

# DIVERSITY IN CONSERVATION INTERNSHIP



Natural Resources  
**FOUNDATION**  
of Wisconsin

CORY PETERS

## 2025 Highlights

The Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin's Diversity in Conservation Internship Program (DICI) provides **meaningful, paid experiences for undergraduates interested in careers in natural resource conservation**. The goals of this cohort-based program are to introduce students to the field of conservation and its career pathways, and to help strengthen their knowledge and skills **to meet the need for diverse professionals in Wisconsin's conservation field**.

In addition to weekly seminars and professional development programming, this year's cohort took field trips to the Kemp Natural Resources Field Station, Havenwoods State Forest, Horicon Marsh, and Lulu Lake State Natural Area. The summer culminated with an afternoon of final presentations and celebration held at the UW-Madison Arboretum with nearly **90 guests** in attendance.

This year, NRF hosted 10 interns, who were each paired with a Wisconsin conservation organization for a unique internship experience. Interns also participated in weekly programming and field trips that connected them to Wisconsin's natural resources, conservation professionals, and future career opportunities in conservation. **Read on to learn more about this year's interns!**



**3**

partner  
universities



**9**

host  
organizations



**10**

interns



**20**

professional  
connections



**4,000**

hours of  
conservation  
experience





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"This internship has given me incredible opportunities to not only build my resume, professionalism, and network, but build myself. Looking ahead, I know this experience is one that will shape my future in conservation."

-Maryam Islam, 2025 Cohort



# MEET THE INTERNS

## **Blakely Daigneault, UW-Madison**

Host Organization: City of Madison Parks

“Overall, this internship taught me a lot and helped me grow. I gained practical skills, made new connections, and learned what kind of conservation work I enjoy. I feel more prepared to take the next step, whether it’s volunteering, going to college for environmental science, or applying for more internships. I’m glad I applied, and I’m thankful for everything I learned.”



## **Juanita Duarte, UW-Madison**

Host Organization: Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance

“Conservation is definitely a career I am going to pursue. The passion people have for this work has shown me that there is inspiration to be found in every corner of the field. I want to be a part of the legacy of care people leave behind. I want my love for the planet and the people on it to be at the core of my work. DICI has shown me I have a place in conservation and that my role in its future is crucial.”



## **Annie Ellsworth, UW-Madison**

Host Organization: Lake Michigan Bird Observatory

“Overall, this internship has been an incredible experience that not only helped me achieve my original goals but also inspired me. I feel so lucky to leave with new connections, networks, skills, and a deepened passion for our natural world.”





## **Noelle Glazewski, UW-Milwaukee**

Host Organization: Lake Michigan Bird Observatory

“Seeing all the good work LMBO and its partners do despite the current state of affairs makes me really hopeful for after college. I’m incredibly grateful for NRF and LMBO for giving me the opportunity to work alongside some amazing people, and I can’t believe it’s already over.”



## **Bryan Haddad Zamorano, Lawrence University**

Host Organization: Zoological Society of Milwaukee

“The impact the DICI program has had on my personal and professional growth is not only felt by me but seen by others... It exposed me to both the fascinating world of conservation, the good, bad, fun and difficult, leaving a lasting impact on where can see myself within a professional career in general and within conservation.”



## **Maryam Islam, UW-Madison**

Host Organization: UW-Madison Arboretum

“Resilience is an important skill to have in this field. It’s one that can be developed in tough fieldwork jobs like the Arboretum, and is even more valuable when it comes to making large-scale policy changes that further impact conservation efforts. I can say that while this is definitely the toughest job I’ve ever had, I’ve grown the most in this role, and looking to the future is not nearly as scary.”



## **Kayla Peirick, UW-Milwaukee**

Host Organization: Wehr Nature Center

“The DICI program has exposed me to many careers in conservation, helped me make connections, and developed my professional skills. It has also exposed me to the many ways people are fighting for the climate on local levels, and given me a fresh and hopeful perspective.”





## Brie Schneider, UW-Milwaukee

Host Organization: The Nature Conservancy-Milwaukee Program

“For my future, I feel a pull towards green infrastructure... I feel gravitated towards habitat restoration. I feel a deep connection to plants and wildlife, so if I can improve their home in any way, that would bring me tremendous joy. Overall, I enjoy serving other people, our environment, plants, and animals, and that is a good start for me.”



## Eli Wunderlich, Lawrence University

Host Organization: International Crane Foundation

“I have a much better understanding of what it looks like to work in conservation and now know how many varied career paths there are in this field. I developed skills that are useful for any workplace as well as conservation-specific skills. I have made many wonderful friends and professional connections in the conservation world.”



## Andie Zei, UW-Milwaukee

Host Organization: Wisconsin DNR- Milwaukee

“All of the great people I’ve met this summer are my absolute favorite part of this internship. My DNR coworkers, my fellow interns, the leaders from host organizations, conservationists ready to welcome new people into their field, and community members alike. All of the hard labor would not be nearly as gratifying if it weren’t for the people I got to do it with and the communities I’m did the work for.”





# 2025 Partner Organizations

Lawrence University

University of Wisconsin-Madison

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

City of Madison Parks

International Crane Foundation

Lake Michigan Bird Observatory

Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance

The Nature Conservancy

UW-Madison Arboretum

Wehr Nature Center

Wisconsin DNR

Zoological Society of Milwaukee

# THANK YOU

We are deeply grateful to these donors and NRF's members for their support of this impactful program.

Steve Bablitch & Elaine Kelch

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