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**SCIENCE RESEARCH MENTORING PROGRAM AT  
THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
TAKES A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD FOR  
NEW YORK CITY STUDENTS**

**AMNH AND PINKERTON FOUNDATION LEAD A CONSORTIUM TO EXPAND INNOVATIVE  
PROGRAM TO FIVE INSTITUTIONS**

The American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), in cooperation with the Pinkerton Foundation, an independent grant-making organization dedicated to helping young people reach their full potential, has announced that it will launch a consortium of six local science-focused institutions designed to support the expansion of its innovative and successful [Science Research Mentoring Program \(SRMP\)](#). The program for New York City students in grades 10-12 provides a unique opportunity to work with scientists on an array of mentored research projects. The goal of the consortium is to engage increased numbers of high-achieving, underserved New York City high school students, many from groups underrepresented in the sciences, in programs where they can conduct research working side-by-side with scientist mentors, enabling them to achieve success in college and motivating them to pursue careers in scientific fields. While each consortium member's program is unique, all are guided by the same set of core principles and best practices identified by the Museum as it has refined its SRMP program over the last 15 years.

"We are extremely pleased to announce the expansion of the SRMP Program and its evolution into a consortium of outstanding institutions dedicated to helping high school students pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)," said Ellen V. Futter, President of the American Museum of Natural History. "No

individual institution or program can, in isolation, solve the STEM education crisis in our nation. Part of the Museum's strategic vision to address this crisis is to take programs, like the intensive, mentored science experiences of the Science Research Mentoring Program, that have achieved success here at the Museum and broaden the scale and reach of their impact. Our distinguished partners in this effort bring an indispensable range of expertise and content to the program while allowing us to reach many more young people each year."

"We see the Science Research Mentoring consortium as a wonderful way to extend the reach and depth of AMNH's highly successful program," said Rick Smith, Pinkerton's president. "Our challenge to other institutions was simply to embrace the principles and spirit of the Museum's model--and we couldn't be happier that so many others stepped up to meet that challenge. We look forward to helping to fund even more such efforts in the future."

AMNH currently has a robust scientist mentor training model that each of the new consortium members will adapt to their respective programs. In addition, the consortium will expand areas of study for students with some of the partner institutions focusing on math and engineering, environmental science, and neuroscience, in addition to the life, Earth and planetary sciences, genomics, and anthropology mentoring featured at AMNH.

Building on experience from the Museum's many years of providing after-school courses for high school students, the SRMP Program provides a deep and rich level of engagement that brings students true insight and hands-on experiences with the process and excitement of research science, the many varied careers and disciplines that depend upon scientific research, and the link between the methods of scientific research and cross-disciplinary, long-term higher education academic success.

Prior to the consortium grant, the Museum had the capacity to serve approximately 50 students each year. The grant will expand the Museum's mentor placements to 60 students per year, with more than 200 students receiving mentor placements through the consortium, which includes the following institutions:

- City University of New York (CUNY) Lehman/College Now Program
- Polytechnic Institute of New York University (NYU-Poly)
- Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, DNA Learning Center
- Wave Hill
- Columbia University-Mind Brain Behavior Initiative, Neuroscience Outreach

Approximately 60 students will be enrolled in the Museum's SRMP Program this summer. Teens first attend after-school classes in relevant subject areas, logging more than 70 hours of coursework. Once accepted to SRMP, students enroll in a summer session to hone their lab skills and explore their research interests. The students are then matched with mentors with whom they conduct more than 120 hours of lab work on authentic research projects after school at the Museum during the academic year.

Recent SRMP graduates have worked on projects as diverse as discovering ancient ants and termites preserved in 52-million-year-old amber; analyzing the genetic signatures found through the testing of mountain lion blood collected in the Grand Teton, a non-invasive way to estimate and help to preserve big cat populations; studying the evolution of skull shape in archosaurs, a group of prehistoric reptiles; and looking for correlations between certain M-dwarf stars and the likelihood of finding exoplanets orbiting them. During the course of their research, students have access to the Museum's state-of-the-art laboratories and work with mentors from the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation, the Sackler Institute for Comparative Genomics, the Department of Ornithology, the Department of Herpetology, the Division of Vertebrate Zoology, the Division of Anthropology, the Division of Invertebrate Zoology, the

Division of Paleontology, the Department of Astrophysics, and the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences. Last year, all seniors in the program were accepted to college, including to such highly competitive institutions as Cornell University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Columbia University, New York University, University of Pennsylvania, Brown, and John Hopkins.

In the next few months, the new Science Research Mentoring Consortium will develop and implement new program elements to benefit students across the partner institutions; create shared assets such as curricula, mentor training, college preparation materials; and engage in recruitment activities to attract high-potential students into the program.

#### **AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (AMNH.ORG)**

[The American Museum of Natural History](http://www.amnh.org), founded in 1869, is one of the world's preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. The Museum encompasses 45 permanent exhibition halls, including the Rose Center for Earth and Space and the Hayden Planetarium, as well as galleries for temporary exhibitions. It is home to the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, New York State's official memorial to its 33rd governor and the nation's 26th president, and a tribute to Roosevelt's enduring legacy of conservation. The Museum's five active research divisions and three cross-disciplinary centers support 200 scientists, whose work draws on a world-class permanent collection of more than 32 million specimens and artifacts, including specialized collections for frozen tissue and genomic and astrophysical data, as well as one of the largest natural history libraries in the Western Hemisphere. Through its Richard Gilder Graduate School, it is the only American museum authorized to grant the Ph.D. degree. In 2012, the Museum began offering a pilot Master of Arts in Teaching with a specialization in earth science. Approximately 5 million visitors from around the world came to the Museum last year, and its exhibitions and Space Shows can be seen in venues on five continents. The Museum's website and collection of apps for mobile devices extend its collections, exhibitions, and educational programs to millions more beyond its walls. Visit [amnh.org](http://amnh.org) for more information.

#### **The Pinkerton Foundation**

[The Pinkerton Foundation](http://www.pinkertonfoundation.org) is an independent grantmaking organization established in 1966 by Robert Allan Pinkerton, the Chairman and CEO of Pinkerton's, Inc., then the nation's oldest and largest security company. The foundation, which

retains no ties to the firm, supports community-based programs for children, youth and families in economically disadvantaged areas in New York City. Pinkerton favors direct-service programs that have one overriding goal: to help young people reach their full potential. With that in mind, the foundation looks for groups with capable leadership, high expectations, well-defined goals and active, engaged participants. Most of the programs we support take place in the after-school, weekend or summer hours and focus on providing opportunities for academic development, career readiness and cultural enrichment. We also support a number of programs that offer a way forward for young people after an encounter with the criminal justice system or years in foster care.

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