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Leadership Outside of River Stewards

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Wednesday, February 23, 2022

Leadership Outside of River Stewards

Isabel Bartram, 2023 Cohort

A key feature of the River Stewards program is a group of people who are all learning to be leaders, and these skills often come out in other areas of life. While I am a River Steward, I am also the VP of the Fantasy and Science Fiction Appreciation Club, a Resident Assistance, and the Director of Arts and Cosplay, or DAC for short for the Anime Club. Each leadership opportunity allows me to express different sets of skills and today I want to talk about how the DAC position lets me be a leader in creativity.

UD's Anime Club is so full of life and is truly a club of friends. We all help each other grow, learn about new things together, and we're there to pick people up when they are feeling down. As the DAC, it's my job to help people with their artistic or cosplay goals. In case you don't know, cosplay refers to either making or buying a costume of a character from a show, comic, or video game and it is a great deal of fun! I have been cosplaying for seven years, so it's been an honor to help pass my love of cosplay to the anime club members. I help people learn to sew, give advice about how to make a prop, or generally encourage people to try something new in a safe environment.

I relate this experience to River Stewards in that similarly to how the Stews try to get people more engaged in environmental issues and show care for the community, I am there for the Anime Club and help them to feel more comfortable with themselves and be more active in things they care about. Just as the Stews are passionate about helping people grow more comfortable with the environment, I help people as the DAC to feel more comfortable liking what they like and loving themselves at the same time. A big issue within the cosplay community is body issues; and I try to help cosplayers feel confident with their unique body type when cosplaying. I have spent tons of time in my life working with people on accepting their body and feeling "good enough" to cosplay characters that are conventionally beautiful or have the "perfect body." The truth is that we are all beautiful just the way we are and being the DAC helps me to reach people with that message and help my friends enjoy their favorite characters through cosplay while also learning just how beautiful each and every one of them are!