



Education Update Fall 2010

Bi-Annual Newsletter of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Education Branch



Harpers Ferry 2010 Summer Education Staff

Each summer, students from all over the country come to work for the Education office. This year we had close to 40 staff members from all different ages and backgrounds. While many workers came from the local area, others travelled from as far as California and Hawaii!

This summer's creative and dedicated staff worked on projects ranging from creating musical parodies, puppet skits, and a giant map of Harpers Ferry, to writing a brand new set of science programs, revamping existing programs, and applying for grants. In addition to office work, five to six Family and Youth programs were offered to the public each day. These programs included informational hikes, a John Brown Debate, puppet shows, 19th century games and dancing, Civil War Soldier Drills, bird identification walks, a look at what is in our rivers, and many more!

Most of these programs were completely run by our seasonal summer workers. When asked about their experience at Harpers Ferry NHP, and what they gained from working here, all gave enthusiastic, positive responses.

Another Great Summer!

"I learned the importance of hard work, professionalism, and having proper role models in the work place." – Nathan, High School Youth Summer Worker, Brunswick MD



"This summer helped build my character and leadership skills as well as public speaking skills. Makes me not think twice about going to college and pursuing a successful future."- Major, High School Youth Worker, Kearneysville, WV

"...Refreshed after a year of classroom teaching and ready to return with more hands on, active lessons"-Karen, Volunteer, Southern California



"...Solidified my decision to attend graduate school and strengthened my commitment to the National Park Service." Graham Humphrey, Graduate Intern, Portsmouth, Rhode Island

A Note from the Teacher's Desk: Rebecca Harriett, Park Superintendent

Another busy summer is winding down here at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park as we say good-bye to our many youth volunteers, interns and summer employees. While we want and need to catch our collective breath, the education branch is busy preparing for the many students that will be attending the park's educational programs this fall and winter.

The National Park Service, including Harpers Ferry NHP, is a leader in applied education. It is through our curriculum based education programs that history comes alive for thousands of young people that may not even know that these special places exist and that they belong to THEM! If youth are immersed in learning about their heritage and it has meaning to them, then they will become the protectors and guardians for future generations. What an incredible opportunity, responsibility and legacy to leave our children!

Harpers Ferry NHP Wins Federal Volunteer Award



Harpers Ferry NHP staff representatives travelled to DC to accept the Take Pride in America Federal Volunteer Award

On Friday, July 16, 2010, the education department, along with other park divisions, traveled to the main Department of the Interior building in Washington D.C. for the Take Pride in America Awards ceremony. As a park, we received the award for the outstanding federal volunteer event. The citation mentioned in particular the Tiger on the Trail hikes, alternate spring break programs, and the service learning partnership between the park, Journey Through Hallowed Ground, and Harpers Ferry Middle School for making educational vodcasts to mark the 150th anniversary of John Brown.

The citation went on to say that "these vodcast releases have captivated audiences of all ages with the history and significance of Harpers Ferry Park, as well as have furthered the ideals of park conservation and preservation needs. By creating these vodcasts, youth engagement and involvement in the park's story have created a new generation of park stewards."

Director Lisa Young presided over the ceremonies with an address by former director of the National Park Service, Robert Stanton and followed by a luncheon in honor of the awardees.

Jess Liptak, Volunteer Coordinator at Harpers Ferry, said that "the award was truly a united effort. The reason why we fared so well is every branch in every department of Harpers Ferry Park supported volunteers in 2009. The Volunteers in Parks program could not be sustained if it were not for the support of supervisors given."

If you or someone you know would be interested in volunteering or being an intern for the park, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Jessica Liptak: (304) 535- 5017 or send her an e-mail at: Jessica_Liptak@nps.gov.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

The Education Update is the biannual newsletter of the Harpers Ferry NHP Education Branch. The Education Branch at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park offers education programs geared toward wide and varied audiences. Programs connect participants of all ages to the resources and stories of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

2010 Summer Teacher Institute: A Teacher's Take



Teacher Institute participants learn how to load and fire their "weapons."

