Volunteering at CEI/ Women’s Body Image in Relation to the Environment
Anna Haney
College Park Scholars – Science & Global Change Program
Neuroscience
ahaney1@umd.edu
College Park Scholars Academic Showcase, April 30, 2021

Introduction

Humans have a unique connection with nature. Nature affects every part of human life down to food supply and even physical wellbeing. Helping to preserve the beauties that nature has to offer will help to strengthen the human connection to nature. Time spent in nature also influences how one views themselves and their self-worth. Women who spend more time in nature hiking, volunteering, or any outdoor activities often have greater feelings of self worth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration of concurrent overnight outdoors</th>
<th>BCS average</th>
<th>Total estimated number of overnight trips</th>
<th>BCS average</th>
<th>Total estimated number of overnight outdoors</th>
<th>BCS average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0-6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>&lt;25</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 nights</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7-15</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>25-74</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7 nights</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>16-21</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>75-99</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 week +</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>22-30</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>100-149</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks +</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>150-285</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activities:

During this project, I mostly worked on site at the Community Ecology Institute (CEI) to assist with any projects. This could include helping to revitalize the greenhouse, constructing a fence, or heavy lifting. While also working at the actual site, I was also able to become involved in ongoing research on women’s body image in relation to the environment. This research project is still in the beginning stages; however, I have been able to assist with writing a literature review, planning a fitness program individuals can do outside, and attending monthly meetings to discuss progress.

Impact

Nurturing and caring for the environment is imperative to a sustainable future of happiness and a healthy earth. My practicum project opened my eyes to the importance of giving back to our planet. In short term, I was able to assist with many unfinished projects around the farm, while also growing my love for being outdoors and giving back to my community. Not only will the farm itself benefit, but as the organization continues to grow, it can branch out its programs to help others. Currently, CEI offers several programs such as Climate of Hope (education of climate impacts and renewable energy sources), the Roots and Wings program (outdoor classroom for children), and Columbia Families in Nature (enjoyable activities around the farm for families). CEI continually gives back to its community and is continuing to expand its outreach. As well as providing many programs, CEI is also involved in many research projects with a knowledgeable research panel.

Future Work:

I look forward to continue this research project. I am also looking forward to see what kind of outreach publishing a paper on women’s body image can have on the community. Giving women solutions for developing better body image could have extremely positive impacts on these people.

Acknowledgments:

I would like to thank my supervisor, Chiara D’Amore for her guidance and interest in working with me this semester. I would also like to thank Dr. Holtz and Dr. Merck for their guidance and dedication to their students (and for being awesome). Lastly, I would like to give a special thank you to Dana Belinger for helping me through the beginning stages of designing a research study, and for her patience with me.

Bibliography


For figure 2 Image: Community Ecology Institute, “Farm Stand,” https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/482aec1f50694bbeb662f4f5d62d1798