Paleontological Experience for Undergraduates: Petrified Forest National Park, Summer 2018

The Virginia Tech Paleobiology Research Group is looking for 3 undergraduate students to participate in a field expedition in search of early dinosaurs and other reptiles in Upper Triassic strata (~215 million years old) in Petrified Forest National Park (mid-May to early June, 2018). These paid positions include: one summer scholar at Petrified Forest (10 weeks) and two scholars that will be part of a two-week expedition to the park. All three scholars will interact in early summer and will continue their research into the Fall 2018 semester.

This is a fieldwork-based position in which participants will be part of a science team within a national park. In addition, participants will help prepare fossils and will participate in public outreach on site and at Virginia Tech. This is an excellent opportunity for students to gain experience in basic geological interpretation, field exploration, collection techniques, fossil preparation, and an introduction to solving paleontological problems.

Applicants should have a background in geoscience or biology, but other sciences will be considered. Additionally, the applicant must not be graduating in 2018 (including December).

Completed applications must be sent by April 1st at noon EDT to Dr. Sterling Nesbitt (sjn2104@vt.edu) and Dr. Michelle Stocker (stockerm@vt.edu). Applications can also be obtained from Dr. Sterling Nesbitt (see application below).
Paleontological Experience for Undergraduates: Petrified Forest National Park, Summer 2018

The Virginia Tech Paleobiology Research Group is looking for three undergraduate students to participate in a field expedition in search of early dinosaurs and other reptiles in Upper Triassic strata (~215 million years old) in Petrified Forest National Park (PEFO) this summer. We are looking for one scholar to spend 10 weeks of the summer at PEFO and two scholars to accompany a team from VT (faculty and graduate students) to the park from mid-May to early June. All three scholars will interact during this time and will continue their projects into the Fall 2018 semester (paid). This is a paid position (Summer scholar: housing and travel expenses paid, salary provided; two field scholars: field and travel expenses paid, salary provided; all three will be awarded a scholarship for the Fall 2018 semester to continue research).

This is a fieldwork-based position in which participants will be part of a science team within a national park. In addition, participants will help prepare fossils and will participate in public outreach on site and at Virginia Tech. This is an excellent opportunity for students to gain experience in basic geological interpretation, field exploration, collection techniques, fossil preparation, and an introduction to solving paleontological problems. Applicants should have a background in geoscience or biology, but other sciences will be considered. Additionally, the applicant must not be graduating in 2018 (including December).

Note: Work is primarily performed outdoors, often under adverse weather conditions including extreme heat and daily thunderstorms. Participants may be required to hike long distances in rough terrain in a hot, dry climate sometimes carrying heavy loads up to 60 pounds. Work requires long periods of bending, stooping, walking, climbing, and working in cramped positions. We may be tent camping in a campground with running water, electricity, some internet, and full bathrooms when at PEFO.

Requirements:
- Available for fieldwork for 10 weeks in summer starting in mid-May (summer scholar) and for 2-3 weeks mid-May to early June (field scholars), 2018 (must commit to entire time frame)
- Able/willing to camp and have some camping supplies (headlamp, hiking boots, backpack, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and possibly a personal tent)
- Completely fill out the application form
- Prepare for the trip by meeting with the trip leaders in April

Expectations:
- Be part of a team and contribute to all aspects of the field trip, including quarry activities, food preparation and cleanup, and lab work
- Keep a field notebook recording daily activities, including data on specimens collected and prepared, and other paleontologically-relevant data
- Upon returning to Blacksburg, write a short account of your experience, with photos, for the VT Research quarterly publication
- Continue a chosen field project into the fall semester or beyond
- Live tweeting from the field for @VTechmeetsPaleo
- Participate in outreach activities at the park (Citizen Science program) and at Virginia Tech (VT Science Festival, Unwrapping Party, Geofair)
Full applications are due by April 1st at noon. No late applications will be considered.
Email your completed application to Dr. Sterling Nesbitt at sjn2104@vt.edu and Dr. Michelle Stocker at stockerm@vt.edu in the format: [last name]_paleo_app_2018

PEFO Undergraduate Field Scholar Application DUE: April 1, 2018 Noon EDT

Personal information
First Name: _____________________________________________________________
Last Name: _____________________________________________________________
Email Address: __________________________________________________________
Major/Area of Concentration: _____________________________________________
Academic level as of April 1, 2018: _______________________________________

Provide a statement (in the space provided) of why you are interested in fieldwork in vertebrate paleontology, and some background information that tells us how you became interested in evolutionary biology.

Briefly list all courses you have taken that are relevant to this application and the grade you received:
What are your career goals?

Additionally, we request **one letter of recommendation** (cannot be from a family member) to be sent directly to sjn2104@vt.edu and stockerm@vt.edu by April 1st.