



1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway
Philadelphia, PA 19103



Dates to Remember...

WINS I & WINS II

WINS Holiday Party - Wednesday, December 19th 4:00pm to 6:00am

"Life After WINS" Alumnae Panel - Thursday, March 7th 4:00-6:00pm

WINS I

First Day Back!

Wednesday, January 9th 4:00 - 5:30pm

Field Trip! - Wagner Museum

Monday, January 21st 9:00am - 2:00pm

Field Trip! - Adventure Aquarium

Saturday, February 23rd 9:30am - 3:30pm

Field Trip! - Delaware Aquatic Education Resource Center

Tuesday to Friday April 16th - 19th

WINS II

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Workshop

Thursday, January 17th 4:30pm - 6:00pm

Senior Fling

Sunday, January 20th 12:30pm to 5:00pm

"Love Yourself: Polish Your Professional Image" Workshop

Saturday, February 9th 9:00am - 3:30pm

MMM...Chocolate Workshop

Thursday, February 21st 4:30pm - 6:00pm

Birds & Bees & Flowers & Trees Workshop

Saturday, March 16th 9:00am - 3:30pm

WINS Newsletter

Editors

Betsy Payne
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Send your comments or questions to:

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All activities are
rain or shine!

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



Women In Natural Sciences (WINS) is an innovative and successful science enrichment program conducted by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University 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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VOLUME 15 ISSUE 3

DECEMBER 2018

My GeoDESLA Experience

When you think of Montana, what comes to mind? An empty and barren wasteland? Well you're both wrong and right there. It is definitely not a wasteland and depending on where you are, it is not empty either. When I went out to Montana, I went to a specific place called Big Horn Basin. It was just myself, teenage students, supervisors, and dinosaur fossils. Yes, REAL dinosaur fossils. Not only did I get to dig up these fascinating fossils, but I also got to go to the famous Yellowstone National Park! Let's take a closer look into this once in a lifetime experience.

My trip started off at the Philadelphia Airport at 4:00 a.m. While at that airport, I met with another WINS girl, Cynthia To, and one of our many supervisors, Nick. We had to fly from Philadelphia to Minneapolis, Minnesota for a three-hour layover. If I'm being honest, it was quite boring. Fast forward to Billings Airport, we met the other GeoDESLA students. When most of the GeoDESLA students arrived at the airport we set off to Red Lodge, our campground. We played some bonding games and really got to know each other. We ended the night with the

girl's cabin choosing their bunks. I was fortunate enough to get a bottom bunk.

The day after the next was by far the best out of the eight days I spent there. We started off the day with a delicious breakfast and beautiful sunrise. After that, we took an hour drive to the Mother's Day Quarry where we learned about dinosaur fossils and began our first dig. We were basically doing the work paleontologists do all the time. There we saw an abundance of sauropod dinosaur bones (long-neck dinosaurs) known as Diplodocus. I was assigned the task of digging around a fossil with a field jacket on it. Myself and another student were trying to dig enough rock to flip over that same jacket.

When it was lunch time, all the students hung out together and just talked. We got pretty close at that point and some interesting things happened. One of those interesting things was that I ended up with mud inside my nose. I'd rather not get into those details. Then came the night time.

During this time, I was paired up with another student and we had to write a blog for the GeoDESLA Facebook page. After we finished, we headed for the bonfire. With a s'more in my hand, I looked up at the sky. I couldn't help but get emotional. It was the most beautiful thing I've ever seen. The night sky was filled with a plethora of stars that lit up the night. This was definitely something you couldn't see in Philadelphia, something I won't see for a while.

For the two days after, we continued to dig for dinosaur fossils. One of those days I ended up sitting on a cactus. The rest of the week was spent in Yellowstone National Park. It was just as beautiful as the camp site. The very last day was a pain, a rewarding pain. We had to hike the last day, and I kid you not, I've never done a hike that difficult in my entire career in WINS! Of course we were exhausted, but the supervisors compensated us with more ice cream. Wise of them.



Arianna Alfaro on right helps jacket a fossil in preparation for shipment to the Academy. Assisting her is another WINS student Cynthia To and staff from GeoDESLA in August 2018

My Geo DESLA Experience (continued from page 1)



Arianna Alfaro above in July 2017 as a WINS Explainer at the dig in the Academy. At left, visiting the Academy in 2010 it seemed she was pre-destined to be a paleontologist.

The next day it was time to leave magnificent Montana. Cynthia and I didn't leave Billings Airport until 4:30 p.m. after arriving at the airport at 10:00 a.m. On my way back, I couldn't stop thinking about this marvelous experience. This was truly the best event of my entire life. I want to thank all the people that made this trip possible, as well as the students that were with me. From this trip, I made new friendships and confirmed what I want for my future, my future as a paleontologist.



