Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
West Virginia

Purpose of Mission: Founded in 1987, OVEC works for economic and environmental justice by building power in communities impacted by extractive industries through education, grassroots organizing, coalition building, leadership development and media outreach. We are a non-profit group working for a day when:

- We preserve mountain ecosystems and the culture of the Central Appalachian communities;
- We create a just, diversified, and sustainable economy that values all people;
- Citizens of all ages, especially youth, value themselves, and claim power to take responsibility for their lives;

Job Title or Position: Economic and Environmental Justice Intern

Responsibilities:
Our motivation in taking on interns is two-fold. First, it increases our organizational capacity with new people, ideas, and energy. Second, we want to develop a new generation of skilled organizers for environmental and economic justice (that's you). Towards that end, you'll be working in the following areas: community organizing, event organizing, and participatory research. Below is a more in depth overview of the work. Our organizer/mentor will work with you to determine what your specific focus will be before you arrive.

1. Community Organizing
   A. Community Meetings
      Interns will be joining a community organizing drive to protect communities from mountaintop removal in Fayette County. Part of this organizing project is to hold monthly community meetings in communities neighboring the growing mountaintop removal site. During these meetings we will identify concerns and support community led actions to hold regulators and the coal company accountable and ultimately stop strip mining in the area. Specific responsibilities for community meetings will involve making materials, phone banking, and follow up with attendees. In all of these areas, you will work closely with our Fayette County organizer.

   B. Door to door organizing
      You will join us going door to door to see what community organizing looks like on the ground and learn more about the experience of the money-poor, rural communities in which we work. You will learn first hand about the challenges faced by Appalachian communities, and the many strengths that they have.

2. Event Organizing
   A. Summit for the Mountains
      The Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition is holding the Summit for the Mountains in the fall of 2012. Over the summer, we will be in high gear planning the event. Areas of work include logistics, outreach, media, and programming.
B. National
OVEC participates in national events as part of the national movement(s) for economic and environmental justice. This summer, we will be joining a coalition grassroots and national organizations to bring greater attention to mountaintop removal coal mining. Our work specifically will be to support people from impacted communities in joining this mobilization.

3. Research
A. Land Reform
In 1981, the Appalachian Alliance did a study of land ownership in central Appalachia to document the disproportionate ownership of land by large land-holding companies from outside the region. The outside ownership of resources under-girds the systemic, persistent poverty in the region, and leaves us vulnerable to the environmental and economic plundering of coal, gas, and timber companies. Today, OVEC, allied organizations, and individuals are in the beginning phases of an updated study of land ownership in West Virginia. Areas of work for this study are compiling data, building relationships with county officials, messaging development, web-design, GIS, and outreach to land owners.

We will work with you to determine which of the above projects are most appropriate to your skills and interests. This is a 40 hrs. per week internship.

Qualifications:
REQUIRED:
Good interpersonal skills.
Ability to work independently.
Clear written communication.
Curiosity about Appalachia.
Ability to walk up and down mountains.

PREFERRED
Experience organizing for environmental or social justice
Owning a car

Working Conditions: Office work will be done from home. Field work is in communities in Fayette County, mostly rural.

Your living site will be near the New River Gorge, and either an apartment in a small town or in the nearby rural areas.

Fayette County and the surrounding area is full of mountains, creeks, rivers, and forests. Living and working in West Virginia, though challenging at times, is a joy.

On Site Supervisor/Mentor:

Direct Supervisor/Mentor

Created: November 2010
Andrew Munn, Fayette County Organizer
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Indirect Supervisor/Mentor
Dianne Bady, Organizer Supervisor
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Mentorship Plan:
Interns will receive a one day orientation at the beginning of their stay.

Intern(s) will meet at the beginning of each week to review workplans. Much of your work will be done with Andrew (door to door, meeting planning, etc), and mentorship will occur through conversation, formal and informal during these times. When appropriate you can shadow him to other movement and organizational functions.

You will complete a work log, both to quantify your work and reflect on your experiences. You will participate in staff meetings and calls weekly.

Preparation:
Contact anromu@gmail.com for a suggested reading list on organizing and West Virginia.