2024 BLBB CHARITABLE Internship Program at Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle
Operated by Bucks County Historical Society

Doylestown, Bucks County, PA

The BLBB CHARITABLE Internship program at the Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle allows a dynamic group of students with varied interests, strengths, and goals to immerse themselves in an outstanding educational and professional environment.

Interns learn and work directly with museum professionals in a team-based, collaborative environment that offers experiential learning, mentoring benefits, and leadership building skills.

An integral part of the internship is the weekly Enrichment Program, where interns spend time with museum colleagues from across departments as well as community professionals, and learn about museum careers, experiences and responsibilities.

Background:

Located in Doylestown, Bucks County, PA, the Mercer Museum and Fonthill Castle are historic castles celebrating the legacy of Henry Chapman Mercer (1856-1930), American archaeologist, anthropologist, ceramicist and scholar. Both sites are operated by the Bucks County Historical Society.

The Mercer Museum, one of Bucks County’s premier cultural attractions and a Smithsonian affiliate, features both local and national seasonal exhibitions as well as a core museum collection of over 50,000 pre-Industrial tools. This permanent collection offers visitors a unique window into pre-Industrial America through sixty different crafts and trades, and is one of the world’s most comprehensive portraits of American material culture. The museum also features a research library that is a center for local history related to Bucks County and the surrounding region, with its roots dating back to the founding of the Bucks County Historical Society in 1880.

Fonthill Castle was built between 1908-1912, and was the home of Henry Chapman Mercer. Mercer built Fonthill Castle as his home and as a showplace for his collection of tiles and prints. The castle serves as an early example of reinforced concrete and features forty-four rooms, over two hundred windows, and eighteen fireplaces. Fonthill Castle’s interior features Mercer’s renowned, hand crafted ceramic tiles designed at the height of the Arts and Crafts movement.
**Internship Timeline:** The internship takes place from Monday, June 3, 2024 until Friday, August 9, 2024, and is a full-time position at 40 hours per week.

**Intern Compensation:** $3,000, disbursed in three equal installments throughout the summer (June 14, July 12, and August 9, 2024), plus a housing stipend of $300 for non-local applicants payable on June 14, 2024.

**Application Requirements:**

Please select your internship area(s) of interest, in order of preference, and list your preference order in your email and cover letter. The three possible areas of interest are:

1. Education & Community Services
2. Archives
3. Exhibitions

**All intern applications must be saved as a single PDF** and should contain the following:

- A letter of interest / cover letter
- A résumé
- A list of 2-3 professional references

The single PDF should be sent with the email subject line “2024 Summer Internship + [Insert Your Last Name]” to info@mercermuseum.org.

**Deadline:** Thursday, February 1, 2024 at 5pm

Applicants should possess the following qualifications (as well as any other qualifications mentioned in the individual intern categories below):

- Graduate studies students preferred
- Undergraduate degree or expected degree in history, material culture, education, humanities, museum studies, museum education, anthropology or related field (preferred)
- Demonstrated interest/experience in museums, exhibitions, programs, production, education, and/or history
- Strong writing, research, organizational, interpersonal, communication and computer skills
- Ability to work both independently and in groups
- Genuine interest in working with the public
- Helpful, positive attitude for other duties as assigned
- Sense of humor greatly appreciated!
**Education & Community Services Interns**

The position of Education & Community Services Intern specializes in facilitating innovative, informal learning opportunities for museum guests of all ages at the Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle.

The intern will participate in the production and execution of educational and community programs to promote formal and informal learning with the Department of Community Services team. The internship includes opportunities to work with a wide array of guests in varied capacities such as special community programs, such as the Fonthill Castle Fourth of July and Shakespeare at Fonthill Castle.

Each Education & Community Services Intern will be trained to facilitate hands-on educational programs, activities and demonstrations for guests, including our legacy summer program.

The 2024 Mercer Wizarding Academy will be one of the highlights of this internship. This museum summer program connects history, science, literature, and magic in a one-of-a-kind castle setting for ages 7-12.

Interns take leadership roles in managing the program and the youth attendees through “classes” such as Potions, Care of Magical Creatures, Herbology, Quidditch, and more.

Education & Community Services Interns will also be assigned an individual project based on organizational needs and the skills and background experience of the individual.

This internship is ideal for graduate-level or upper class undergraduate students contemplating a career in museum education, non-profit program development, teaching, and/or youth development.
Archives Intern – Collections Processing

The 2024 Archives Intern will assist in processing two manuscript collections, recently acquired by the Mercer Museum Research Library. The first collection is the Anna Paist papers. This collection contains items related to Anna Paist and her Montessori School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, est. 1914 and the Montessori Children’s Village and Camp, est. 1916 in Furlong, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Collection items include photographs, published items, personal writings, an oversized family tree, pamphlets, and financial documents. The second collection consists of Bucks County Planning Commission records. This collection contains materials related to different County Commissioner initiatives such as agricultural preservation, the new Justice House, and the Bucks County Open Spaces program. Items include brochures, published materials, newspaper clippings, and bound items.

This project will be supervised by the Bucks County Historical Society’s Director of Library & Archives. The Archives Intern will process the two collections according to a predetermined processing plan. Processing includes rehousing, inventorying, labeling, and creating a finding aid. This finding aid will then be input into the archives collection management system, ArchivEra. The project will require the intern to learn the Library’s collections database, and adhere to contemporary archival best practices.

Additionally the 2024 Archives Intern will be responsible for digitizing and item level cataloging recent acquisitions to the Bucks County Historical Society postcard collection. This project will include training on BCHS digitization standards and in-house equipment.

The ideal candidate is a student pursuing an advanced degree in library and archival management, or related field. In addition to processing and re-housing, work may also involve climbing ladders, lifting 50 lb. boxes or other objects, cleaning shelves, and other physically demanding tasks.

In May of 2024, the Mercer Museum will open a major new exhibition, *The Doan Gang: Outlaws of the Revolution*. The exhibition explores the history and legacy of a network of Revolutionary War-era Tory bandits, who maintained their loyalty to Great Britain and sought to sabotage the cause of American independence as they committed thefts and robberies throughout southeastern Pennsylvania and beyond. The exhibition will extend through the close of 2026, and will serve as the Mercer Museum’s contribution to “America250,” marking and reflecting on the semiquincentennial of our nation’s founding.

Once the exhibition opens, we wish to implement a series of evaluative studies and surveys to measure its cognitive and affective impact on visitors, and how it may influence their perceptions of the Revolutionary period. Given the exhibition’s planned two and half year duration, it may be possible to make some changes to the exhibition’s content and messaging – changes suggested by the results of initial summative evaluation. Some changes to the exhibition are already planned and anticipated, including the addition of certain video elements (which may be available to the museum only after the opening), and the changing out of certain fragile artifacts and documents that must only be on view for shorter periods of time.

The 2024 Curatorial Intern will be tasked with developing and implementing the evaluative surveys and instruments for the Doan Gang exhibition, as well as assisting in any change-outs and updates to content during the summer months. Help with the maintenance of interactive elements and the monitoring of visitor questions (submitted to exhibition curators via a special email address) will also be features of the internship. The Curatorial Intern will work closely with the Mercer Museum’s Curator of Exhibitions and its VP of Collections, as well as with other members of the curatorial team, to develop evaluation strategies and implement surveys. The ideal candidate is a student pursuing an advanced degree in Museum Studies or Exhibition Design, and preferably with some experience in museum evaluation and visitor relations.