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Let the New Year Ring with River Ramblings!

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Monday, January 2, 2012

Let the New Year Ring with River Ramblings!

Connie Reda, 2014 Cohort

December 31st, I celebrated the coming of 2012 sitting around the kitchen table talking with several of my good friends from Chicago. The night was pleasant and surprisingly warm. At one point in the night we simply sat there calmly, feeling the city air waft through the window, until my friend Helen broke the silence with a chirpy question, "So what was everyone's high and low in 2011?" As I pondered what could be my high and low I was surprised at how quickly the high of my year came to mind. I'm the type of person who really likes to think things out and I usually don't make quick decisions. So, after forcing myself to consider some lesser alternatives I knew that without a doubt the best part of my year was becoming a River Steward.

I'm proud of being a River Steward. At every Christmas gathering this year my Aunts and Uncles asked me how school is and I would go straight into a story involving the Rivers Institute. This past semester in Dayton I've met tons of new people and made many new friends. The Cohort of 2014, that I became a part of this year, is comprised of quality students who are all eager to get more involved in the community. The cohorts above have been wonderful role models and I will never forget how welcoming they were to me and the rest of the "Baby Stews" throughout the entire semester. I am constantly being motivated to stay involved on campus and perform my best by the goodness of all my peers.

Ever since I arrived to the University of Dayton as a timid little Freshman my time here has gotten better and better. I attribute this to the increasing number of opportunities I have received, starting with applying to be a River Steward. From the moment I was accepted in to the program I could feel its welcoming nature. Our Orientation Paddle down the Miami River opened my eyes to the true potential of the City of Dayton, the University of Dayton, and my education for the first time. Since then, I have felt blessed with the means to easily get involved with City of Dayton and its surrounding environment. I have been able to Kayak with the Dayton Rotary Club, teach Girl Scouts how to Canoe, Volunteer for Five Rivers Metro Park and watch my fellow River Stewards become involved in and initiate other opportunities such as a Boy Scout paddle down the Great Miami River (that will hopefully take place this summer), teaching special needs students in the Dayton area to Kayak, launching the bike renting program at the Rec Plex, and designing a mobile river museum to teach students in the Dayton area about their watershed. I've also had the privilege of becoming the intern for Ohio's Great Corridor Association (OGCA), which has allowed me to become even more involved with the Dayton Community. On that note, the only thing that makes me happier than thinking of all the things I have done this semester with the River Stewards is thinking of all the things I will be able to do next semester! So, I write this reflection looking forward to a new year filled with

kayaking, River Ramblings (the OGCA newsletter), River Mobiles, and the 5th Annual River Summit! Thank you for reading and supporting the Rivers Institute and your rivers!