

Navigating a federal career in public lands



Ricardo Escobar

Lead Interpretive Ranger – Rocky Mountain National Park



Ricardo Escobar (he/him/his)

B.S. and M.S. Geology

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Rocky Mountain National Park

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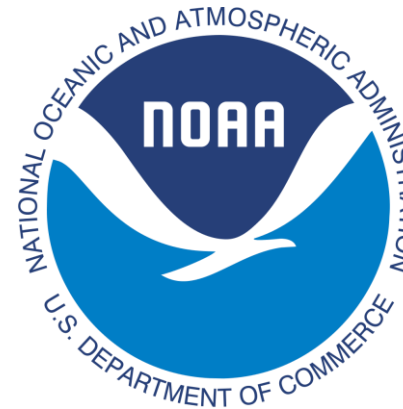
What We'll Cover

- What are public lands?
- Intro to basic federal job jargon
- USAJOBS.gov
- Federal resume – why it's so important!
- Internships
- Strategies for navigating the process
- Questions



What are public lands?

- Land managed by central or local governments
 - City
 - County
 - State
 - **Federal**
- Held in trust for the people
- Department of the Interior (DOI)



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

U.S. LAND TOTAL

2.27 BILLION ACRES

640 MILLION ACRES ARE
FEDERALLY MANAGED

FOUR MAJOR LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

MANAGING 614 MILLION ACRES
(26.6% OF U.S.)

BLM
248 MILLION ACRES (10.5%)

USFS
193 MILLION ACRES (8.5%)

USFWS
89 MILLION ACRES (3.9%)

NPS
84 MILLION ACRES (3.7%)

STATE
& LOCAL

199 MILLION ACRES
(8.7% OF U.S.)



Public Lands Near You

- City – Whatcom Falls (City of Bellingham)
- County – Chuckanut Mountain Park (Whatcom County)
- State – Larrabee State Park (Washington State)
- **Federal – Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (U.S. Forest Service)**



Why work for federal public lands?

- Work outdoors
- Great medical/retirement benefits
- Make scientific information accessible
- Live in beautiful places
- Varied career opportunities
- Make outdoors more accessible



Estephany Campos – Park Ranger
Coconino National Forest – northern AZ

Federal Career Jargon

- Three main types of employment
 - Seasonal (<1 year)
 - Term (1 year; NTE 4 years)
 - Permanent
- Pathways - student positions; may have non-competitive hiring authority
- NTE: Not To Exceed
- FTE: Full Time Equivalent (2,080 hours)
- 1039: max 1,039 work hours allowed
- OPM: Office of Personnel Management



Federal Career Jargon

GS-1350-13

Pay Plan

GS: General Schedule

“white collar”

paid annual salary

WG/WL/WS:

Federal Wage System

“blue collar”

paid hourly wage

Job Series

Type of job

1350: Geologist

0025: Park ranger

1311: Physical science
technician

4361: Rubber equipment repair

Grade

Annual salary or

hourly wage

1-15

Locality adjustment added to
base amount

What is USAJOBS.gov?

