



The Governor's School of New Jersey

2010 GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL ON THE ENVIRONMENT at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

July 11th - July 25th, 2010

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The management of our environment has assumed critical and strategic importance in today's world, given the accelerating pace of change, the power of technology, the scope of scientific inquiry, the direction of demography, and the competition for natural resources. Confronting today's environmental challenge is crucial to improving the quality of life in New Jersey and, indeed, the nation and the world.

The Governor's School on the Environment is designed to bring together a diverse group of talented high school rising seniors from throughout the state for an intensive learning experience designed to explore the relationship of human beings to their environment and the impact of humans and the environment on each other. Students will be challenged to discover and evaluate competing interests affecting critical environmental issues of our day and to seek their personal roles in creating positive environmental change. The program is **not** limited to students whose academic interests and strengths are in the sciences. The program will explore aspects of the social, economic, and political environment as well as the natural environment. Therefore, students who have interests in any of these areas are encouraged to apply.

The Governor's School learning experience is intended:

1. to increase students' practical knowledge of our natural environment and its scientific study so as to bolster their confidence, capacity, and interest in taking ownership of the fragile ecosystems that sustain all life;
2. to enhance students' awareness of participatory public responsibility for the quality of life through intensive collegial participation in public concerns related to the environment;
3. to encourage students to aspire to community leadership;
4. to provide students with direct exposure to local natural ecosystems through hikes, kayak & canoe trips, and overnight primitive camping experiences.

To accomplish these goals the Governor's School will offer to students an array of "hands-on" activities within a collaborative setting. These include:

- inquiry into classic and contemporary thought about the relationship of humanity and nature in space and time;
- application of state-of-the-art scientific and technological information to contemporary and pending environmental concerns;
- examination of the competing claims of economic development interests and environmentalists about public policy questions;
- field experiences in environmental concerns such as land use planning, preserving bio-diversity, energy conservation and resource management;
- student research which integrates ecological concerns, private action, public health, community organizing, and public decision-making with scientific knowledge.

ELIGIBILITY

In order to be considered for the Governor's School on the Environment, a student must meet the following criteria:

- The student must be a New Jersey resident and be a high school **junior** during the 2009-2010 school year.
- The student must have a very strong interest in the environment and be committed to the acquisition of knowledge and the pursuit of opportunities in that field.
- The student must be willing to live on campus for the **duration of the program**. Saturdays and Sundays make up part of the program; there will be no weekend leaves of absence. Students will not be permitted to leave the program early.
- The applicant must be one of the top students in his or her school. The student should have primarily "A" grades in honors classes and outstanding scores on standardized achievement tests. Students who have demonstrated very strong interests in the environment outside the classroom can also be strong candidates for the Governor's School in spite of weaker standardized test scores. Competitive candidates often rank in the top 5% of their class.

The Governor's School encourages all qualified applicants regardless of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, physical handicap, political activity, or private conduct.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Governor's School program is structured around the intensive course, field experience and the evening and afternoon programs:

1. Daily intensive courses focus on areas such as Pinelands ecology and policy, environmental protection and economic development, geographic information systems, community design, pollution and public health, the quality of urban life, air and water pollution, marine science, biodiversity, alternate energy sources, environmental ethics, and global environmental issues. Each course approaches its topic in the context of New Jersey while considering local, national, and global dimensions also. Students concentrate on one course and develop individual or group research plans within the context of their course. Frequent field trips provide the student with abundant first-hand experiences in multiple habitats as well as research opportunities. **In addition to other physically demanding activities, scholars should be prepared for the rigors of hiking, backpacking, and/or canoeing, for extended periods in the Pine Barrens as well as overnight primitive camping.**

2. The evening and afternoon programs further enriches the learning environment with debates, lectures, simulations, and workshops on a range of personal, state, and global environmental issues.

The College Environment

An informal atmosphere of community life involves students, residence assistants, and (some) faculty living full time on campus, working and learning together. Opportunities for sports, recreation, and social events are scheduled regularly.

