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# Everyday, Great Stories from AmeriCorps Programs and Members

## Connecting a Match to Great Rewards

*By: Melissa Olgine  
4-H Mentor Michigan Initiative*

On November 13, Nikki and LeeAnn met for the first time. Just a few weeks prior, Nikki’s caseworker had contacted me asking for some help finding a mentor for Nikki. She and her younger sister were both youth in the foster care system and were having trouble adjusting to their newest foster home placement.

After interviewing Nikki and reviewing my notes, I decided to match her with LeeAnn, a local librarian who wanted to “make a difference in the life of a young person” and who seemed to personify a calm patience. We met at a local bowling alley for the match



Mentor and Mentee pair with  
4-H Mentor Michigan

meeting. During the course of the evening, Nikki and LeeAnn discovered they both loved the color orange, thought pizza was “the best food created...ever,” and shared they both listened to the alternative rock band *Paramore*, but were secretly closet fans of Miley Cyrus.

Nikki felt so safe with LeeAnn that by the end of the night she had opened up to her and shared that things had been a little tough lately because her younger sister had recently been removed from their shared foster home. She was hurt over her sister’s behavior that had precipitated the removal, but also very confused over the obvious relief the foster family she was placed with felt to have her little sister out of the home.

While I don’t know what the overall outcome of this story is going to be, I am confident it will be a good one. The trust and connection between both Nikki and LeeAnn is obvious. The match could not have happened at a better time for Nikki who desperately needs someone to listen and care for her right now. I know LeeAnn will be that person!

## One Small Service

By: *Kate Armour*  
Cherry Street Health Services

Serving with the Patient Assistance Program, I encounter patients in all emotional states: furious, frustrated, overjoyed, relieved, indifferent, and anywhere in between. Through these reactions I have come to understand how important this program is to our patients. Not incurring the cost of often expensive medications makes a huge difference in these patients' lives.

One particular encounter with an individual further reinforced this understanding. This patient came in to my tiny office using a walker. There was hardly room for her to

turn around and I had no other chair to offer her other than my own. She sat down and her story poured out along with her tears. She had been through the ringer with a myriad of medical diagnoses and trying to get care without insurance. She had been fighting to get any form of insurance coverage she could, but kept running into closed enrollments across the board.

When she came into my office she was at the end of her rope. It pained me all I could offer her was help with a few of her dozen medications. But the relief and gratitude on her face made it feel like so much more! My words of

“yes” and a compassionate, “I’m sorry for everything you’ve been going through,” meant a great deal. I didn’t solve all of her medical issues that day, and I certainly didn’t cure her, I didn’t even really help significantly lighten her load, but she left my office with a smile on her face. I felt renewal to continue helping our patients in any way that I can.

## What was I so worried about?

By: *Dawn Gould*  
Downriver CARES AmeriCorps

I serve with Downriver CARES AmeriCorps in Southgate, Michigan where I facilitate parent/child interaction groups. These groups promote literacy, social, and emotional growth, and offer parenting tips and suggestions.

At the beginning of my second year of service, I was given the opportunity to begin a new parent/child interaction group in Taylor. The site had been closed for quite some time, so I knew it was going to take a lot of effort to get it up and running. Initially intimidated by starting a group in a community in which I did not live, my worries stopped when I was welcomed with open arms. There are more than 400 children that attend Head Start at this site so I knew I could get at least two or three families to

participate. And I was right; all it took was a smile and some small talk!

I would stop parents in the hall and explain to them what I was doing. With a little time and effort, I had a playgroup of four in a matter of two days! Even though this group was small, the members were strong and supportive of one another. They have donated items for crafts on special occasions; they have brought in special snacks and treats; and most importantly, they listen intently to any parenting tips we offer and are putting a great deal of effort into providing a great start for their children.

It is so rewarding to build

something from the ground up and be a part of these families' lives. When I go to the site on Mondays and Wednesdays, just knowing parents are counting on me to be there makes me know I am doing something good – and that most of all I am making a difference in the lives of these children!

## I Never Knew...

*By: Gopi Patel  
City Year Detroit*

As a newcomer to City Year Detroit, I didn't realize the impact I would have on students. Sure, some of my students dread coming to tutoring, but there is a select few that actually enjoy the experience. Every day they stand eagerly by the classroom door, looking for my arrival. As soon as they see me they ask, "Miss P! Can I come to tutoring with you today?!" I soon realized those students were the reason I joined City Year. The look on their faces motivates me to be a better tutor and mentor for them.