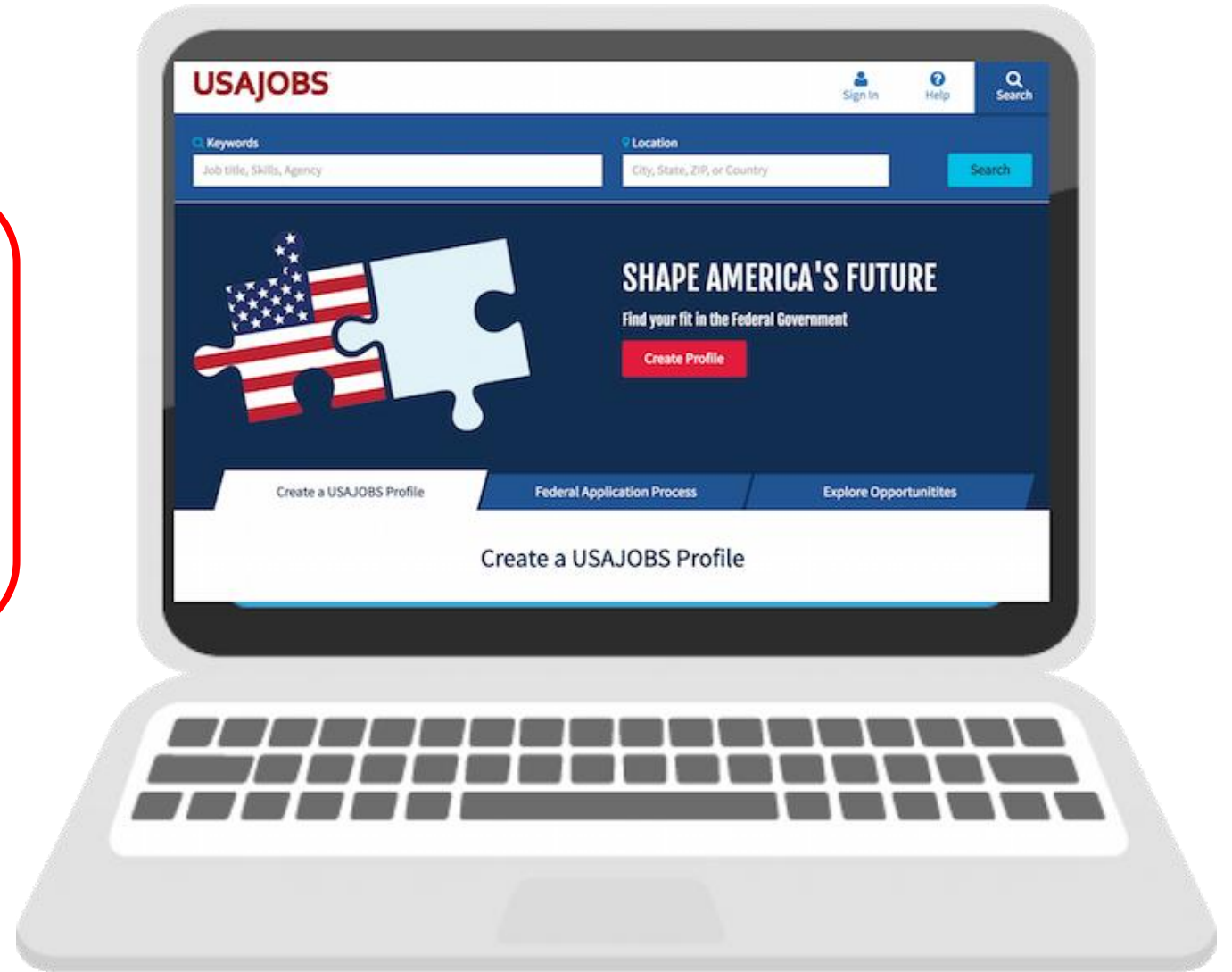
- U.S. Government job opportunities listing website
- Connects job seekers with federal employment opportunities
- Used by Human Resources (HR) to rate and rank applicants
- Visit www.usajobs.gov





Application Process

- Create account with login.gov
- Create USAJOBS profile
- Search for jobs
- Review job announcement
- Prepare your application
- Submit application to agency
- Agency reviews application
- Interview
- Agency selects candidate
- Job offer



Create your account



USAJOBS is using login.gov to allow you to sign in to your account safely and securely.

Email address

Password

Show password

Sign in

Create an account

[Sign in with your government employee ID](#)

[Back to USAJOBS](#)

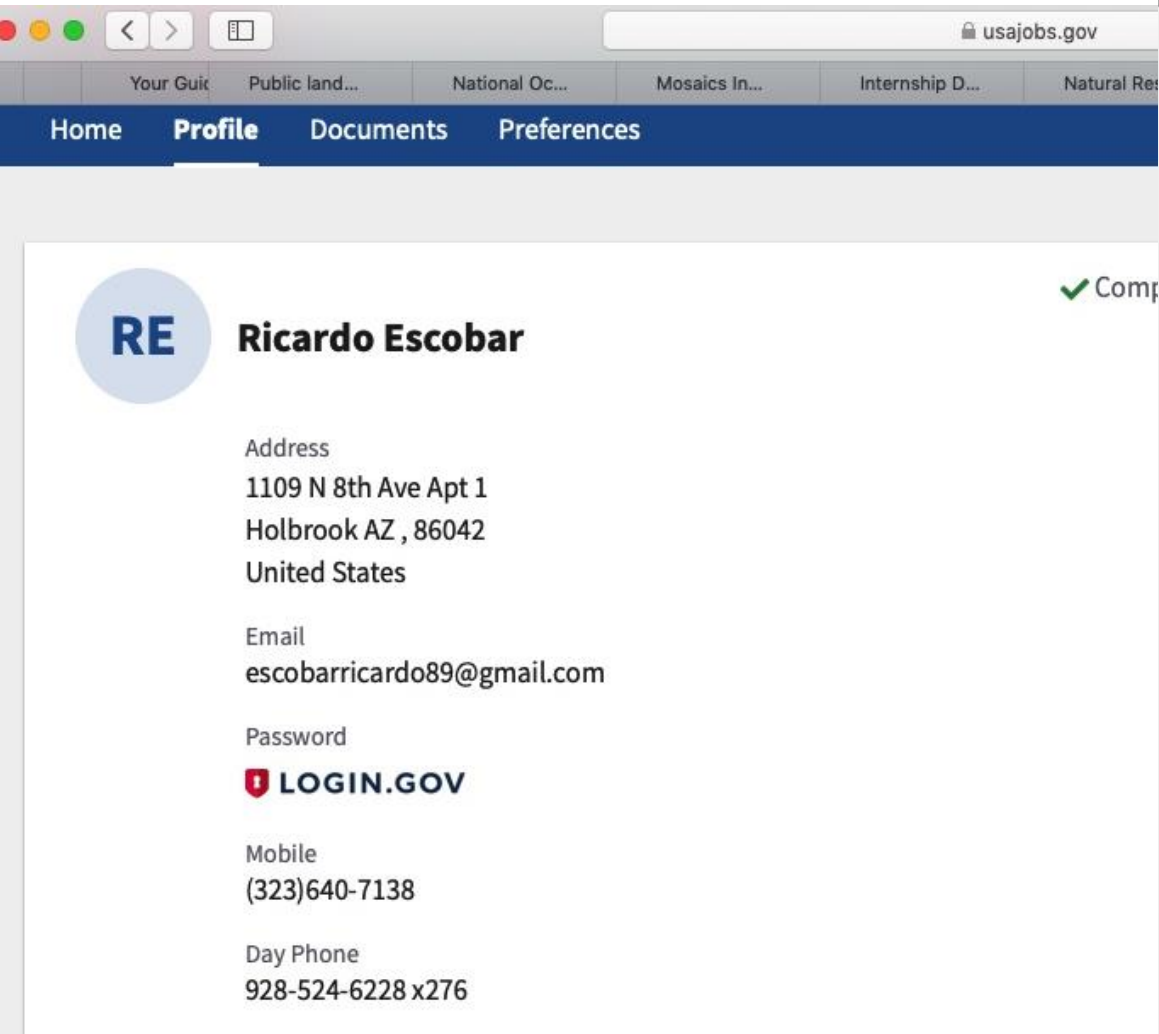
[Forgot your password?](#)