Experienced, sensitive residence assistants supervise dorm life and attend to the personal needs of each participant. Experienced college and high school faculty teach courses and workshops and lead seminars. The faculty has been chosen on the basis of their love of teaching, their proven accomplishments, sensitivity to young people, and their respect for nature. The learning atmosphere emphasizes freedom from routine academic structures and it stresses the connections between the cognitive, creative, and ethical dimensions of learning.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

To apply for a New Jersey Governor's School program, a student must be nominated by his or her high school. If the high school's **junior class** has 325 students or fewer, only one student may be nominated for each Governor's School program. If the high school's junior class has between 326 and 650 students, two students may be nominated for each Governor's School program. Three students may be nominated only if the junior class comprises more than 650 students.

Students chosen by their high school's nominating committee are termed "nominees." The nominee is responsible for completing all parts of the application, ensuring that all necessary supplements (including transcripts, copies of PSAT scores, and the principal's signature) are in order, and verifying that the application has been submitted by the high school before the deadline. The application must be mailed by the high school, not the applicant. In a change from past years, applications must be sent **directly to Richard Stockton College** at the following address. **The deadline for submitting an application is January 15th, 2010.**

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
NJ Governor's School on the Environment
P.O. Box 195
Pomona, NJ 08240

Please note that incomplete applications (missing any required document) will not receive full consideration. At Richard Stockton College, a panel of professors, researchers, and educators will review nominees' applications. Using the criteria below, this panel chooses the "Governor's Scholars" and invites those students to attend the Governor's School. **The committee's decision will be emailed to the student after school hours on April 5th, 2010.** The admissions process is very competitive; in recent years, 15% - 25% of nominees have been offered admission.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection committee for the Governor's School on the Environment aims to craft a student body made up of New Jersey's most talented and enthusiastic students. Our student body should be diverse in myriad ways. Our students should possess a great range of gifts in technology, the arts, humanities, and the sciences. Overall, the committee chooses the students who will best take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Governor's School.

Decisions are based on the following qualitative and quantitative criteria:

- The student's high school transcript and class rank, which should demonstrate that the student is at or near the top of his or her class.
- The student's essays and reasons for wanting to attend the Governor's School.
- Letters of recommendation.
- The student's extracurricular activities and community service pursuits.
- The student's academic and extracurricular honors and accomplishments.
- The student's standardized test scores (PSAT preferred).

We expect Governor's Scholars to exhibit great creativity and a unique passion for the nature of our Governor's School. We look for students who have shown a strong interest in the environment, as well as an open mind and the ability to work on a team to explore these interests further. We want to know what a student hopes to gain from the Governor's School experience, as well as what he or she hopes to contribute to the program. In general, students who have demonstrated a fervent interest in the environment both inside and outside of the classroom will be most successful in the admissions process. A student with perfect standardized test scores but only superficial interest in the nature of the school is not a competitive candidate. Of course, our scholars are not only devoted to the environment, but *also* have strong academic credentials.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mr. Kevin Wolbach, Program Director

Web: <http://www.stockton.edu/govschool> (*Environment only*)
<http://www.nj.gov/govschool/> (*all programs*)

Email: gschool@stockton.edu

Postal Mail: Governor's School on the Environment
The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
P.O. Box 195
Pomona, NJ 08240

Telephone: (609) 652-4924

Fax: (609) 626-5515

OTHER SELECTION GUIDELINES

NOMINEES WILL BE EVALUATED BY THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Is the application complete?
- Does the student's application demonstrate interest in the environment, leadership potential, and a drive to achieve?
- Does the student's writing sample demonstrate good writing skills and creativity? Has the student taken a risk to write other than what he or she thinks the selection committees want to hear?
- Does the student's writing sample illustrate the student's interest in the unique nature of the school?
- Does this student seem willing to learn and does the student believe in him or herself, yet is humble?
- Do the student's extracurricular involvements reflect a range and depth of interests, leadership potential, and/or community involvements?
- Do the letters of recommendation and the high school nomination committee's letter of support demonstrate why this student is atypical and uniquely suited for the school?
- Does this student exhibit many of the traits of talented students?

SUGGESTIONS FOR RECOMMENDERS

CHARACTERISTICS OF TALENTED STUDENTS WHO MAY BENEFIT FROM THE GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL

Applicant: Provide those writing letters of recommendation with a copy of this page, as well as the description of the Governor's School on the Environment.

