

Environmental Education Intern: A Day in the Life by Autumn Dillon

Working as an intern with Plano's Environmental Education and Community Outreach Division has given me more opportunities than I expected! When I came on board this September, they had just finished the construction of the Environmental Education Center and had five education coordinators, each with a different environmental focus.

Having several team members makes this the best internship for someone like me who is interested in all aspects of the environment, because I get to assist with all kinds of projects. Whether I am helping teach 7th-graders about the wonders of worm composting, processing water and energy rebates; visiting a school's eco club; or working at the reuse center, I am always learning about new issues.

Some of my favorite moments working here involve visiting with the students in Plano. Walking into their schools and seeing how excited they are that we have come to share knowledge about the environment with them, reminds me why I love doing this. Teaching a student a quick lesson on water quality or recycling may be a small part of what they learn, but for some it will stick with them for years and hopefully a lifetime.

I am continually reminded of what a rarity it is to encounter such an amazing sustainability program when I visit other cities. Plano really is unlike few others with its abundance of education programs for Plano residents. It is great to have coworkers who feel the need to encourage others to live sustainably, whether it is by promoting recycling or the use of reusable bags and water bottles. It is also encouraging to know they promote sustainability by living it in their lives every day.

The past eight weeks have been a very enjoyable experience, and I have learned so much while working with each of the coordinators. Wherever I go next, I will continue to promote sustainability and teach others about the wonders of the environment. I hope the environmental lessons taught in Plano continue to have such a positive impact on our residents and our environment.