



NSF REU: Exploring Evidence of the Anthropocene

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Research and
Intellectual
Achievement

SUMMARY

I completed an **interdisciplinary NSF REU** program for archaeology and ecology students in the **Upper Mississippi River Valley** through June and July 2019. We did daily field work on the Mississippi River and archaeological dig site, lectures on both fields' concepts and lab work, and research in interdisciplinary databases. My personal goals were to gain **experience in ecological field work** and make connections from ecology to other fields, this case being archaeology. This helped me gain **professional connections** with my peers and supervisors and become more experienced in research. Target communities for this were **first-generation undergraduates** with interest in these fields to expose students to research. My work consisted largely of electrofishing with **the Great Rivers Field Station** and completing a research project and poster presentation.



SPICES

This project provided undergraduates with experience in both ecological and archaeological field work, **conducting research** and creating a poster, paper, and abstract, and in **presenting professional research** at a symposium, in order for us to grow as researchers.

HERBS

This REU incorporated fostering **benevolence for the environment** researching fish populations and learning about **ecosystem relationships**. With the other students, we practiced **supporting each other** throughout the program's eight weeks and especially our partnered research.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

I practiced **creative courage** as my research partner and I conducted our own research and created a professional poster presentation. This act helped me develop **project management** skills as we carried out associated tasks throughout the eight weeks of the program with the Great Rivers Field Station under the **Illinois Natural History Survey** to create our final research poster and abstract to. We were able to practice **intellectual dexterity** as we practiced field work, partnership, and **analysis** outside of our respective disciplines.



IMPACT

This experience specifically impacted my **future academic, career, and research goals**. Previously, I had no experience with aquatic science and fish and found myself with a new interest in **ichthyology**. I now am looking forward to working in ichthyological labs and research. This gave me **tangible experience** in the field and a soon-to-be **published abstract** in the **Journal of Archaeology**. This REU also provided coaching in resume and CV building and in how to interact with **graduate schools**, further influencing what I choose to do with my future as I pursue ichthyology and other aquatic based field sciences.

ADVICE

I would advise other students to **actively engage** in activities like these to ensure that they are able to carry the lessons of the experience to their fullest extent in their future acts, as well as to continue to ask questions and for **guidance** from those who are there to mentor you.