[Security and Privacy Practices](#)

[Privacy Act Statement](#)

The screenshot shows the USAJOBS website interface. At the top right, the "Sign In" link is circled in yellow. Below the navigation bar is a search section with "Keywords" and "Location" input fields and a "Search" button. A banner below the search section reads "We're hiring - help us respond to COVID-19." At the bottom of the page, there is a large graphic with puzzle pieces and the text "SHAPE AMERICA'S FUTURE Find your fit in the Federal Government". A red "Create Profile" button is circled in yellow.

Create your profile



usajobs.gov

Home Profile Documents Preferences

RE **Ricardo Escobar** ✓ Completed

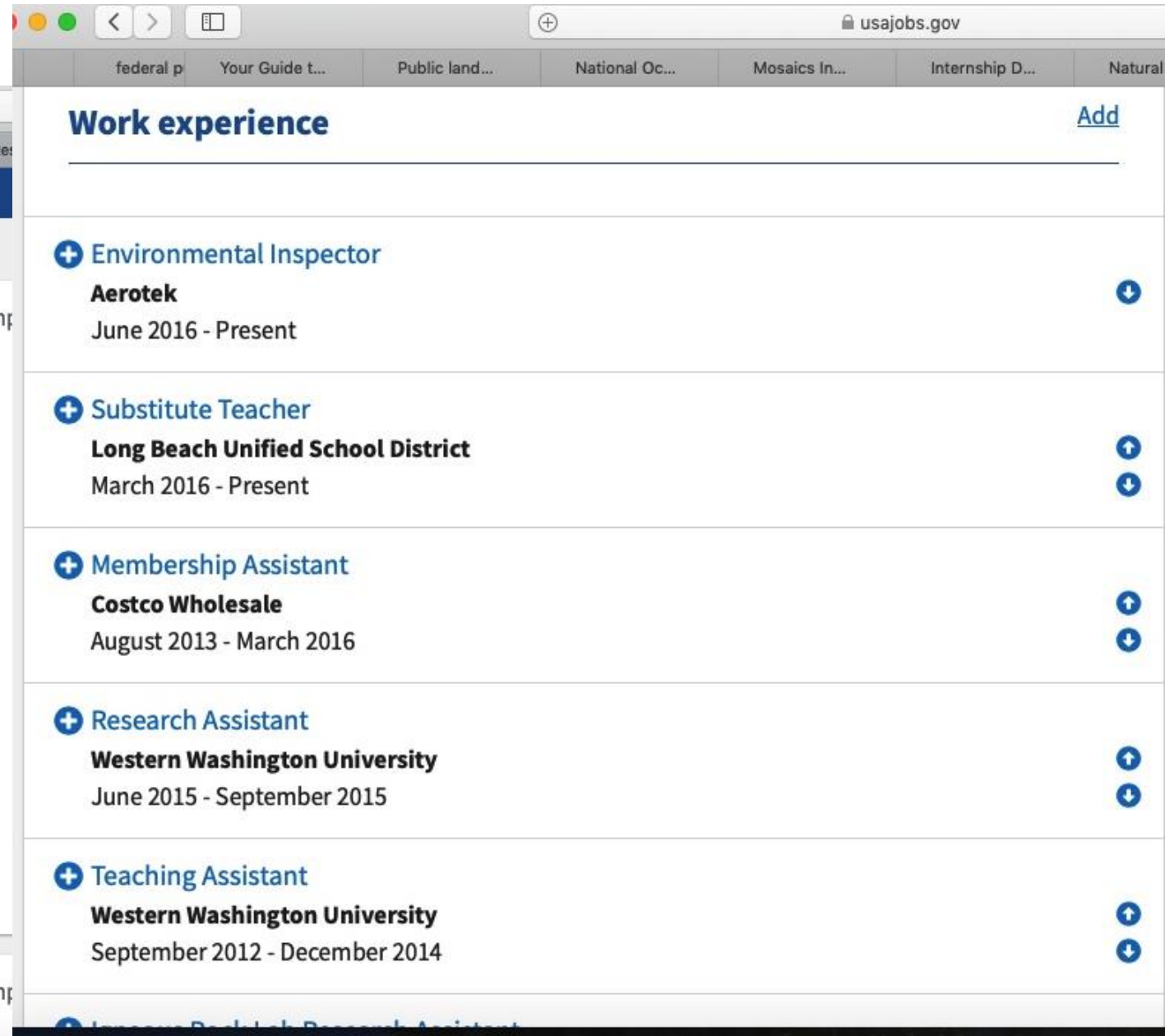
Address
1109 N 8th Ave Apt 1
Holbrook AZ , 86042
United States

