

Information for Mentors

AZ-START (Arizona Science Teacher Advancement and Research Training) is a professional development program that links the state's K-12 science teachers with the science research infrastructure throughout the state. In recognition that teachers have difficulty in teaching about scientific inquiry because few of them have directly engaged in the process of inquiry, the program will enable teachers to work with faculty at the state universities and research partners in government and agricultural resource agencies throughout the state in paid summer research internships.

Each intern will engage in a biological research project on a topic of his/her choice. Research may take place in a research lab or in the field. A research database is available to help interns search for and locate an appropriate mentor for his/her research project. The research may be conducted at a location convenient to the intern. For example, an intern living in the Flagstaff area may engage in his/her research project at NAU or at the Coconino County Agriculture Research Station, while an intern living in Tucson might do his/her research at the University of Arizona.

Courtesy of a grant from the Science Foundation Arizona, in-service Arizona middle and high school science teachers selected to participate in the AZ-START Summer Research Internship will receive scholarship support. This award is based upon the amount of time each intern spends actively engaged in research, and the monies may be spent as the intern directs. An intern who spends the entire summer (at least 9 weeks, 40 hours/week or more) on his/her research project would receive the maximum award of \$9,000. The intern who spends less time on research will have his/her scholarship pro-rated accordingly. In order to receive this scholarship support, each intern must enroll in at least 1 unit of credit of BIOC 593A Biology Internship for Teachers.

We will take care of enrolling interns in the Biology Internship for Teachers course (BIOC 593A) for 1 unit of credit. The grade will be based on:

- attendance at the Orientation/Training Session
- completion of the Lab Safety Training online course
- input from your research mentor regarding your research work
- participation in the weekly discussions
- participation at the annual poster session (poster itself is not graded)
- completion of the final evaluation

Our summer will begin on June 2 with our Orientation/Training Week. Our annual Poster Session will be held on Thursday, July 24 from 2-4 pm in Life Sciences South Bldg. 2nd & 3rd floors on the University of Arizona Main Campus in Tucson. We expect all our interns to present a poster at this session, and we would like to invite all the research mentors and other lab members to attend.

We expect our interns to work 40 hours per week for 7-8 weeks. If interns don't have to report back to school until August or Sept., they may continue to do research after July 24 if you wish, and be paid, too, if they haven't already reached the \$9,000 maximum. While

engaged in research, interns should be as time efficient as possible (i.e., while a centrifuge is running, you could be working on another experiment). We expect our interns to make a good impression on their research mentors and lab members by showing up each day and working hard during scheduled hours so they will invite the interns to return again next summer if they are so inclined and are selected for a second summer.

We will have timesheets for the interns at the Orientation/Training Session. Interns should have their advisor approve each timesheet and send them to Ellie Warder by the specified due date for processing. While we call these timesheets, the interns are not on the University's payroll as employees. All the interns are graduate students receiving scholarships (i.e., tax is not withheld). These timesheets are a mechanism for us to prove to our funding agency that the interns have spent the summer doing research. Each intern will receive 4 payments over the summer, if they submit their timesheets promptly. Each payment will be deposited in the intern's UA account.

We will hold weekly research lunches here in Tucson. We will provide lunch for all attendees. Each intern is expected to make a 15-minute presentation regarding their research experience at one research lunch this summer. We invite all interns to attend these research lunches, as their time permits. We understand that interns doing research outside of Tucson may only be able to attend 1 research lunch (the time he/she presents). We will tape the presentations and post them on our website each week for those interns who aren't able to attend.

Many interns have asked what types of activities we consider to be research. Interns may claim the hours spent on the following activities on their timesheets:

- * The hours spent in our Orientation/Training sessions
- * Time spent in the field or lab doing experiments, collecting data, etc.
- * Any training received in the lab/field (i.e., learning to perform a new technique)
- * Time spent analyzing data
- * Time spent preparing graphs, charts, tables, and creating/editing the poster
- * Time spent discussing research activities with the advisor and lab personnel
- * If the advisor sends the intern from one field site to another, or to purchase supplies, travel time may be counted

If the intern starts or ends the day at a field site, travel time Home-to-Site or Site-to-Home would NOT count, just as you don't count driving to and from work each day.

Some interns have asked about funds to cover research expenses. Courtesy of a grant from the UA Foundation, we have a small amount of research funds available this summer. Each intern may apply for a research supply grant of \$500; we will award grants on a competitive basis to a maximum of 10 interns in Summer 2008. You should discuss your supply needs with your research mentor and submit a grant application by June 23. There are 18 interns in the AZ-START program this summer and only enough funds for 10 interns, so not all applications will be funded.

We would like to thank all the scientists who have agreed to serve as research mentors this summer, and we hope you find it a valuable and rewarding experience. If you have questions about the AZ-START program, please feel free to contact Lisa Elfring elfring@u.arizona.edu or Nadi Anderson nadja@email.arizona.edu at any time.