

**For Immediate Release:**

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Contact: Emily Barlett
Telephone: 225-219-3967**LDEQ and LWC Join Forces in an LDEQ Internship Program**

BATON ROUGE – Today, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) in partnership with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) announced their joint efforts to launch the inauguration of the Louisiana Environmental Ambassadors Program (LEAP) internship program for undergraduate and graduates students statewide and nationally.



Students in LDEQ's LEAP internship program can get hands-on real world experience.

"LEAP builds the foundation for students to translate classroom theory into actionable environmental solutions." said **LDEQ Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto**. "With the vast natural resources and abundant industries present in Louisiana, this program provides a pathway to attract the best and brightest into the field of environmental stewardship so that they may go on to the important work of protecting Louisiana's second-to-none environment."

"We are thrilled to partner with the LDEQ to launch the LEAP internship program for college students throughout Louisiana," **LWC Secretary Susana Schowen** said. "This program will allow students to gain credible knowledge and resources outside the classroom in various professions, with hopes of the students choosing to enter the workforce in that field. The LWC will continue to work with the LDEQ to help make this program successful for our students in Louisiana."

LEAP is a comprehensive 8-10 week program that will begin June 3, 2024. Students will have the opportunity to work in the various divisions of LDEQ: Surveillance, Permitting, Emergency Response, Enforcement, Remediation, Air Quality and Assessment, Audit Services, Communications, and Legal. Students with backgrounds in legal, communications, accounting, biology, and engineering are encouraged to apply. This program is cognizant of barriers and competing interests for students seeking summer opportunities; therefore, LEAP provides students either the option to obtain course credit, by working with their institution, or paid internship.

Now more than ever, Louisiana needs dedicated environmental professionals, and this program provides a real world application at a leading state agency. LDEQ is adopting a pathway to enable interns who successfully complete LEAP to apply their time towards the probationary period if employed by LDEQ. This internship will broaden the experience and exposure of students through facility tours of regulated industry and special guest speakers including professors, industry leaders, agency professionals, nonprofit organizations, and others.

"Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) fully supports the LEAP internship program as it aligns perfectly with our commitment to providing our students with educational and workforce training opportunities," **BRCC Chancellor Dr. Willie E. Smith** said. "The partnership between LDEQ and LWC will create pathways for our students to explore meaningful careers that will contribute to Louisiana's environmental solutions."



*LWC Secretary Susana Schowen and
LDEQ Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto at
LWC headquarters*

“The Louisiana Environmental Ambassador Program (LEAP) is a transformative, innovative and visionary initiative. Students from Southern University and other state higher education institutions will greatly benefit from the partnership between the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and the Louisiana Workforce Commission,” **Southern University Chancellor John Pierre** said.

To qualify, students must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher and school enrollment verification is required. Course credit or compensation is provided by and subject to approval by the student’s institution. Deadline to apply is May 15, 2024.

To learn more about LEAP or how to apply online, please visit our website at www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/LEAP.

If you have any questions about LEAP, please reach out to our team at leap@la.gov

