## research

A variety of research opportunities arise from work in the coalfields. If you're looking to take on a research project or you're already in the middle of one, we just might have the right fit for you.

## protest/action planning skills

Making change often involves the political aspect of protest and sometimes requires taking direct action to change or prevent something from happening. If you have experience with planning either direct actions or protests, consider yourself valuable to MJ.

## back woods skills

Experienced with wilderness first aid? Are you a master of orienteering? Mountain Justice has plenty of opportunities for outdoorsy types to help us slow down the coal industry. If you're confident in the woods and like to spend the day tracking mine permit boundaries, we've definitely got jobs for you.

## the volunteer experience

"I worked with Coal River Mountain Watch during the summer between my Freshman and Sophomore years at university. It was a life changing experience because I got to help design a campaign and several tactics to help get a new school for Marsh Fork Elementary. I wrote press releases, planned events, attended hearings, and met some really incredible folks that helped opened my eyes to the realities of energy and environmental injustice. The skills and perspectives I learned there helped me throughout my college career, and will be invaluable for the rest of my life."

## where to learn even more

- www.mountainjustice.org/volunteer/
- Or contact volunteer@mountainjustice.org

# mountain justice volunteer/internship informational brochure 2009

helping communities and grassroots organizations bring justice to the land and people of appalachia...

## what is this thing?

This is the what, where, how, when, and why of volunteering with Mountain Justice. It's got information on:

- The History of Mountain Justice
- Volunteering/Interning with Mountain Justice
- Grassroots Organizations & Campaigns
- Useful Skills and Why They're Needed!
- The Volunteering Experience
- Where to Learn Even More

## mj introduction/history

Mountain Justice is a network of people helping people deal with coal related issues throughout Appalachia. It was formed in early 2004 by a handful of environmental activist organizations working on various issues in the coalfields. A series of dramatic events related to strip mining sparked a movement towards the abolition of mountaintop removal. This was and still is the primary goal of Mountain Justice although many new avenues of energy have grown since it's inception. Currently, Mountain Justice takes the form of collective efforts focused within the coalfields and solidarity from beyond. The principal function of Mountain Justice is education and organization of volunteers to support directly affected coalfield communities. Safe communities, local economies, and healthy ecosystems are held paramount by Mountain Justice. Much has been done since the beginning, but even more is still ahead. Join a family of activists working to protect the environment, empower communities, and change the world!

### medical/first aid

Many issues in the coalfields are health related. Medical skills certainly have their place as do first aid skills. You never know when a dangerous situation will lead to injury.

### aquatic science

We need help with water monitoring and generating the baseline data for pre-mined streams. This involves gathering field samples and logging data. We write site specific statements about water quality for public hearings, regulatory agencies, and newspapers.

### art/design

Outreach and education can benefit greatly from the touch of those who are visually talented. From advertising events to designing educational materials, an eye for design can work wonders. We also welcome any screen printing experience.

### farming/gardening

Part of Mountain Justice's goal is to move towards sustainable local economies. Growing your own food is a perfect way to start. If you have experience farming or gardening, we'll gladly put you to work.

### energy efficiency/renewable energy

Part of the transition away from fossil fuels is getting serious about energy efficiency. Appropriate technology skills that honor efficiency and renewable energy are prized in our movement.

### organizational/office skills

Every herd of cats needs a little shepherd dog to keep them in line. If you're good with people and keeping day-to-day functions in order, we've already got a parking spot reserved for you!

## Coal River Mountain Watch (CRMW)

**Mission Statement:** The mission of Coal River Mountain Watch is to stop the destruction of our communities and environment by mountaintop removal mining, to improve the quality of life in our area and to help rebuild sustainable communities.

**Location:** Coal River, WV

**Current Campaign:** The Coal River Wind Project is an effort to employ a ridge-top wind farm rather than a mountaintop removal site that has been proposed by Massey Energy at Coal River Mountain.

