

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOUNT ★ VERNON

GEORGE WASHINGTON: ENTREPRENEUR

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 2020

Must my resume be chronological and just two pages?

Yes, chronological, and yes, at most two pages. Less is fine. You can go into more details on key parts of your resume in the *Related Skills and Activities* document.

What should I include in the *Related Skills and Activities* document?

This document allows you to expand upon items listed on your resume. While we are interested in reading about what you did, we would particularly like to know what you took away from each experience. For example, a new way to teach a game, how to deal with a disgruntled customer, a better understanding of a historical moment, etc.

Do I have to submit an official transcript?

No, you can send us an unofficial, unsealed copy; however, a download from your university's or college's web portal is not acceptable. An undergraduate transcript is generally a one-page document and looks official, except that it is not in a sealed envelope. It should include declared major, grades for each course, and cumulative GPA. If you have attended more than one institution, submit transcripts for each.

I just declared my major and I don't know any of the professors in the department very well. May I have someone else write a recommendation letter for me?

You may submit a letter from a professor in another department, if you feel that person could better address the questions listed in the application; however, if available, the first choice should be a professor within your department.

How does the vaccination and drug testing procedure work?

For vaccinations, you will need to provide proof that you have an up-to-date tetanus vaccination prior to your first day of work. Generally, your personal physician provides this document.

Upon offer of an internship position, you will work with an HR representative on a variety of matters, including the coordination and payment of drug testing. This will be done at a lab in your geographic area. The offer of an internship is contingent upon passing this test.

How does the background check happen?

Upon offer of an internship position, you will work with an HR representative on a variety of matters, including the coordination of a background check.

May I mail my application via the U.S. Postal Service?

Yes, please use this address:

George Washington's Mount Vernon
Attn. Sam Murphy, Historic Trades
P.O. Box 110
Mount Vernon, VA 22121

My mail delivery service will not ship to a post office box. What is the street address?

George Washington's Mount Vernon
Attn. Sam Murphy, Historic Trades
3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway
Mount Vernon, VA 22121

Can I email my application?

Yes, please submit the application and supporting documents at the same time in a single email to gwentrepreneur@mountvernon.org. The documents should be either .doc or .pdf files, and need not be one file. Submitting each of the supporting documents as separate files is fine, so long as they come at the same time.

Is there an online option for submitting applications?

Yes, the application and some supporting documents may be submitted through the Mount Vernon Human Resources online employment application program. This can be found on the employment page at <http://www.mountvernon.org/about/employment/open-positions-at-mount-vernon/> and by clicking the appropriate position opening. Use the “Apply for this Position” button at the bottom of the position description page.

My semester doesn't end until after the start of the internship. Can I still apply?

The first week of the internship is devoted to orientation and training, both in the classroom and on site. If you are not able to participate during the first week, it will not preclude you from applying. It will, however, be a significant factor in the overall evaluation of your application.

I need to leave Mount Vernon during the internship to take part in a special program/ family event. Will that be a problem?

It would depend on the number of days you would be away. We can usually make arrangements for you to leave the estate for a long weekend but that is the limit. Given the 10 week time commitment, no vacation leave is available. We do understand that emergencies arise. If that is the case, we can work with you to accommodate your needs.

When will a final decision be made?

After an initial application review, a pool of applicants will be selected for telephone interviews during late February/early March. Phone interviews are scheduled in advance and last approximately 20 minutes. We make our decision within a few days after the last interview. Those not receiving internships will be advised by email within a few days after the last interview.

Do you have any internships for graduate students?

Historic Trades does not have internships for graduate students; however, each spring, Historic Trades hires a number of part-time interpreters for our department. If you would be interested in applying for such a position, please contact department Director, Steve Bashore, at sbashore@mountvernon.org or department Manager, Sam Murphy, at smurphy@mountvernon.org for more information.

Other departments at Mount Vernon do have internships for graduate students. These are posted on the Human Resources employment page at <http://www.mountvernon.org/about/employment/>.

What travel expenses are provided by Mount Vernon?

If you travel by plane or train, Mount Vernon will pay for your fare. Travel arrangements will be booked and prepaid by Mount Vernon staff. Flights are usually routed to/from Reagan National Airport; train arrival/departures are usually through the Alexandria Amtrak station. A member of the Historic Trades staff will provide ground transportation to/from Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon will cover the cost for one checked bag. If you travel by personal vehicle, Mount Vernon will reimburse you for mileage up to a maximum of \$350 round trip.

Can I bring my car to Mount Vernon?

Absolutely. In fact, we strongly encourage interns to bring their own vehicle. You will be much better able to travel to/from work, and will have more freedom to explore the area. We often ask interns with cars to give rides to those without. If you are not comfortable doing that, still bring your car. You will have days off which can be spent at your leisure, so having transportation can facilitate visits to other notable locations in the region.

I won't have a car with me. How will I get to the sites where I'll be working?

Interns commute to work by personal vehicle, public transportation, or ride-sharing services.

What is the difference between the work at the Pioneer Farm (PF) and the Gristmill & Distillery (GMD) sites?

Interns work at both sites, interpreting and providing living history demonstrations to visitors. They are also responsible for some maintenance of buildings and equipment. Morning chores at the GMD might entail waxing wooden gears in the mill or mopping floors. GMD interns help move 50 pound bags of grain, clean milling and distilling equipment, and learn to operate the mill during demonstrations. Chores at the PF include planting, weeding, and harvesting the fields, removing/restocking layers of wheat in the treading barn. Living history demonstrations include spinning, weaving, general fiber production, hearth cooking, and other 18th century daily chores.

