

1. What inspired you to participate in Envirothon?

I loved the environment from a young age. As a “weird” kid, the environment was a refuge where my weirdness did not matter. Envirothon seemed like a great place to learn more about environmental science and conservation. What inspired me to stay, though, was the student mentorship and the ability to be part of a team. I gained a strong appreciation for my team members' strengths. One was good at the technical aspects, one at attention to detail for macro-invertebrate identification, one at the political implications of decisions for the current issue. My strength was finding and learning the connections between concepts.

2. What year and what school did you attend when you participated?

Housatonic Valley Regional High School, 2009-2012 (sophomore to senior year)

3. What were the location(s) where you competed in CT Envirothon(s)?

2010: I don't remember.

2011: Rocky Neck State Park, East Lyme

2012: Winding Trails, Farmington

4. Which workshops did you attend – and can you give any specific feedback on them? For example – did you learn any skills that you currently use?

I attended every workshop. My memory of them is a bit of a muddle, though. I remember they were very helpful for teaching the practical application of what we had studied, like accurately measuring a chain before measuring log feet in a tree or how to use tools to measure water quality. They also were helpful for showing, for example, how different forestry practices appeared in practice, or what the differences were between two similar types of scat. I vividly remember the soils workshops partly because I liked clambering into soil pits and partly because the weather always worked against us. Thankfully the soils workshop was moved to a different time of year after 2013.

5. What college or institution of higher learning did you, or are you attending, and the area(s) of study?

Gettysburg College: Environmental studies, policy concentration.

Vermont Law School: Law

6. What degree(s) do you hold?

Environmental studies B.A.; Law degree

7. What is your current career?

Assistant Clerk at the superior courts

8. How did your CT Envirothon experiences impact your life? (Career wise, Environmental Awareness or some other way?)

Although I'm not in an environmental career (yet), CT Envirothon gave me important skills for my career. Envirothon gave me an awareness of interconnections and trained me in teamwork. It also encouraged a

specific form of practicality that was very useful for studying law. Usually. All of those skills come up in my current job.

Otherwise, my environmental awareness is still very heightened. I still can quickly tell the water quality of a place by the insect life. And I think about things differently. In everything from food to clothing-making to online shopping, I'm keenly aware of the interactions between resources, human labor, and the environment. I think some of my colleagues are confused by my choices sometimes, but it's because Envirothon ensured that I cannot view anything separate from its resource input, waste output, or biome impact.

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