



SAF

STUDENT ACTION
WITH FARMWORKERS

2009 Into the Fields Internship Program Details

SAF's Mission

Student Action with Farmworkers is a non-profit organization that brings students and farmworkers together to learn about each other's lives, share resources and skills, improve conditions for farmworkers, and build diverse coalitions working for social change.

We have been building student-farmworker solidarity since 1992. SAF works with students, who want to work within social justice movements; farmworkers, one of the hardest-working yet most marginalized populations in our society; as well as farmworker agencies and community groups, that need greater human resources to carry out their work. Most of the staff were *Into The Fields* interns at one point. We value preparing young leaders and organizers for the social justice movement, bringing our full selves to this work and having fun!

The Into the Fields Program

A Life Changing Experience

Many people don't take the time to think about where their food comes from; they just go to the grocery store and buy it, unaware of who planted it, where it was planted, who packaged it, and who transported it to the store. Farmworkers have one of the most dangerous jobs and are among the lowest paid workers in the U.S. They face discrimination, heat illness, pesticide exposure, poor housing, low wages and no benefits, and ironically they even struggle to put food on their tables. Farmworkers also have a long history of organizing themselves to gain better working and living conditions in the Southeast, from the days of slavery to the Southern Tenant Farmers Union in the 1930's and even today through labor unions and community organizations.

How would you like to spend your summer meeting and supporting farmworkers, the people who plant and harvest the fruits and vegetables you eat everyday? How about meeting those who work in meat processing factories, processing and cutting chicken and pork? Perhaps you are from a farmworker family and witnessed your parents' hard work, or have done farm work yourself and you'd like to give back to your community. Or maybe you have a passion for educating consumers about farmworker issues and how they can become involved in the farmworker movement.

Through *Into The Fields* not only will you support farmworkers, but you will be trained on the issues surrounding their lives and the broader context of the agricultural industry. SAF places 30 college student interns to work with organizations that serve, organize or advocate for farmworker justice in the Southeast. SAF interns come from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and about half of interns are from farmworker families. You will get to know each other well at 3 retreats in North Carolina, and may be paired with a SAF partner at your internship placement, living and working alongside one another.

But wait, there's more! SAF embraces the arts, culture and storytelling as a means of educating the public about farmworker issues and organizing for social justice in the South. We have a theater group and photo documentary program that you will participate in during the summer. Interns choose to create and perform a skit for farmworkers in labor camps, or select one farmworker with whom to document their life experiences. There are many more activities and opportunities for SAF interns, so please read the details below to discover how *Into the Fields* can change *your* life!

Eligibility Requirements

- The application process is pretty competitive; we receive about 75 applications for 30 intern positions! But don't let that discourage you because we strive to select a diversity of students (those with little work experience to super-activists!). Any college student can apply, but must realize that SAF has strong preferences. In order to qualify you must:

Speak intermediate to advanced Spanish (you will most likely work with monolingual Spanish speakers) **AND** to be preferenced you must fit one of the following:

- I am a college student from a farmworker family (anywhere in the U.S.)
- I am a student currently attending college in the Southeastern U.S. (NC, SC, VA, TN, AK, AL, MS, LA, or GA)
- I am a student from the Southeast (the southeast is your home; you grew up there; your parents still live there, etc.)

Helpful Hints

- Most placements require interns to have their own transportation to/from work or for work purposes. Some have a company vehicle you can borrow for the summer, and in rare cases SAF rents cars for a couple of interns to use during the summer. If you have a car or drivers license that you can use for the summer, this will increase our ability to place you.
- Do you speak an indigenous language of Mexico or Guatemala? Do you have theater or documentary experience, or another special skill? Be sure to tell us in your application!

Attention UNC-Chapel Hill & Duke University Students!!