Dear Recommender:

We appreciate your help to the selection committees so they may get to know this applicant better. We rely on you to tell us what this student is like as a learner and collaborator. Be as frank as you can and please give us some examples that will help bring your comments to life. We would particularly like you to consider their 1) environmental interest, 2) their leadership potential, 3) their drive to achieve and 4) the following characteristics of talented students; in writing your letter of recommendation. We have observed that students with such characteristics have been able to take great advantage of the learning experience at the Governor's School on the Environment.

Generally speaking, the talented student who benefits from this program:

1. possesses curiosity, is a keen observer, thrives on complexity, gets involved;
2. shows strong intellectual ability in functions such as abstracting, conceptualizing, and reasoning;
3. sees new relationships, is able to generate many alternatives;
4. develops ideas that are original and uncommon, yet adaptive to the requirements of a particular problem or task;
5. is tolerant of ambiguity;
6. teams rapidly, easily and efficiently; retains and uses information;
7. can learn quickly and in sizeable chunks, both in formal and experiential situations;
8. is fluent in written or verbal expression or in the arts (this is often characterized by advanced vocabulary and abstract reasoning);
9. has a sense of humor;
10. is inquisitive, asks provocative questions, has unusual ability to evaluate and criticize ideas;
11. is very likely to have the courage to support his or her convictions in spite of open criticism, and may dissent from authority at times;
12. is perceptually open to subtle cues in his or her environment;
13. is sensitive to others and adaptive to new situations;
14. demonstrates leadership ability in his or her peer group; has an ability to organize people and tasks, and to motivate others;
15. has a pronounced ability to concentrate for long periods of time and is a producer;
16. derives considerable pleasure from intellectual and artistic attainments;
17. shows a university of interests;
18. enjoys the freedom to learn and create according to his or her own style;
19. is very likely to have strong moral and social concerns; and
20. enjoys the outdoors and observing natural environments.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Review the program information and descriptions in this packet. We also highly recommend that you and your family visit our web site at www.stockton.edu/govschool in order to see a detailed description of previous years' programs.

Step 2: Complete the "Cover Sheet" page, which is the sixth page of this packet. This "Cover Sheet" should be the **first page of your submitted application**.

Step 3: As the second page of your application, include the "Check List," which is the seventh page of this packet. Portions of this check list must be completed by your **school principal**.

Step 4: Attach a list of your extracurricular activities, in order of their importance to you. You are welcome to include clubs at school, community service activities, artistic or athletic programs, jobs you've held, individual pursuits, and anything else that you do. Be sure to include leadership roles you hold in any of these activities. Along with this list, please note any honors (academic or extracurricular) that you have received.

Step 5: Include answers to each of the following essay prompts. We recommend writing 1 page, single spaced, for each essay question. The short response can be answered in two paragraphs.

Essay 1) Include a brief autobiographical sketch that includes, for example, your personal background and aspirations. Be sure to describe what makes you unique.

Essay 2) Include an essay clarifying your interest in attending a Governor's School that focuses on environmental issues.

Short Response 1) Describe your most meaningful extracurricular or community activity.

Step 6: Include recommendation letters from two people not related to you. At least one of these letters must come from a high school teacher. The second letter may come from another teacher, a club advisor, or a mentor. The student should provide these two people with the selection criteria and guidelines, as well as, the suggestions for recommenders.

Step 7: Verify that your high school will include your transcript (including junior year grades) and 2009 PSAT scores. If you did not take the PSAT in 2009, include your 2008 scores. If you have yet to take the PSAT, include scores from another standardized test.

Step 8: If your junior year grades or junior year PSAT scores are not available at the time you submit your application, please forward them to the selection committee at the Richard Stockton College as soon as they become available.

Step 9: Once your application is complete, it is your responsibility to verify that the application has been mailed by your high school to the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey by the postmark date of January 15, 2010.

DATES TO REMEMBER

By **January 15th, 2010**, completed applications must be submitted directly to the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

On **April 5th, 2010**, you will receive an email announcing the selection committee's decision.

