

professionals to work with. We did not account for about 10% of people expecting to receive an education from us or constant oversight in addition to the opportunity, staff and materials we provide. We think our price of \$850 per month is more than fair for what we do provide. We have set out protocols for people to follow, we have tested and achieved them while we are there. We have also run the sanctuary for 3 months by ourselves (with two people) for three months. Further we have hired a staff, provide a location, lodging and food. Now I have heard the argument from a minority (usually in the spring when it is hardest to be there) that our price is too high for what we provide, and that is very debatable. Sure you can frequent hostels throughout the cheaper parts of Central America for less than \$27 per day. However you cannot do that and have access to a several graduate students and professors' time, studies, and projects, as well as orphaned primates anywhere for that price without proving yourself first.

On the other side, North Americans tend to see everything through the lens of a one time economic exchange. "If I don't like the pants I bought, I should be able to get my money back and buy a better set of pants..." Etc. This type of thinking is so far from reality when you are talking about primate conservation, or true conservation of any kind. Conservation is about giving, not taking. If you are only worried about what you get out of it, for a nominal amount of investment and work, then we suggest a Conservation Vacation, or a Field Study School, both of which charge more in order to offer more comforts and individualized attention so you don't have to rely on your own capabilities and education. Instead we offer the internship which is set up to find people who actually want to do this as a career. We understand that no one really wants to pay to work. But primatology, and primate rehabilitation is not something that can support a "business model" as there is no real "product".

We set up our project to take these two considerations into account. The first way we do so is by making the payment and first three months about "proving that you belong here" instead of as a "commodity for sale". How we do this is by offering anyone who can 1. Stay positive and 2. Contribute to our work, the opportunity to stay on as long as they wish after their initial three months... for free. Furthermore, if you have a degree then you are eligible to be an intern coordinator and/or site manager, and earn money back. Depending on how long you stay and your degree you may earn all of your money back and then some. In this way we look for commitment, conscientious decision making, conviction, determination, etc. We look for people who can make the leap from student to peer.

You have a Masters degree in Science. You are surrounded by a nationally established private preserve, enclosures, a link to the environmental agency of Panama (ANAM), subject animals, and some scientific equipment (more to come in March). Further you have several protocols for research written by a professor of Conservation Biology and Anthropology to study the effects of your work. You are part of a program that has won an important SENACYT grant and has had its first paper accepted by the International Journal of Primatology for publication. And you are set up in a fabulously gorgeous location with peers and mentors.

I can't in any way wrap my mind around how that could be anything other than ideal conditions to make a contribution to primate conservation in Panama. Sure it will take a bit of ownership and incentive to engage your directors and staff in productive conversations and activities. And it will take real work to carry out the methods we have outlined. We have held up our end, interns should have to hold up theirs even if it is hard.

I suggest you give your degree a good spot on your wall, and then judge yourself by the amount of habitat you protect, the animals you help, the policy you impact, or the people's minds that you change. Pure research is the province of geniuses who drive their fields through discovering new and IMPACTFUL information. It is my opinion that if you are an academic and not the 1% of geniuses that are actually driving the academic field through research, then you are one of those nursing off of it. However, It's a good thing for the rest of us that conservation can be accomplished without breakthrough research papers. In any case, those that do drive their field through research certainly are not the same group that can be surrounded by all the resources available to you and find themselves accomplishing nothing and quitting early.

The people who see themselves as more important than the people who went before them, are not the people we are looking for. We are not a school where you get a "rate my professor" form afterwards. While we would love to hear ideas about how we can accomplish mutual goals, we have supplied you with many. It is up to you to drive that conversation and take responsibility for your future. Many things may not run perfectly at the Sanctuary and I believe I made this abundantly clear in the interview. We are open to people who want to improve things (other than the refund policies). When I asked the managers about you they said you were "quiet". I think you should open up early about your interests and you would have a better time. That includes taking the time to read the materials we have set before you and ask questions early.

We respect and are grateful for your work and dedication to date. However, I will not continue to reply to implications and accusations. If you would like to have a direct, respectful and sincere conversation about any of these issues, then you may call me via Skype before I get down there in the second week of March, or wait until I get there. Or you can quit without ever talking to any of us about your dissatisfaction and/or goals, and disappear. In either case, we will be carrying on with the program, and don't feel it necessary to coddle you. Conservation is not the province of academics. Doing well in school is not an indicator of your ability to leave a place better than you found it. That is what we want, that is why you were given the opportunity to show us you belong there. I hope you will take it.

Best Regards,

Seth Hopkins

On Feb 15, 2016, at 4:07 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Um... That's very weird. These interns were here currently at the sanctuary. Their policy matched the one that was in the guide. Why doesn't mine (for only coming one week later.) Are you telling me that there is no cancellation policy???

[REDACTED]

On Feb 15, 2016, at 7:03 PM, Alouatta Business <alouatta.sanctuary@gmail.com> wrote:

We changed our policy since last year. Some interns got the old policy before the change. You probably got the 2015 intern guide.

On Feb 15, 2016, at 3:54 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Seth,

Thanks for sending that to me.

I suppose I am still very confused though. Why does the last paragraph ("Cancellation Policy") not reflect what was written in the internship guidelines or what other interns had on their invoices?

Thanks in advance,

[REDACTED]

On Feb 14, 2016, at 8:22 PM, Alouatta Business <alouatta.sanctuary@gmail.com> wrote:

<Invoice.pdf>

[REDACTED]

Here is the receipt I sent [REDACTED]. I reviewed both your acceptance paperwork and this invoice and see that the policy has not changed from the one you were sent originally. The policy is clear and complete, and has not changed since your acceptance. The only change is the merit based discount we extended to you which reduced your price to \$1600, and the removal of the payment schedule and procedure, since this is a receipt. Turn on the generator yourself and print it out if you need a hard copy. We don't set any hard rules for use of the generator. We just try to keep use to a minimum within reason. Of course if you need it for reasons like this, or to charge computers/equipment to keep in touch, then it is totally fine. You can turn it on to utilize computers or to print out training exercises, and at night for light or to watch movies, etc.

Best Regards,

Seth Hopkins