Spring Break Opportunities in West Virginia

Step by Step is a community educational and leadership nonprofit entering its 28th year in 2015. We have hosted over 670 spring break volunteers from our base on Big Ugly Creek in the heart of the southern coalfields. Through additional community partners, each spring break experience also includes opportunities to work both in very rural and inner city communities and in a range of programs including arts and culture, environmental education, after school and youth leadership, and community-based research. We have hosted students from Earlham College, Berea College, Washington & Lee, John Carroll College, Roosevelt University, Kenyon College, Harvard University among others. In the spring of 2015 volunteers will be:

- Serving as a role models for potential first generation college students through presentations at middle schools, high schools, and after school programs
- Modeling a passion for learning through helping with enrichment activities in after school—music, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math), environmental and other service learning activities
- Helping build a long term activist archive through video interviews (legal services, civil rights, women’s rights LGBTQ activism, environmental, community development)
- Working with our teen volunteers to perform home repairs with community elders
- Supporting bully awareness and prevention workshops in schools and housing projects
- Taking part in environmental monitoring and clean-up activities
- Helping with interviews on drop-out prevention
- Helping with community gardening initiatives

Lodging for spring breaks provides an immersion in the commitment to “zero waste” (or minimal impact couch surfing) including experiences in recycling, composting, and striving for water and energy efficiency. Step by Step also works with spring break groups to provide a variety of reflection and cultural experiences including appearances by local musicians, meetings with teen volunteers, and an annual panel and interview opportunities with “Long Haul Activists” who share their experience of decades of commitment to social change.

Currently Step by Step has particular commitments to the communities of Big Ugly Creek, Man/Buffalo Creek, Omar Elementary School and the South Park Village housing project in Charleston. Typical spring breaks include opportunities to work in both city and rural projects.

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