Email
escobarricardo89@gmail.com

Password
LOGIN.GOV

Mobile
(323)640-7138

Day Phone
928-524-6228 x276



usajobs.gov

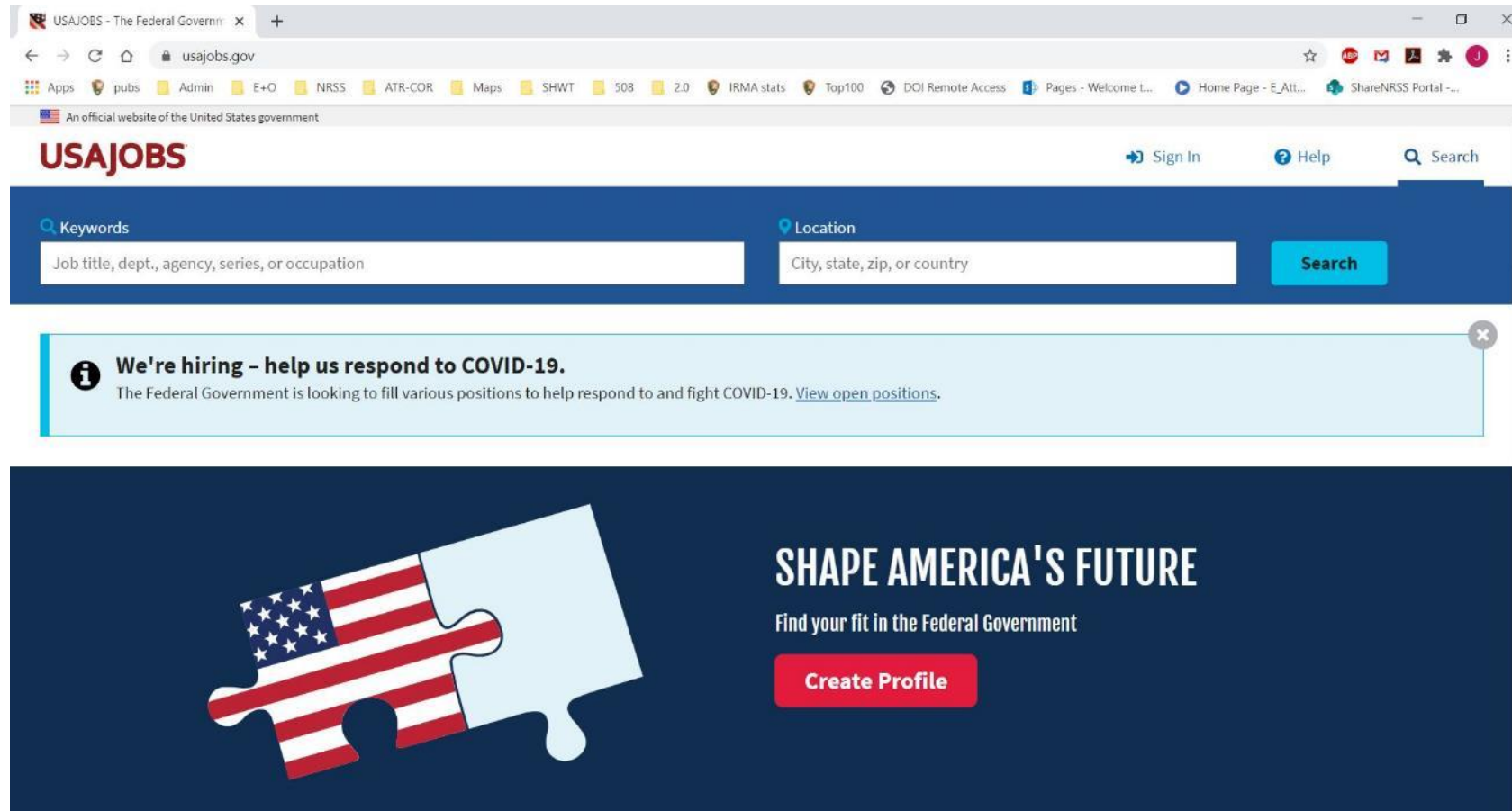
federal p Your Guide t... Public land... National Oc... Mosaics In... Internship D... Natural Res

