

Valley Forge National Historical Park



YOUTH JOB ANNOUNCEMENT Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) Program

What is the YCC?

The purpose of the YCC is to further the conservation of the natural resources of the United States by America's youth and, in so doing, to prepare participants for the ultimate responsibility of managing these resources for the American people. The program objectives are to: 1) Accomplish needed conservation work in Valley Forge National Historical Park; 2) Provide youth with gainful employment; and 3) Develop youth understanding and appreciation of the nation's natural environment and heritage. You will learn work ethics, how to relate to peers and supervisors, and how to build lasting cultural bridges with youth from other backgrounds.



Typical Duties



The YCC Program at Valley Forge NHP centers on the control of non-native, invasive plants and animals in the park. These species represent one of the primary threats to the natural diversity of the park ecosystem. Approximately 40% of work time is spent in fields and forest removing non-native plants such as mile-a-minute weed and oriental bittersweet vines. An additional 40% of work time is spent in the stream catching and removing the rusty crayfish. One day per week is dedicated to environmental education and includes field trips to other local areas of interest as well as presentations by NPS staff. The YCC also occasionally helps park partners on other conservation projects such as trails and tree planting.

Eligibility and Selection

The YCC Program is open to young adults, 15-18 years old. No previous experience is required. Selection is by random drawing and targets a ratio of 50% female to 50% male participants. ***To be selected participants must be available to work the full eight weeks and be physically capable of performing the work described above.***

Work Location, Schedule, Salary, and Leave

YCC participants report each morning to a central location at the park. Work days are Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 4:00pm (40 hours per week). Participants must provide their own transportation to and from the park. The park is served by SEPTA bus routes 125 and 139. Transportation during work hours is provided by the NPS. Participants earn the prevailing minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. Participants DO NOT EARN LEAVE. Under certain circumstances, the NPS can grant leave without pay to accommodate illness and/or occasional vacation days.

Program Dates The YCC Program at Valley Forge National Historical Park begins on Monday, June 24, 2013, and ends Friday, August 16, 2013.

Application Deadline Applications must be received by May 1, 2013 to be considered. Applications are available at <http://www.nps.gov/vafo/parkmgmt/jobs.htm>.

YCC Program Expectations By submitting an application to join YCC, you agree to comply with the following expectations of employment. Failure to do so will be grounds for termination.

YCC participants:

- Are required to wear the provided uniform and safety equipment at all times as directed by the supervisor
- Will arrive at work on time and ready for daily assignments
- Will follow instructions given by supervisors
- Will work with other YCC Crew Members and care for their safety
- Will participate in all aspects of the program, including work activities and environmental education
- Will contribute their best to the success of the program.

Physical Demands and Environmental Hazards YCC participants perform hard work in an outdoor setting—rain or shine. Physical demands and environmental hazards may include:

- Use of hand tools such as shovels, hand saws, and pruning shears
- Lifting up to 50 pounds of weight
- Dragging vegetation and debris such as branches to a central location
- Digging, pulling, and chopping
- Working in the sun and summer heat
- Hiking or working on rough terrain, steep slopes and in creeks
- Possible exposure to insects (e.g. bee stings), ticks, Lyme Disease, poison ivy, and periodically encountering wildlife such as snakes

The park staff emphasizes the importance of a safe working environment, conducts daily safety briefings, and provides sunscreen, poison ivy treatment, and DEET-based insect repellent (if requested and approved by parent or guardian).

Mail completed application to:

Valley Forge National Historical Park
1400 North Outer Line Drive
King of Prussia, PA 19406
Attention: Natural Resources - YCC

Questions?

Kate Jensen
kate_jensen@nps.gov
610-783-1035 215-692-3340 (cell)



In the words of 2010 YCC crew member, Erin Clark: At the beginning of my 8 weeks, I told my parents I was almost like a glorified weed puller, but as I learned about the different invasive species we were controlling I started to take pride in my work. Every rusty crayfish that we caught and every strand of mile-a-minute weed that we pulled saved a native crayfish or another native plant from being overrun or killed. Our work made a difference... Overall, this summer was one I will never forget. Our work was balanced with enjoyment and new things to see, explore, and we left our ignorance long enough to try to understand. I loved the people I worked with and am thankful for this opportunity. So next time you look on the side of the road and see a group of teenagers pulling weeds and think 'glorified weed puller' - take another look and see we are really preserving the beauty of nature and history – we are preserving us.