2025 *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 2, 2025 until Friday, August 8, 2025, and is a full-time position at 40 hours per week.

Intern Compensation: $3,000, disbursed in three equal installments throughout the summer (June 13, July 11, and August 8, 2025). An additional stipend of $1,000 will be made available to non-local candidates to be used towards summer rent for local housing, should an accepted candidate be from outside the region (payable on June 13, 2025).

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. Archives
2. Education & Community Services
3. Exhibitions

If you have no preference and would like to be considered for any of the three, please state this.

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 "2025 Summer Internship + [*Insert Your Last Name*]" to info@mercermuseum.org.

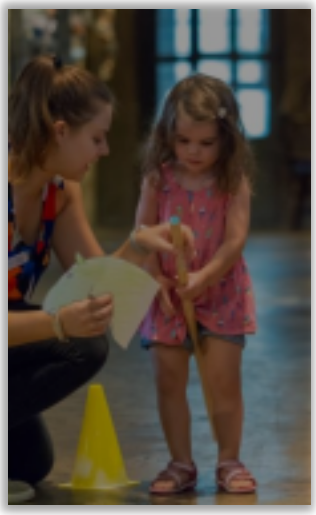
Deadline: Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 5pm (no exceptions)

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

- Graduate studies students preferred
- Upper class undergraduate studies or expected degree in history, material culture, education, humanities, museum studies, museum education, anthropology or related field
- Demonstrated interest/experience in museums, exhibitions, programs, 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



The 2025 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*



Education & Community Services Interns will also be assigned an individual project based on our 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 2025 Archives Intern will minimally process two manuscript collections that are part of the Mercer Museum Research Library's recent acquisitions.

The first collection is the Smith family papers which documents the Smith family, and other interconnected families, of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. This collection contains mostly visual material such as photographs, cased images, and photo albums. The second collection is the Lingohocken Questers records. The Questers is a non-profit organization that promotes preservation and restoration of artifacts, historical buildings, and landmarks. This collection contains photo albums, scrapbooks, and other meeting materials related to their work.



This intern project will be supervised by the Historical Society's Director of Library & Archives. The project will consist of processing the two collections according to a predetermined processing plan. Processing includes rehousing, inventorying, labeling, and creating a finding aid. This finding aid would then be input into the archives collection management system, ArchivEra. The project will require that the intern learns the Library's collections database, and adheres to contemporary archival best practices.

Additionally, the 2025 Archives Intern will be responsible for digitizing and performing item level cataloging of some recent acquisitions to the Bucks County Historical Society photograph 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. 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.

Curatorial Intern – Original Core Exhibit Enhancement



The core exhibits in the Mercer Museum "castle" retain much of their original character and appearance – as when first installed under the direction of museum founder Henry Chapman Mercer in 1916. While some changes in labeling, materials and lighting have been introduced over the past half-century, the density of artifacts and eccentric display methods remain key elements of the museum's preserved interior. Despite the gradual introduction of labels in most of the museum's warren of small rooms and alcoves over the past few decades, there are still a number of exhibit rooms that have no descriptive or interpretive labeling. As a result, visitors have little to go on as they view and seek to understand the objects displayed in these spaces.

The 2025 Curatorial Intern will be tasked with developing a new labeling scheme for at least one and perhaps two of these under interpreted exhibit rooms. The Curatorial Intern will work closely with the Mercer Museum's VP of Collections and Curator of Exhibitions, as well as with other members of the curatorial and collections team, to research, write and prepare plans for the introduction of new descriptive labels in these spaces. This will include working directly with the collections exhibited in the two exhibit rooms, and developing ideas about how to make those collections – and the traditional crafts or trades they represent – engaging and intelligible to visitors.

The ideal candidate is a student pursuing an advanced degree in Museum Studies or Public History, preferably with some experience in the development of museum exhibits. The intern should also possess some expertise in handling cultural artifacts and experience with collections databases. Experience with developing and producing illustrative graphics is a plus.