Young Naturalists

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

Member of the STEM PUSH Network, an NSF INCLUDES Alliance

Young Naturalists is a five-week paid internship for high school students to study ecology, gain outdoor work and leadership experience, and collaborate with a diverse cohort of other students. Students explore a range of ecologically focused themes and perform research & restoration in an urban park in Pittsburgh, PA.

Young Naturalists was established in 2014 at Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to serve students interested in pursuing a degree related to environmental science, ecology, education, STEM or sustainability.

Young Naturalists emphasizes & develops several targeted outcomes, including:

- Connection between STEM content & real-world experiences
- Environmental science applied to the urban environment
- Climate science & justice
- Sense of belonging & STEM identity

Sudents demonstrate these skills through a series of projects (park restoration, teaching elementary campers, zines, etc.) based on weekly themes.

About STEM PUSH

STEM PUSH, an NSF INCLUDES Alliance, is a national network of pre-college STEM programs who are engaging youth historically underrepresented in STEM to learn & do in-depth, authentic science, and ultimately to persist in STEM through college & beyond. More information available at stempushnetwork.org.

Program Features

STEM Focus

Ecology and Environmental Science

Five-week paid
summer internship

130 total program hours

12 high school students served annually

~40% of students are underrepresented in STEM

>60% of expert guest speakers are from minoritized groups

Program Results

55% of alumni demonstrate an increased interest in STEM after participating

Alum attend schools with strong programs in environmental science & sustainability, including:
- Chatham University
- University of Vermont
- University of Pittsburgh

Connect with Young Naturalists!

Contact Jen Schnakenberg at jschnakenberg@pittsburghparks.org to schedule a visit.
More information available at pittsburghparks.org.

STEM PUSH NETWORK