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Wednesday, February 23, 2022

Describing the Significance of Water in My Life

Katie Horgan, 2024 Cohort

Water has always been significant in my life. At the age of six I began competitively swimming, something I continued through the end of high school. Though the pools I swam in were strictly manmade, I still felt a connection to any body of water I came across. After graduation, I continued my streak of always being near water by getting a job as a traveling lifeguard for some pools and lakes in my area. The job had its' challenges, but there was one particular aspect that kept me coming back for two more summers. I loved seeing how people interacted with each other. As a lifeguard, I was basically paid to people watch, but in a pool environment people seem to act somewhat differently. I have seen grow adults squeal with joy at their friend jumping off the diving board. I have experienced a baby saying some of their first words poolside and watched as the parents smiled ecstatically. Water provided them a space to congregate and make memories. I myself have had these same experiences. I have spent my summers swimming in quarries, lakes, and beaches. Water has provided me with so many happy moments shared with friends and family.

I think the thing that fascinates me most about water is that it sustains life. It was in high school when I first became interested in sustainability, and of course I thought about how water factors in. Water ecosystems have an interconnectedness that still intrigues me. In college I began to learn about energy pyramids. An energy pyramid is meant to represent that every ecosystem has a flow of energy. When this flow is interrupted somehow, the entire pyramid suffers. Pollution, climate change, and a lack of respect for our environment are the main reasons why this flow would be interrupted. This knowledge furthered the passion I already had for protecting our environment. I started to think about how pollutants could harm creatures both on land and in water, and how this could lead to me not being able to make more memories in the beautiful outdoor spaces I was used to frequenting. For this reason and many others, I decided to join the River Stewards program at UD. I know the program has expanded my knowledge of water an immense amount. This knowledge will continue to grow for my remaining two years.

I excitedly look forward to the rest of my time as a River Steward at UD and beyond.