- Undergraduate students at UNC-CH interested in receiving academic credit and financial assistance can complete the ITF application through the Apples Service Learning Program. www.unc.edu/apples
- Undergraduate students at Duke University should also apply to Duke Engage to receive financial assistance. <http://dukeengage.duke.edu/>

Expectations

In order to participate in the internship program, you must be able to:

- Work 40 hours per week at your placement agency
- Participate for the entire program from June 1-August 9, 2009
- Attend Orientation, Mid-summer and Final Retreats (see timeline)
- Meet regularly with your site-supervisor
- Complete basic office duties
- Write guided journals throughout the summer
- Conduct a presentation to the community on farmworkers
- Complete a documentary or theater project
- Complete all SAF requirements in a timely manner

Training

Interns will take time to prepare for their summer experience at the week-long Orientation. Situated in the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina, the Orientation is a great space for interns to build friendships and participate in issue-based and skills-building workshops. Sample workshop topics include: farmworker history & demographics, legal rights, immigration, migrant education, health education, documentary photo & audio techniques, theater practice, dismantling oppression, and community and labor organizing strategies. At the Mid-Retreat students will reflect on their summer experiences, address conflicts that may have arisen, and continue training in documentary and theater. We also often participate in an awareness-raising action supporting a current farmworker campaign. The Final Retreat is an opportunity to celebrate the summer's accomplishments, present completed documentary projects, and prepare for sharing your experiences and knowledge back on campus.

Theater & Documentary Projects

In addition to working full-time at a farmworker organization about 22 interns will create a documentary project and 7 will participate in SAF's Theater group.

Documentary students will get to know an individual or family more in-depth by documenting their lives through interviews, photography, and creative writing. Recent projects have focused on cultural traditions and educational aspirations of farmworkers and their families. SAF uses interns' projects in printed publications and traveling exhibits to raise awareness about farmworkers. Students will spend about five hours a week working on their projects. No previous photography or interview experience is required.

Theater Group students will use skits to initiate dialogue among farmworkers and to mobilize them to come up with solutions to the issues they face. Performances take place in labor camps in Eastern NC and address issues important to workers, such as health or housing concerns. There are six performances in the evenings and one Saturday rehearsal. Only interns placed in Eastern/Central NC can participate in the theater group. Plays are performed in Spanish. No previous acting experience is required.

Location/Housing

The majority of placements are in North Carolina, but about 1/3 are in other Southeastern states. Most interns live and work in rural agricultural areas with limited access to public transportation, shops and activities. SAF will locate furnished housing and cover rental costs for the summer. Interns' living conditions will be **basic**. You may not have air conditioning and may live in co-ed housing with other interns and/or with families. Interns will use their per diem to pay utilities, phone, food and gas to/from work.

If you want to find and set up your own summer housing, please let us know ASAP. SAF will pay partial rent for participants who locate their own housing and coordinate with the SAF staff. If an intern happens to live close to their summer placement it may be possible for them to live at home. However, we cannot guarantee that a placement will be available close to your home. SAF will not pay rent for participants who live with family members. If you need to live with family, would like to live at home, or have an outstanding lease, you must make this clear on the application. Since interns usually live together in small groups, individual housing accommodations may not be appropriate.

Finances

Interns will receive a \$1,250 total per diem to pay for food, gas, electricity, water, phone, and other miscellaneous expenses accrued during the summer (Interns will be given a check for \$625 at Orientation and \$625 at Mid Retreat). SAF will pay for room and board during Orientation, Mid and Final Retreats. Each intern will be awarded a \$1,500 educational award upon completion of the program.

Fundraising

Sponsoring organizations, interns and SAF all fundraise to support the program. **Each intern must raise a minimum of \$650 by Orientation.** Don't worry! SAF will provide you with fundraising suggestions, techniques and support. Most students raise even more than the goal of \$650! Since contributions to SAF are tax-deductible, many people are willing to make donations. SAF encourages participants from the same campus to fundraise as a group so you aren't competing for the same resources.

Travel

SAF will pay for airfare or other travel costs for students from farmworker families who travel to North Carolina to participate in the Orientation. In addition, SAF will assist with travel costs for students placed outside of NC to attend the trainings. Because interns and farmworkers live in rural areas, you will drive long distances to and during work. Interns may live up to 30 miles from their work-site and may drive even farther to visit farmworkers who live in isolated areas. We will place interns without cars with interns that have access to a car or in areas where public transportation is available. Most sites will reimburse participants for work-related travel. If a placement does not reimburse mileage, participants should use their per diem to pay this expense. SAF does not reimburse participants for work-related travel.

Interview Process

You can't judge a person by their resume, so we conduct in-person or phone interviews with most applicants. The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) staff, SAF Alumni and other Partners help SAF conduct interviews. If you do not fit the requirements for the internship program or we have not received a complete application you may not be interviewed. Applicants who fit SAF's preferences will be contacted by SAF or your campus contact to hold an interview between February 23-27. All other applicants will be processed and only those who are finalists will be selected for an interview. Please bring an additional copy of your application to your interview.

