



Teacher to Ranger to Teacher Summer Employment



The intent of the Teacher to Ranger to Teacher program is to provide opportunities for teachers to have well- rounded work experiences in National Parks. Teachers will develop lesson plans based on their experience for use in the classroom. The program focuses on teachers from schools that have diverse student populations, who have had no experience with national parks or little opportunity to explore the relevance these areas can have in their lives.

Background

The challenge for the National Park Service (NPS) is to provide opportunities for all Americans to connect to their national heritage as embodied by national parks. The Teacher to Ranger to Teacher (TRT) Program focuses on the education community and engages teachers from schools that are not currently being reached with park programs. This program hopes to offer additional opportunities for these populations to connect to the resources of their national parks.

Teachers are detailed as park rangers to parks through an Inter- governmental Personnel Act (IPA) agreement between their public school district and the National Park Service. This program links national park units and teachers from under- served urban and rural schools.

Teachers spend the summer working in their park. The parks provide a uniform, housing stipend, and supplementary payment for the teachers. They perform various duties depending on their interests and the needs of the park, including developing and presenting interpretive programs for the general public, staffing the visitor center desk, developing curriculum- based materials for the park, or taking on special projects.

During the school year Teacher- Rangers bring the parks into the classroom by developing and presenting curriculum- based lesson plans that draw on their summer's experience. In April, during National Park Week, Teacher- Rangers will wear their NPS uniforms to school, discuss their summer as a park ranger, and engage students and other teachers in activities that relate to America's national parks.

Concepts Learned and Incorporated into the Classroom

This place- based experience provides opportunities for Teacher- Ranger to deeply connect with park resources. Exposure to our American heritage offers teachers a chance to gain a better understanding of the relevance these places have for all Americans, of the diversity of sites that have been set aside by and for the American people and of civic engagement.

They, in turn, can provide opportunities for their students and other school staff to find their own connections to parks.

Teacher- Rangers learn about the complexities of interpreting and researching natural and of interpreting cultural resources. Learn how:

- a variety of resources can be used for research, and how these will be used to tell complex stories from a variety of viewpoints;
- to increase their understanding of scientific research and the complex issues related to these resources.
- scientific research is interpreted.

Benefits of Being a Teacher-Ranger

- ✓ Participating Teacher- Rangers have the opportunity to develop a personal connection with national parks.
- ✓ These Teacher- Rangers develop a wide array of teaching examples based on real life experience in parks and create “curricula enhancers” that highlight issues surrounding heritage conservation.
- ✓ Teacher- Rangers become life- long friends of the National Park Service and begin teaching an ethic of heritage conservation in the schools where much of America’s future resides.
- ✓ Teacher- Rangers obtain a wide range of knowledge and skills by working with personnel of other divisions such as Resource Management, maintenance, and non- law enforcement specialties of Resource Protection.

Program Benefits to the School District

- ✓ Other educators exposed to a Teacher- Ranger in their schools benefit from “curricula enhancers” and other resources. They also gain access to a wide array of resources and teaching tools.
- ✓ Teacher- Rangers develop a network with resource specialists, scientists, historians, curators, and the teaching programs and resources of the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior.
- ✓ School districts profit from having Teacher- Rangers who have been exposed to current resource- based

Program Benefits to Urban or Rural School Children

- ✓ This program provides the opportunity for students to connect to the nation’s heritage through the experiences of their Teacher- Rangers.
- ✓ A variety of resource issues, based on the teacher’s summer experience, are discussed in class. These might include historic preservation, interpretation, fire, exotic species, endangered species, and air and water issues.
- ✓ Students learn about opportunities for summer and permanent employment with the National Park Service.
- ✓ Students share the enthusiasm of a teacher who has had the opportunity to be a National Park Ranger.

Application

Teachers apply to individual parks. Interested teachers should contact the parks directly and the parks will send applications and position descriptions specific to the positions that they are offering.

If your school district does not already have an agreement and you are interested in applying to the program, we will help guide you through the agreement process with your school.

If you have any questions about this program on the Niobrara river, please contact:

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The NPS manages 391 National Park units throughout the United States and its territories, though only 54 bear the official title of National Park. Many other sites such as National Monuments, National Rivers, National Historic Sites, National Memorials, National Recreation Areas, etc. are no less “parks” than those that bear the official title. All are managed to preserve our nation’s history and nature for future generations.

Find out more at www.nps.gov