

REU summer internship in host-parasitoid interactions and global change in the Pacific Northwest (Binghamton University SUNY)

Overview: The Prior Ecology Lab at Binghamton University SUNY is seeking one undergraduate student for an NSF Research Experience for Undergraduate (REU) internship in insect ecology and global change this summer. The successful applicant will develop an independent project that contributes to NSF-funded research investigating how insect host-parasitoid communities are altered under global change in the Pacific Northwest. Please see the Prior Lab website for the type of research projects that we work on (www.priorecologylab.com).

We seek a highly motivated and enthusiastic undergraduate student for a ~10-week full-time, paid internship. The majority of the time (~ 6-8 weeks) will be spent conducting field research in the Pacific Northwest. The remaining weeks may be in the lab at Binghamton University, NY, or remotely in another location, analyzing results and a report. Dates are somewhat flexible, between mid/late-May and mid-August 2022.

The selected student will perform research in conjunction with an NSF-funded research project, "Uncovering the role of altered cryptic interactions in driving the demographic success of a range-expanding species." This project focuses on how tri-trophic interactions (between insects, host plants, and parasitoids) are altered under anthropogenic range expansions. The insect community we work on contains oak gall wasps and parasitoids in western oak ecosystems. We perform field surveys and experiments in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, and Vancouver Island, BC). The selected student will develop a research project in this system, working along with Dr. Prior and Ph.D. students.

Benefits: The selected student will receive a \$5000 stipend and housing during the 10-week program. Additionally, funds will be provided to travel to and from field sites in the Pacific Northwest with funds for research supplies. The student will live in a shared residence with Ph.D. students/field technicians. The team will likely live in Oregon, with potential trips to Vancouver Island (depending on Covid-19 border restrictions). The student will pay for their food using a field vehicle that can be used to get groceries and a kitchen to prepare food.

Eligibility: Applicants must be rising sophomore, junior, or senior undergraduate students enrolled in a degree program. Due to NSF funding restrictions, only U.S. citizens, nationals, or permanent residents are eligible. Students must have a valid passport and driver's license. Applicants should be willing and able to work under sometimes strenuous field conditions, work and live well with others, and adapt to flexible and irregular hours needed when conducting field research.

To Apply: Applications should be submitted to Dr. Kirsten Prior by email (kprior@binghamton.edu). Please put "2022 Summer REU position" in the subject line. Applications will be considered until March 21st, 2022. Applications should include the following documents: (1) a letter of interest that describes your educational background, career goals, and how this internship will contribute towards those goals (4 paragraphs maximum), (2) current curriculum vitae/resume, and (3) names and contact information for two references. We strongly encourage undergraduates in underrepresented groups in STEM to apply.