**Phone:** 304.854.2182
**Website:** http://www.crmw.net/

## United Mountain Defense (UMD)

**Mission Statement:** United Mountain Defense is dedicated to the protection of Tennessee's watersheds, air, mountains and communities.

**Location:** Knoxville, TN

**Current Campaign:** Relief work after the TVA coal waste spill in Harriman, TN. Monitoring all surface mining activities in TN. Completing a comprehensive water assessment of the New River watershed.

**Phone:** 865.633.8483
**E-mail:** unitedmountaindefense@yahoo.com
**Website:** http://www.unitedmountaindefense.org/

## Lexington Environmental Action Project (LEAP)

**Mission Statement:** LEAP is a local, environmental action group in Lexington, KY. We advocate community ACTION as a form of social change. LEAP welcomes grassroots organizing aimed at raising awareness and fostering change related to mountaintop removal coal mining. LEAP uses non violent civil disobedience to confront coal companies and their allies.

**Location:** Lexington, KY

**Current Campaign:** Campaigns are aligned with the broader Mountain Justice movement statewide, with a focus on strengthening the efforts of ally groups by sharing skills and person-power. Prior campaigns included pressuring KU (Kentucky Utilities) to offer renewable energy purchases to its customers, as well as addressing safety concerns and awareness in the coalfields.

**E-mail:** davecooper928@yahoo.com

## Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OHVEC)

**Mission Statement:** To organize and maintain a diverse grassroots organization dedicated to the improvement and preservation of the environment through education, grassroots organizing and coalition building, leadership development and media outreach.

**Location:** Huntington, WV

**Current Campaigns:** Collaborative work on the Coal River Wind Project and the Sludge Safety Project, an effort to improve safety for those living in the shadows of sludge "ponds."

**Phone:** 304.522.0246
**E-mail:** vivian@ohvec.org
**Website:** http://www.ohvec.org/

## useful skills

There are so many ways you can help. A few of the more common skills used in the coalfields are outlined here to give you a better idea of which skills important and why...

### media

Public outreach is a big deal when you need to garner support for your campaign work. Press releases, interviews, and editorials can enlighten the masses about key issues and why they're important.

### writing

A strong ability to wield words can influence elected officials to consider your stake in the issue at hand. Often more effectively it can help fund a campaign by winning grant money. Crucial.

### construction

Oftentimes volunteering encompasses relief work that involves construction or repair. From community homes to campaign houses, construction skills always come in handy.

### web design

Today's most popular medium of communication is the internet. Thus, web design skills clearly translate into powerful organizing potential. Good designs yield astounding results.

### gis/mapping

When organizations monitor mine activity and perform water testing in the nearby watersheds, the data must to be represented spatially. GIS skills are a key element of field work performed in Appalachia.

## volunteering/interning with mj

Part of MJ is connecting volunteers and interns with community groups that deal directly with coal-mining issues. People in all walks of life are encouraged to apply for these opportunities. Moms, church leaders, college students, career people, grandparents, radical activists, zoo-keepers, and more, all have something to offer to the work that we do.

Internships may be the most appealing option for college students. While Mountain Justice is committed to connecting interested volunteers with grassroots work, and we hope this experience can be used for college credit, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to make those arrangements with their school.

Ask for an application or go to: mountainjustice.org/volunteer/

## grassroots organizations we work with

### Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards (SAMS)

**Mission Statement:** Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards is an organization of concerned community members and their allies who are working to stop the destruction of our communities by surface coal mining, to improve the quality of life in our area, and to help rebuild sustainable communities.

**Location:** Appalachia, VA

**Current Campaign:** Challenging a new coal fired power plant in St. Paul, VA that will violate the Clean Air Act upon construction and will only further demand for coal and exacerbate the climate crisis.

**Phone:** 276.565.1083
**E-mail:** samsva@gmail.com
**Website:** http://www.samsva.org/