Duke Homestead: Who We Are & What We Do

Duke Homestead State Historic Site and Museum encompasses the historic home, farm, and factory buildings of Washington Duke and his family as they lived on the property from 1852 - 1874 as well as a visitor's center and museum which covers the history of tobacco farming and the tobacco industry in North Carolina and the United States.

Before the Civil War, Washington Duke and his family lived on the property as small farmers. It was not until after the war that he and his children began a business processing smoking tobacco in a small log structure on the homestead. This business, first named W. Duke and Sons, eventually grew to become the American Tobacco Company. Many of the profits were used to invest in land and develop fast growing southern industries, but much of the profits were also used for humanitarian causes. In 1924, Duke's son Buck created the Duke Endowment, a 40 million dollar gift which made local Trinity College into Duke University.

Today, Duke Homestead interprets the Dukes' lives as small farmers on the homestead before the Civil War as well as their lives beginning and growing their tobacco business on the property during Reconstruction. Our interns and volunteers play a vital role in our ability to offer visitors an accurate and engaging experience and in preserving an important part of Durham’s history.

Duke Homestead offers internships for academic credit to college and graduate students who are interested in gaining experience in the history and museum field. Interns need not have a background in history or museum studies, though it is considered a plus for some of the internships. Past interns have gone on to major in Anthropology, Sociology, Education, Engineering, History, Museum Studies, Parks and Recreation, Art History, and many others.

In this packet you will find information on the available internships and information on how to apply. We offer internships for the fall, spring, and summer seasons. All internships are unpaid and can be completed for course credit. Students must complete the minimum number of hours and fulfill any other requirements held by their school or program in order to receive school credit for the internship.
Digital Collections: Duke Homestead is looking for interns to be a part of our on-going project to digitize and catalog Duke Homestead’s collection of slides. After completing the scanning of the slides, the intern will be cataloging them using our collections software, Proficio. The intern will also be working to digitize our collection of audio and film recordings to be made available online for public consumption.

Collections Management: Duke Homestead is looking for interns to work with the Historic Sites Curator, Martha Jackson, to inventory and catalog the artifacts in the Duke Homestead Collection. Under her supervision, interns will learn about proper care, handling, and storage of artifacts as well as how to use and record artifacts with our collections software, Proficio.

Visitor’s Services: Duke Homestead is looking for interns who will be responsible for visitor’s services, which include giving our 45 minute guided tour, greeting and orienting visitors as they enter the visitor’s center, and helping to conduct our educational programming for visiting school groups. In the fall and spring interns must commit to participating in at least one event put on by Duke Homestead. In the summer, interns must commit to participating in at least two of the events put on by Duke Homestead. Interns will also have the opportunity to work on on-going interpretation projects such as costume making and creating interactive activities for visitors.

Junior Interpreter Education: Duke Homestead is looking for interns who will lead our Junior Interpreter program. Interns will be responsible for planning and leading junior interpreter workshops. The workshops will teach our Junior Interpreters historic interpretation skills (such as hand-sewing, historic cooking, weaving, ink making, etc) and allow them to practice interacting with our visitors. In the summer, these workshops take place during weekdays, and in the fall they are held on Saturdays.

Grounds Maintenance: Duke Homestead is looking for interns to assist the site Maintenance Mechanic in grounds maintenance and site improvement projects. The intern will assist in the care of the site chickens, preservation of historic structures, and planning and care of the kitchen garden and tobacco field.

Language Intern: Duke Homestead is looking for interns who will be able to translate our self-guided tour and other site materials into one or more of the following languages: Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Korean, or Japanese.
How to Apply

If you are interested in interning with Duke Homestead, please submit a cover letter specifying the internship and detailing your interest along with a resume/CV.

Send a digital copy to:

duke@ncdcr.gov

Please write “Internship Application for (student’s name)” in the subject line.

OR mail your application materials to:

Duke Homestead Internship
Duke Homestead State Historic Site
2828 Duke Homestead Road.
Durham, North Carolina 27705

If you have any questions regarding the application process or the internships themselves, please contact Julia Rogers at Duke Homestead.

Via phone: 919-477-5498
(Tuesday - Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

Via email: Julia.Rogers@ncdcr.gov

Duke Homestead offers internships for the Fall, Spring, and Summer. Specific start and end dates can be adapted to the individual intern.

Fall: September - December
Spring: February - May
Summer: May - August

Duke Homestead State Historic Site and Museum is part of the North Carolina Department of Culture Resources in the Division of State Historic Sites.