

PVS Member Intern Candidates Want to Know...

Q: *What should I expect to get from the Member Internship experience?*

A: As a PVS Member Intern, you can count on being challenged by an exciting new experience that is enjoyable, even fun, and offers you many opportunities to contribute to a determined effort to enable American voters to make better informed decisions. The unspoiled beauty and recreation opportunities of our Montana wilderness setting will inspire you, and you will enjoy your interactions with your fellow Member and Student Interns and Project Staff. You will work hard, play as hard as you wish, and gain great satisfaction knowing that you are helping to make a significant contribution to strengthen American democracy.

Q: *I'm mature and well-educated, with broad experiences and accomplishments. Will I be overqualified to serve as a Member Intern?*

A: A great deal of the hard, repetitive, often monotonous and boring work that is essential to locate, check, recheck, and recheck again, the information voters need is not likely to require all of your knowledge and skills. To that extent, it may be said that you are overqualified to do the work of a Member Intern. As a Member Intern, you will, however, know that your contributions of careful, meticulous, hard work will help ensure that the information PVS makes available is invaluable because of its accuracy and completeness.

Q: *Will I have time to enjoy the recreation opportunities at the Great Divide Ranch and surrounding country?*

A: Yes, you certainly will. Interns and Staff generally work from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. You are free to pursue your interests after 5:00 PM on weekdays and all weekend long. The Great Divide Ranch provides a wide range of opportunities and equipment for recreation, sports, and games.

Q: *What expenses will I incur while staying at the Great Divide Ranch?*

A: You are responsible for the cost of your transportation, as well as a \$45 per week per person charge for meals. Also, the rooms do not include private phones, so long distance phone service is only available by using a calling card on the central lodge phone. Please bring a calling card because most cell phones do not work at the ranch. There is no charge for lodging.

Q: *Why doesn't your Member Intern Application form ask for my age?*

A: Your ability and willingness to be an outstanding Member Intern is not related to your age, gender, or ethnic background. One of the most enjoyable aspects of your experience as a Member Intern will be that you will share it with a diverse group of young and old, both women and men, from many different parts of the country. At the ranch, lodging accommodations are arranged by gender, or for couples if possible.

Q: *What is the weather likely to be at the Great Divide Ranch, and what clothing should I bring?*

A: The Great Divide Ranch is located at an elevation of 6,000 feet in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness, a few miles from the Continental Divide in southwestern Montana. The monthly average high and low temperature range at the Ranch is approximately (all temperatures are °F) :

January high 26° - low 11°

February high 33° - low 17°

March high 43° - low 22°

April high 54° - low 29°

May high 63° - low 36°

June high 71° - low 43°

July high 81° - low 47°

August high 80° - low 46°

September high 68° - low 37°

October high 54° - low 29°

November high 37° - low 21°

December high 28° - low 14°

The weather frequently varies 30° F or more each day, so a wide range of clothing may be needed, with “layering” recommended. The cold winter temperatures require heavy clothing, including a warm winter coat and insulated boots. While the average winter temperature is only slightly less than freezing, a few days with temperatures of 20-30° below zero each year is not uncommon. There is a lot of snow and ice on the ground throughout the coldest winter months.

Q: *Do I need to cram two or more weeks worth of clothing into my suitcase?*

A: No, we have free washers and dryers here for you to use at your convenience. We also provide sheets, blankets, and towels so there's no need to load down your luggage with those.

Q: *In addition to PVS office duties, will I be asked to do other things to help at the Ranch?*

A: All Interns and Project Staff are expected to contribute, each in their own way, with their individual capabilities, to the Project “community” and maintenance of the facilities. You may volunteer to help clean, work in the kitchen, or a wide variety of chores that help maintain the Ranch and our community. As with the Project office work, we are all expected to do our assigned part and offer to chip in whenever additional help is needed.

Q: *I'm traveling with my spouse, companion, or friend. Will we have a room to ourselves?*

A: Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee private rooms for anyone. We will do our best, especially if you are traveling with someone, but some weeks are simply too crowded to accommodate such requests.

Q: *I hold strong personal political views. When you ask me to “leave my personal politics at the door,” do you expect me to give up my views?*

A: We all have our personal political views and preferences. In our Project work, however, we pledge to treat all political viewpoints and candidates equally and fairly so that the information PVS distributes will continue to be reliable, unbiased, and non-partisan.

Q: *For health reasons, I am unable to work or live in environments where individuals are smoking. Will this be a problem at the Ranch?*

A: The Project offices, lodging rooms, dining area, and common spaces are all smoke-free areas. Those who smoke may do so only outside.

Q: *What kind of accommodations and facilities are available at the Ranch? Are things pretty rustic?*

A: No, you won't need a sleeping bag and a tent (unless, of course, you want to go for overnight hikes into the surrounding Wilderness). Sleeping accommodations at the Ranch are equivalent to a modern motel, with private, modern bathrooms. Meals prepared in a modern kitchen are served “family style” in the dining area of the “rustic” Lodge. The Lodge also houses a small library (which, because it is enclosed, is the only indoor smoking area at the Ranch), a satellite TV and VCR room with a video collection and large screen television, and a recreation area complete with fireplace, a pool table and a foosball table, and a selection of board and card games and puzzles.

The Ranch and surrounding area offer an amazing array of recreation, sports, and games opportunities year-round. Winter sports include downhill and cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and ice fishing. In warmer months, there are short and long hikes to spectacular views of snow-capped mountains on the Continental Divide, fishing (oh, the fishing is to die for—the Ranch has its own private, stocked fish pond, is situated on beautiful Moose Lake, and the world-famous trout fly fishing Rock Creek runs right through the Ranch property), canoeing, row boating, swimming, and other aquatic sports. Occasionally, those staying at the Ranch will have the opportunity to go horseback riding. It is most likely that you will find several activities that you will thoroughly enjoy.