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Marine Science Education at The Community Boating Center

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COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Internship Title: Marine Science Education at The Community Boating Center

Student Name: Sandy Rost

Internship Dates: 1/10/23-3/10/23

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STUDENT SIGNATURE

3/11/2023 DATE:

Sandy Rost

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Marine Science Education at The Community Boating Center

I have been teaching sailing seasonally at The Community Boating Center (CBC) going on 5 years now. Though this has been incredible hands-on experience with education, I found myself starting to ask questions about the inner workings of our programming. I began to wonder how a tiny non-profit is able to reach so many people in our community and effectively at that. In the past two seasons, CBC management has been making connections with local schools and began developing field trip programs. I found myself particularly interested in these relationships with schools. This internship was the perfect opportunity to dive into some of my newfound interests. Going into this internship I had set specific objectives to gain more skills developing curriculum with a non-profit as well as learning more about how schools build and keep relationships with non-profits.

As an environmental education major, I feel my coursework has been helpful in developing my personal skills as an educator. For example, my 492 curriculum course has helped develop my understanding of the structure of curriculum both in the classroom and outside and how to make said curriculum effective and relevant to specific audiences. My 483 Interpretation course has given me the confidence to create programs and present them to audiences in meaningful and impactful ways. Overall, my coursework has given me an excellent background on environmental issues including social interactions, justice, and policy aspects. Additional electives and major requirements have been key to developing my skills and confidence as an educator. That being said, my marine science education internship has been a highly influential opportunity to develop a different set of more outwards skills I have not gained via coursework.

As someone who wants to continue working in the nonprofit space as an educator, this internship provided the perfect opportunity to gain knowledge and skills specific to the non-profit world. Ultimately, I accomplished 3 major projects during my internship. First, I was able to start a partnership between The Community Boating Center and The Marine Life Center. After meeting with Casey Cook, the Marine Life Center Coordinator, we agreed both our organizations were a good fit for a partnership. We have not made specific plans yet but have agreed to continue working with each other with the hopes that CBC programming can include trips to the Marine Life Center.

Second, I had the opportunity to apply for grant funding for a marine science summer camp program. I applied for the Youth Philanthropy Grant offered by The Whatcom Community Foundation. This was a new process for me and upon completion I felt a great sense of accomplishment and pride. I was able to continue developing my writing skills while also beginning to think more critically about how a program is developed and what resources are necessary to accomplish them successfully. As an educator I typically do not spend time thinking about things like budgets but this grant writing process forced me to think about all facets of the informal education process in ways I would not have before. My grant application is attached though I will not be hearing back until later this month.

Finally, much of my time was spent developing a "Field Trip Handbook". This was a document designed to give to schools, or any other interested groups, as a resource for marine science based field trips. Again, this forced me to think outside of my typical educator mind. I had to ask important questions like: What does a teacher need/want to successfully take their class on a field trip? While most of my internal focus is on curriculum development and presentation, the process of developing this handbook has

expanded my understanding of the education process as a whole. For example, an important realization I have made it that students are much more likely to be engaged and enjoy a field trip if they have been properly prepared ahead of time and are physically prepared the day of the field trip. Telling students to dress warm for a day on the water is just as important to the education process as the curriculum itself!

As I prepare for my final quarter as a college student with most of my coursework behind me and my internship complete I feel as prepared as I can be to jump into the world of informal education in non-profit spaces. Both my coursework and my hands on experiences have been essential to developing my skills, knowledge, and confidence. Though teaching sailing will always have a place in my heart, I am excited to have a more well rounded and holistic set of skills to apply to helping the Community Boating Center to grow its reach as a beloved member of our community.