Everyday during sixth hour, I tutor a student in the City Year Room of Brenda M. Scott Middle School. This student is one of my favorite young people, always so excited to learn and get out of her noisy classroom. She is a grade behind, but has so much potential. One day we were writing a creative poem about someone important in her life. Feeling frustrated, she said, "Ms. P, I

know who I want to write about, but I can't find the words! This is hard. I don't want to do this anymore." But I responded, "No, don't give up. It's not so hard! You just have to let the words flow and not worry about how it sounds."

Through these small words of encouragement, she started writing and finally put her pencil down. As she was handing me the poem, she said, "Miss P, my poem is about you." I replied, "Really? That's so sweet of you." She then responded, "Yeah, well... you're the only one I can really talk to. And you're so nice to me and I really like coming to tutoring with you. You're so helpful and I really appreciate it."

Suddenly, the bell rang and it was time for her to go home. The bell seemed to ring just at the right time. She didn't say much, but I

had tears flooding my eyes. I was so touched because I never knew how much I meant to her. It finally hit me that it may not seem like I'm making a huge impact on the kids, but I really am. I'm changing the lives of my students, one person at a time. This makes me so much more inspired to come in everyday with a smile on my face and a can-do attitude.



City Year member helping a student in an after-school program

## Connecting Families through Homework?

*By: Amanda Cook  
Schools of Hope*

It was the last Family Night for parents enrolled in Schools of Hope's English as a Second Language program. We decided to give the children of our students a chance to express what this class has done for them or say what they like about their parents being in school. As we went around the room, each child shared their thoughts.

One little girl said, "I am so excited and proud that my mom is learning to speak English! Now she can help me with my school work, and I can help her learn and do homework." Her mother was so happy to hear her daughter was proud of her.

Bringing the children to Family Night festivities has really helped the group come together during class. It not only gives parents an opportunity to exhibit how great their children are, but it also allows them to practice their English skills as a group. The mother of the little girl who shared told me her daughter loves for the two of them to do their homework together on Wednesday nights after class. This program has given their family a great bonding experience. Seeing their excitement and enthusiasm makes us realize what a rewarding experience we're having thanks to AmeriCorps.



Participants in Family Night festivities with Schools of Hope

## Helping Those In Need: The Self-Employed

In Northern Michigan, job opportunities are scarce. Many of the people who live up there either earn a living waiting tables and bartending or are in the construction business. Several of our clients are self-employed and are currently watching their businesses fall apart because their clients have experienced a decrease in annual income. We have had a difficult time getting banks to help the self-employed because of the large amount of paperwork and Profit and Loss (P & L) statements they require.

The P & L statements often pose a challenge for business owners because of the accounting knowledge necessary to create such statements. We have just received trial modifications for two such people. The first was a married couple who have two young children living at

home. The husband owns a construction business and is used to making six figures each year. In recent years though, business has been slow and he is looking at a gross annual income of significantly less. Another problem with this is he was no longer able to afford health insurance, an unfortunate circumstance when his wife became very ill and was diagnosed with cancer. Her hospital and treatment bills are very large and growing daily.

The second person is a single woman whose husband left her with an income of about \$20,000 a year and a \$1,800 a month mortgage payment. She started a daycare to supplement her small income as a waitress at a local casino. The bank wanted a P & L statement with just the income and expenses for the business listed. This was a challenge

*By: Suzanne Elzinga  
Foreclosure Corps*

as the childcare and it was an in-home business.

I was able to help put together P & L statements for both clients, which was a huge relief for them. The bank seemed satisfied, and both clients received trial modifications they feel able to maintain. Both clients were also very proactive in obtaining their modifications. They returned all requested paperwork when asked, made calls to the bank, and worked very hard to receive these workouts. The clients who take an active role in their modification process tend to have better luck in retaining their homes, and I was happy to be able to take part in this process.

## Youth and Their Futures, A Collaborative Effort

My name is Kathryn Johnson and I am an AmeriCorps member at MARESA in Marquette. My responsibilities include assisting with career preparation and exploration activities in K-12 schools in two counties in the U.P. A few months ago, I organized a dinner meeting to support the collaboration and

communication of high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs throughout Marquette and Alger Counties. CTE programs include subjects such as business, health occupations, and the industrial trades.

