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August 19, 2009
SS09.11H

Julie Pringle (Vineyard Haven, Mass.)

A senior at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School and an avid sailor, Julie Pringle likes biology and says her favorite classes are in science and history. Although she isn't sure exactly what she will do after high school, she knows she wants to pursue a career in the biological field and may want to be a marine scientist. Her summer experience may help her with that decision.

As one of nine high school students from Montana to Massachusetts, Pringle spent part of the summer as an intern at the Woods Hole Science Aquarium, the nation's oldest public research display aquarium and part of NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole, Mass.

Pringle participated in the Aquarium's Careers in Marine Science Seminar July 27 to August 7. The career seminar students get training in marine animal husbandry and basic aquarist chores, hear presentations from scientists working in a variety of marine fields, go on collecting trips, visit other Woods Hole science institutions, and go on field trips to the New Bedford waterfront, Whaling Museum and Buttonwood Park Zoo and Nantucket's Maria Mitchell Association Aquarium.

The career program is designed to give students an idea of what people working in Woods Hole do, and how different areas of science contribute to the larger effort to understand the marine world and to manage marine resources wisely.

"I really liked our visit to the Buttonwood Park Zoo and learning how to train animals," she said of the experience. "I also enjoyed meeting so many people from different places and with different interests."

Along with the other summer interns, Pringle performed the daily chores of running an aquarium, like cleaning tanks and feeding the fish. She and the other interns also helped care for the Aquarium's two harbor seals, LuSeal and Bumper, and explained local marine life in the touch tanks to visitors.

Pringle is a member of the high school's sailing team in spring and fall, and plays in the women's softball league. She also plays tenor saxophone in the high school band and jazz band, and in the community band.

Her community activities reflect her love of the environment. She has participated in beach cleanups since she was five years old and the "Adopt a Beach" program, and usually spends summers as a lifeguard and assistant harbormaster.

"I love being outdoors and around the ocean," she said. "I was born and raised on Martha's Vineyard so I have always been within minutes of the ocean. I love the water and I love science, and a career in marine science would combine both!"

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Related links:

Woods Hole Science Aquarium: <http://aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov/>

Aquarium Blog: <http://whaquarium.wordpress.com/>