

Molly McCormick

Internship Support Proposal

In this proposal, I am seeking funding for a student internship with the Carolinas Clean Air Coalition. This internship will last for fourteen weeks of the Davidson College spring term of 2007, January through May. The CCAC internship and ACS funds will replace the time and the salary from my work-study position at Davidson College.

The mission of the Carolinas Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) is to restore clean and safe air to the Charlotte and Mecklenburg County region through community outreach, coalition building, and public policy advocacy. The CCAC works through a 15-county region of North and South Carolina; eleven counties in North Carolina and four counties in South Carolina. Please visit <http://www.clean-air-coalition.org/> for further information about the organization.

My primary goal in this internship will be to develop the CCAC's ongoing *Clear the Air for the Kids!* Campaign, the goal of which is to raise awareness concerning the effects of car and bus idling collectively on local children's health. Children are especially vulnerable to pollution from idling cars and buses because their lungs are still developing, and children breathe at exceptionally rapid rates, to the extent that much of their body mass is air. To help attain the goals of the *Clear the Air for the Kids!* campaign, I will represent CCAC to elementary and middle schools throughout Mecklenburg County. I will help to monitor no-idle bus policies through maintaining regular contacts with area schools to make sure the CCAC's guidelines are put in place. In addition, to fulfill the *Clear the Air for the Kids!* Campaign's goals, I will promote the retrofitting of school buses through personal communication with school staff and parents. I will correspond with area school administrations and board members of the PTA. I will share information with these groups concerning the *Clear the Air for Kids!* Campaign, including "no-idling cards" and related educational resources.

In addition to directly helping to coordinate the *Clear the Air for the Kids!* campaign, I will work with CCAC's executive director to conduct air quality-flag raising events at the schools in Mecklenburg County that the CCAC and the local Asthma coalition find to have increased risk of higher than average asthma rates. At several of these schools, we will also advocate the long-term project of developing ozone gardens. This activity will involve the students, themselves. We will instruct the students at the schools we visit in the planting of special plants that demonstrate sensitivity to ozone levels. I will work with the CCAC to teach these students how to monitor the effects of air quality on these plants. The CCAC has elaborated this topic in a seven-minute video that we will distribute, along with instructional materials on air quality that teachers can include in their curriculums, to the schools we visit. The ozone-sensitive plants, the video, and the other materials will leave a lasting impression on the schools.

Later in the semester, beginning in late March, my internship's focus will turn to two finite projects. First, Central Piedmont Community College has asked CCAC to serve as a partner in its first-annual clean air service-learning project, which is scheduled to take place throughout the week of April 16-20, 2007. Highlights of the week will include a one-day event, consisting of a keynote speaker, a public film viewing (hopefully *An Inconvenient Truth*) with an accompanying discussion, as well as a student service project in the local community, such as a bike or bus riding day. As an intern for

the CCAC, I will help to plan and coordinate this week of events for Central Piedmont Community College. I plan to consider implementing at CPCC successful pro-environmental events Davidson College has performed during my two years here. Davidson annually declares the month of April as "Earth Month" on its own campus. I will work with the Davidson EAC to coordinate pro-environmental events between the two colleges, initiating a sense of greater community and effectively broadening awareness among undergraduate students of air quality issues.

My final project during my internship with the CCAC will involve the CCAC's celebration of its fifth anniversary during the National Air Quality and National Asthma Awareness month this coming May, 2007. This year, the CCAC will partner with different area organizations to promote a month of clean air events, which will culminate with the Regional Air Issues Seminar. During the month of April, I will help to prepare the events attributed to the themes of this month. Appropriately, this seminar will highlight the successes of the Carolinas Clean Air Coalition over the past year, directly including the events I will help organize.