The Harpers Ferry Teacher Institute is always an enjoyable experience for me, a high school history teacher. I receive many benefits when attending the Institute. The staff is knowledgeable and willing to help teachers bring history alive for our students. It also presents a chance to meet other educators from various places and share ideas with each other.

This summer's institute, Prelude to War, focused on the time period between John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry and the beginning of the Civil War.

Two of the events we learned about were the candidates and

important issues of the 1860 election, and the Baltimore riot of 1861. On Thursday, we traveled to Baltimore to walk part of the route taken by the soldiers between the train stations. It's always good to connect with history by visiting the place where it happened.

We also learned how to be a soldier in the Virginia militia, even if your only weapon was a broomstick! ☺ We were able to tap into the resources of the park staff. I appreciate that those who led this institute had different areas of expertise. They are committed to their particular subject and have researched extensively.

I really enjoy spending time in Harpers Ferry. Attending these institutes expands my knowledge of the history that happened here. I know that my love for our local history comes through to my students when I talk about Harpers Ferry. Thank you to the education staff for making that possible!

Time was built into our schedule each day to discuss ideas and issues that apply to this time period in history. We had people from other states, as well as people who work in various

schools, private and public, and in various capacities.

All of this adds up to interesting discussions. I enjoy hearing what others think and believe. It makes me think of issues in a different light and from angles I hadn't before considered.

Throughout the week, we worked in small groups to create podcasts about the prelude to war. My group talked about the issues of the election of 1860. Technology is important in today's world and, therefore, important in education. It is helpful that the teacher institute gives us a practical way to bring technology into our classrooms while studying history.

This article was written by DiAnn Miller, a history teacher at Musselman High School. This was her second year attending our Teacher Institute.

Applications for next summer's institutes will be available online in February, 2011. For questions please contact Amber Kraft (304) 535-6293 or email: Amber_Kraft@nps.gov

Staff Trains to be Better Educators

As Educators for the Park Service we believe not only in the importance of sharing with the public, but also in seeking opportunities to continue our own education. This summer, upon the arrival of our interns and seasonal workers, workshops were offered by staff members to enhance our interpretation skills. These sessions included a History of Island Park (a small amusement park formerly located on an island in the Potomac), Puppetry Skills, How to

Successfully Research, Period Clothing Overview, Civil War History, the Learning Community, and Presentation Skills.

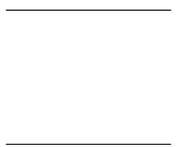
In addition to the sessions offered here, staff and volunteers have traveled often to attend workshops, conferences, and trainings. Since January, staff have attended many trainings ranging from a "Save our Streams" program in Spruce Knob, WV to "Hike Leadership/Wilderness 1st Aid and CPR" training in New Hampshire.

Other sessions include School's Out – Summer Programs for Youth, Leadership Challenge, GIS Training, Wetland Plant Identification, Best Practices for Field Days, The 5 E's, and How to Interpret the Civil War. Our partnership organization, Bridging the Watershed, graciously offered many of these trainings in addition to others often held at the nearby National Conservation Training Center.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

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Upcoming Events

Harpers Ferry Middle School students will partner with the park once again to create their third set of Vodcasts. This year they will focus on the Civil War in 1861 and how it affected our town.

Look for our new gun puzzle program piloting soon! This hands-on puzzle will allow students to learn about interchangeable parts and the history of gun making in Harpers Ferry.

Our staff is excited to launch a whole set of Science programs! Keep an eye out for these additions focusing on the five senses, geology, habitats and biodiversity, what's in our rivers, and the food chain.

Thanks to local teachers and students, our Heritage Garden has been constructed! Please contact us if you or someone you know would be interested in working in the garden.

Don't Forget!

If you would like to plan a field trip to our park please visit www.nps.gov/hafe and check out our "For Teachers" link.

The Civil War trunk offers great lessons and is packed with tons of reproductions to make history come alive. For pick up at the park only. Teachers can check out the trunk for 2 week periods.

The hike program has been a big hit. Consider adding a hike to your scheduled program!

Spread the Word

Tell all the teachers you know about the fun and exciting programs being offered by the Education Staff at Harpers Ferry NHP!

