Nature Camp Counselor at Sunbury Urban Farm

Haleigh Leonard, Natural Resource Management

About Sunbury Urban Farm
Sunbury Urban Farm is located here in Columbus off Sunbury Road. The farm's goal is to educate the community on the importance of nutrition, sustainability, agriculture, and environmental awareness. Kids involved in the programs improve skills in gardening, nature exploration, take healthy risks, and form a connection with the earth.

• 11-week summer camp with 6 different themes.
• Specialty camps: Farm Chef and Teen Apprentice.
• Farm and Forest School through the school year.
• Fall Friday and Saturday programs: Fall at the Farm and Survival Skills.

Counselors were responsible for the schedules and what activities they wanted to do with the campers. This involved leading activities or managing behavior. Most of the time you would have a co-counselor to switch back and forth on responsibilities with.

• Engagement of campers depended on age.
• It was a space for kids to be kids, not a classroom.
• Counselors were there to guide and inspire them.

Tea from foraged ingredients, a frog campers found while creeking, and a love letter to the trees.

Reflections
Being a Nature Camp Counselor gave me some insight into environmental education. I taught me a lot about how different kids connect with nature which relates to my career interests as a NRM major and Developmental Psychology minor. I hope one day to help connect people back to nature by implementing Outdoor Therapy programs into park systems.

• Kids will be kids. I learned a lot about when I should and shouldn't step in.
• They will surprise you.
• I learned how to have fun again.

My future with Sunbury Urban Farm
The farm taught me that working with kids can be exciting, however, it is also exhausting. I am hesitant about returning as a Nature Camp Counselor next Summer, but I will be doing Saturday programs this Fall with the camp.

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A house campers created for a caterpillar, and the chickens on the farm.

Typical day in the position
Exact schedule depended on the age group, but all groups had 2 planned activities each day that fit the theme of the week. As well as an hour and a half of free play time in the play space. My favorite activities included:

• Creeking
• Foraging/Tree ID
• Snacktivities
• Petting the farm cat Margo.

One of many forts the campers loved to build.

After bird ID, campers got to create their own bird species.

A collection of interesting things we said over the summer.

Camp cat Margo in bed of catnip.

Considering for other students
• Highly recommend employment with Sunbury Urban Farm, or at least a visit. You can also volunteer.
• Pay is decent for the position and the hours are preferable during the summer.
• Easy commute if you live in Columbus.
• Outside all day, everyday, unless there is thunder.
• Must have a positive attitude and empathy/respect for ALL things.
• Always felt comfortable and supported at Sunbury Urban Farm.

One of the Farm Chef Campers making their own pasta

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