*By: Kathryn Johnson  
MARESA*

classes that teach students useful skills that can be applied to future employment. Our students can earn college credit in Culinary Arts, Aviation Technology, Cosmetology, and Welding.



MARESA members making pasties for a school fundraiser

The dinner meeting brought together teachers and advisory committee members (professionals in the field) for 13 CTE programs, with a total of 80 attendees. The meeting was hosted at Northern Michigan University Jacobetti Center's Culinary Program. This showcased an example of how high school students can earn college credit through articulation agreements

between high schools and universities while taking hands-on

Out of 56 anonymous survey evaluations received, 55 respondents reported the meeting was useful to learn about the other CTE programs and promote collaborations between business professionals and teachers' classrooms. These collaborations will certainly benefit hundreds of high school students in both counties as they explore potential careers and plan their future professions.



## The American Red Cross in Action

*By: Debra Krieg  
Together We Prepare*



**AmeriCorps members in action  
with Together We Prepare**

As I arrived at my service site, I detected the faint smell of smoke. Once inside, it was apparent there had been a fire this morning. Volunteers were bustling everywhere, including those who didn't usually volunteer that day. As I made my way to my desk, a dog barked. A dog, I thought? Had someone brought a pet to work? I wandered back out to the lobby and it suddenly hit me. There in our lobby

were two fire clients, still carrying a blanket. They had spent the night, and a freshly-washed little black and white dog was racing in circles around their feet. The clients were headed to a friend's home to pick up a dog crate. I offered to help, and quickly drafted to create a spreadsheet to track client information.

Later, another fire client came in. I began interviewing her, gathering information, and making telephone calls to assist her in recovering her identification. I sent her to a motel room with information and a comfort kit. Then I passed a mother, grandmother, and two young children in the lobby. After providing them something to drink, another client came into the lobby looking quite traumatized. I observed a fellow AmeriCorps member calmly listen to the victim and effectively help her

focus on present matters. It was clear this client had emotional and mental issues that rendered her quite vulnerable and would affect where we placed her for the next three nights.

My site director thoughtfully and compassionately ran through the options for this client. She carefully eliminated all areas of the city that could pose problems or dangerous conditions for her, all while remaining impartial and respectful of her humanity. All of the Red Cross volunteers working to meet the immediate needs of the fire victims truly epitomized the meaning of voluntary service. They showed up to help, not prompted in any manner by desire for gain. The priority was to serve the humanity in each person. Today I saw the American Red Cross in action and came to realize my important role within this great organization.

## A Dedication to Life

*By: Jacob Ignatoski  
Michigan Habitat's AmeriCorps*

It was a cool, wet, dreary morning, yet spirits were bright and sunny inside the homebuyer's house on the day of her dedication. The home was sponsored by Wal-Mart, and consequently the property was not only teeming with Habitat staff and friends and family, but with Wal-Mart employees as well. It was a crowd of approximately 40 individuals, many of whom had not yet experienced the power of a Habitat house dedication. As it happened, emotions ran high, tears flowed, and the homebuyer experienced overwhelming joy. A dream of hers was coming to fruition!

Everyone present introduced themselves, some sharing stories about their involvement with the build and the entire process. As I listened to these stories being told, I reflected on my own involvement in the process as a Habitat AmeriCorps

member. Many things came to mind, including collecting information and documentation, filling out mortgage paperwork, and getting the homebuyer ready for the rigors of home ownership. As I reflected, it reminded me of why I had decided to become involved with the AmeriCorps program. I joined AmeriCorps because of its mission of providing service across the country.

The homebuyer explained how arduous the process was for her as a single mother. Completing sweat equity hours in the morning, going to work, and then finally coming home to cook dinner and help the kids with homework at night – this was a regular schedule for her. As she shared her emotional story, I thought about how an individual's dreams can manifest themselves into reality if the right degree of hard work, dedication, perseverance, and spirit

is exercised, along with help and service from others. I knew the home dedication would be moving, but it was much more powerful than I had imagined. It was a great reminder of the impact AmeriCorps has on communities.



**A Habitat member assists a  
volunteer on a home build  
project**

## Building a Vision & Culture of Service

By: *Matt Reaume*  
*AmeriCorps\*VISTA MCSC*

Serving as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA at the Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC) has been nothing short of the opportunity of a lifetime. In the past few months I have been learning about and experiencing firsthand all the great service being done statewide to address Michigan's critical needs.

