

Women In Natural Sciences (WINS) is an innovative and successful science enrichment program conducted by the Academy of Natural Sciences in collaboration with the School District of Philadelphia. Since its founding in 1982, WINS has been providing female public school students with hands-on science classes, scientific literacy and skill-building activities, and opportunities for personal growth in a uniquely nurturing setting.

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Mahogany Davison (far right) exploring with Briana Oliver and Jasimir Turner during one of the many hikes at PEEC.

WINS Newsletter

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 3

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Reflections from PEEC

My experience at PEEC (Poconos Environmental Education Center) was different. It was something I would never think to do during the summer. For example, the 3½ mile hike we did (to Tumbling Waters) was something very different and new to me because knowing who I am, I barely like to walk up the steps.

So the hike was a new experience for me and it also showed me I had the ability to do something like that - climb up and down steep hill, walk across streams. Also, it changed the way I see the woods and nature.

Before PEEC, I thought the woods were a scary, dirty, ugly place to be. But going on hikes and trails made me see the beauty of the outside and nature. For example, the waterfall, looking out over the lookout at Tumbling Waters, the streams and fields were really beautiful and it changed how I look at nature.

Going to PEEC was a great experience for me and I'm glad I had the chance to do it.

Mahogany Davison, WINS



Michele Holland, Mahogany Davison and Sandy Tang in front of the falls in the Tumbling Waters hiking trail.

My experience at PEEC was a very positive one; I would say life changing as well. I got off the bus expecting to see trees, and nothing but trees. I was so wrong.

Yes, there were trees, but due to the amount of knowledge I acquired there, I learned that the wilderness is a very complex and beautiful thing. Being there challenged my perception on all things little; that even the tiniest of creatures can have an impact on the world.

The week at PEEC was a time of many firsts. Before, most of the stars I've seen turned out to be lights from airplanes! Learning astronomy in school and looking at pictures of stars is nothing close to how beautiful they are in actuality.

After coming to PEEC, I felt stronger. I would have never pictured myself going on a 3 hour hike (Tumbling Waters). I learned to live without my usual pieces of technology. In all, I loved PEEC and would not hesitate to say that it was the best week of my life.

Sandy Tang, WINS I

My First Kayaking Experience



WINS II with the kayaking instructor at Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

My first trip as a WINS II was kayaking. I was very hesitant about going. I have a fear of being in little boats in huge amounts of water. As soon as I found out that was our trip, I was like "NO, NO WAY am I going". But Ms. Betsy talked me into going, so I gave it a chance.

The entire ride to Cape Henlopen in Delaware I was wondering how it was going to be and it this was that going to be my last day alive. My nerves started to calm down a little because I started thinking it can't be dangerous if Ms. Betsy is letting us do this.

We then arrived and I found out we were going to be kayaking in the OCEAN!!! I panicked and told Ms. Betsy I couldn't do it. She said "Yes, Deneisha, you can do it. It's not that bad". I was scared to the point a tear came down. But I finally said to myself, "yes, I can do this".

I got in that boat and started paddling. I thought – "this isn't as bad as I thought". I was kind of happy and thought it was fun. It was a loooong way across the ocean, but I made it through.



Deneisha Cook, finally at ease, kayaking in Delaware



The WINS II "fleet" in the process of taking off for an ocean kayaking experience.

When I was finally done, I was so proud of myself. I got through my fear of a little boat in a huge body of water. Ms. Betsy really encouraged me to go kayaking and I got rid of my fear. Although I got really wet, it was a lot of fun and a nice experience. I'm happy I went and can honestly say I'll do it again.

Deneisha Cook, WINS II

SEPTEMBER

- 7th - Molly Olshin
24th - Joy Morrow
30th - Sunnise Faust-Saunders



OCTOBER

- 6th - Dominique Thomas
15th - Jasmin Turner
19th - Zania Jones
26th - Maranda Parker
26th - Mjaan McIvor

NOVEMBER

- 7th - Sandy Tang
9th - Debbie Lynn Mayo
15th - Linda Croskey
18th - Sydney Dombrowski
25th - Tesha Jones
26th - Janai Keita
26th - Jacqueline Ng
28th - Krista Hill

On not quitting

In school I'm required to complete 45 hours of community service in order to pass, and what better place to do that than the Academy of Natural Sciences. While the WINS I spring classes were still in sessions, I asked Ms. Betsy if I could help her with anything during the school year to get the necessary hours. Sadly Ms. Betsy didn't; but she knew someone who did, Ned Gilmore.

