

# STUDENT COMMENTS ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

## “MINORITY YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING INSTITUTE”

“10 Days of Learning, A Lifetime of Experience”

August 3 – 28, 2001  
Glorieta, NM

NHEC trained 120 students through its Minority Youth Environmental Training Institute. Following the Institute, many of the students (and their parents) thanked us for the experience, for which we at NHEC were grateful and humbled.

Below are some of the comments from the students, taken verbatim from their cards, letters, or emails.

“I attended the NHEC Institute nearly two months ago held in Glorieta, NM. What an experience! ...Going into the Institute, I did not realize how much of an impact it was going to have on me. I did not realize it then, that I would meet people and see vistas that would change the course of my life. ...Everyday, life cannot compare to those 10 days where I experienced many firsts: black bears, camping in the true wilderness, hiking the desert, seeing the true night sky ...and many more. I recommend the Institute for anyone who has the slightest of interest in our natural world and for anyone who is willing to learn about the meaning of life”.

“I miss you guys a lot. I miss everything we did there. I miss the things we saw. I miss the people we met. ...Its so incredible, because any time I think of New Mexico and nhec, I smile and want to laugh out loud. ...I wonder if you know how much you changed all of our lives.”

“I was one of the Forest Service students. I wanted to tell you in 10 days I never thought I could learn as much as I did. You picked the best role models and I think that’s what made the experience even better than I expected. ...no one believes me when I tell them there are 394 national parks, 155 forests, and then start talking about the dangers of invasive species, like zebra mussels or mullen.”

"I'm not sure who exactly to send this email to, but I wanted to thank the people of NHEC for the incredible experience my son had at your environmental youth camp. He returned home with so many positive experiences to share, a different perspective on the environment. ...and an uplifted level of self esteem from being with the role models and other students. ...He talked about the Park Superintendent, Mr. Vasquez, who he said was so wonderful. ...I want you to know that NHEC has made a huge difference in my son's life. He says he wants to be an environmental engineer now!"

"When I came home, I had two days until school started so I decided to wear my NHEC hat and shirt from the Institute. I had students coming up and asking me what it stood for and I was able to tell them my whole 10 day success. They were very surprised. The students and I found it neat that you could learn about plants, animals, forests, parks, wastewater plants, and more. ...My own science teacher doesn't even know some of the things I learned in New Mexico!"

"Before I arrived at the Institute, I already had a good background on the environment, since I had taken honors biology and I'm the president of my school environmental club. ...but I really learned so many things in the 10 days over there. It's so cool to learn about the environment, the wildlife, and their features. Now I want to learn more about the environment here in Maryland and not only here but also in El Salvador and Puerto Rico, where my parents are from."

"To everyone who sees this email from the Institute: I miss and love you all. Thank you so much to NHEC, who made this all possible. When Mr. Rivera said on the first day that we wouldn't want to leave each other and NM come the end of the 10 days, I didn't comprehend how right he would be. ...Thank you again for such an amazing experience."

"The educational experience that I have received is sensational. My teachers will sometimes ask difficult questions on the environment, and I find I can answer many of them correctly. ...Your institution has benefited me greatly. ...sometimes I find myself getting after my brother or parents to turn off the lights or conserve water, like you taught us."

"The Youth Institute opened so many doors for me. Thanks to Mr. Gwaltney, I met a local NPS employee near me and he has been extremely helpful. ...I will be getting an internship with the Park Service, and after that a job, they say (if I do well first, that is). ...Thanks again so much for the Institute. You were so right: it was "10 days of learning, a life time of experience". I definitely want to apply next year. See ya then!"