the future growth and progress of our interns and our industry.***

Achieving these goals will provide the intern with the best chance to enter the professional arena with the confidence and skills needed to succeed. Cooperation of all parties is required.

PenMet Parks

PenMet Parks will invest time and resources to the internship program in order to ensure that the integrity of our programs and services is preserved. Interns:

- Are treated as upcoming future parks and recreation professionals.
- Are a means of contact with participating colleges and universities.
- Help us strengthen training procedures and develop efficient training programs.
- Bring new perspectives to old problems
- Augment staffing in a cost-effective way

College or University

The college/university shall lay the foundation for young students to succeed. Enabling one of their students to participate in a practical learning experience will not only prove to be invaluable to the intern but also to the school. Some of the benefits for the college to participate in an Internship program are as follows:

- To evaluate their own program's validity or "success"
- To evaluate their students on a more individual basis
- To maintain of close community-education ties in the professional arena

The Intern

All interns who participate in the PenMet Parks Internship Program shall benefit in the following ways:

- Receive a direct, practical experience
- Network with practicing professionals
- Increase their understanding of professional responsibilities
- Make choices about their career direction in the industry



Policies and Procedures Overview

The PenMet Parks Internship program will provide a practical mentoring and learning experience for a selected internship candidate. PMP provides a pro-active recruitment plan that targets all fields represented at PenMet Parks. Opportunities exist within a number of majors, disciplines and career fields.

Procedures

1. Recruitment

The recruitment process begins with active solicitation by PenMet Parks to various colleges and universities by providing internship announcements and advertisements. Upon review of the announcement and information provided, a student may wish to express interest. A student may express interest in pursuing an internship experience by contacting the Intern Coordinator (IC) at PenMet Parks via e-mail, telephone, or mail. The IC will follow-up on the initial contact with the individual, assess the interest and determine the opportunities available to the prospective intern. The IC will consult with the appropriate supervisor for the area of interest to determine the feasibility of the placement. After matching the intern's needs and interests with available resources in that program area the prospective intern will move forward to the selection process.

2. Selection

After receiving the application, disclosure statement, and initial interests the candidate, the IC will refer the prospect to the appropriate supervisor and an interview process will take place. Depending on volume of interest, a specific date may be arranged for a personal interview. If there is a significant amount of interest a set of dates can be arranged to facilitate an interview panel to make a selection. In some cases, phone interviews may be arranged. Interviews are designed to determine three main factors:

- **Educational Value**
- **Qualifications**
- **Project Goals/Objectives**

The interview will be facilitated by both the IC and supervisor with final selection approval by the supervisor. The IC will inform the prospective intern in writing or in person regarding their acceptance as a candidate. The selection will not be final until after the negotiation process to define the job description and commitment.

Step 1
Forms:
An Application
(with
attachments)
& Disclosure
Statement

Step 2
Forms:
A Interview
Form

Manual is
shared at the
Interview if
not previously
received.

PENMET PARKS INTERNSHIP MANUAL



Step 3

Forms:
Background
Check (FBI
and/or WA
State)

Position
Description

Internship
Commitment
Form

Step 4-5

Forms:
Orientation
Checklist –
Code of
Conduct –
Release of
Liability

Stipend
Agreement

Timesheet

Step 6 & 7

Forms:
Exit Interview
Form

Certificate of
Completion

3. Negotiation

Upon selection into an internship several items must be addressed before the assignment begins. They include:

- Background Check information
- University Requirements (agreements, responsibilities, Measurable learning objective/special project)
- Position Description and Intern Agreement

After background check requirements are filed, and the university requirements and proposed position description are reviewed, the intern agreement should be signed by PenMet Parks, the Intern and the College/University Advisor (if applicable). The candidate selection is finalized pending results of the background check. The internship will be effective the date authorized in the internship agreement for the hours & position defined in the agreement.

4. Orientation

Upon arrival for the assignment, the intern will participate in an orientation conducted by the district. This will be facilitated by the IC and will include specific objectives in order to welcome the intern to the agency. These objectives are outlined on the agencies website through an on-line orientation. The orientation will occur during the first week the intern is placed with his/her respective supervisor and begins the assignment.

This includes filing all forms associated with the internship.

5. Logistics/Monitoring

During the assignment the IC will track and monitor the progress of the intern which includes administering monthly 'check-ups', and acting as a liaison to both the agency supervisor, and the university. This monitoring process will help solve problems quickly, should they arise, and provide PenMet Parks with information needed to continually develop and maintain the internship program. The semi-monthly timesheet is filed to the Supervisor with a copy given to the IC. The timesheet is a key feedback tool when utilized correctly.

6. Evaluation

In the final week of the assignment, the intern will partake in an evaluation process. This process includes an exit interview with the IC and supervisor to discuss the experience with the intern. The university or college evaluation will also be conducted at this time. All results will be kept in a database and will be tracked for the benefit of the program.

7. Recognition

At the conclusion of an internship, the IC will provide a letter of accomplishment and a certificate of completion to recognize the contributions of the intern for the intern to include in their professional portfolio.

Responsibilities

1. Agency

The interest and support of the agency is necessary for the successful functioning of the internship assignment. The agency supervisor has the opportunity to give invaluable support through leadership and guidance. The agency supervisor sets the tone for the overall effectiveness of the experience and assumes leadership for the day to day guidance of the intern. It is this guidance that will provide the intern with the essential exposure needed for his/her professional growth.

The prime responsibilities of the agency supervisor are:

- To orient the intern to the role he/she will assume
- To assign responsibilities and duties, including a work schedule, that are consistent with the educational needs of the intern
- To actively assist the student in the planning, execution, and evaluation of his/her role both as a staff member and as an intern

2. College/University

The college/university advisor will coordinate, with the agency IC, a plan of action to ensure the intern's educational requirements are achieved. Pathways to this plan involve the following:

- Review a proposal for placement within PenMet Parks Internship Program, and authorize this placement using the intern agreement.
- Approve the intern's project plan and ensure that it meets the prescribed course of study.
- Communicate with the intern and the IC throughout the assignment.
- Work with the intern on university specific requirements.

PENMET PARKS INTERNSHIP MANUAL



3. Intern

PenMet Parks will assist the intern in learning as much as possible from the parks and recreation profession. To obtain the highest benefit from the experience the intern will be expected to:

- Conduct himself/herself in a professional manner
- Dress according to agency and position standards
- Be timely in attendance, and with all required written communication
- Communicate regularly and effectively with his/her supervisor
- Complete all paperwork and timesheets in a timely manner
- Seek opportunities to complement his/her work and educational experiences
- Notify his/her supervisor in advance of any anticipated absence from work
- Ask questions if in doubt
- Be friendly, courteous and treat everyone in all circumstances with dignity and respect
- Not engage in, or advertise, personal or other business while on duty as an intern
- Not engage in duties that they have not been given clearance to perform
- Use district property and materials they are given access to only for PenMet Parks purposes
- Maintain confidentiality of participant information and data
- Become involved in any opportunity presented to them
- Show initiative and creativity. Offer ideas and suggestions on program improvements
- Follow the policies and procedures of the District including, but not limited to, those found within the District's Personnel Manual (HR Policy)

PENMET PARKS INTERNSHIP MANUAL