Work experience [Add](#)

- + Environmental Inspector**
Aerotek
June 2016 - Present
- + Substitute Teacher**
Long Beach Unified School District
March 2016 - Present
- + Membership Assistant**
Costco Wholesale
August 2013 - March 2016
- + Research Assistant**
Western Washington University
June 2015 - September 2015
- + Teaching Assistant**
Western Washington University
September 2012 - December 2014
- + Junior Research Assistant**

Citizenship ✓ Completed

Job search



The screenshot shows the USAJOBS website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the USAJOBS logo, a 'Sign In' button, a 'Help' button, and a search icon. Below this is a search bar with two input fields: 'Keywords' (with a magnifying glass icon) and 'Location' (with a location pin icon). The 'Keywords' field contains the placeholder text 'Job title, dept., agency, series, or occupation'. The 'Location' field contains the placeholder text 'City, state, zip, or country'. To the right of these fields is a blue 'Search' button. Below the search bar is a light blue banner with an information icon and the text: 'We're hiring - help us respond to COVID-19. The Federal Government is looking to fill various positions to help respond to and fight COVID-19. [View open positions.](#)'. At the bottom of the screenshot is a dark blue banner with a graphic of two puzzle pieces, one with the American flag pattern and one light blue. To the right of the puzzle pieces is the text 'SHAPE AMERICA'S FUTURE' in large white letters, followed by 'Find your fit in the Federal Government' in smaller white letters, and a red 'Create Profile' button.

***Don't be too specific!**

Competitive service ✕ Full-time ✕ Permanent ✕ Detail ✕ Not required ✕

Occasional travel ✕ 25% or less ✕ 50% or less ✕

✕ [Remove all filters](#)

Viewing 1 - 3 of 3 jobs

Sort by Relevance

[Save this search.](#) We'll email you new jobs as they become available.

Supervisory Law Enforcement Ranger

Bureau of Land Management
Department of the Interior
Las Vegas, Nevada

Starting at \$93,518 (GS 13)
Permanent • Full-Time



Open 01/14/2021 to 02/01/2021

Jobs may not be open very long

Supervisory Forester

Forest Service
Department of Agriculture
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Starting at \$64,009 (GS 11)
Permanent • Full-Time



Know what path(s) you qualify for!

You're now using 8 filters from your profile for this search.

Top filters

More filters

Location

- Offers relocation assistance (2)
- Offers telework (2)

Work schedule

- Full-time (3)

Appointment type

Explore Hiring Paths

The Federal Government offers unique hiring paths to help hire individuals that represent our diverse society. Learn more about each hiring path and your eligibility.



Open to the Public

U.S. citizens, nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.



Federal Employees

Current or former, includes the competitive and excepted services



Veterans



Military Spouses



National Guard & Reserves

Current or prospective members



Students & recent graduates



Senior Executives



Individuals with a disability



Family of overseas employees



Native Americans

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Review Job Announcement

Park Guide

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

[National Park Service](#)

Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park

READ EVERYTHING!

Overview

Locations

Duties

Requirements

Required Documents

Benefits

How to apply

Overview

Open & closing dates

🕒 10/19/2020 to 10/23/2020

This job will close when we have received **100 applications** which may be sooner than the closing date. [Learn more](#)

Pay scale & grade

GS 4

Appointment type

Seasonal

Service

Competitive

Salary

\$15.37 to \$15.37 per hour

Work schedule

Full-Time

Apply ASAP

[Help](#)

This job is open to

[Career transition \(CTAP, ICTAP, RPL\)](#)

Federal employees who meet the definition of a "surplus" or "displaced" employee.

[The public](#)

U.S. citizens, nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.

Clarification from the agency

Open to the Public and CTAP/ICTAP.

