• Seek out responsibility in your position, regardless of how intimidating it may seem at first.

• Complete whatever preparation you're assigned, such as reading background information, so that you will be well-informed. Then you can ask insightful questions and make meaningful suggestions on daily processes.

• Always accept any extra projects or learning opportunities offered. Working with different people and being willing to try new things enhances the experience.

• Go above and beyond your normal effort to learn.

• Ask for more challenging work if you're ready for it.

• Always carry a camera with you, because you never know when it might come in handy!

• Communicate

• Be proactive and take initiative, but make sure to keep constant, clear lines of communication with your Project Advisor and Mentor.

• Take part in the culture of your internship location; attend festivals, concerts, and other events in the community.

• Meet the challenge

This summer is no time to be ordinary. Last year's Fellows found that taking that extra step let them make their marks with their internship projects.

• Don't forget to explore the area and travel a little if you have the free time.

• Enjoy yourself

Despite that particular adventure, Megan didn’t lose any of her passion for field work, and, more broadly, ecology and the environment. "I spent a lot of time outdoors growing up, observing and interacting with nature, and learning how we can all protect it and use resources wisely," she said. "I had always wanted to work in the environmental field, so working at the EPA for a summer was actually a bit of a dream coming true."

Megan said that being a GRO Fellow gave her the opportunity to explore areas of environmental work with which she had limited experience or knowledge. As a result, she said, "I came to appreciate the challenges and demands of environmental regulation and more fully comprehend the role of biassessment in environmental protection. In addition, while I had considered myself 'environmentally conscious' prior to my internship, personally working in degraded habitats heightened my consciousness to a greater degree."

Megan graduated from The College of New Rochelle (CNR) in May 2007 with a B.S. in biology and environmental studies, and a minor in chemistry. CNR was founded in 1904 as the first Catholic college for women in New York State; its main campus is located in New Rochelle, NY, 16 miles north of New York City. At CNR, Megan was a member of the Honors Program and received the President's Award upon graduation, the highest honor for a CNR School of Arts and Sciences graduate.

Megan is currently in the final year of a Master's program in ecology at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) in Syracuse, NY.

(continued on next page)
“I entered grad school interested in avian responses to landscape variability, with ideas inspired by my work at the EPA,” Megan explained. “My goal was to encompass landscape and population ecology, focusing on the dynamics of ruffed grouse and wild turkey in NY in response to habitat features.”

Megan’s choice of SUNY-ESF came about due to a chance encounter during her GRO internship. One day, she accompanied a USGS biologist to band a ruffed grouse in a meadow in NY. She explained how she had used a GPS radio transponder attached to the bird, an experience that led to a deeper interest in the ecology of the area. “My grad work encompasses landscape and population variability, with ideas solidified by my work at the EPA,” Megan said. “I also worked closely with my mentor, gaining insight into his work in the field and its implications. I left my internship with an expanded skill set and broader perspective on my own goals, as well as valuable real-world experience in the field.”

Megan urges GRO Fellows to interact with EPA staff and other interns and to take advantage of the many learning opportunities they will find during their summers at EPA, including volunteering on other projects. “I found that even brief conversations or small contributions to another’s work can make lasting impressions,” she said. Megan suggests asking coworkers and supervisors about graduate school, what they recommend about their jobs, and their take on current environmental issues. You’ll find that getting others’ perspectives can fundamentally influence how you view your own goals, she noted. But most of all, Megan said, “The GRO summer experience is an incredible opportunity—make the most of it and enjoy it!”

Megan location individual birds within the habitat she is studying via radiotracking. Here, she uses a receiver with an antenna to pick up a radio signal from a small transmitter placed on a bird. Megan location individual birds within the habitat she is studying via radiotracking. Here, she uses a receiver with an antenna to pick up a radio signal from a small transmitter placed on a bird.

Updates from 2007-2008 GRO Fellows

During his 2008 internship with EPA Region 4, Atlanta, GA, GRO Fellow Jay Feitshans discussed his project, the Hitchcock Woods Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Project, with Doug Raybold, the Executive Director of Hitchcock Woods. In the bed of the Sand River near Alcan, AK.

GRO Internship Projects Summer 2009

Charisse Carter
Analyses of BMP Implementation in the Conservative River Watershed
Atlanta, GA

Betsy Huyser
Sustainable Reuse and Alternative Energy at Superfund Sites in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska
Seattle, WA

Nathan Jones
WaterShed Assessment
Denver, CO

Todd Massari
Restoration Narragansett, RI

Joshua Pierce
Sciences of Marine Ctenophora
New England Aquatic Habitat Survey under Water Underwater Sonar Mapping
Narragansett, RI

Lan Tran
His Evaluation of Aquatic Communities to Assess Biological Conditions in Rivers, Streams and Lakes
Edison, NJ

Joseph Hooke
Finishing his senior year at the University of North Texas, Joseph has decided to go to medical school following his graduation. He is currently weighing the best college for his career, and is deciding between the University of Texas Health Science Center and the University of Southern Mississippi. He has found that being in an environmental health focused program can open up many opportunities, and is looking forward to getting deeper into public health policy. Joseph is seeking another internship this summer, and has applied for one in environmental health with the Centers for Disease Health, and for one with the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. He has found that being in an environmental degree program opens up many opportunities, and is looking forward to getting deeper into public health policy. Joe is seeking another internship this summer, and has applied for one in environmental health with the Centers for Disease Health, and for one with the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. He has found that being in an environmental degree program opens up many opportunities, and is looking forward to getting deeper into public health policy. Joe is seeking another internship this summer, and has applied for one in environmental health with the Centers for Disease Health, and for one with the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. He has found that being in an environmental degree program opens up many opportunities, and is looking forward to getting deeper into public health policy. Joe is seeking another internship this summer, and has applied for one in environmental health with the Centers for Disease Health, and for one with the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. He has found that being in an environmental degree program opens up many opportunities, and is looking forward to getting deeper into public health policy. Joe is seeking another internship this summer, and has applied for one in environmental health with the Centers for Disease Health, and for one with the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. He has found that being in an environmental degree program opens up many opportunities, and is looking forward to getting deeper into public health policy.

Experience EPA

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