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River Stewards - A Life Changing Experience

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Sunday, December 25, 2011

River Stewards - A Life Changing Experience

Amy Schultz, 2014 Cohort

Applying to be a River Steward was the best decision I made as a freshman at the University of Dayton. I've already gained so much from the program, and it's only been one semester. Looking back on the countless happenings of my brief time as a River Steward, I can honestly say it has been a rewarding experience that I can't wait to continue with.

Coming into the program I hardly knew the majority of my cohort, and never expected us to bond as quickly as we did. After a few days of team building activities and getting to know each other, you'd never guess we were strangers only a couple days prior. It was great to get the opportunity to meet a handful of people with the same interests as me. I'm so thankful for all of the friendships I've made- without River Stewards to bring us together I would have missed out on some great times with some great people (and I can't wait to see what the future holds for the 2014 cohort!!)

I'd say the most rewarding and fondest memory I have from this semester would be the orientation 17 mile paddle. I'd never been kayaking in my life, and was slightly nervous to have to take on such an intimidating task as an amateur. However, once we got paddling the nerves subsided and I was able to fully relax and enjoy being out in nature. Being from Cincinnati I never had many opportunities in high school to just sit and enjoy what the world has to offer, and being on that paddle brought me back to the nature-appreciating time of my childhood. Getting to spend time with all the river stewards and community partners without the worry of social networks and happens of the outside world was priceless, and an experience I'll always remember. That and spending time around the campfire, paddling through the mega fountains at River Scape, and the feeling of accomplishment after pulling my kayak ashore after the paddle was over.

The Rivers Institute has given me so much in my small time as a River Steward, and I am so excited to move forward and see what the next semesters bring. Anyone who is considering applying for the program should definitely do it - there isn't a better opportunity out there to have so much fun and get involved in the community as being a River Steward is!!!

Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays!!