Apply

Qualifications

All qualifications must be met by the closing date of this announcement-10/29/2020-unless otherwise stated in this vacancy announcement.

Credit will be given for all appropriate qualifying experience. For current Federal employees, if hours worked per week are not included on your resume, you must submit a non-award SF-50 as part of your application to be used to validate your work schedule and determine the amount of specialized experience that you will be granted. **An award SF-50 will not be acceptable documentation for which to consider your amount of qualifying experience.** For all other applicants who are not current federal employees, your resume must state either "full-time" (or "40 hours a week") or "part-time" with the number of hours worked per week to ensure proper crediting of specialized experience.

For periods of time that reflect military service, the DD-214 or Statement of Service is sufficient to meet the full and/or part-time hours requirement as the service dates will be reflected.

To qualify for this position at the GS-05 grade level, you must possess of one of the following minimum qualifications by close of the announcement:

EXPERIENCE: At least one full year of specialized experience comparable in scope and responsibility to the GS-04 grade level in the Federal service (obtained in either the public or private sectors). This experience includes activities such as: Experience is experience that involved oral presentation of historical, scientific, or program information to groups; or developing and/or revising technical, historical, or scientific information for oral presentation to groups. Examples of specialized experience include, but are not limited to, Park Guide or tour leader; naturalist; environmental educator or teacher; or other similar work. You must include hours per week worked.

-OR-

EDUCATION: Successful completion of at least four years of education above high school (120 semester hour or 180 quarter hours) leading to a bachelor's degree with courses related to the occupation, such as American history, science, public speaking, parks and recreation, education or communications. You must include transcripts.

-OR-

Successful completion of a combination of education and experience as described above. To combine education and experience, first take . Then take the number of months of full time experience and divide by 12 months. Add the percentages together. The total must equal at least 100 percent to qualify. You must include transcripts.

Volunteer Experience: Experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work done through National Service programs (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) and other organizations (e.g., professional; philanthropic; religious; spiritual; community, student, social). Volunteer work helps build critical competencies, knowledge, and skills and can provide valuable training and experience that translates directly to paid employment. You will receive credit for all qualifying experience, including volunteer experience.

READ. EVERYTHING.

You will have to explain how you qualify on your questionnaire

Don't forget to address the specialized experience requirements

You can mix education and experience

Volunteer experience counts

How You Will Be Evaluated

READ. EVERYTHING.

You will be evaluated for this job based on how well you meet the qualifications above.

A review of your resume and supporting documentation will be made and compared against your responses to the Assessment Questionnaire to determine if you are qualified for this job. If your resume is incomplete or does not support the responses provided in the Assessment Questionnaire, or if you fail to submit all required documentation, you will be rated 'ineligible', 'not qualified', or your score will be adjusted accordingly. If a determination is made that you have inflated your qualifications or experience, you can lose consideration for this position. Please follow all instructions carefully; errors or omissions can affect your rating.

Candidates will be rated and ranked using Category Rating procedures. These procedures place candidates with veteran's preference above non-preference eligibles within each category. Veterans with a service connected disability of at least 10 percent are listed in the highest quality category, except when the position being filled is scientific or professional at the GS-09 grade level or higher. Under Category Rating, candidates will be rated and ranked into one of three categories:

Best Qualified - applicants possessing experience that substantially exceeds the minimum qualifications of the position including all selective factors and are highly proficient in all requirements of the job and can perform effectively in the position

Well Qualified - applicants possessing experience that exceeds the minimum qualifications of the position including all selective factors and are proficient in most of the requirements of the job

Qualified - applicants possessing experience that meets the minimum qualifications of the position including all selective factors and are proficient in some, but not all of the requirements of the job.

You will be evaluated on the following competencies:

Customer Service


Education and Training

Interpersonal Skills

Leadership

Oral Communication

Your resume needs to show your ability to do these things. Use these as headings.



How to Apply

READ. EVERYTHING.

To apply for this position: You must complete the occupational questionnaire and submit the documentation specified in the Required Documents section below. To receive consideration, the complete application package must be submitted by 11:59 PM (EST) on 10/23/2020. **WE DO NOT ACCEPT HARD-COPY OR E-MAIL APPLICATION PACKAGES.**

1. Select Apply. If you are not logged in, you will be prompted to login or [create an account](#).
2. Prompted to Start the Application Process by selecting "Start Application."

[Click here for USAJobs Help with "How to create an application"](#)

To **PREVIEW** the application questionnaire, select the following link:

<https://apply.usastaffing.gov/ViewQuestionnaire/10941478>

3. Select or add the resume you want to use for this application. [Click here on how to build a resume in USAJOBS](#).
4. Select documents you want included in this application.
5. Review package to acknowledge your documents were reviewed.
6. Select if you want to include your demographic information.
7. After reading and certifying the application is true and submitted in good faith, select "Continue to Agency Site."
8. Follow onscreen prompts and instructions to complete your application.
9. Add the supporting documents by indexing your documents with the dropdown.

