

## Mount Rainier National Park Internship Report

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### 1, Motive

It was very attractive to me to work as a ranger for 3 weeks. Because I had been interested in ranger's job at National Parks as the one of my future jobs. In addition, I'm learning about Environmental Sociology and Environmental Folklore at my university. So, personally I wanted to know about the roles of National Parks as the field for Environmental Education or the place for sightseeing. And, of course, I was looking forward to seeing the view of MORA and cultural exchanges with the people there.

### 2, Program

#### \* Schedule

- Aug. 18 Welcome Party@MORA
- Aug. 19 ottery
- Aug. 20 Park Tour / Horseback Riding
- Aug. 21 JVC
- Aug. 22 JVC, RVing / Cook *Yakisoba*
- Aug. 23 Go to Seattle
- Aug. 24 JVC
- Aug. 25 Wedding
- Aug. 26 Pot Luck Party ( Study Tour from WASEDA University arrived. )
- Aug. 27 RVing
- Aug. 28 Longmire Museum, JVC / Lunar Eclipse
- Aug. 29 Mariners Game / Pick Blackberries, Watch Bats
- Aug. 30 JVC, Starting Ceremony of Bio-toilet / Frisbee
- Aug. 31 JVC / Cook Chinese Noodle
- Sep. 1 Hike up to Camp Muir
- Sep. 2 Hike down from Camp Muir / Bike Ride, Frisbee
- Sep. 3 WIC, Back Country Ranger
- Sep. 4 JVC / Tacos Day
- Sep. 5 JVC / Summer Last Party
- Sep. 6 JVC / American Restaurant



Sep. 7 Farewell Pot Luck Party / Cook *Okonomiyaki*, Football Game

Sep. 8 Pottery, Northwest Trek, Chinese Restaurant

MORA: Mount Rainier National Park

JVC : Jackson Visitor Center

: Work

Actually, I arrived at Seattle on August 17<sup>th</sup> and looking around in downtown. And, after this program I trip to Port Angeles and went hiking in Olympic National Park until September 13<sup>th</sup>.

\* Holidays

Ex. 1; Go to Seattle with a coworker.

Ex. 2; Attend at the wedding of my host family's nephew.

Ex. 3; Hike up to Camp Muir (3105m) with a Climbing Ranger.



### 3, Content of Ranger's Job

\* Introduction

My job coordinator at MORA gave me a chance to work at the front desk in JVC. Indeed, she and my coworker let me try several kinds of jobs day by day, according to my own interests. Here, I'd like to introduce ranger's job at MORA based on their specialties.

(1) Interpretation Ranger

I experienced this job at JVC and Longmire Museum. They know much about both inside and outside the park. Generally, they are the experts in a certain kind of field, such as Biology, Geology and Education. By putting it to account, they produce study tours or play some picture showings. Besides, giving information to visitors at the front desk or going the round of trails, called RVing. Every ranger I worked with like to go RVing and sometimes he / she spent a whole day for it. I did RVing twice and really

enjoyed with them.

Time Schedule@JVC

- 9:00 Drive from Longmire to Paradise.
- 9:30-10:00 Open JVC, Turn on the switch of the computers and the lights.
- 10:00-10:40 Put the weather information and brochures, Check the climber's permits.
- 10:40-12:10 Guide Tour to Nisqually Vista / Myrtle Falls.
- 12:10-13:00 Lunch Time.
- 13:00-14:00 At the front desk / Book Store.
- 14:00-15:30 Guide Tour to Nisqually Vista / Myrtle Falls.
- 15:00-17:00 At the front desk / Book Store / Picture Showing.
- 17:00 Drive down to Longmire.



(2) Climbing Ranger

I got three holidays in a row during this program, so I wanted to hike up to Camp Muir (3105m). I talked about it to my coworker, then she introduced me a Climbing Ranger who was planning to go there on his job. Climbing Rangers like him live on the first floor of JVC and always being prepared for emergency. They also check the climber's permits at the front desk. Most of them are the experts in mountain climbing. For example, a man who took me to Camp Muir had been to the top of Mt. Rainier (4392m) for more than 20 times and climbed many of the mountains around MORA. This is a very responsible job, but they love mountains, so they look having fun with it.

Time Schedule@Camp Muir

- 9:00-14:00 Hike up from Paradise to Camp Muir (There was snow and ice).
- 14:00-17:00 Arrive at Ranger's Hut, Take a nap.
- 17:00-19:00 Talk with the climbers and give them the information.

- 19:00- Make meals, Take a rest / Reading / Write a diary.
- 9:00-10:30 Wake up, Make breakfast and drinking water with listening the radio.
- 10:30-12:00 Reading / Talking
- 12:00-13:00 Clean the toilets, Check the equipment for emergency.
- 13:00- Put the crampons and hike down to Paradise.



