

AmeriCorps Member of the Year

Amelia Ford, Racine Zoo AmeriCorps Project – Racine, WI

Understanding the role environmental education programs contributed to who she is today and its value for students that have limited exposure to the natural world, Amelia Ford brought her enthusiasm for teaching it to the Racine Zoo AmeriCorps Program.

With experience in both animal care and developing and delivering environmental content, Amelia played a vital role in the success of the Racine's Zoo AmeriCorps program initial year.

Amelia jumped in to help launch their programming. She taught Racine County students in five different grade levels, in both classrooms and at the Racine Zoo. She led activities and projects designed to address grade-level science curriculum.

As the program year progressed, Amelia noticed students were struggling with some challenging topics. She helped revise the curriculum across the courses and developed ways to reinforce these topics. As a result, the students participating in all five of the programs following these revisions showed greater growth than those during the first part of the year.

Amelia also demonstrated a passion for seeking to expand her knowledge with animal care and training. She quickly progressed to working with many of the more advanced animals while serving with the animal care department.

Even after the Racine Zoo's closure due to COVID-19, her commitment was showcased through her teleservice as she worked on new training plans for the ambassador animals used in educational programming. Through her strong desire to educate students and communities about the importance of environmental protection, Amelia Ford made a significant difference for students in Racine County and the future success of the Racine Zoo AmeriCorps Program.