

George Melendez Wright Initiative for Young Leaders in Climate Change FY 2016 Program Report

The Climate Change Response Program (CCRP) successfully conducted the second year of the George Melendez Wright Initiative for Young Leaders in Climate Change (YLCC). The YLCC is a competitive internship program in which high-achieving undergraduate and graduate students conduct innovative climate change projects in parks and program offices.

Twelve students participated in the YLCC in 2016. Project topics span a large range of disciplines and resources, such as development of a vulnerability index for rare plants in Olympic NP, interpretation of climate change in coal-dependent communities at New River Gorge NR, and development of planning resources to adapt NPS coastal assets in the Park Planning & Special Studies Program. A final report, related deliverables, and evaluation are available from each park or program. Both interns and their NPS supervisors provided extremely positive feedback regarding all aspects of the initiative.

The YLCC is an approved Direct Hire Authority Internship Initiative; interns who successfully complete the YLCC become eligible for noncompetitive hiring. Career mentorship and professional development are core elements of the YLCC experience. The summer culminated in a Professional Development Symposium designed to expose interns to leaders in their chosen fields and provide them with useful tools and knowledge to launch federal careers. There are now 24 YLCC alumni who possess, or will possess following completion of their degree program, direct hire eligibility.

The initiative is administered by the CCRP in partnership with the University of Washington. The CCRP and Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate provided a total of \$199,739 to administer the 2016 YLCC season.

FY 2016 Young Leaders in Climate Change Positions

Region	Park/Program	Project Title
AK	Gates of the Arctic NP&P	Changing Climate, Changing Policy- Subsistence use and wilderness values in Arctic Alaska
AK	Klondike Gold Rush NHP	Assess Climate Change Vulnerability of Archaeological Resources to Plan for Resilience and Outreach
AK	Kobuk Valley NP	Establishing Fisheries Baselines for a Changing Arctic
IMR	Grand Canyon NP	Climate Change Interpretation through Citizen Science
MWR	Hot Springs NP	Monitoring Soil Moisture and Fuel Loads in the Recharge Zone at Hot Springs National Park for Climate Change Effects
MWR	Midwest Regional Office	Climate Change Interpretation through Centennial Partnership with the American Solar Challenge
NER	New River Gorge NR	Interpreting Climate Change in Coal-dependent Communities
PWR	National Park of American Samoa	Develop 4th Grade Climate Change Curriculum in concert with NPSA's Climate Change Study—National Park of American Samoa.
PWR	North Cascades NP	Integrating Future Hydrologic Models into Transportation Management in North Cascades National Park
PWR	Olympic NP	Climate Change Vulnerability Index for Rare and Endemic Plants of Olympic National Park
SER	South Florida/ Caribbean Network	Ecotonal Monitoring of the Marching Mangrove Front
WASO	Washington Office Park Planning & Special Studies	Planning for Adaptation and Resilience of NPS Coastal Assets