



**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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## Peace and Justice

*As a homework for school, Ebony Dyson, a WINS Senior, had to write a one page biographical essay about Peace and Justice and how it had impacted her life. Her response included her participation in WINS and she kindly agreed to share it with us:*

I have and currently take part in various activities that have impacted the world and are interconnected with peace and social justice; these activities include, but are not limited to being a member of the leadership team, a junior protégé in a young female's inspiration group, a peer mediator, being in partnership with the academy of natural sciences Women in Natural Science (WINS) program and many service learning projects within my high school. The activity that has had the most impact and has enabled me to make changes in the world and include many of my strong points is the WINS program. This program is for minority females students in the school district of Philadelphia; it provides an introduction to science content from many different perspectives and avenues.

Many workshops that I have attended with the WINS program have really showed me how the environment and peace are intertwined. While I sat through a presentation by Oxfam International about "Sisters on the Planet" my eyes were open to how four women reclaimed their lives from natural disasters. Within this presentation these women were effected drastically by climate change and living in very poor conditions. These women took matters in their own hands and made peaceful solutions at an unchanging outcome. This impacted my life to know that even women who have very little say in their country have made a big change in the world by just standing up for what is right in a peaceful way.

As a part of a community service that WINS hosted, we visited Mill Creek Farm, which was once an abandoned and degraded lot in West Philadelphia. This farm now gives community members a chance to plant their own fruits and vegetables, while also having a farmer's market available so that low income minorities in that neighborhood can have access to fresh foods at good prices; having access to fresh fruits and vegetables is a growing problem especially for minorities in inner cities. Not having access to fresh foods can lead to many negative outcomes, for instance, obesity, poor eating choices and health deficiencies, so as this was a growing social issue we took matters in our own hands and assisted with digging out sweet potatoes and selling them at their farmer's market.

Another aspect that brings peace with others is my job as a peer mediator. As everyone in Parkway Northwest is trained in peer mediating, only a few continue with it and give back to the school community by using it. I have observed the need for mediation not only in school, but also in WINS program; as I previously stated this is an all young females program, so at times issues arise and I use my training to make amends to both parties. Learning about peer mediators has really helped tremendously in my growth process of how the smaller things in life can make the biggest change in ourselves and the people around us.

In closing, all of my experiences have led me to pursue a career in forensic science. I believe by becoming a forensic scientist I will help make additional changes to the world in a peaceful way. Therefore, not only did WINS impact my life, but has made me aware of everything all over the world and showed me how to give back. Overall, with the collaboration of my high school and WINS they have implemented the idea of peace and social justice through my everyday life.

Ebony Dyson, WINS II



Ebony Dyson during the latest WINS college tour to New England.

## WOW (Women On The Water) Trip



Monique Edwards is in her second year of WINS

*“I already appreciate the world and the beautiful nature we have, but being face to face with fish and certain birds we don’t see everyday made the world more significant in my eyes.*

*Monique Edwards*

In June of this year, a group of 9 WINS girls got to participate in WOW, an experiential education program focused on building excitement and engagement in young women for the natural world and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Sponsored by the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC), it was funded by the National Park Foundation’s America’s Best Idea Program. Below is the impression of one of the girls.

*Paddle, paddle, paddle!* is all I heard on the Delaware. This trip built confidence, courage, strength and tolerance for a lot of things in life. At first when I was asked to be in WOW it thought “no way, that’s not my type of thing.” But I realized this is a once in a lifetime thing and I have never tried it before. When I told Ms. Betsy I would go, she said “Whaaat! Ms. Monique?” I laughed but deep down inside I was so nervous. I was nervous about not taking a shower for a few days, going to the bathroom outside and sleeping in the woods.

When we got to PEEC, I felt comfortable because I had been there before. The first couple of days we learned about water safety, how to paddle, pack our things and team building. When we finished our training it was time to really start our journey.

I began to get so excited because now I have to paddle, save myself and save someone else as well. That night we packed and rested for the next day. When we woke up I thought, “this is going to be a real eye opener.” I already appreciate the world and the beautiful nature we have, but being face to face with fish and certain birds we don’t see everyday made the world more significant in my eyes.

The first day we went rafting; it was the activity I was looking forward to the most because I never had the opportunity before. We rafted 10 miles! My shoulders and arms were so tight and sore. That night we set up our tents just like we learned and had dinner. While we settled down in our tents we had some time to reflect in our journals and relax. Rafting turned out so well, I couldn’t wait to canoe. Even though I had gone canoeing before, I had never canoed on the Delaware.

The next morning we woke up, got dressed, packed our bags - including our tents we had to break down – and loaded our canoes. The first few hours of canoeing were fun because we were talking and the current was moving us. After all the singing and trying to find our lunch spot, Minisink Island, we started getting exhausted. It had started to rain while we were on the water and we started to give up. When we finally got to the island, we had lunch and listened to folk tales by Kathleen Sandt from the NPS. When we headed out the rain was still going, but we were pushing to get our final stop so we could set up tents and go to sleep. When we finally go to our final stop for the night, we were drenched, tired and cold. But we didn’t stop. I think this is really when the sister bond formed between all of us because that night instead of giving up, we pushed through it and encouraged each other.

