

A Day in the Life

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Mornings start slowly but gain momentum crossing the Columbia River on the Interstate Bridge from Oregon to Washington on my way to work and gazing over my shoulder in hopes of seeing a mountain. Last year, serving in Wishram, on the eastern side of the Gorge, I would look over my left shoulder as I crossed the bridge from The Dalles Oregon to Washington and catch Mt. Hood in all its glory. This year as I cross the bridge 80 miles west (and a whole world) from Wishram, crossing from Portland to Vancouver, I look over my right shoulder to see the other side of Hood—the same mountain, the same glory but a different view. Similarly this year of service has been the same power the same beauty of service but from a different perspective.

Last year as a USA member in Wishram, I delighted in my direct service with children, being part of a school, and seeing the direct results of my presence at the school. So much so I wanted to continue to work with WRC. As the Team Leader I am removed from the direct gratification of what we do. I work to make sure our program continues to exist, I help ensure that our members will have the tools and the support to have the impact that so inspired me.

I arrive at the ESD which is astonishingly huge! The ESD has more employees than the entire population of Wishram, the town I served in last year. My early days serving at the ESD were a maze of intimidating cubes, but the cubes have become a familiar entity now. I remain in awe of the number of people and programs that exist to serve children and schools. This year has cultivated a larger knowledge and understanding of programs, and organizations that work in service to our communities

I have gotten into the habit of arriving early, I walk through the huge building that seems to still be sleeping, get to my desk, pull out my list from yesterday and make a new list for the day. From Mountains to lists everyday—but after that the uniformity ends.

Some days I am glued to my cube: contacting trainers; sending out communications to the team; creating the ever-growing Weekly Update, the weekly newsletter that is posted online to keep members in the know about WRC happenings. Other days I get to be out and about: at schools tutoring; helping members with their projects; meeting with other National Service leaders; perhaps at my own trainings; or the highlight of my week our Team Fridays when I get to see our whole crew, and participate in the activities that I helped to assemble.



As the Team Leader, the days are full and varied. There are constantly opportunities to participate in interesting trainings and service oriented projects. I have had many opportunities to take on tasks that I am not so sure I can do, and then to glory in actually doing them. The best part of the position is getting to see it all! I am continually amazed and impressed with the accomplishments and impact of my fellow WRC members. It is a thrill to be a part of their success and to see growth, from individuals, from the team, and in myself.

Leaving work, my head is filled with details about the day, errands I need to do before Friday, and people I need to contact— I often find myself contrasting what fills my head these days with what filled my head last year serving in an elementary school, kid's stories, funny and sad, a particular struggle or triumph working with a student. Crossing back over the Columbia, the same river I have crossed daily for two years, I catch a glimpse of the mountain and remember the connection between the work I am doing now and the students that benefit from WRC, I am grateful to be a part of it.