Recently I had the privilege of attending a two-day conference on service-learning and civic engagement hosted by Michigan Campus Compact in partnership with the MCSC. This important event brought together educators from higher education and K-12 institutions as well as administrators and staff from community organizations across Michigan. Participants shared best practices, networked with colleagues, and explored potential partnerships. Workshop sessions covered a variety of topics ranging from student-initiated environmental

projects to models in higher education engagement with communities and schools.

The conference also included an informal focus group discussion centered on national service awareness. The information collected in these discussions will assist with Michigan's cross-stream efforts to better connect the national service programs currently operating across the state.

Events like this one help further the MCSC's mission of building a culture of service to strengthen communities through volunteerism. These important statewide gatherings engage partners and foster collaboration both within and outside of the national service family. They also provide

AmeriCorps members, like me, the unique opportunity to be part of a rapidly growing movement that utilizes service and volunteerism as a means of addressing Michigan's most critical needs.



MCSC Board Chair Jim Vella, speaking to student participants at this year's Institute

## Right Place, Right Time

By: *Deidre Erin Denton*  
*MPCA Community HealthCorps*

One of the AmeriCorps member requirements for the Michigan Primary Care Association (MPCA) Community HealthCorps is to become certified in First Aid. Recently, I was able to put my first aid training into action. As a Community Outreach Specialist, I attend many health fairs around the community. At an H1N1 clinic, I was assisting nurses during the Mid-Michigan Food Bank's February Mobile Food Pantry at Cristo Rey Church in Lansing.

While I was chatting with a fellow HealthCorps member, a woman collapsed next to the MI Child enrollment table. The woman hit the

table corner as she fell to the floor, stunning all those who were nearby. I immediately ran over to the woman, whose name I later learned was Linda, to ask if she was alright and what I could do to help. I found Linda's friends and alerted Kay, the H1N1 Registered Nurse, about the situation.

When we returned to Linda, she was still on the floor, but alert. As Kay began to assess the situation, I noticed Linda was cradling her wrist. I went to the kitchen and asked the volunteers if I could get an ice pack. By the time I gave the ice pack to Linda, the paramedics,

also volunteering that day, were on their way over to the table to administer additional first aid. During Kay's assessment, Linda stated she was dropped off at 6:30 in the morning to be the first in line to receive food and forgot to have breakfast. She said she started to become lightheaded, went to the bathroom to splash water on her face, and passed out on her way back to her friends. Kay gave Linda a banana and the paramedics wrapped her wrist. I was so glad I was in the right place at the right time to provide assistance to this woman.

## An Extraordinary Journey

By: Holly Martin  
Superior AmeriCorps

My AmeriCorps site placement is with BHK's Even Start program in Houghton, Michigan. Even Start is a family literacy program that engages parents who need to complete high school or obtain a GED and also have children seven years of age or younger. One individual entered the program after finding himself widowed with five children ranging in age from one to 10. He was committed to keeping his family together and doing what was best for his children. This was a significant challenge for a man with no job, car, or high school diploma, and he was well aware he would have to make some significant changes in his life.

Before we could begin GED preparations, we had to improve his literacy skills. We began by practicing writing letters. He decided to write to his mother in Arkansas, whom he had not spoken with in a couple years. In fact, she had not yet seen a photograph of his youngest child

because he did not know how to address an envelope. He had received a letter from her through a relative in which she wrote, "I don't expect to hear back from you. I know you do not write well enough to respond, but I want you to know that I miss you and think about you and your family." That single letter gave this man such meaningful and personal motivation that I am still in awe at how far he has come in the time we have worked together. In the initial letter, he dictated to me what he wanted to say and then he re-wrote it. We included pictures of his kids, told his mom he was doing everything he could to better himself, explained he was learning to write, and that he would respond to every letter she sent him from now on.

Since then, he has not missed a single day of lab; his penmanship and spelling has improved; and he is

reading and writing every day. We read books he wants to read to his children so they do not have to correct him while he is reading. We also help him fill out job applications. Most importantly, he continues to write to his mom. It will likely take some time for him to fulfill his goals, but this man's journey is an example of how worthwhile these programs are. It is a positive change in his life and his children's lives and I feel extremely fortunate to have been a part of that.