From **July 11th to July 25th, 2010**, the Governor's School will be in session on the campus of the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.



The Governor's School of New Jersey

2010 GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL ON THE ENVIRONMENT at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

Application Cover Sheet

Student's Name: (first) _____ (last) _____

Street Address _____

City/Town _____ Zip _____

State Legislative District _____ County _____ Birth Date _____

Student's Email Address _____

Home Phone # _____ Student's Cell Phone # _____

Gender: Male ___ Female ___ Race/National Origin (Optional) _____

Mother's/Guardian's Name: (first) _____ (last) _____

Father's/Guardian's Name: (first) _____ (last) _____

Mother's Email Address _____

Father's Email Address _____

School Name: _____

School Address _____ Town _____ Zip _____

School Guidance Counselor _____

Guidance Counselor's Email Address _____

Guidance Department Phone # _____

Name of School District _____ Public ___ Private/Parochial ___

IMPORTANT DATES

January 15th, 2010
Applications are due.

April 5th, 2010
Admissions decisions are announced by email.

July 11th – July 25th, 2010
The Governor's School on the Environment is in session.

Additional Information:

In addition to other physically demanding activities, scholars should be prepared for the rigors of hiking, backpacking, boating and/or canoeing, for extended periods in the Pine Barrens as well as overnight primitive camping.

STUDENT AND PARENT CERTIFICATION

- I am a resident of New Jersey.
- I expect to be a high school senior in the 2010-2011 school year.
- I am willing and able to attend the entire Governor's School session.

Signature of Student

Date

This is to certify that I give my permission for the student named above to participate in the Governor's School on the Environment at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, in full-time residence. I understand rigors of this program as mentioned above in the Additional Information

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

APPLICATION CHECK LIST

(Please include as “Page 2” of your application)

Nominee's Checklist:

- I've included the “Cover Sheet” as Page 1 of my application.
- I've included this checklist as Page 2 of my application.
- I've attached a list of my extracurricular activities and my extracurricular and academic honors.
- I've included responses to all requested essay prompts as per the guidelines on Page 5.
- I've attached two letters of recommendation as per the guidelines on Page 5.
- My school has included my high school transcript and copies of my PSAT (or other standardized test) scores.
- I am a resident of the state of New Jersey and will complete my junior year of high school in June 2010.
- I have kept a copy of my application for my own records. If my current PSAT scores or transcript were not included, I will forward them to the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey as soon as they become available.

I have reviewed the checklist above, and have included all necessary and appropriate application materials. All of the information submitted as part of my application is factual and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

Name of Nominee (please print)

Student's Signature

Principal's Checklist:

- The nominee is one of our top students and has expressed a strong interest in the Governor's School on the Environment.
- Our school has nominated the correct number of students. (If the junior class has 1 – 325 students, 1 nominee is permitted. If there are 326 – 650 students, 2 nominees are permitted. If there are more than 650 juniors, 3 nominees are permitted.)
- The nominee has included his or her application “Cover Sheet,” this checklist, a list of activities and honors, essay responses, and two letters of recommendation.
- I have included the nominee's high school transcript and copies of his or her PSAT (or other standardized test) scores.
 - The transcript includes grades from the first marking period of the 2009-2010 school year.
 - The student will forward his or her junior year grades to the Governor's School once they become available.
 - I have included the student's 2009 PSAT scores. (Preferred)
 - The student did not take the PSAT in 2009. I have included his/her 2008 PSAT scores.
 - The student has not taken the PSAT. I have included other standardized test scores.
- The nominee is a conscientious and eager student, and ranks near the top of his/her class.

Nominee's high school GPA _____ Number of Students in Junior Class _____ Nominee's Class Rank _____
- The nominee's standardized test scores are among the best in our school.

PSAT Scores: Verbal _____ Math _____ Writing _____ Test Date: 2008 / 2009 (circle)
- This student has not been nominated to more than one Governor's School.
- The nominating high school has kept a copy of this application on file.

I have reviewed the checklist above, and have included all necessary and appropriate application materials. All of the information submitted as part of this application is factual and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

Name of Principal (please print)

Principal's Signature