Summer 2012 Undergraduate Research Position

"Are nature-lovers healthier people?"

Prof. Marcus Webster, CSBSJU Biology Department

One 10-wk summer research fellowship, funded by a CSBSJU Rooney Grant, is available for continuing St. John's or St. Ben's students. Must be self-motivated and able to work independently. Preference -- but not limited to – students majoring in Biology, Environmental Studies or Psychology. **Successful applicants will have a demonstrated interest in environmental issues, natural history, and outdoor recreation.** First-year students with some research skills and relevant career goals are encouraged to apply.

This project involves searching the scientific and social science literature for evidence supporting the hypothesis that all humans display an innate love of nature (biophilia) that, when unsatisfied, causes emotional, physical, and spiritual distress. Past research on environmental education, eco-tourism and adventure recreation have documented their many beneficial effects on personal development; a goal of this research is to bring rigorous scientific analysis to bear on the question "Are nature-lovers healthier people?".

The student researcher will aid Prof. Webster in collecting source material and developing activities and discussion topics for a seminar course "The Nature of Place" as part of the Fall 2012 Study Abroad Program in Australia. Students with a **demonstrated interest in Australia**, especially those planning to study abroad there or returnees, are encouraged to apply.

This fellowship is an excellent opportunity to develop a related topic for a Senior Thesis or Independent Learning Project for the student's continuing academic program. Reading, library research and writing will comprise the major portion of the work. Survey development and implementation are projected for future studies. Some funds are available for travel to consult with faculty from other academic institutions or to make use of library facilities elsewhere.

**To request an application, email MWebster@csbsju.edu with "Summer Research Fellowship" in the subject line.** Rooney Fellowships are very competitive, so please consider your qualifications and discuss your intentions with a faculty advisor before you apply. **Applications are due Friday March 16th.** Interviews will take place March 19-23.