Superior AmeriCorps member interacting with the community

## Encouraging Others to Serve

By: Trevor Pegues  
Faith In Youth Partnership

Christmas is a time for giving and family. One of my favorite ways to celebrate both is to volunteer at a local food distribution program. When a food truck pulls up at a local ministry center, it provides a way to help disadvantaged members of our local community. The food truck usually arrives every first and third Saturday of the month, and this year it happened to arrive just in time for Christmas. I decided to invite Emilio, who is an eighth grade student involved in our after-school program. Emilio lives with his grandparents and is used to sharing food, clothing, and toys with other family members because of tight finances.

When the food truck arrived, we quickly got to work, unloading produce and other items. When there is produce on the truck, it is usually in a loose, bulk form, needing to be individually bagged for safety and easy transportation. Emilio sprang to work, filling bags of apples to be tied by other volunteers. I have taken it upon myself to carry bags, baskets, and boxes for people who are too weak to carry their own. I noticed Emilio watching me with an envious look so I asked him if he would like to jump on board and be a carrier. He said, "That would be sweet!"

Emilio began his efforts as a carrier by holding a smaller box of bread and eggs for an elderly woman. On the way back from her car, he told me in a manner that only a teen boy can express that "carrying bread and eggs made him feel tingly inside." I smiled and encouraged him to carry a heavier load for someone else in the line. He quickly moved to another person struggling with a laundry basket full of donated food and proceeded down the line. After a few more trips he asked if he could come back and help next week. Although he was disappointed to learn this was only a bi-weekly event, the beaming smile never left his face.

After all the food had been distributed, Emilio approached me with a sheepish look. "I feel dirty," he said. I asked him what could possibly make him feel that way. Emilio said someone had given him a tip for helping carry the food. He said he felt bad, considering those people probably needed the money more than he did. I thought about it for awhile and told him if he felt like he shouldn't have the money, he could put it in the offering plate at his church. Overall, it was a great day to give gifts to others and learn how to step outside of ourselves.

## Making a Difference *By: Heather Thackston Michigan AmeriCorps Partnership*

“Telling It: Kids” engages at-risk youth affiliated with SOS Community Services in a stimulating literacy program. The program curriculum provides children, all of whom test below their current grade level in core academics, a chance to learn about expressing themselves in healthy and positive ways through writing, reading, painting, and other forms of literacy activities. SOS Community Services is one of the few organizations in Michigan that provides such an opportunity, and this program has proven to be successful in raising reading levels through past evaluations.

My service includes working with a child who reads one grade below her level and has experienced several traumatic events. Because so many people have filtered in and out of her life, it is difficult to connect with her. In

addition to helping this child achieve academic success, I have also been trying to form and maintain a relationship with her as a positive and consistent role-model.

At one of our sessions, the program coordinator for the SOS after-school program told me she can see this child beginning to form a relationship with me – something she has been unable to do in the past. The child and I have, in fact, begun to connect on many different levels, and it has already positively influenced her behavior in the program. When the program first began, she was distracting to other students and would deliberately disobey program staff. Now she exhibits confidence, healthy communication skills, and is even the first to volunteer each

week for sharing time!

AmeriCorps has allowed me the chance to do what I love and make a difference. Because of AmeriCorps, I have been able to positively impact this child, among others.



Mentor and Mentee spending quality time together at the SOS after-school program

## Power of We

*By: Andy Cease  
Power of WE*

The past February 20th was my first solo day of service. At previous days of service I had only been a volunteer, or at the very most a co-coordinator. Today, however, I was on my own. I scheduled the groups, met the group leaders, identified an appropriate work area, gathered the tools, mixed the herbicide, and set up a plan of attack. The second group I hosted that day was a group of six Michigan State University students, many of whom were studying International Relations, and all of whom were going abroad to work on service projects for their spring break.

After they signed in and completed the safety waiver I walked them through our plans for the day. I provided a brief introduction to the

invasive plant we were removing and an explanation of why winter was a good season to remove that particular plant. The plant is called Autumn Olive, which changes the soil chemistry and leafs out much earlier than native plants, stealing energy in an already challenging environment. The entire group worked extremely hard, finishing the original project I planned for the day in less than two hours. This was very encouraging, as I had a whole host of sites I was eager to treat.

