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Stephen Crum

University of Dayton

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Saturday, December 24, 2011

Eyes Opened to Dayton's Assets

Stephen Crum

I won't sugarcoat it and tell you that I have always loved the city of Dayton. If you had asked me last year "Hey, do you want to do something downtown tonight?" I probably would have laughed at you. The experiences that I have had my sophomore year through Rivers Stewards and R.E.A.L Dayton has led me to appreciate the beauty of this city and all that it has to offer. Okay, so what does the city of Dayton have to offer? There is an abundance of nature parks, bike paths, entertainment attractions, and a plan for economical uplifting for the downtown area. Discovering all of this during my sophomore year has been exciting and I'm anxious to make an impact on this city in the future.

What is Dayton's most valuable asset? I'm here to tell you that my favorite asset is the beautiful preserved nature that surrounds, fills, and runs through the city. Let me bring to you one of my fondest memories as a River Steward thus far. It is a beautiful morning in August during the summer orientation paddle. The Miami River is gleaming with a new day's sunshine. The green banks hold back the forested areas. The river is calm and only the birds are heard this morning. In the far distance you can see Dayton's skyline, bridges, and highway traffic. Not many cities allow harmony between nature and the city life like that of Dayton. The low dam removal on Monument Avenue in the Miami River will bring recreation to the new white water course planned to replace the low dam.

There are many to thank for Dayton's clean park system. If you are going to thank someone though, it better be Five Rivers Metro Parks. Five Rivers Metro Parks has preserved 15,000 acres of forests, wetlands, and farmlands. They have installed six bike paths throughout Montgomery County. There are 19 parks for the public to use for recreation. Many of these parks provide the option of camping at no cost to the participant. Twin Valley Park has 22 miles of hiking paths for the adventurer up for the challenge. Five Rivers Metro Parks also has a mountain biking course for the avid bikers out there.

I love the outdoors, but Dayton still has more to offer. This year I have learned about some of the entertainment attractions like Victorian Theatre, Riverscape, the Riverscape Ice Rink, Fifth Third Field, the Second Street Market, and many fine restaurants downtown. I've already visited many of these attractions this year but I still have more to see. This winter I hope to make it out to the ice rink at Riverscape. When the weather gets nicer I'm looking forward to getting my friends together to go to a Dayton Dragons game.

I don't care who disagrees with me, I think we have ourselves a beautiful city in Dayton, Ohio. Now it's time to draw some more businesses to the area. When rebuilding a city you have to utilize your already grown assets. That is the mission of Tech Town. Tech town was born ten years ago when an unused radiator plant was renovated in Dayton. The space is now used as a campus for technology commercialization: Tech Town. The ultimate goal of Tech Town is to

provide an environment for optimal success for businesses that specialize in technology. Tech Town offers consultants in their Wright Patterson Air Force Base and also the University of Dayton Research Institute. Among the benefits of working with Tech Town is a proactive Dayton government. Dayton is looking to add to their 750 businesses, 100 restaurants, bars, night clubs, and art institutes. For more information on the Tech Town plan visit the website <http://www.daytontechtown.com/>.

Say what you want about the city of Dayton. I feel a part of it. There are some beautiful places in the city. The integration of nature, and outdoor parks within the city provide some sights worth seeing. Entertainment attractions like Fifth Third Field, and an outdoor ice rink provide some excitement for getting downtown. One thing that I really like the most about Dayton is how it builds off of its assets. A river runs through it – lets protect it. There's 15,000 acres of natural beauty in the area – lets make it accessible. The Dayton Dragons are located downtown –lets showcase them. We need to draw businesses to downtown – lets provide expertise in a field we're known for: technology. I'm proud to call Dayton my own. I'm excited to see what the future holds for a city that is working hard to elicit its assets.

Merry Christmas all!