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ADC 2023 INTERN REPORT

Adventure Day camp is a youth development program in Pueblo, Colorado led by the Colorado State University Extension office. The focus of this organization is environmental education and youth development and recreation. Each event highlights unique environmental and social themes that guide learning. Science, math, history, drama, art, environmental education and teamwork are woven into the activities to meet the diverse interests of the young learners.

This program encourages healthy lifestyles, active engagement with the outdoors, and perseverance through challenge, the camp day includes hiking in local parks and open spaces. Campers are given the opportunity to bond with their leader and peers, creating a pathway to comfort and safety, supporting an environment of learning. Programming is sometimes led by a number of community partners that enhance the opportunity for the campers to broaden their horizons and interact with professionals in various fields.

The value found in Adventure Day Camp is a value that can only be seen with the eyes and cannot be described by numbers. To have the privilege of being around these outgoing and intelligent children was truly indescribable. From the photos I have you can see that I have a bright smile on my face the entire time. I can hear in their voices how much they love Adventure Day Camp and how much they look forward to each 4-H event. Many of these children are also homeschooled, so when they get involved in 4-H, they still have access to an age group community. These are a few of the many reasons why ADC has such a positive impact on the kids of Pueblo Colorado County.

The CSU Extension 4-H camp should continue growing. As a 2023 intern of this office, I believe that everyone who works for CSU Extension does their job incredibly well and each member works together to create great events. I was genuinely shocked at the workload that each member of this office takes on daily without the help of assistants. They work from 8 a.m. to well beyond 6 p.m. just to do it all over again, while getting paid on salary. Mind you not only are they making lesson plans for the children, but are also creating grocery lists, renting venues, asking for volunteers, filling out the multitude of forms and waivers to ensure the events will occur, safety precautions and plenty more aspects that people do not see. I admire each person in

the CSU Extension office that works diligently to bring education and community to the children of Colorado.

However, while this program goes above and beyond what they are required to do, there is one act of change I would like to see develop over time in the program. Throughout my time at the various camps, there was not a single African-American or Black volunteer nor child. I may have seen one or two bi-racial children during the state fair competition, but these children were not at any of the camps. From my experiences, I was often the only African-American in the vicinity in general. I believe this program could expand upon its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives by locating our African-American children in schools to give them the opportunity to participate in youth development programs such as these. I believe that if more knew the cost was in-expensive as well, a group of parents could bond and find a way to get their children in these programs. Now this is not to just have representation or numbers, but to genuinely get these children to feel included and that they have access to the same opportunities as their peers. To go even further on expanding this county's DEI initiatives, I would suggest reaching out to the Latinx community and getting these children involved with 4-H. I would say the group of children I worked with could use more diversity among their peers in outdoor activities.

Members 4-H age 8-18 pay \$30.00 each year and members 4-H age 5-7 pay \$20.00 each year. This amount could include a payment plan for those whose parents would need that assistance. This is a decent price and this could bring more education to African American and Latinx children about agriculture, horticulture, family and consumer sciences and other natural resource information.