Alumnae Bridging the Gap

The WINS college tour was not something that was new to me, but chaperoning as a WINS alumna was a completely different experience. This year there was a good integration between the current ladies and the alumnae. Kerriene Huggins, Manna-Symone Middlebrooks, and I were able to be active mentors to the ladies this year throughout the weekend on the college tour.

Bridging the gap between the high school girls and the graduates is a great combination in my opinion. The ladies had the same questions, excitement, and thirst for the experience of college life as I once had while attending the college tours. Having current college students around seem to have enhanced the trip because the girls had the opportunity to have more intimate conversations with us about the ins and outs of college life that were not sugar coated by the tour guides. Needless to say, they trust our opinions and guidance because we’ve literally came from where they are.

It’s a good feeling coming back and interacting with the ladies after completing WINS. Being in college and having the chance to talk the girls about their next step of gearing up for college can be very helpful especially for those who may be the first generation going to college in their households.

Seeing the growth in not only the girls, but the program, reminds you that we’re a part of something that has made an impact on so many lives. If there is any way that more alumnae could be active in not only the college tour, but WINS in general, I think that they should. I know I personally get excited when I’m around the girls and I can only hope that they feel the same about the alumnae. I think it is important to bond and bridge the gap between the two since we all have a common ground called Women In Natural Sciences.

Donniee Brownlee Robinson  
WINS Alumna 2007-2011
My WINS Experience

WINS has been an amazing opportunity and experience for me. Not only is it an engaging learning environment, it’s a program that opens up the minds of young girls to different aspects of science and life. Even though WINS stands for Women In Natural Sciences, we get to learn about biology, paleontology, ecology, waste treatment, etc… a variety of topics get covered as we move through the program.

Jacquelyne Ng (left) along with Sierra Grayson and Priya Smythe, setting up to go into the marsh at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge on a recent WINS Interns’ trip.

I’ve learned a lot from WINS… from working with people to dissecting squid. I’ve been exposed to so many things other high schoolers don’t normally get a chance to experience. I’m so grateful for the opportunities I get just by being in WINS. The various trips we go on help to reinforce things that were taught in previous lessons; they really drive home how things work and the importance of it. School just teaches the concept of things, but to actually see it in person and get hands-on experience gives so much more depth into the subject.

All in all, WINS has helped me to grow and become more knowledgeable. I would continue with this forever, if I could. It has inspired me to continue learning throughout life. Jacquelyne Ng, WINS II

Editor’s note: Jackie has taken advantage of every opportunity the WINS offers. Through her participation in "WOW" (Women on the Water) she was able to do a two week internship in PEEC, that later led to her employment at PEEC for a month as a camp counselor. She is currently an Intern as a wetland crew and field assistant in the Academy’s Patrick Center.

Jacquelyne Ng exploring the macro-invertebrates at PEEC in her first summer as a WINS I in 2010.

We don’t only learn about science stuff either. We learn important life skills too, like communicating, scheduling, solving problems and becoming more well-rounded and open-minded overall. These are especially useful in moving forward in education and career settings.

College tour

This year’s college tour was amazing! For me personally, being my first college tour, it was totally different than what I expected. College tour is available to WINS II and helps them gain an understanding about a college and to show what the typical “College Life” would be like. I expected it to be stuffed with boring information that would make me even more nervous about attending college – but it was the total opposite.

College tour really helped me realize that college is just like high school, but only this time it costs a ton of money, and it is up to you if you really want to succeed. Also, what you hear about college life is not always true. For example, the “popping” parties and hazing that you always hear about, nine times out of ten, your school work comes before any of those because now you are actually paying for your education.

The week also involved sharing rooms, and spending time together after visiting colleges for the day. One thing I really enjoyed besides visiting different colleges, was hanging out afterwards.

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College tour was truly something new, and I just can’t wait for next year to go again.

Danielle Williams, WINS II