Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors
   Attention: Natural Resources, Forestry and Fire Management Managers and Supervisors

From: Acting Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Subject: Office of Trust Services’ Pathways Internship Program

The Pathways Internship Program provides opportunities to American Indian and Alaska Native students interested in pursuing science, technical, engineering, mathematics (STEM) related degrees, promotes career opportunities, and facilitates the placement of the graduates into entry-level career professional positions across various Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), or with Tribes and Tribal enterprises.

The Pathways Internship Program is continuing to evolve and looking at new ways in which the Program can help meet the needs of the BIA and Tribal programs in the areas of management and protection of trust and restricted lands, natural resources, and real estate services, including minerals and energy development.

The Pathways Internship workforce strategy is to widen the pipeline for Native students entering STEM. As before, students must be accepted or enrolled full-time and be in good standing in an accredited college or university and seeking a bachelor’s degree or higher directly related to the position to meet the basic education requirements. However, this year we are recruiting and hiring students who are enrolled in an unrelated degree program area or undecided or about their future career choices. This practice will allow students who have a limited understanding of what options might be available under the BIA’s broad mission an opportunity to explore STEM career paths as paid federal employees. They will be offered one work-based learning assignment before they will be required to submit documentation of enrollment and appropriate degree program change. For more information please visit our website at https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/workforce-planning-coordination.

Programs Supported:
- Forestry
- Wildland Fire
- Agriculture and Rangeland Management
- Minerals and Energy
- Real Estate Services
- Land Titles and Records
- Water and Power
The American Indian Agriculture Resource Management Act (25 USC 39) and National Indian Forest Resources Management Acts (25 USC 39) both mandate internships for forestry and agriculture and rangeland management programs.

**Internship Job Vacancy Announcement**
Currently we are recruiting for several Pathways internship positions working across various natural resources management programs nation-wide. Students can apply on the USAJobs website using the link below. Please refer to the job vacancy announcement on USAJOBS for the specific education and eligibility qualification requirements.

Student Trainee (Rangeland), GS-0499-3/4  
https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/526519600

We are in the process of rewriting student trainee positions for the Pathways Internship Program and hope to have more announcements opening soon. When these announcements are posted, hiring officials and program managers as appropriate will receive an email announcement.

**Funding**
Student intern’s base salaries and benefits will be covered by Central Office cost accounting codes. Central Office has budgeted to cover the regular time for the interns for a period of 12 weeks and must not exceed $7,500 each fiscal year, unless otherwise stated or authorized. On rare occasion, when the hosting unit has additional work for the student intern beyond the budgeted 12 weeks, arrangements can be initiated by the hosting unit to continue working the intern using their funding sources, including other expenses e.g., (travel expenses, local, tribal or formal training opportunities, tuition assistance).

**Hosting Interns**
The host supervisors play a critical role in the success of the Program and the student’s professional and career development. Additionally, the role of the host supervisor is to make available quality work assignments related to the student’s academic studies and to ensure that the objectives of the developmental plan and participant agreement are met.

Student intern’s work schedules can be configured to fit a variety of situations. Students can work year round, during summer, and or during breaks. Student interns can also be placed with a tribe or tribal organization. Since the student interns are federal employees, when assigned to a tribe, a local BIA official is required to “host” to fulfill the administrative requirements.

If you are interested in hosting a student intern(s) for the 2018 summer season you will need to complete an Host Office Intern Request Form and return it to the Gayla Schock, OTS Pathways Program Manager, at gayla.schock@bia.gov as soon as possible, or no later than May 24, 2019, to allow for better coordination and processing.

The form is available on our website at:  
Evaluations
Host supervisors are responsible for completing a Host Supervisor Student Intern Evaluation Form at the end of each assignment to assess an intern’s strengths and weaknesses and to ensure the match with the agency is a good one. If problematic issues arise at any time during the internship, they are to contact the Pathways Program Manager as soon as possible.

Student Intern Placements
Student placement decisions are based on the following:
   a) Student’s duty station and/or permanent residence;
   b) Internship Participant requirements;
   c) Job responsibilities and location;
   d) Relevance to a student intern’s major and course work;
   e) Duration of employment;
   f) The learning opportunity associated with completing an internship with the proposed employer; and
   g) Completed Host Office Intern Request requirements (i.e. detailed description of work assignments and training opportunities, cost sharing, and signature from authorizing official).

Conversion of Student Interns
Student graduates who successfully complete the Pathways Internship Program and meet all education and position eligibility requirements may be noncompetitively converted to a term or career conditional position within the BIA. We provide support for job placement opportunities with a Tribe or Tribal enterprise.

If you have questions, please contact Gayla Schock, OTS Pathways Program Manager, at (202) 208-6410.