### (3) Back Country Ranger

2 weeks after I started my working at MORA, I noticed that I only knew around JVC and a little bit Longmire. So, I talked with my coworker that I wanted to see around the rest part of the Park. She was so nice to introduce me a Back Country Ranger. On the day after coming back from Camp Muir, I got a chance to follow their works. A woman ranger took me some trails and we joined other rangers at the campsite. There we dug up the ground for the signs and watered some young trees. Back Country Rangers are often driving by themselves and like to go hiking on the unpopular trails. They seem quiet and have a strong body, know many nice places and delicious berries. I could spend only a day with them, but I understand why they like their jobs.



### (4) Volunteer Ranger

I worked with them in JVC and when I went RVing. I think their jobs are the same as Interpretation Rangers'. Many of them looked old and already retired from regular jobs.



They seemed to be enjoying the work with their partner, a husband or a wife, for one's own interests and as the contribution to society. I had a chance to talk with 2 men. One had used to be a climber, while the other a teacher. They said, "We can play a part in the Park by putting our abilities (from many experiences) to good account. In addition, working in the wonderful nature is very nice! ". They were so bright

and it impressed me a lot. And also, I learned many things about MORA, the nature and one's life from them.

#### **4, Learning, Realizing, and Making Progress**

##### **\* Changed My View of Life**

I have a lot of things to describe here. My experience at MORA was too special to write in only a few pages. But, this was an Internship Program, so I'd like to talk about something to do with "Work".

What I remember for the first is that every ranger at MORA had pride in one's job. Their ages or the backgrounds were very different from a person to person. For example, a 20-year-old pretty girl (about the same age as me) is doing Back County Ranger only during summer vacation. She said, "I just like outdoor sports from my younger age influenced by my family. And, I love to go hiking on the quiet trails." Another example, a 70-year-old man wearing white beard has an interesting history in his life. He used to be an actor in TV commercials, then a sailor on the ship going all over the world, and finally, became an Interpretation Ranger. Like this, the motives or the thinking on their jobs are varies, everyone seemed to have some kind of pride. I think it's a very important factor when we work.

Secondly, MORA (in other words, all National Parks in the United States) has an excellent system to manage. By comparing with some National Parks in Japan, MORA seems to be playing the more important roles in the preservation of the nature and the environmental education for the visitors. I think that fact makes the rangers at MORA have pride in their works.

Lastly, I'd like to say, "There was something that made me feel like going back again." I'm not sure what it was. But, maybe it's the thing that I loved, such as the beautiful

nature or the dear people I met. J-VIPA members have shown you my opinion, because they've been to MORA for more than 10 years. And, I guess I'll be like them.

Now, I'm at the starting point of the job hunting, but sometimes, I'll try to look back on the experience in this summer. When I think about the plan for the future or my belief for life, it's very valuable to remember the people I met in MORA, the talking we had with and, of course, the wonderful nature there.

In addition to some rangers I've written in this report, I'd like to say big "Thank you!!" to my host family for special 3 weeks. They've welcomed me as a real family and let me try so many things. I hope I'll visit them again. And, I want to say thank you to Tom & Mika, Mr. Yamaguchi, some staffs from WAVOC. It's my great treasure which I learned from them and also the students from J-VIPA and WASEDA University. I'll never forget the respect and the gratitude for all of them. From this experience, I'm going to work hard for my future.



#### \* Character of this Program

I was on this program as a student from WASEDA University. It was one of the elective laboratories in the class learning about Mt. Fuji. At the same time as I visited MORA, there was another group called J-VIPA. So, the coordinator of that group, Mr. Yamaguchi, had invited me to the party with them before we left Japan.

During this program, I spent most of the time with my host family or coworker in JVC, and the rest with J-VIPA members, much more than other students from WASEDA University. As I wrote before, the volunteer activities of J-VIPA has continued for more than 10 years, therefore, the people who were involved in MORA saw me as a member of it. But, this time I was officially a student from WASEDA University and besides, my work was different from anyone. In this situation, at first, I was hesitated about how I should behave to the people. But, gradually I could think, "I was given a special occasion. So, I'll have to make the most of this position."

I was related to 2 groups during this program and sometimes it was a little hard for me. However, if I (or you, who will go to MORA next year) can get it by positive thinking, that situation become a very glamorous. I hope everyone who will join this program can get on with many people in MORA! And, finally, please awake to your position at anytime, then get as many chances as you can!!



## 5, Dear people

### \* Coworker

Dave, Lee, Mike, George, Jasmine & Naamen, Rebecca & Andy, Rachel, Kevin, Jack, Jim, Scott, Jayme, Ian, Tom, Ted, Cailen, Jill, John, Michel, Ruth & Bluth

### \* Host family

Rick & Jana, Cindy, Jana's sister, Steph, Ram, Jana's climbing friends, Jim

### \* Student

Students from the class learning about Mt. Fuji at WASEDA University, J-VIPA members (Especially, Mina, Akiko, Moo, Tomo, Mr. Ito)

### \* Special Thanks

Mr. Yamaguchi, Mr. Kubota, Mr. Watanabe, Staffs from WAVOC & Ground Work Mishima, Tom & Mika, Members from "Yamanokai" at WASEDA University, My Family, My partner, and many friends