Ned Gilmore is the Collections Manager for Vertebrate Zoology at the Academy of Natural Sciences, who thanks to perfect timing, needed help with the Mammal Collection Catalog. I really didn't care what I was going to do, as long as I completed my hours. I took the opportunity thinking I wouldn't be interested in anything I was going to do. In the beginning, I

was completely right. All I did was sit at a computer desk and type in data for animals that had names I couldn't pronounce with localities I've never heard of, for an hour after school on Tuesdays. I got annoyed and wanted to quit.

Luckily I didn't quit, because one day as I was typing in the data, I came across a name that looked interesting to me, *Microtus*. I looked it up, and to me they looked hamsters. They were so cute and chubby!!! To my surprise they were Voles, which until then I had no knowledge that there was such a species.

As the school year progressed, my interest in Zoology grew. Now every time I come across a genius and/or species that I've never heard of I take the time to look up what kind of ani-

mal it is and learn random facts about them. I'm glad I didn't quit.

Mjaan McIvor, WINS II



Mjaan McIvor, working behind the scenes at the Academy's Ichthyology Department.

Editor's Note:

Due to her diligence at work, Mjaan is now a WINS Intern with the Ichthyology Department.

My experience in the USDA

As part of the internship in the USDA, the girls do a presentation of their project to the USDA scientist and their fellow WINS. What follows are Priya Smythe's words of that day:

When I first heard about the USDA I was sitting in this same room listening to some other WINS girls tell me about their experience. I wanted what they went through; I wanted to learn what they learned.

When Ms. Betsy told me that I was accepted to participate as an Intern in the USDA, I was so excited I couldn't wait to tell my mom. That first Tuesday I learned pipetting technique with Dr. Steven Lehotay. Dr. Lehotay told me that I had some of the best pipetting skills out of all the WINS (he's been keeping records from the past years).



Priya Smythe in the midst of practicing her pipetting technic.

The next couple of Tuesday I worked with different scientists and helped them with the projects they were working on. I learned about mass spectrometry with Dr. Alan Lightfield – we played with M&M's, separating them by color and/or size

to learn the subject. The only problem was we couldn't eat them because they were contaminated!

During our lunch, we were able to share with other scientist and learn about what they do in the USDA. I learned about things like biofuel and food safety. It made me think about other things that we could do to help the environment. Hearing about other career paths in the science field opened my eyes to many different ideas.

Being here has taught me so much - what I may or may not want to do as a career. This opportunity was such a wonderful one and I'm glad I came here. I wish that I could come again.

Priya Smythe, WINS II

THE
ACADEMY
OF NATURAL
SCIENCES

- PHILADELPHIA -

1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway
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ALL WINS

Maize Maze, Cherry Crest Farm
Saturday, September 17th
9:30am to 2:30pm

Holiday Party at the Academy
Wednesday, December 14th
4:00pm to 6:00pm

WINS I

First Class of Fall Session
Wednesday, Sept. 14th
4:00pm to 5:30pm

Field Trip! Bronx Zoo
Saturday, Oct. 8th Meet at the Academy at 8:00am, back by 7:00pm

Field Trip! - Hawk Mt. Sanctuary
Saturday, October 29th - Meet at the Academy at 8:00am, back by 4:00pm

Field Trip! - The American Museum of Natural History
Saturday, December 10th- Meet at the Academy at 8:00am, back by 7:00pm

Dates to Remember...

WINS II

"The Whole Application Process" & Pre-college Tour Workshop
Thursday, September 15th
4:30pm to 6:00pm

Curation and Research of Fossils Workshop
Thursday, October 20th
4:30pm to 6:00pm

Interviewing for College/Internship (for Seniors Only)
Saturday, October 22nd
By appointment

College Tour - Western Pennsylvania
November 9th to 12th
Wednesday 4:30pm to Saturday 6:00pm

What is Biogeochemistry? Workshop
Thursday, November 17th
4:30pm to 6:00pm

WINS Newsletter

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All activities are **rain or shine!**

Please let Ms. Betsy know if you cannot make it to an activity beforehand.