



31 Titus Mill Road
Pennington, NJ 08534
Tel: 609-737-3735
Fax: 609-737-3075

sbmwa@thewatershed.org
www.thewatershed.org

Media Release

Contact: Jeff Hoagland, Education Director
jhoagland@thewatershed.org
Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association www.thewatershed.org
609-737-3735 (tel) 609-737-3075 (fax)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 15, 2006

Environmental Education Interns begin 9-Month Program at the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association recently awarded environmental education internships to Tamara Gotsch of Newton, NJ and Denise Etienne of Arima, Trinidad. The nine-month internships run from March 6 to December 8.

Tamara Gotsch graduated from Cook College of Rutgers University in May 2005 with a B.S. in ecology and natural resources and a New Jersey teaching certificate in the biological sciences. She has previously worked as backcountry assistant in the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve in Alaska, led instructional sessions for undergraduates in principles of applied ecology, served as farm intern at the largest student-run CSA (community supported agriculture) farm in the US, worked as a laboratory technician in the Department of Ecology, and interpreter/naturalist at Stokes State Forest

Ms. Gotsch has loved being outdoors exploring ever since she can remember. As she got older, she knew she wanted to share her experience of nature and the environment with others as a teacher-naturalist. She also enjoys drawing and painting in her spare time.

“This internship is the perfect fit for me,” says Ms. Gotsch. “My ultimate goal is to teach in a non-traditional setting such as a park, reserve or nature center.”

Ms. Etienne has worked as a naturalist guide and then a supervisor naturalist guide at the Asa Wright Center and Lodge in Arima Valley in Trinidad for the past 11 years. During that time she has participated in international internship programs at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Kempton, PA; Brukner Nature Center, Troy, OH; and Allwoods Audubon Nature Center and Farm, Dayton, OH; she also represented the Asa Wright Nature Center at the British Bird Watching Fair in Leicestershire, England, in 2003 and 2004.

Ms. Etienne first became interested in environmental education when she studied biology in high school and developed a love for and interest in nature. Her home island boasts an impressive diversity of species matched by few other areas in Tropical America. In the Arima Valley alone, over 170 species of birds have been recorded.

What does she hope to learn from internship at the Watershed?

“I would like to get more training in working with children and school groups, and developing programs and exhibits for these audiences,” says Ms. Etienne.

Students awarded the internships explore various trailside teaching techniques, gain solo and team teaching experience, strengthen their naturalist skills, complete two independent projects, and perform onsite assessments of other nature centers and environmental education programs. Other Watershed Association activities that enrich the internship experience include learning about the activities of other departments such as watershed management and membership and development.

“We are indebted to The J. Seward Johnson Charitable Trust for helping to fund this program, which allows us not only to further the education of our interns but also helps us deliver experiential environmental education to hundreds of children from surrounding school districts,” said Executive Director Jim Waltman. “Without the support of these interns, we would not be able to reach as many children as we do.”

Launched in 1994, The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association internship program is one of the only environmental education internship in New Jersey offering valuable “hands-on” experience for students planning a career in the field. Past interns have gone on to positions at other educational facilities including the Somerset County Environmental Education Center, The Raptor Trust, Delaware Bay Schooner Project, The Pennington School and Johnson Park Elementary School in Princeton. Former intern Rick Lear is now Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association Naturalist on the education staff.

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to preserving water quality and the natural environment in the 265-square mile area of central New Jersey drained by Stony Brook and the Millstone River. Headquartered in the J. Seward Johnson, Sr. Education Center, the Watershed Association preserves open space by maintaining an 860-acre nature reserve in Pennington; provides year-round environmental education programs for children and adults; and works with towns, businesses, and landowners to improve land use decisions that impact the environment. The Watershed Reserve contains 14 miles of hiking trails, a nature center and gift shop, and the Honey Brook Organic Farm—an independently operated, community supported farm. Visitors are welcome from dawn to dusk all year long. For more information, call 609-737-3735 or visit us online at www.thewatershed.org.

###