Acknowledgements

SCI Network NYC is generously supported by Speaker Adrienne E. Adams and the New York City Council.

Contact

Erin Prada, Wildlife Conservation Society, eprada@wcs.org

Photos

Eryn Hazithomas, Olivia Ramos, and additional photos courtesy of New York Botanical Garden, American Museum of Natural History, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and Wave Hill
The SCI Network NYC is a consortium of eight science-based cultural institutions committed to providing high-quality STEM internships to New York City youth. In 2022, we collectively hosted 900 interns who gained experience in a variety of fields, including animal care, horticulture, science communication, teaching, and administration.

**GOALS:**
- Increase the number of youth from historically underrepresented communities in STEM internships.
- Develop systems to connect interns with employment opportunities across institutions. We call this "latticing in action."
- Develop a plan to leverage New York City’s Summer Youth Employment Program to benefit our interns and institutions.
- Demonstrate our collective impact through evaluation, storytelling, and advocacy.

Number of interns per institution

Interim Report December 2022 | 2
Internships are critical pathways to employment, but have historically been available only to those with financial resources and social capital. Through targeted partnerships and outreach, we are working to ensure that youth from all backgrounds can participate in our STEM internships. We partner with local community organizations, council members, and schools to actively recruit youth for these rich learning experiences.

The Other category includes American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or other identities. Note: NYC percentages add up to greater than 100% because some respondents selected multiple categories.

**YOUTH SPEAK A TOTAL OF 48 LANGUAGES**

51% speak a language other than English at home.

Spanish is the most common language, with 22% speaking Spanish at home.

The Other category includes American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or other identities. Note: NYC percentages add up to greater than 100% because some respondents selected multiple categories.
Collectively, we offered 900 science-based internships.

Sci Network NYC internships are diverse and wide ranging. We offer opportunities for youth in the following disciplines:

- Science Communication
- Science Research
- Stem Education
- Conservation Advocacy
- Animal Care
- Horticulture/Gardening

Collectively, youth earn more than $2.2 million in stipends and wages.

On average, youth receive more than 200 hours of training through internships.

Youth receive access to the network resources, including skill development workshops and assistance with advancing.
In addition to providing internship opportunities, leaders from the partnership organizations have developed a community of practice to accomplish the following:

- Share resources and identify shared challenges and solutions around recruitment, research and evaluation, and gathering support
- Position SCI Network NYC to become a provider for the Summer Youth Employment Program in 2024
- Plan and host peer networking events for youth
- Provide training and networking opportunities for supervisors of youth interns
- Broaden recruitment efforts for all partners at the WCS Youth Jobs, Internship, and Volunteer Expo
- Explore ways to track youth movement across organizations
All participants agreed that they learned new approaches or activities that they plan to apply in their work, including how to provide feedback to interns, ways to streamline logistics and paperwork, and access to resources for supporting youth mental health.

Participants enjoyed meeting youth development colleagues from other institutions and nearly all planned to follow up with someone they met.

SCI Network NYC piloted a professional networking event at WCS’ Central Park Zoo in March. The event was attended by approximately 25 professionals that directly oversee and make decisions about youth intern programs and/or directly supervise the network’s 900 youth interns.

The event provided an opportunity for youth supervisors to meet and network with staff within SCI Network NYC organizations and to share tools and best practices they could take with them to implement in their programs or share with youth. Conversations were centered around participants’ personal experience facilitating science-based internships as related to intern administration, direct youth services, and program design. It is the goal of SCI Network NYC that the connections made during this event will foster an ongoing collaboration between these professionals throughout the year as they mentor youth in STEM opportunities and work to support youth in their awareness of STEM opportunities across the network. SCI Network NYC plans to offer this event annually.

“I LOVED HEARING ABOUT THE WORK THAT OTHERS ARE DOING. IT WAS VERY INSPIRATIONAL.”

“ I'M EXCITED TO CONTINUE CONNECTING WITH THE PEOPLE WE MET!”