The success of each of these projects I will conduct during my internship with the CCAC will be determined by many factors. At the end of the semester, I will work with CCAC to determine how many schools we have reached, in what capacity these schools have demonstrated comprehension of our proposals, and to what extent these schools are manifesting the values we shared with them. We will do so through personal surveys of all of the schools with which we have worked, inquiring to what extent teachers have kept up with the ozone-sensitive plants as well as to what extent schools have implemented the no-idling bus policies. Throughout the semester, I plan to exchange information with Dr. Cindy Hauser, the Davidson College ACS Faculty Fellow, who is currently researching air quality around schools. She and Davidson College Biology professor Dr. Chris Paradise, who currently serves as a CCAC Board member, have each agreed to act as faculty mentors for this internship. CCAC also plans to use Dr. Hauser's findings in its own data supporting the CCAC's causes. Regarding the April project with Central Piedmont Community College, the extent of partnership with the CCAC and with Davidson College as well as the breadth of CPCC student participation during environmental events that week will determine CCAC's success in raising awareness concerning air quality issues on that campus. Finally, the extent of coordination with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Transportation System and with the Asthma Coalition, as well as community participation and support during the anniversary month's events will determine the May Anniversary project's success.

On November 14, 2006, I attended the Carolinas Clean Air Coalition Fall Regional Air Issues Seminar in Matthews, North Carolina. There, I learned the relevance of the causes I will be fighting for next semester, and I also met the CCAC executive board members with whom I will work next semester. I also heard sobering presentations from diverse fields and organizations, including business, medicine, the Cleveland County Asthma Coalition, and the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, which together taught me more about air quality issues and demonstrated the sundry groups of people air quality affects.

As an intern for the CCAC, I will utilize the Mecklenburg bus system to commute to the Uptown Charlotte office at least one day per week. The CCAC has offered to pay for my bus pass. I will perform the rest of the work required for the internship either

visiting area schools or from my residence at Davidson College. I request that ACS grant \$100 per week for the fourteen week internship, totaling \$1400 for the entire internship. This amount will cover the funds I am required to earn to maintain my financial aid package for tuition at Davidson College.

At Davidson College, I am a sophomore Political Science major. This year, I serve as one of Davidson's two ACS environmental interns. For the past two years at Davidson, I have served on the Executive Board of the Environmental Action Coalition; this year, I serve specifically as Secretary. This past semester, together in these positions with both ACS and the Davidson College EAC, I have helped to coordinate the following events on and off campus: a guest speaker, Dr. James Kahn from Washington and Lee University came to campus to meet with students and faculty, eat with them, and lecture on his experience concerning sustainability in the Amazon; in September, EAC helped to organize the college's participation in a 5-K run raise money for the Davidson Lands Conservancy; Davidson College's annual Waste Audit, this year held in October, determines to what extent Davidson is improving in the extent to which it recycles; I encouraged EAC members to organize a successful public voicing of environmental concerns to the Student Presidential Search Committee, as our current president is retiring this year; and, a competition among dormitories to save energy, entitled, "Do It in the Dark" to last through the month of November.

During our most recent meetings, the Davidson College Environmental Action Coalition has declared the week of January 22-26, 2007 to be Green Week. We are currently planning separate activities for each day of the week, including a Green Ribbon Day (we will distribute green ribbons to students to wear for the day in honor of their respect for the environment), a viewing of *An Inconvenient Truth*, three guests from Furman who have coordinated Furman's ongoing initiatives to become environmentally friendly, as well as the student head of the environmental group on Furman's campus, and finally an Environmental Forum scheduled to take place in January, 2007. The forum will take the format of a town meeting. The panel we are inviting will include, among others: the two faculty members from Furman University; Davidson College faculty who teach environmentally-themed courses; members from the Student Government Association; an official from the Davidson College Physical Plant; and members of the Student Presidential Search Committee.

The internship with the CCAC is ideal for me at this point because I plan to work in the philanthropic sector post-undergraduate, initially with the Peace Corps. I would like to use the internship with the CCAC to learn how to effectively manage non-profits and set and attain reasonable goals in the non-profit sector. I will also explore what specific study in graduate school would help me to most appropriately attain my goals. The CCAC internship is appropriate for my future because I am interested in researching school bus retrofit programs, as well as no-idling policies in South Carolina. In addition, eventually, I plan to enter the field of education. Thus, appropriately, this internship with the CCAC will enable me to interact with children in an educational atmosphere. Spending time in my sophomore year of undergraduate school in the real world achieving goals for which I'm passionate will be most valuable for me both now and in the future.