

## EDUCATION

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## Working at Alcatraz Island



The Concrete Preservation Institute (CPI), a non-profit educational foundation partner to the National Park Service (NPS) and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, is hosting an all-military veteran team for the 2015 CPI spring session on Alcatraz Island. While CPI teams are usually inclusive of military veterans, university students, and local high school graduates, this special session is dedicated to the growth of the CPI program's focus on providing veterans with a once-in-a-lifetime training, education, and personal growth experience. The Institute's mission, the NPS Marin Headlands housing location, and the Alcatraz worksite provide an environment well suited to veteran acclimatization to civilian life and the concrete construction industry workforce. Their 12 weeks working full-time on the Island, where they will learn from CPI staff, academic experts, the NPS, and leading industry experts, will result in the preservation of an important historic landmark structure while providing the foundation, skills, and connections for alumni to move directly into jobs in the skilled construction trades or application to college programs, such as Concrete Industry Management, leading to management careers in concrete and construction-related fields. Participants also work in field validation research that furthers the preservation and construction industries and youth mentoring activities within the Park.

The project for this session in the main prison cell



house -- the largest reinforced concrete building in the world when it was built 1909-12 by the U.S. Army -- is especially exciting. Preserving this structure, together with the other extensive historic concrete structures and features throughout the island, are of great concern not only due to the Island's infamous 28-year federal penitentiary legacy, but also because of its much longer history as a strategic military fort dating from the mid-1800s. As a National Historic Landmark within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Alcatraz is one of the most visited National Parks in the country

with more than 5,000 visitors each day. Early work by CPI staff and student teams in 2010 revealed just how rich and interesting the concrete history of Alcatraz is when, in the course of demolition to prepare for repairs of the prison recreation yard slab, they uncovered buried historic military batteries partially constructed of what may be some of the oldest concrete on the west coast.