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From Dayton to Bloomington to California to India

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Wednesday, May 15, 2013

From Dayton to Bloomington to California to India

Saehan

Happy summer everyone! I can't believe I'm not a baby stew anymore this year as a river steward has flown by and I must say it was spectacular. I learned so so much about the the waters that surround us at UD and how they can impact a campus and a city by increasing the feel of ownership and community for everyone. I can't wait to keep learning next year, and even though I am cooping in Cincinnati next semester, I am going to be as involved as possible and I hope. I hope I get a chance to work with the RiverMobile giving tours and such because I had a blast the last time during Stander.

So this past year I've learned a lot about the aquifer and how lucky we are to have such clean water, and it's been really interesting to apply that knowledge to other places I go. When I go home to Bloomington, water isn't something that gets talked about a lot. B-town is pretty hippy to start with, so there is a lot of environmental awareness in the community. However, we always talk about the trees and the air when we talk about environmental issues, and it's very rare that I ever hear about water. I am pretty sure we don't have any kind of clean water scarcity issues, so I think that people just don't even consider how lucky we are.

I just went to Redlands California for about a week to visit one of my best friends that goes to school there. In Redlands they get a lot of pollution from LA, so they have a lot of clean air and water issues. Everyone makes sure to use water purifiers and drinking tap water is just asking to get sick, according to the students I talked to. It was yet another wake up call for me when I was chastised for filling my glass up in the sink like I would do in Dayton. The idea that tap water isn't drinkable was so alien to me, and it's so sad that so many people can't just drink water from their sink. I told everyone about our aquifer and how lucky we are to have such awesome clean water and everyone decided the next time I visit I need to bring some Dayton tap water so they can taste it for themselves.

In a couple days I leave for my 10 week ETHOS immersion to India. I'm excited and a little nervous for this new adventure and I'm interested to see what I will learn and experience water wise while I am there. I am not supposed to drink any local water or eat anything that was soaked or made in local water because of the diseases that travel in the water there. In the class I took preparing us for this trip, I was taught that in many places in the world people get sick and die from dirty infected water every single day. I knew that many places don't have clean water, but that was the first time I really thought about the fact that some people's only source of drinking water, which everyone needs to survive, is also the cause of serious sickness and death. It's unbelievable to think about and yet again makes me realize how lucky we are and that we need to appreciate it to the fullest.

Another thing I got the chance to experience this semester was the love that so many people have for the city of Dayton. One of my favorite volunteering experiences this semester was at OctoberFest, watching the bikes people could leave while they wandered around listening to the awesome live music, seeing the cool art in the tents, and sampling the beer. The lady we worked with was part of BikeDayton and she was just so excited about the Dayton community and everything it has to offer. The other people volunteering with us were the same way and everyone surrounding us at the event was friendly and wanted to talk about all the great things Dayton has to offer, many of which are hidden and not widely known. It was great to be around such a great community full of love and respect for their city and everything it has to offer, and I hope that I continue to become part of that great community serving and giving back to Dayton and UD.