LIFE STEM Summer Bridge Reflection

 My interest in becoming a LIFE STEM scholar began when I read the brochure sent to me in the mail over the summer. It felt like the perfect program to build me up as a scientist interested in lifelong learning. I was genuinely surprised when I received an acceptance email from the LIFE STEM staff. A few weeks before the start of the fall semester, new and some returning LIFE STEM scholars embarked on a Summer Bridge experience near the Chesapeake Bay. Honestly, it was quite nerve-wracking at the thought of being away from home for so long, but after a couple of days of being at Hull Springs Farm, my mindset switched. I was excited to be experiencing so many different things; being near the ocean and visiting different places all excited me. Several experiences that stood out to me the most were my times on the water. I have had a fascination for bodies of water for quite a while now, and to be out on the water for most of the day was amazing. The most memorable time I had was the ferry trip to Tangier Island. The boat ride lasted for nearly an hour and was extremely calming. There was nothing but water in sight for miles. On the ride I ended up listening to a beautiful song by the band Deftones called Cherry Waves, a song that I always imagined listening to out on sea. It was a blissful time. My next most memorable experience on the trip was the boat ride with Captain Rowe. We spent the day on the boat learning about the issues with the Chesapeake Bay and the declination of oyster populations there. It was interesting, and one of the most hands-on experiences we had on the trip. We were able to individually interact with oysters as well as other species of fish. It was honestly a great trip, and I would love to experience it again. It was a huge eye-opener, being able to see with my own eyes how we as a species affect something much larger than ourselves, and it inspired me to make even more changes in my own life.

