

## Summer Bridge

The memories that I created at Hull Springs Farm were memories that I will cherish forever. Waking up surrounded by nature felt peaceful and relaxing, which was a feeling that I haven't experienced in a long time. The day before I moved in, I felt all types of emotions. I felt nervous, sad, and excited all at the same time. I wasn't so sure about the Summer Bridge, but I was willing to embark into this new experience. During my stay at Hull Springs Farm, I learned so much about oyster and life underneath the Chesapeake Bay. I also, learned about a small Island called Tangier Island. The people in the community still have a spark of hope in saving their beloved home. If I could have the chance to redo the Summer Bridge week all over again, I'd be the first one sitting on the broken Longwood bus. I couldn't be more thankful in being part of this experience and this is all thanks to the LIFE STEM program.



It was such a marvelous day, the second day, because I was able to learn and gathered so much information about oysters. I learned so many fun facts, like oyster take in about 50 gallons of water per day, and how oysters play a big role in helping the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. They are like a filter who help in cleaning the polluted water in the Chesapeake Bay. They help with living shore lines and the restoration of the lost habitat.



Another interesting fact that I learned about oysters is that an oyster can determine whether a certain area is well structured for them to live in, by finding other oysters who have previously lived there before. But slowly the oyster habitat is being lost. This is because a lot of fisher mens and restaurants do not recycle the oyster shell. It is a

tragedy to find out that not many people in the community are well educated and informed about issues that are affecting many people including themselves. By not recycling, you are causing part of the loss in habitat and restoration in the Chesapeake Bay.

Learning about Tangier Island was one of the most joyful and saddest days of the whole week. It is incredible what a small group of people can do to save their home. But without the funding to help to create another shoreline on the other side of the island to prevent a big amount of water from coming in, it will destroy their house and properties. Then, they are hopeless to save their beloved home from sinking. I was very fortunate to be able to talk to some folks in the community and ask them questions about their thoughts on the island. Many said that they love the peace and the fact that you don't hear cars up and down your street in the morning. Also, the fact that you get to know every single person and



build a relationship with everyone, was a unique experience. But others said that there is no point in stopping what is going to happen. Some have decided to abandon their homes because they don't believe that anyone cares enough to help save their island. It is hard to say goodbye to the place you once called home, but without the help of the government or the president, this community has no hope in saving their island.

