Objective: To provide in-service learning experiences in museum environmental education and exhibition activities.

Internship Focus: Interns will be involved in the creation and delivery of environmental education programs to audiences of varying ages and backgrounds at the Schiele Museum of Natural History. In addition, interns will provide support for activities required for the success of the Museum’s education department including resource and materials management, data collection, program evaluation and exhibit development.

Internship Duration: Internships correspond with academic semesters and are available during spring (January-April), summer (May-August) and fall (September-December). Spring and fall internships require at least 160 hours with a time commitment of 15-25 hours a week. The summer internship is a 320-hour full-time experience requiring a time commitment of 40 hours a week.

Institutional Summary: The Schiele Museum of Natural History is the premier natural science museum in the Charlotte-Metro region and serves nearly 200,000 visitors a year. Museum interpretive operations deliver mission-based information to visitors and program participants through presentation activities and exhibit experiences. The Education Department, comprised of 8 full-time staff and 10 part-time or contract interpreters, delivers mission-based programs, events, classes, workshops and field experiences to 80,000 participants annually, including all segments of our audience: students on field trips, outreach programs, adults, families and organized youth organizations. The James H. Lynn Planetarium is a 152 seat facility with a staff of 3, providing public programs 6 days per week to general audiences and for school field trips. Other interpretive operations include the Exhibits Department and Museum Live Animal Program.

Internship Summary: The Museum Environmental Education Internship will provide an in-service learning experience that illustrates a career in environmental education. Outdoor resources used for the implementation of the environmental education program include a 0.75 mile nature trail, pond (1/8 acre), small creek, play space for children under 8 years old, gazebo with seating for 100, picnic shelter with seating for 60 and gem mining sluice. Indoor resources utilized include a variety of program spaces, North Carolina ecosystems exhibit, North American wildlife exhibit, North America habitats exhibit and rotating feature exhibits. Interns will learn to develop, conduct and evaluate programs in a multitude of formats for a variety of audiences. They will be responsible for supporting the environmental education program of the Schiele Museum through programming, resource and materials management and data collection. Interns will learn to support an organization’s mission through environmental education initiatives.
Activities will center on the critical components of a successful environmental education program: Program Development, Program Delivery, Audience Evaluation, Facility Management and Data Collection. Upon completion of the internship, interns will have a better understanding of how to effectively manage an environmental education program in a museum setting.

**Internship Supervisor:**
Stephenie Berggrun, Environmental Educator, will provide the day-to-day supervision and instruction for the Museum Environmental Education Internship. She is a Certified Interpretive Trainer (CIT) through the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) as well as a Certified Environmental Educator in the state of North Carolina. Stephenie oversees the environmental education programming at the museum, designs interpretive media, coordinates relevant grant opportunities and assists in developing educational content for and in support of museum exhibits.

**Objectives:**

1. **Gain an understanding of effective educational programing techniques for a variety of audiences and program styles.**
   Interns will learn how to use a variety of techniques to present information in an engaging manner that helps the audience to understand the information, relate to the message and look for opportunities for engagement. Techniques will vary based on the demographic, physiographic and geographic audience base as well as the format of the program (guided tour, presentation, interactive activity or impromptu interaction).

2. **Develop skills to create and present thematic environmental education programs.**
   Interns will discover the importance of developing programs around a central theme. They will practice creating effective themes and subthemes and incorporate those themes into their presentation.

3. **Participate in audience and program evaluation.**
   Interns will participate in evaluation prior to, during, and after programs. They will choose an audience and topic in the program development phase that aligns with the Museum’s mission, goals and objectives. Interns will develop skills to adapt their programs on-the-spot to accommodate their actual attendees, then they will conduct summative evaluations to discover what the audience took away from the experience.

4. **Gain an understanding for the tools necessary to personally understand and manage your resource and materials.**
   Interns will actively learn about the Schiele Museum and its exhibits, the flora and fauna commonly found in the Piedmont of North Carolina and a variety of ecosystems across North America. Since program materials are a crucial part of any museum education program, interns will assist in properly maintaining the program materials housed within the Museum.
5. **Explore strategies to incorporate supportive programming with museum exhibits.**
   Interns will participate in program development in support of permanent and feature exhibits at the Schiele Museum. Special considerations will include maneuvering groups through exhibit spaces, ensuring visibility of exhibit components being highlighted and providing engaging content for guests who’ve seen the exhibit before.

6. **Gain an understanding of how effective educational programming supports the organization’s mission.**
   Interns will understand how the environmental education program supports the mission of the Schiele Museum. They will explore other departments of the Museum and their respective alignment with the Museum’s mission to gain a better understanding of the museum profession as a whole.

7. **Provide a written and verbal evaluation of activities.**
   Interns will reflect upon their experiences through a verbal evaluation and written documentation. During the last few weeks of the internship, interns will meet with the intern supervisor to review the internship experience. Interns will be asked to verbally evaluate themselves and the internship during this meeting. A written evaluation will be completed by the intern supervisor for each intern. This evaluation will review the intern’s performance, including strengths and weaknesses. The purpose of this evaluation is to aid interns in future endeavors by helping them grow as individuals. Completion of this documentation concludes the internship.

**Qualifications and Requirements:**
- Some background experience with conducting informal programs is desirable.
- Comfortable working outdoors and speaking in front of the public.
- Must be able to lift and carry up to 50 pounds.
- Willingness to get dirty.
- Strong communication skills.
- Ability to work independently after sufficient training and experience.
- A minimum time commitment of 160 hours for spring and fall internships and 320 hours for the summer internship.
- Must be at least 18 years old and currently enrolled in or recently graduated from a higher education facility, such as a community college, state college or university, or private university.
- Need to be willing to work weekends, holidays and occasional evenings.

**Housing is available on site at the Schiele Museum of Natural History. Food and transportation are NOT provided. Deadlines for applications: Spring – October 15th; Summer – February 15th; Fall – June 15th.**

**How to Apply:**
Email resume, letter of interest, and availability to Stephenie Berggrun at stephenieb@cityofgastonia.com. You may contact Stephenie with any questions regarding the internship via email or phone at 704.866.6915.