



THE OUR WORLD-UNDERWATER SCHOLARSHIP SOCIETY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM Summer 2010

DAN RESEARCH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Website: <http://www.diversalertnetwork.org>

What is the DAN Research Internship Program?

The DAN Research Internship Program provides experiences that motivate young people toward careers in medicine, diving or dive-related fields. Interns applicants can be students from colleges, universities and medical schools. The program runs primarily from mid May (training at DAN) through August and starts at DAN headquarters where interns receive an orientation to dive-related science and research. Part of the DAN Research Internship Program is designed to expand *Project Dive Exploration* data collection. Alternatively, interns may be assigned to assist in scientific and medical research at DAN headquarters.

After training, interns are assigned to field or lab studies for two to four months. Interns may work at various dive locations, at research facilities affiliated with DAN or at DAN headquarters in Durham, North Carolina.

What is Project Dive Exploration?

Project Dive Exploration (PDE) is a prospective, observational study of safety in recreational diving. The objectives of PDE are to establish the risk of injury in recreational diving; study the effects of age, sex, and dive style on the risk of decompression illness; and investigate the relationship between pre-existing health conditions. PDE has collected over 70,000 dive profiles and publishes this information in DAN's Annual Review of Recreational Scuba Diving Injuries and Fatalities, Report on Decompression Illness (DCI), Diving Fatalities, and Project Dive Exploration. To understand risk, one must know about safe dives as well, and as DCI risk is determined by depth-time exposure, knowledge of the dive profiles is also necessary. Cooperation with the dive computer manufacturers Cochran, Suunto, Dive Rite, Uwatec and Sensus has made this possible. DAN developed Data Acquisition Software (DAS) to collect dive profiles and information about the divers, dives and medical outcome following injuries.

DAN is committed to training and mentoring the interns to make them competent in data collection and to give them an experience in diving medical research that will help to guide their future careers. They will receive training in diving physiology and research methodology and will have access at DAN to people who are actively conducting diving safety research. Because of their training and interactions with the diving public for *PDE*

data collection, they will be able to communicate the importance of diving research for improving the safety of recreational diving.

Objectives

The goals of the internship are to: (a) collect dive profile data for Project Dive Exploration; (b) provide the Interns with an experience in diving safety research; (c) educate the diving public about DAN; and (d) educate the diving public about *PDE*. DAN will work the intern's educational institution to ensure that guidelines for academic credit are met through the internship program.

Training and Schedule for Project Dive Exploration

The three-month Internship will be organized into three sections:

1. Academic and Professional Training Course at DAN (late May)

This one-week course will include lectures on diving physiology, research methodology, and diving injury management. In addition, the Interns will receive training and certification in Aquatic CPR and first aid, and oxygen provision. Interns will be trained as *PDE* Field Research Coordinators (FRCs) to collect dive data using dive computers and DAS.

2. Field Data Collection (June – August)

After initial training, Interns will be placed with dive retailers that have volunteered as host facilities. Interns may remain in residence for 2 to 2.5 months, depending on the specific location, and collect *PDE* data. Daily activities will include briefing divers about *PDE*, completing daily interviews with divers, entering dive profile and diver history data into the computer, downloading dive computers, spending time on the dive boats, diving, and interacting with divers. Interns will submit dive profile data to DAN weekly. Interns would be expected to work five out of seven days per week collecting *PDE* data.

3. Debriefing at DAN (August)

Upon completion of the data collection period, Interns are required to conduct a debriefing session with DAN Research. This can be done in person at DAN or as a phone interview. Interns are required to finish data entry and organization, turn in equipment and debrief with DAN Research. Interns will also be expected to complete a written review of their experience. The intention of the debrief is to improve the internship program for the future. The written review may be used in full or part in any DAN publications including Alert Diver, the DAN website, research newsletters and press releases. In some cases, Interns may participate in a data analysis project.

Eligibility Criteria

- Is scuba certification required? No, but it is preferred
- Other skill sets:
 - Marine Biology Any type of biology or pre-medicine
 - Other Good communication and writing skills are preferred

Budget

The internship grant of \$3,000 will help to cover room, board and related expenses. The intern will be given a monthly stipend to cover these incurred costs. All expenses must be approved expenses or have the written approval of the Internship Coordinator. Any expenses that are unapproved or are above the grant amount will be the responsibility of the intern.

Written Report

Upon completion of the Internship, the recipient will be required to complete a written review of his or her experience.