Selection Policy

SAF does not discriminate in its selection process on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, citizenship, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, gender, age or ability. SAF shall give preference to and actively recruit current and former farmworkers and people from farmworking families to reflect the constituency of the organization. Members of under represented groups are particularly encouraged to apply.

Participant Agreement

We require all participants to sign an agreement committing to work for the duration of the summer program & acknowledging that you are responsible for raising \$650. SAF makes numerous financial commitments on behalf of all participants after we receive the signed agreement. Participants who break the agreement are required to contribute \$650 towards program expenses.

2009 ITF Timeline

Jan 1	Application available online
Feb 11	Application deadline
Feb 23-27	Applicant Interviews
March 10	Applicants notified of Selection/Waitlist/Decline
March 16	Deadline to accept position or be on the waitlist
March 29- April 4	Farmworker Awareness Week
April 17	Placements Finalized
April 27-May 15	Intern/Sponsor Interviews
June 1-6	SAF Orientation, Mars Hill, NC
June 8	First day of work
July 10-12	Mid-Retreat, Greensboro, NC
August 7-9	Final Retreat, Chapel Hill & Durham, NC
August 9-10	Students travel home

Placement Descriptions

The internship is designed to build on your past experiences, foster the development of new skills, and challenge you to think and act in new ways. When placing interns with agencies, SAF considers your language skills, past experiences, access to transportation, specific agency needs, number of available placements, and geography. Selected applicants must accept a position as an *Into the Fields* intern before the matching process begins. Many placements offer opportunities for direct contact with farmworkers, while some focus more on working with community members. Applicants may not choose or suggest the organization they want to work with (it would be very difficult for us to try to place everyone with their choice). Also, SAF cannot promise that you will be placed with your first choice of agencies. Keep in mind that placements vary from year to year. Placements may include all or some of the duties listed below.

Legal Assistance Programs provide workers resources to free legal assistance and advice. There are approximately 5 positions available in this category. Past sponsor organizations include: Legal Aid of NC-Farmworker Unit, SC Legal Services, NC Justice Center, Southern Migrant Legal Services. Interns may:

- Discuss issues such as wage concerns, pesticide hazards, and housing conditions with workers
- Meet with farmworkers in their homes about their legal rights
- Document and report violations
- Research farm labor legislative issues, assist with pending cases, and prepare memos

Health Agencies address the health needs of farmworkers. There are approximately 13 positions available in this category. Past sponsor organizations include: Piedmont Health Services, Farmworker Health Program-Watauga Medical Center, SC Primary Health Care. Interns may:

- Conduct health assessments
- Conduct health education workshops about pesticide safety, Green Tobacco Sickness, heat stress, and other occupational health concerns specific to agriculture
- Interpret medical terminology between workers & health providers
- Visit workers at their homes
- Interns will **not** perform clinical duties

Education & Policy positions advocate for improved educational opportunities for Latino, migrant and immigrant youth. There are approximately 4 positions available in this category. Past sponsor organizations include: East Coast Migrant Head Start Project, El Pueblo, Henderson Co. Schools-Migrant Education Program. Interns may:

- Document Latino and migrant youth's educational dreams and obstacles
- Educate community members about immigration & migrant education issues
- Coordinate meetings/trainings with state and local school systems, Community Colleges, and Latino groups
- Monitor related state and federal legislation
- Conduct outreach to migrant and Latino youth and their families
- Educate migrant and Latino youth and their families about services available and college access
- Survey migrant families
- Teach English as a Second Language

Community-Based Organization positions emphasize broader, community-based solutions to support agriculture & food processing workers. There are approximately 5 positions available in this category. Past sponsor organizations include: National Farm Worker Ministry, Western NC Workers Center, Telamon Corporation. Interns may:

- Organize community actions and events (i.e., boycotts & petitions)
- Conduct presentations to community members or workers
- Recruit community members to support farmworker-led campaigns
- Provide direct services to farmworkers

Union Organizing positions support agriculture & food processing workers as they initiate change in their workplaces. There are approximately 2 positions available in this category. Past sponsor organizations include: United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Farm Labor Organizing Committee, Western NC Workers' Center. Interns may:

- Give presentations to educate & recruit workers
- Meet with workers about their legal rights
- Conduct home outreach with workers