The next morning the leadership realized we had enough and let us go back to PEEC to dry out, take showers, and unpack. We went back the next morning to finish our trip down the Delaware by going kayaking.

*(continued on next page)*



The Women on the Water 2010 (from left): Jasmir Turner, Sarah Pellechia, Maranda Parker, Marissa Pinder, Priya Smythe, Manna-Symone Middlebrooks, Monique Edwards, Nancy Koam, Dominique Thomas and Betsy Payne

# Untitled

*As part of every trip, we ask the WINS to journal about their experiences. During the WOW experience (see WOW trip article) we let the girls express themselves as they wished. We requested if anyone wanted to share their thoughts with others, and what follows is one of Nancy Koam's poems.*

I watch your land pass me by.  
Your river goes on...  
and right before my eyes I almost can see the way  
you've lived before me...

I wonder if you'd ever met me  
Would you look into my brown eyes and see the  
love and passion I have inside for your way of life?  
Would you give me 10 minutes of your day?  
And if you did, what would you say?  
Would you say?  
"The beaver and river otter are my brothers. The river  
& trees are my ancestors for they are the roots that my  
people and I came from."

Just out of curiosity I wanted to know when you  
look up at the sky during the night and wish upon a  
star as I do?  
When the wind blows, does it speak to you?  
Or do you wish to be as free like the eagles I've  
seen?

Paddling down the river I've learned to feel the  
breath of land around me and it's a melody.  
One day I will be free...

Nancy Koam, WINS II



Nancy Koam on the approach to Minisink Island in the Delaware Water Gap. The canoe trip down the river made her feel very connected to the original native people of the Delaware.

# WOW trip (cont. from pg. 2)

I was so excited we were still going to go because I get to say I went kayaking. I thought I would capsize this time because I would be by myself, but when the lady showed us how to adjust the kayak and the seat it seemed easier. I honestly love kayaking the best because I could go as fast as I wanted and not follow someone else's speed. Also, I liked kayaking because I got a chance to see if I was brave enough to be on the water like that, by myself.



The WINS girls getting instruction on how to properly use a kayak before going on the last leg of the WOW experience.

Finally as the day ended, we said our goodbyes and went back to Philadelphia. When we got back it was bittersweet to say goodbye because we went through a journey with its highs and lows but still came out strong. Even today we are still close and act like we've known each other for years. WOW is something I will never forget.

Monique Edwards, WINS II

## Birthday Wishes to...

### December

- 1st - Nicole Glover
- 5th - Tenzin Ngawang
- 8th - Joshlyn Johnson
- 14th - Manna-Symonne Middlebrooks
- 23rd - Marissan Pinder
- 27th - Keisha Medina

### January

- 4th - Arlana Brown
- 9th - Kyra Sacksith
- 15th - Rabiya Jalloh
- 16th - Brittany Smith
- 22nd - Katreena Thomas
- 28th - Linda McNeill

### February

- 2nd - Zakia Elliot
- 24th - Nickea Rodriguez
- 25th - Irene Patterson
- 26th - Jasmane Harvey



**WINS**  
Women In Natural Sciences

The Academy of Natural Sciences  
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## ALL WINS

### **Holiday Party at the Academy**

Wednesday, December 15th  
4:00pm to 6:00pm

### **Safari Overnight**

Friday-Saturday, January 7th to 8th  
7:00pm to 7:00am

### **“Life After WINS” Alumnae Panel**

Tuesday, March 15th  
4:00pm to 6:00pm

## *Dates to Remember...*

## WINS II

### **Marcellus Shale Workshop**

Thursday, January 20th - 4:30pm to 6:00pm

### **The College Expression Workshop**

Thursday, February 17th, 4:30pm to 6:00pm

### **Love Yourself: Polish your Social Skills**

Saturday, February 26th - 9:30am to 3:00pm

### **Field Trip! - NJ State Museum**

Saturday, March 19th - Meet at the Academy at 9:00am, back by 4:00pm

## WINS I

### **First Class of Winter Session**

Wednesday, Jan. 12th  
4:00pm to 5:30pm

### **Field Trip! Wagner Museum**

Monday, Jan. 17 Meet at the Academy at 9:00am, back by 2:00pm

### **Field Trip! - Adventure Aquarium**

Saturday, March 5th - Meet at the Academy at 9:00am, back by 4:00pm

### **Field Trip! - Spring Recess trip to Delaware Aquatic Education Resource Center**

Monday to Thursday April 18th - 21st  
Meet at the Academy Monday at 9:00am, back by 1:00pm on Thursday

### **WINS Newsletter**

#### **Editor**

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#### **Send your comments or questions to:**

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