

My name is Lucille Sherlock. I am a rising senior at Yorktown High School in Arlington Virginia, and for the last four weeks I have had the great pleasure of working as an intern with the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust. I was matched with NVCT through an internship program in the Arlington Public Schools, called PRIME. When you apply to the PRIME program, you provide information about the types of career fields you are interested in, and then you are placed accordingly. On my application I mentioned that I would love to work in a nonprofit and that I was interested in environmental science and conservation, so what better organization to be matched with, than NVCT?

From day one at NVCT, I felt like I had been given the perfect internship. At first, I was a bit overwhelmed because I had never been in a professional office environment before, but after much help and reassurance from all of the staff members, I knew that my time here would be enjoyable. Over the last four weeks I have done and learned a lot. I assisted with social media, did research, sat in on meetings, went on several site visits, and did some photography. I was able to learn a lot about the workings of not just a land trust but a nonprofit in general. I learned so much about land conservation and gained an even greater appreciation for it. In fact, because of this internship I have considered centering my Girl Scout Gold Award around land conservation and awareness.

Perhaps the thing that stood out to me the most about NVCT and the land trust world is just how passionate everybody is about their jobs. From what I can see, everyone who goes down this career path has one thing in common: they all want to do what's best for nature. There is a sort of unity in this community that seems to be unique. During my time here, every interaction I have witnessed has been a collaborative one, rather than a competitive one. It is this kind of work environment that I have always pictured myself thriving in, so it is very exciting to see that it exists in a career field I am interested in.

This internship provided me with the opportunity to really get an in-depth look at a career field I was curious about. As a result, I have begun to seriously consider land conservation as a potential career path, even more than I had before. I also learned a lot about the working world in general. This internship served as a way for me to "get my toes wet" and discover what it is like to work in an office environment. As I leave NVCT, I know that my time here will come to play a large role not only in my near future, but also when I begin to choose a career field. I am extremely grateful to everybody at NVCT who made my time here so wonderful and meaningful.