

ADAPTIVE SPORTS PARTNERS

of the NORTH COUNTRY

Rooted in the community, reaching out to all - all disabilities, all sports, all seasons

2010 Summer Intern



This summer ASPNC was fortunate to have an intern to help with our programming and our organization. Justin May-West came all the way from North Carolina where he is enrolled at Appalachian State University as an Industrial Design major. Justin was inspired to come here by the stories of his aunt and uncle, Emily and Mike Platt, who are volunteers in the program. Justin's engaging personality made him an instant hit with everyone involved in ASPNC, especially our participants. His contributions were numerous as you will see as he answers our questions in the following interview.

Question - You decided in the spring of 2010 to do a summer internship with Adaptive Sports Partners of the North Country. What made you think that was something you wanted to do?

Justin's Response

I decided I wanted to do an internship with the Adaptive Sports Partners of the North Country because first I was interested in anything sports and second my Aunt and Uncle were having great opportunities and experiences with the program. It seemed like it would be a unique experience where I would be able to affect others in a positive way.

Question - What goals did you set for yourself before you arrived at ASPNC HQ for the first time?

Justin's Response

I was trying to come in with an open mind and just do as much good as I could and hopefully change participants' lives.

Question - What were your expectations about the position of intern?

Justin's Response

My expectations of being an intern were that I wanted to have a way more fun time and more important role than any of my classmates were going to have in their respective internships.

Question - So, "What did you do on your summer vacation?" Or, in other words, what are the things you did as an intern

Justin's Response

Everything

Helping participants with sports and activities.

Bocce ball and building a Bocce court.

Trail work and more with youth group.

Special Olympics.

Building bike trailer.

Ski for Light.

Researching and designing new and improved equipment.

Adjusting and adapting equipment for almost every outing.

Cook outs and getting to know volunteers, participants, and locals.

Kayaking, biking, waterskiing, hiking, swimming, trailriding.

Mountain biking, hiking, peak bagging, wakeboarding on my own.

Carrying people up mountains.

Having fun and lots more...



This participant is being pulled in Justin's bike trailer designed so that she can see over the rider in front.

Question - What were the challenges?

Justin's Response

My challenges were not getting exhausted from doing all of the above day in and day out. Patience was another challenge for me at times.

Question - What were the rewards?

Justin's Response

Rewards were so invaluable and I would have never experienced much of what I did had I not done this internship. I had great satisfaction daily because of helping others do things that they would otherwise be unable to do.

Question - What were the major things that you learned during your internship?

Justin's Response

Patience

understanding of mentally and physically disabled individuals.

How different the world is.

How rewarding what I did was.

Question - What were the most exciting things that happened during your internship?

Justin's Response

*Got kissed by a boy (Thanks Trav).
Built a bike trailer that is hopefully still working.
Got to know a whole new place and some great people.
Special Olympics.*

Question - What accomplishments are you most pleased about?

Justin's Response

The accomplishment that I am most proud of was the look in participants eyes when they had accomplished something or it clicked for them in a sport or activity. Priceless.

Question - When you think about your internship with ASPNC, what makes you smile?

Justin's Response

The whole thing makes me smile, but namely the participants.

Question - One of your objectives was to work on designing equipment. How did that work out?

The only thing I would change if I were to do it all again, would be that I would design and build more for ASPNC.

Question - What thoughts do you have for someone else who might be thinking of following in your footsteps – someone considering a similar internship with ASPNC?

Justin's Response

I would strongly urge anyone who is even slightly interested in an internship or just volunteering with ASPNC to check it out and you won't regret it, but it will change your life.

Question - What recommendations or suggestions do you have for ASPNC with regard to the areas in which you were involved?

Justin's Response

*I would say keep doing what you're doing. Being a young program, it is making progress by leaps and bounds. And I would consider it to be a success for sure.
Really I think the direction of the program is great. I really can't think of room for improvement, maybe a better weather policy and somehow to raise more money.*



Thank You Justin for all of the great work you did at ASPNC, for the fabulous bike trailer that we know will get lots of use, and for reaching your goal of making a real difference in the lives of our participants!