- All participants agreed that they learned new approaches or activities that they plan to apply in their work, including how to provide feedback to interns, ways to streamline logistics and paperwork, and access to resources for supporting youth mental health.
- Participants enjoyed meeting youth development colleagues from other institutions and nearly all planned to follow up with someone they met.
UPON COMPLETION OF THEIR INTERNSHIP

66%

OF YOUTH REPORTED THEY ENVISION THEIR CAREER INVOLVING SCIENCE

"I finally found a community I feel comfortable in outside my family. Working here gave me the nudge I needed to move on to a new independent lifestyle." - WCS Intern

"This internship helped me to realize that I want to work with and around people, and that I feel most comfortable in a space where I can interact with and bounce ideas off of others." - QBG Intern

78%

OF YOUTH REPORTED THEY WOULD LIKE TO WORK OR INTERNS AT A CULTURAL INSTITUTION IN THE FUTURE

19%

OF INTERNS FELT THAT THEY HAD EXPERIENCED BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATING IN SCIENCE

59%

OF INTERNS AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED THAT THEY KNEW HOW TO FIND INTERNSHIPS AT OTHER CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN NYC.

SCI Network NYC is dedicated to increasing this latter percentage by sharing information and supporting our young people as they identify their next opportunity.

Priya Mohammed

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: LATTICING IN ACTION

- Queens Zoo Discovery Guide, 2019
- Queens Zoo Discovery Guide Leader, 2020
- Queens Zoo Quest Leader, 2021
- New York Hall of Science Explainer, 2021-2022
- Queens Zoo Visitor Engagement Assistant, 2022

"The difference between the person I was at 14 when I first joined the QZ team and now at 18 starting college is astronomical. I was never truly passionate about anything and did not have the motivation to strive for a successful career. However, with the extremely supportive community at WCS, I began to realize my potential...which led to me believing in myself, finding a passion and moving forward to other positions within the Queens Zoo. Eventually, I developed such a passion for education that I joined NYSCI’s Science and Career Ladder which also allowed me to expand my social skills and expose me to even broader career options in STEM. Both places gave me countless networking and career opportunities and is the reason why I was inspired to pursue a higher education."
“My communication skills are very important. I am a Spanish speaker but don’t speak Spanish at home, so coming to the zoo has pushed me out of my comfort zone to speak to those who only speak Spanish.”
- WCS Intern

“I learned to communicate my ideas to a team or audience simply and concisely. I approach presentations with a new perspective which helps me better convey information.”
- NYSCI Intern

“I’ve learned lots of valuable information about climate change and maps, which I think will prove to be beneficial in the science career I hope to have in the future.”
- Wave Hill Intern

“One thing I will use in the future is my new ability to communicate and efficiently explain new ideas and concepts.”
- AMNH Intern

“One of the most important things I’ve learned is modifying activities to fit the needs of people depending on their age. I learned how to engage kids so all were able to understand.”
- NYBG Intern

“The interpersonal skills I developed over the course of the internship helped to expand my professional network and interact with people in different departments. Learning to traverse each of these spaces was pivotal in my time there.”
- SIZ Intern

“This internship gave me a glance of what working a full job might be. Some of the difficulties and enjoyable things about working are now clearer and more understandable.”
- QBG Intern

“My leadership skills are something I will definitely use in the future in order to accomplish a task together.”
- BBG Intern

“my most important takeaway from my time at QBG and WCS was that both opportunities were able to help me grow in their own ways. At WCS, I was able to make new friends and practice with my public speaking. These were viable skills that helped me through the rest of my high school experience. At QBG, I wanted to explore a future potential career choice. Being a Human Resources/Developmental intern helped me learn more about a career I wanted to pursue. It even helped me in getting an actual job in Human Resources as a Human Resources Representative.”

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: LATTICING IN ACTION

Tenay Fullerton

- Queens Zoo Discovery Guide, 2018
- Queens Botanical Garden HR Intern, 2021-2022
## APPENDIX

### SCI NETWORK NYC YOUTH BY NY CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th># of SCI Network NYC Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 - 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 - 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 - 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22 - 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29 - 42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>