



**For Immediate Release**

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## **The Bay Foundation Hits the 10,000 Volunteer Hour Mark, Helps Transform Students into Active Scientists**

(Los Angeles, CA – September 3, 2014) The Bay Foundation Internship Program, launched in 2009, has proudly passed the 10,000-volunteer-hour mark with the help of more than 150 interns and volunteers. As a reflection of The Bay Foundation’s mission to protect and restore our coastal environment, the program provides valuable learning experiences to students and volunteers, with many working scores of hours this summer.

The internship program is run by the Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies, established as a joint program of The Bay Foundation and the Frank R. Seaver College of Science and Engineering at Loyola Marymount University. Students from more than 50 universities around the world have participated. Their unique experience includes hands-on field work—on land and underwater—alongside of project leaders and other interns. Volunteers have used their experience here to further their academic and professional careers (several have become TBF employees) or simply to pursue a personal passion.

“I was drawn to The Bay Foundation because of the wide range of projects I would get to work on, from fieldwork to lab experiments to data entry and research,” says Remy Landon, a student volunteer. “I was very excited to get the opportunity to work directly with the Ballona Wetlands, an integral part of the environment in my own neighborhood.” Remy grew up near LMU, but is earning her Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences at Emory U. in Georgia.

Interns work with staff in the Wetland Monitoring, Habitat Restoration, Rainwater Harvesting, Boater Education, and Clean Bay Restaurant Certification programs, and at community outreach events such as Farmers’ Markets, Nature Tours, and more. They can participate in a wide range of scientific survey and restoration procedures including water quality and vegetation sampling, invertebrate identification, kelp surveys, the application of regional protocols, and the development of scientific skills in a laboratory setting.

LMU Environmental Sciences major and videographer Vincent Graves will be making outreach videos that connect the public to nature. He says, “My knowledge of wildlife species, vegetation, and technical terms for various assessments throughout the wetlands has increased. I have now learned to apply this knowledge in a practical manner by creating a video series to get the general public involved as well.”

Binh Vuong, a recent Occidental College graduate who won a coveted, paid marine internship for the summer, and who hopes to apply his knowledge back home in Vietnam after graduate school, states, "The comprehensive nature of TBF means a wide range of resources is available, and when I actively take advantage of those, the internship truly becomes uniquely diverse and fun!" He expands, "I scuba dive near Palos Verdes to survey the health of kelp forests by estimating the interweaving urchin populations. In the office, I enter and interpret these field data. I also collect and dissect urchins for their gonads!" He also participates in aerial surveys and wetlands research.

To date, the Intern program counts:

- Over 10,400 hours
- 161 internship students and volunteers
- 54 participating Universities (including local, state, national, and international)
- 59 completed undergraduate and graduate units
- 40 job and graduate school recommendations

"An internship is an essential component of our students' learning experience here at LMU. I'm a firm believer in learn-by-doing, the key attraction of TBF internships," states John Dorsey, LMU Professor, Department of Civil Engineering & Environmental Science. "With TBF staff, our students learn many practical skills, they experience how theory is applied to practice, and most importantly, they often use their critical thinking skills to tackle problems encountered in the lab and field -- i.e. real life situations. All this provides them invaluable experience to pursue their post-graduate goals."

"We are so proud of our internship program and all its successes," shares Karina Johnston, TBF's Director of Watershed Programs and architect of the intern program. "We wouldn't be able to complete our projects without the hard work and dedication of our students and volunteers. And we've had the pleasure of hiring some former interns!"

To volunteer or intern with The Bay Foundation, visit [www.santamonicabay.org](http://www.santamonicabay.org) and click on "Get Involved / Volunteer."

### **About The Bay Foundation (TBF)**

The TBF is a 501(c) 3 non-profit environmental group founded in 1990 to restore and enhance the Santa Monica Bay (from the LA-Ventura county line to the Palos Verdes Peninsula) and local coastal waters. The Foundation is the non-profit partner of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, raising and expending funds for research, education, planning, cleanup efforts and other priorities identified in the Commission's *Santa Monica Bay Restoration Plan*. As advocates for the Bay, TBF works collaboratively with a broad group of stakeholders, including government agencies, industry, environmental groups, and scientists, to implement innovative policies and projects that clean up the waterways, create green spaces and natural habitats in the Los Angeles region. The TBF conducts research and mentors student intern and volunteers through its Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies at Loyola Marymount University. This collaboration connects research across disciplines, and provides an opportunity for student participation and engagement. ([www.santamonicabay.org](http://www.santamonicabay.org))

### **About Loyola Marymount University and The LMU Center for Urban Resilience**

Located between the Pacific Ocean and downtown Los Angeles, Loyola Marymount University is a comprehensive university offering 60 major programs, 36 master's degrees and a doctoral degree in education from four colleges, two schools and Loyola Law School. Founded in 1911, LMU is ranked third in "Best Regional Universities/West" by U.S. News & World Report. LMU is the largest Jesuit Catholic university for undergraduates on the West Coast with more than 5,900 undergraduate students and more than 3,000 graduate and law students. For more LMU news and events [please click HERE](#).

The Center for Urban Resilience is an interdisciplinary research and community program with core efforts in urban ecology research, public understanding of science and restorative justice.

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