How many visitors will I see each day?

Mount Vernon hosts hundreds, and more often thousands, of guests daily. The Pioneer Farm is situated on the main estate but it is about a 10 minute walk from the main historic area, so you won't see all the guests who tour the Mansion. The Gristmill & Distillery site is a 3 mile drive from the main estate. Visitation there is about 150-300 guests per day.

What's the weather like in Virginia?

Virginia summers are generally very hot. Our average temperatures in July can reach the mid 90's with high humidity. You will be outside for much of the workday, so bring plenty of sunscreen. You also will want a large refillable water bottle to use on site. We also experience a fair number of afternoon/evening thunderstorms, so an umbrella or rain jacket would be a good addition to your packing list. The period costuming is generally as comfortable as modern garments but we do allow for some modification for extremely hot weather.

Will I have a chance to work with farm animals?

Mount Vernon's farm animals are handled by the Livestock department. Usually there are sheep quartered at the PF, but Historic Trades is not responsible for their care. Horses and oxen are routinely brought down to the site by Livestock staff for a variety of demonstrations (plowing fields, treading wheat, etc.). Occasionally our staff assists with these. There are no farm animals at the GMD.

When I work at the Gristmill & Distillery, will I have a chance to make whiskey?

It is unlikely that whiskey will be made during your internship. Mount Vernon usually has two whiskey runs per year. Both take place when the site is closed to the public during November and March. Sometimes fruit brandy distilling takes place during the summer internship but interns must be 21 years of age to participate.

The application states the work is "dusty." What does that mean?

Primarily, but not exclusively, this means cereal grain dust. In the gristmill, we regularly grind wheat and corn, as well as other grains. On the farm, we thresh wheat. Many of the roads around the estate are dirt and so can get dusty too. Many of the items we work with represent 18th century standards, so a certain level of dust provides authentic patina.

I have a health consideration, will that preclude me from the internship?

Generally, only you know whether you'll be able to perform the duties of the work. If you have concerns about a specific element of the work you would be doing at Mount Vernon, please ask us. Do keep in mind that you will spend lots of time on your feet, will be lifting and carrying a variety of items (like buckets of water, wheat shocks, bags of grain, wood), and possibly tasks like chopping wood, tending to tobacco, etc.

Will I portray a specific character?

While you will be wearing period clothing, you will not portray a specific 18th century person. We wear period clothing in order to show visitors what would have been worn by the 18th century laboring class in the Chesapeake Bay region or hired workers at Mount Vernon. The Character Interpretation department portrays specific persons from Washington's life, but they generally stay in the main historic area of the estate.

What sort of clothes do I need to bring?

For on-site work, you need to bring one pair of shoes that can be worn with your period clothing. These should be plain black or brown leather lace-up shoes, without any obvious logos or trademarks. Clogs, sneakers, Crocs, running shoes, etc. are not acceptable. Our costume coordinator will work with interns prior to arrival to prepare period ensembles.

Bring casual attire to wear during your time off. You will need at least one business casual ensemble to wear when attending Teacher Institute programs or other special events. It's a good idea to pack a pair of jeans and a long-sleeved t-

shirt – occasionally there’s a cool evening and they are needed for certain work tasks. Sometimes interns take road trips to the beach during their stay, so you may want to pack a bathing suit just in case.

I have my own period clothing. Can I wear it at Mount Vernon?

We will provide two sets of period clothing for you to wear during your internship. If you wish to wear your own period clothing, it needs to be vetted by the costume coordinator. You will find that work clothes can acquire a lot of wear and tear during your brief time at Mount Vernon. Please know that Mount Vernon cannot be responsible for its repair or replacement if damaged.

What field trips do the interns go on?

The Historic Trades department generally takes the interns on two field trips to historic sites in the region. In the past, interns have visited places such as Monticello, Ash Lawn, Stratford Hall, and Aldie Mill. In late June, all interns will participate in a work trip to southern Maryland to pick up the wheat needed for treading barn demonstrations. On their days off, interns frequently travel via Metro to the many museums and other attractions located in the Washington, DC area.

What topics can my research paper cover?

Your paper must address George Washington, Mount Vernon, or the 18th century world in which Washington lived. Topics related to the operation of Washington’s farms and businesses are preferred. You will meet with the Historic Trades manager after your arrival to discuss your planned area of research, and he will give final approval for your topic. Research papers, interpretive programs, and new media projects are common projects. You will have use of the George Washington National Library while working on your paper. Some interns have also traveled to Washington, DC to do further research at the Library of Congress.

How do I get class credit for participating in the internship?

Whether you can obtain class credit for the internship is up to your college or university. We are happy to work with your professor to make this possible.

What are you looking for in candidates?

We are looking for bright and eager students who have a keen interest in history. Students need not be history majors, although they often are. We have had political science, museum studies, education and a variety of other majors represented in our interns. It is key that interns are able to communicate with a variety of people, be willing to work hard, and having a good sense of humor never hurts. If selected, we expect punctuality, adherence to Mount Vernon’s employee handbook, and professional decorum.

What else do you think I should know?

Please follow the application process carefully, proofread, and ask questions.