As we moved further into the western reaches of Lake Lansing North Park, I began sharing more in-depth historical stories regarding those that used to manage these natural areas, what used to grow here, and how the Native Americans impacted the environment through which we were

now traversing. This group of highly educated and worldly university students was visibly blown away by the rich historical and ecological character of the city. This whole time they had been looking outwards, to other states, countries, continents, and time periods. This new information shifted their perspective and helped refocus their interests and passions toward what was available to them locally.

As this group was preparing to do service in other countries in lieu of a traditional Spring Break, they realized in a matter of hours, there was a whole host of intriguing, constructive, and enjoyable pass times and service projects to be had in their very own backyard. What an inspiring initiative to be a part of!

## Service Means Sharing

By: Ryan Weberling  
Campfire USA

This year I discussed the topic of community service with my third and fourth grade Camp Fire USA students at Covell Elementary in Grand Rapids. As such conversations can only go so far, my students and I decided to take on a project that would be relevant to them and benefit their school. The project involved organizing the huge clutter of donated clothing items stashed in one of the school's storage closets into a usable resource for students.

The students were enthusiastic and felt connected to the project. Several of them had taken past trips to the cluttered closet in search of something to replace a muddy shirt or torn pants. On the day of our "Covell Clothes Project," the students were noticeably excited. I gave them

nametags that declared their "position" on the service team and we sorted and organized more than 200 articles of clothing! Girls' pants in one box, boys' shirts on that shelf, boots and winter jackets over there! At one point, we found a box of costumes, and three girls ended up sorting t-shirts as fairies and a cowgirl.

The only things students wouldn't touch were the new and unused socks and underwear, which needed to be sorted and stacked into containers. As I sat there, folding tiny boxer briefs and watching the two "counters" fill out their inventory sheets, I realized my year of service is not just about me trying to get things done – as if one person could change the world all alone! Instead, service happens as a community, and it takes the fun, as well as the challenge of teamwork,

collaboration, and friendship. Serving means sharing.

Everyday, my students and I are able to see the obvious result of our service. But in the background is all the important stuff we sometimes forget about – the brainstorming of ideas and searching for opportunities, the planning and the learning how to plan, the actual time and energy, and also the tensions that can arise in the midst of working with others. My students and I experienced all of these aspects of service, made a concrete impact, and came out of it ready to do more in our school and in our individual lives. As one student told me the day after sorting, "Next time, I can help with the underwear."

## Real Bogs vs. Mud Bogs

By: Liz Padalino  
Huron Pines AmeriCorps

"Can anyone tell me what a bog is?" It was three months into my service and my first time in front of a class. My program, Huron Pines AmeriCorps, is designed to assist conservation nonprofit organizations in Northern Lower Michigan. As a Stream Specialist, my service involves more technical skills, like spotting resource concerns surrounding dam removal. At this moment, however, my goal was to teach the students of Grayling Middle School about wetlands. Facing a group of 30 eighth graders, their faces revealed a mixture of attitudes: interest, boredom, excitement, and indifference. "Oh yeah, like the mud bogs!" one student offered, "They race trucks through there every year. It's a lot of fun."

Several other students chimed in with their experiences at the mud bogs. They were referring to a local event where a pit is filled with water and dirt to make a deep, muddy mixture. Trucks high on

jacked-up wheels are brought to the site to race through the mud without getting stuck. This was a stark contrast to the quiet, moss-covered wetland I had in mind. I wondered how I could make these kids realize how cool a real bog was, when compared to the loud, fast, action-packed festival they thought I was going to elaborate on.

Lucky for me, bogs are incredibly interesting. They offer just the type of bizarre plants and crazy stories that would impress an eighth grader. We talked about carnivorous plants of the bog, sparking a lot of interest. Next, we discussed the Tollund man, a 2,000 year old 'bog person' found perfectly preserved in a Denmark bog. All it took was a photograph of this bog mummy face and I knew bogs had won them over. Now, rather than wondering how a truck could plow through *that much mud* they wondered how the bog man could still

have *that much facial hair*. This led to discussions about the scientific value of the bog man, decomposition rates in a bog and the buildup of peat over time.

By the end, the kids were so excited about bogs; they were asking questions about why bogs were acidic and where they could find one. I was so happy to see the kids interested in their local ecosystem and eager to get out and explore it. In the end, real bogs held their own against the mud bog races.



Huron Pines AmeriCorps  
Members in action

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