Semester of Service at Adventure Central
Student Overview
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Environmental Biology

Semester of Service
The Semester of Service program allows students to take a semester away from full-time study to contribute 450 hours of direct service in the Dayton community. Students also participate in a three-credit course that meets once a week to examine urban issues and social justice. Through the Fitz Center for Leadership, students are allotted housing assistance and a stipend to complete their semester of service.1

Adventure Central
In the West Dayton community, Adventure Central is transformative. The program is located at Wesleyan Metropark and sits just in front of Wolf Creek. The center empowers youth in West Dayton to become healthier, happier and more successful versions of themselves through nature exploration, homework assistance and a wide variety of out-of-school educational programs. There is no other place like Adventure Central in the country.

Adventure Central is possible through a partnership between The Ohio State University, Five Rivers Metroparks and 4-H.2

Positive Youth Development
Adventure Central is committed to positive youth development. The kids are surrounded by encouragement and positive role models. Adventure Central emphasizes the importance of school and making healthy decisions. Healthy decisions for physical as well as mental health.

I pledge my HEAD to clearer thinking, my HEART to greater loyalty, my HANDS to larger service, and my HEALTH to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world.

Adventure Central participants are greeted positively every day as they walk in. We want the kids to feel like they are supported and have agency in their own lives. One way Adventure Central tries to promote a sense of agency is through the Job Experience and Training (J.E.T.) program.

The J.E.T. program teaches children between the ages of 12 and 18 important life skills. They must fill out an application, go to an interview, and possibly go on to receive a job placement. J.E.T. teens have the opportunity to work within Adventure Central and Five Rivers Metroparks gaining valuable work experience. Participants in the program start out completing volunteer work, but may move on to paid positions.3

Daily Work
As a semester of Service participant, I am a full time group leader. I, along with Ellie Ryan, are the blue group leaders for the spring semester of 2018. Blue group kids are 2nd and 3rd graders and ages seven to nine years old. Group leaders are responsible for daily lesson plans to get kids interested in learning and outdoors as much as possible!

We lead many activities, but there are some that stand out as being more successful than others. The best activities are the ones where the kids are challenged, get to move around, and be active. A great example of this kind of activity is the DIY kites shown above.

Daily Work
In the picture below, the kids were challenged with finding puzzle pieces hidden around the room. After finding the pieces they worked on teams to put together the puzzle pieces to form sentences. Then, as a group, they read the sentences aloud. This activity worked as a team building activity and helped their reading and writing skills.

There is a different theme every month at Adventure Central. While working at Adventure Central we encountered themes including Hidden Figures and College Road Trip. Hidden figures celebrated African American History Month and allowed the children to discover new role models. College Road Trip got the kids interested in higher education and their many options after high school.

Acknowledgements
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2https://www.metroparks.org/adventure-central/
3https://youthsuccess.osu.edu/?page_id=213