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Field/Administrative Internship

KLAC Internship Experience

The Key Largo Anglers Club is home to one of the most unique internship opportunities for anyone interested in aquaculture, wildlife, or anything relating to these fields. The 46-acre property not only caters to the club’s members through private accommodations, dining services, dockage, and countless recreational facilities, but on top of this, in the heart of the property lies a 6-acre Everglade Oasis with five interconnected saltwater lakes boasting one of the most pristine, functioning man made ecosystems in all of Florida. This Park is home to an immense list of flora and fauna species replicating the local Everglades Park. With such an immense system, the need for preservation and maintenance is ever present; thus, the various KLAC internship programs were born.

I had the opportunity to join the internship team February- March ‘21. Though my background in this field was lacking, I have always been fascinated by aqua nature and it’s preservation. The program allowed for me to gain field exposure on a regular basis, as park upkeep was the highest priority as we fought to get the park to a point of self-sustaining and self-regulation. While I spent much of my time in the field stocking species, managing algal blooms, and maintaining overall aesthetics and functionality, I was able to utilize my education and prior work experiences through various administrative duties aimed at streamlining and converting data, formalizing the internship program, and establishing key documentation and catalogues that would help it progress into the notable internship program it is today.

My administrative duties varied across the board, but some of the more beneficial projects I was tasked with included establishing a working species list for all flora and fauna found in the park, drafting the internship program brochures, information documents, and onboarding forms, as well as modernizing accessibility through mobile app/internet platforms. While my work behind the keyboard was a major component to my internship, my fondest memories were the hands-on experiences in the park. Not only was this a huge opportunity to learn about this ecosystem and how to preserve it, but the work itself was very gratifying. Two of my favorite experiences were when fellow intern, Ray, and I ventured by boat to the University of Miami oceanography campus to collect and transport various aquatic species we then used to stock the lakes, of course, fishing our way there and back. Another being when we redesigned the tidal pool; it was incredible being knee deep in the pool surrounded by so many different species, making their home safer, healthier and more beautiful.

This is an amazing internship program where you will learn a lot, work hard, and have fun doing it. Whether you are studying fisheries, ecosystems, environmental science, biology… the list goes on, you will, without doubt, come out of this program with the experience and knowledge needed to launch your career in any related field. This program is far more than just a resume builder, you will leave with a much greater appreciation for the Everglades, a knowledge of all things that make and sustain the park, and an excitement and energy to continue building a better world.