

AJ Zekanoski

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EDUCATION

Master of Environmental Science and Management (Expected June 2021)

Bren School of Environmental Science & Management – University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB)

Specialization: Environmental Policy and Economics | Area of interest: Conservation Planning

Highlighted Coursework: Science and Management for Forest Sustainability; Advanced Data Analysis

Bachelor of Science in Forestry and Natural Resource Management (December 2016)

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Concentration: Watershed Management

Highlighted Coursework: Sustainable Forestry and Environmental Practices; Rangeland Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Conservation Management Intern - The Nature Conservancy, Santa Barbara, CA (Summer 2020)

- Evaluated the potential for invasive species movement into different habitat types at the Dangermond Preserve by surveying the coastal dunes as part of a team of four
- Created a map of coastal access points for wild pigs using ArcGIS and ground surveying to guide future camera placement and population management at the Preserve
- Created a Cost-Benefit Analysis of potential actions and provided a recommendation to TNC for the management of invasive wild pigs at the Preserve

Lead Guide - Aspiro Adventure Inc., Mt. Pleasant, UT (9/2017–2/2020)

- Led adventure activities such as climbing, mountain biking, and backcountry navigation with groups of 8-10 adolescents in wilderness environments to establish positive coping skills
- Mentored groups of at-risk youth by using therapeutic soft skills such as crisis intervention and motivational interviewing in order to foster a supportive environment for their treatment
- Accrued 250+ trail days on two dozen eight-day excursions working specifically with groups of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder with the goal of developing their social and behavioral skills

Trip Leader - The Road Less Traveled, Chicago, IL (Summer 2016 & 2017)

- Managed a high school group in New Orleans on a service and cultural exploration program rebuilding two houses in the Lower Ninth Ward to allow displaced families to move back into their homes
- Oversaw middle school group of 15 students in Colorado on a service and wilderness adventure program volunteering at Mission: Wolf Sanctuary to contribute to their goal of sustainable care for rescued animals
- Facilitated discussions about race, cultural sensitivity, and community service philosophy to help students gain the most meaning out of their experience

Program Manager - Cal Poly Student Community Services, San Luis Obispo, CA (5/15–6/16)

- Organized over 20 service events for university students to build positive relationships between the university and the San Luis Obispo community
- Planned and facilitated a 2-day social justice conference with over 200 attendees including over 15 workshops to promote the needs of underserved communities.
- Supervised 6 student employees running awareness events and boothing for volunteer programs benefiting local youth and homelessness services

Machine Shop Technician - A&J Machining Inc., Morgan Hill, CA (Summer 2008-2014)

- Produced prototype parts for NASA Ames Research Center by operating CNC Machines
- Managed cleaning and packaging of products to customer standards

- Ran transportation and logistics team to ensure 100% on time delivery rate of finished products to 15+ customers

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Server – The Aerie Restaurant and Bar, Snowbird, UT (1/19–5/19)

Landscaper – Private landscaping contractor, San Luis Obispo, CA (1/15–11/15)

SKILLS, CERTIFICATIONS, & ACTIVITIES

Computer: ArcGIS, Rstudio, Github, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

Certifications: NOLS Wilderness First Responder

Activities: Enjoys backpacking, skiing, mountain biking, and kayaking