Upload any missing required documents or optional documents.

10. Review and Submit Application.
11. While logged in, you can check the status of your application by selecting "+" next to the job title for this position.
12. You can review or revise your application at any point during the open period of the announcement.

To update an application, you should log into your USAJOBS account and select "+" next to the job title for this position.


Select **"Update Application"** for this job

You must rate yourself on the application questionnaire. Your resume must support your answers.

Download/print the preview and mark it up.

Preparing your application

- Your federal resume is critical!
- Application questionnaire
- Supporting documentation
 - Scan into PDF, JPG, etc. if you have hardcopy
 - Transcripts
 - Veteran's preference DD-214
 - Peace Corps, Public Lands Corps, Schedule A, other hiring path requirements
 - SF-50s (if current/past fed employee)
 - Whatever else they ask for!



TRANSCRIPTS					GRADE	HOURS	MSH	CTP	MHP
Term Total			GPA:	4.000	A	3.00	3.00	3.00	1
Cumulative Total			GPA:	3.580		3.00	3.00	3.00	1
							60.00	97.00	21
Fall 2006		Undergraduate			GRADE	HOURS	MSH	CTP	MHP
		Kinesiology							
EDUC	392	Educ Multicult Soc			B+	3.00	3.00	3.00	9.90
EDUC	402	Rdg Wrtg Content			A	3.00	3.00	3.00	12.00
PHYSED	305	Prac Elem Teach Meth			S	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
PHYSED	354	Meth of Teach K-5 PE			A+	3.00	3.00	3.00	12.00
PHYSED	373	Issue Hlth Wellness			A	3.00	3.00	3.00	12.00
Term Total			GPA:	3.825		13.00	12.00	13.00	45.90
Cumulative Total			GPA:	3.620			72.00	110.00	260.70
Winter 2007		Undergraduate			GRADE	HOURS	MSH	CTP	MHP
		Kinesiology							
EDUC	307	Practicum			S	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00

Federal Resume???

Topic	Federal Resume	Business Resume
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No specific look or style▪ Narrative lists and bullet points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Eye-catching▪ Bullet points encouraged▪ Minimal narrative text
Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No page limit (5 – 10+ pages)▪ Include as many details, examples, accomplishments, and explanations as needed.▪ Do not use acronyms or abbreviations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Concise, 1–2 pages
Required Information	Yes	No

Highlighting your accomplishments

Not So **Good**

Built a fence

Great

Followed compliance from cultural and natural resources to develop a twenty square foot barrier to protect a native plant restoration project.

