

**For Immediate Release:**

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Contact: LDEQ Communications**Phone:** 225-219-3964***LEAP: LDEQ's Comprehensive Internship Open for Applications***

LDEQ Baton Rouge, LA — The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) is excited to announce the commencement of the second year of its highly successful Louisiana Environmental Ambassador Program (LEAP). This comprehensive and competitive internship program is designed for undergraduate and graduate students eager to gain hands-on experience in environmental regulatory processes and governmental operations.

The LEAP program provides students with invaluable opportunities, including tackling real-world environmental projects, attending weekly speaker seminars featuring professionals in the field, and participating in facility tours to witness regulations in action. Last year, LEAP welcomed 12 talented interns, one of whom contributed significantly to the solid waste capacity report for the State of Louisiana.

Eligibility for the LEAP program includes:

- Enrollment as a full-time student in an accredited undergraduate or graduate institution.
- Part-time enrollment in the last two semesters necessary to complete graduation requirements.
- Pursuit of a degree that directly relates to the division in which they will be interning (e.g., BS/MS in Biology for OES/Permits, BA in Accounting for Fiscal Services).

In its inaugural year, LEAP attracted a diverse group of interns, including undergraduates, MBA students, and Ph.D. candidates, all of whom are offered paid internships or course credit. Additionally, participants have the option to count their time with LEAP toward the probationary period should they choose to continue employment with LDEQ. The success of last year's program is evident, with over 30% of participants opting to continue their journey with LDEQ.

“It is imperative to retain great talent to stay here in Louisiana, and with LEAP, we are doing that with students gaining real-world experiences that solidified their interest in the environmental field,” **said Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto.**

“This internship expands students understanding of their current studies in environmental fields and other diverse fields of accounting, communications, and legal,” **said Tomeka Prioleau, one of LEAP program managers.** “The seminars and field trips provided diverse perspectives on environmental management from professionals across Louisiana.”

As LEAP gears up for another year, LDEQ is committed to fostering talent that will shape the future of Louisiana's environmental landscape. Interested students are encouraged to apply and be part of this transformative experience.

For more information about the Louisiana Environmental Ambassador Program, visit www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/LEAP

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