Arianna Alfaro, WINS II

The Un-Intendent Impacts of WINS

Recently, Ms. Kim and I received the following email from one of our WINS alumna; it made us smile, and we'd like to share it with you.

To whom it may concern,

I have just realized that today at 4 am that WINS may have had a negative impact on my life. There was a bat in my living room and upon waking my mother and brothers for assistance, they were horrified and left me to handle it hiding behind the stairs claiming "Hanaa, aren't you a WINS girl?" and "You should know how to catch it nature girl!"

I automatically thought of you both and tried to recall our bat class but couldn't. I thought it was hilarious how

my family assumed WINS was some sort of animal control training course and it made me remember all of the crazy bat games we played while in WINS. Lol, I just had to share that during a bat attack in my living room, (a little dramatic) that I was thinking about you both.

Lots of love,
Hanaa Belgrave



Hanaa Belgrave is currently studying Environmental Health at West Chester University.

DECEMBER

12th - Sedonia Hamilton
26th - Laysha Torres-Fernandez
31st - Thuy Le

JANUARY

1st - Kaiya Pedro-Nichols
9th - Khalisah Bint-Hadi
11th - Elizabeth Escobar
12th - Sawitri Mawardy
17th - Jaelynn Robinson

FEBRUARY

1st - Nayeli Perez
18th - Meymey Seng
18th - India Cerdan
20th - Tatiana Villegas
25th - Luofei Li
26th - Zabana Salcedo
27th - Azeemah Solomon



WINS in Hurricane Island, Maine

As part of our continuing collaborations with UL and NAAEE team, the WINS program was able to send a WINS participant on a scholarship to Hurricane Island in Maine., another UL Innovative Education Awardee!

There's a planetarium in a nearby museum. For over a decade I looked up at the simulated night sky and thought that the brightness of the stars had to be exaggerated. Stargazing isn't a popular pastime in Philadelphia.

Last Spring Ms. Kim told me about a marine biology program in Hurricane Island, Maine and right away I was interested. In my mind, Maine was an easy three or so hours away. Imagine my surprise when I started booking bus tickets and found out it would take fourteen hours!

So, there I was, two in the morning, sleeping bag in one hand, pink pillow in the other and on my back a duffel bag two thirds the size of my body, threatening to topple me over with every step. As we inched our way further up the coast I started to have less and less reception on my phone so I unenthusiastically closed Netflix and searched for music in my library. The coastal scenery was my visual entertainment now.

When I got to Hurricane Island, immediately my phone was taken and locked away. In the moment, it felt like the end of the world, but looking back now I realize that disconnecting helped me to connect. It was so refreshing to be surrounded by people who were as enthusiastic as me, and in many cases even more enthusiastic, about learning and the environment.

Without giving too much away for the girls that (hopefully) will participate in the future, I will say that the program was like a two week long WINS class. Every day we were out and about, every day I was seeing and learning new things. Most of the work we did was on a mini research project based around the intertidal zone. Because of this, we became familiar with the organisms that lived here and some people in the group were even able to find sea stars and anemones.

In addition to working on the project, there were also many activities lined up for us to do. We helped measure scallops from spat bags. We made chocolate pudding with the gelatin in Irish moss. On one day, we went rowing and during the middle of our trip a seal popped its head out of the water!



Nayeli Perez holding a juvenile American Lobster while exploring Hurricane Island off the coast of Maine.

Everything was so much fun, but by far the most fun I had was during all the team building we did. Our group leaders introduced us to a bunch of new games that everyone was in to. There were many nights where intense Uno games went down in the bunkhouse. Some nights we spent knitting and embroidering and making friendship bracelets. Even doing the dishes turned into a party with us.

At the end of those two weeks I was dreading the bus ride back home. Not because I wouldn't be able to watch Parks & Rec until we reached Boston, but because this time it was taking me away from a place I had grown to love and appreciate. I knew that it'd be a long time before I could look out of the window of my room and see the lobster people out on their boats. I wouldn't have the opportunity to get stung by a Lion's Mane jellyfish in a tide pool in Philly, let alone be in a body of water that isn't polluted to the point that it's not healthy to put your feet in.

In Maine, I learned that stars had the ability to light up the sky in a way that millions of planes and helicopters could never be able to do. There I learned that living sustainably isn't unreasonable or out of reach. Above all else, this amazing island taught me that it's time to start exploring new places.

Nayeli Perez, WINS II