*Use numbers, percentages, or dollars to highlight your accomplishments

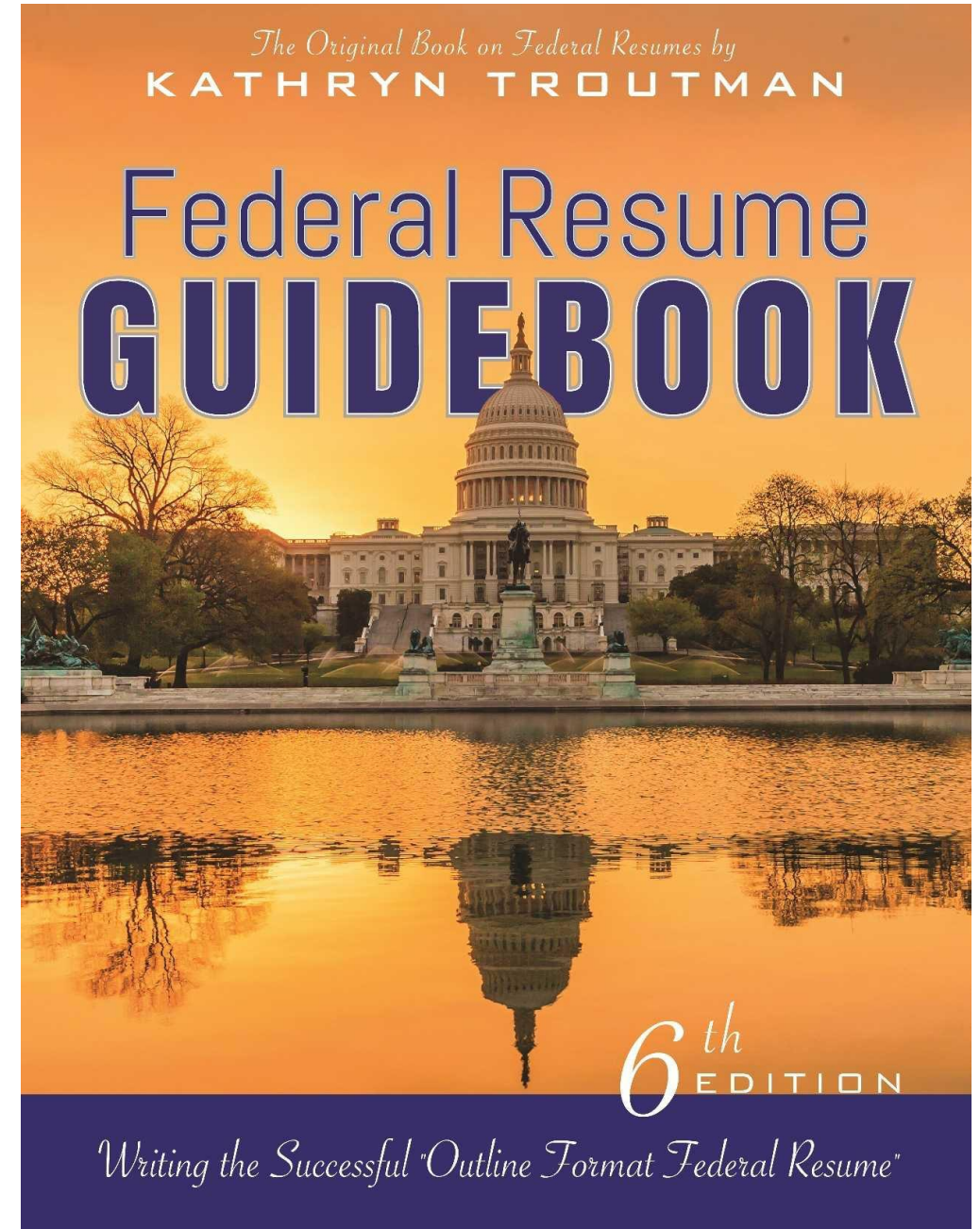
Good

Led environmental education programs for students at Grand Canyon National Park and schools

Great

Led environmental education programs for grades K-12 at Grand Canyon National Park to students from over 10 different schools, delivering over 20 different programs, lasting from 1- 4 hours. Typical programs contained a total of 25 - 60 students.

Federal Resume
Guidebook
by
Kathryn Troutman



There are other ways though...



Internships

- GeoCorps America
 - Deadline February 3rd
 - www.geosociety.org
- Scientists in Parks (SIP)
 - Deadline January 24th
 - www.geosociety.org
- Mosaics in Science
 - Deadline January 24th
 - www.mosaicsinscience.org
- Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP)
 - Year-round – typically spring for summer opportunities
 - www.volunteer.gov



Some internships earn you a path to non-competitive hiring!

Hiring Authorities

- Provide young folks (16-30 years of age) with a non-competitive path into the federal service
- Several types in DOI:
 - Direct Hire Authority (DHA) – approx. 420 hours
 - Public Land Corps (PLC) – 640 hours
 - Peace Corps – 3 years



Kayla Fermin – Biological Science Technician

- 2017 Mosaics in Science DHA intern
- 2018 hired permanently at Lewis & Clark National Historical Park in Astoria, OR

My timeline



Mosaics in Science (DHA)
Summer 2017



Geoscientists-in-Parks (GIP)
Fall 2017 – Winter 2018



Education Specialist
Spring 2018 – Summer 2020



Lead Interpretive Ranger
Summer 2020 - Present

But....

It was not a linear path

- Substitute teacher – Long Beach Unified School District (2016)
- Environmental Inspector – Aerotek (2016)
- Photometric Lab Technician – Klight Laboratories (2016-2017)
- Adjunct Faculty – Cal State LA (2017)
- In between all this... at-home car mechanic with my father
- Applied to 40-50 USAJOBS announcements
 - Not a single referral
- Applied to Mosaics in Science (January 2017) – thanks to Sue!

Jason Kenworthy – NPS Geologist

- B.S. and M.S. Geology
- GS-1 with USDA post-H.S. in MD
- Fossil Butte, WY
 - SCA conservation intern (2001)
 - GS-4 Park Guide (2001-2002)
 - GS-5 Physical Science Tech (2003)
- George Washington Parkway, D.C.
 - Interpretive Park Ranger (2004)
- GS-6 Molecular Biology Tech w/ USDA (2005)
- Geologic Resources Division in CO
 - Physical Science Tech (2006)
 - Permanent in 2014
 - Now a program manager (GS-13 Geologist)



Strategies

- Set up job search in USAJOBS
 - Apply early as some jobs have limited apps
 - Summer 2021 seasonal positions now posted
- Attend USAJOBS webinars and career fairs
- Create master federal resume and modify for each position
- Be flexible in early career choices
 - Very uncommon to go from school to permanent
- Get the experience - intern or volunteer
- Keep a document with new and relevant skills/experience
- Network and persist!





Thank you!!! Be patient and persistent!

ricardo_escobar@nps.gov