

Hello Everyone!

For those of you with a lucky child taking Online Crime Scene Sleuths or the Online Public Health Protectors camp, your camper will have Ms. Oshima! She graduated from Newport HS (she was actually in my chemistry class!) and is now graduating from UW! Please read more about her below--she still has spots left in her camps for incoming 7th-10th graders! :)

I first joined WISE Camps the summer before my freshman year at the University of Washington. 4 years later, it's surreal to be writing this now as a graduating senior with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health-Global Health with departmental honors. Working for WISE Camps these past couple of years has really helped me to develop and grow the skills that I have learned in my degree.

My first teaching job, however, was in middle school with Rokka Ski School in Snoqualmie, where I still teach intermediate skiing on the weekends during the winter. Rokka is a Japanese American ski school and it taught me a lot more than just skiing. It taught me the importance of community and of respecting the diverse cultural backgrounds that everyone brings to the table. It also brought out my passion for teaching others. Then, in high school I was the student director of a drama camp at Newport High School, a Link Crew Leader, a tutor, a teaching assistant for AP World History, and a lab assistant for Chemistry. Without really realizing it, I was preparing myself for a teaching position.

These experiences have exposed me to many learning opportunities. One thing I realized was that we (as teachers) learn just as much by teaching, as others learn from being taught. My ski students and campers are incredibly creative and intelligent people that not only make me laugh, but also teach me something new every time we meet (both virtually and in-person). Whether it is how to say something new in Japanese, how to fold a paper airplane, or a new current event, I am constantly learning from my students. I also have learned that others share my passion for learning. Learning is fun! And I think there is so much power in education. The reason I love working with WISE Camps is because I get to work with other teachers who are inspiring students to love learning too and I get to interact with students who are also passionate about learning.

Finally, as a college student I have realized how interconnected we are as a community. Health is a lot more than just the physical body, it is also mental and emotional. Therefore, health work is not just about clinics and washing your hands. Health work involves environmental, cultural, political, and social structures. It's about dealing with the hard stuff. Dealing with inequity and diversity. Dealing with inadequate access to healthcare and healthy food options. My new goal is to pass on my passion for learning and to inspire others to improve their own health by helping improve the health of others. I am so excited to be teaching another year at WISE Camps and for the opportunity to get to know a whole new set of incredible campers!

Please register at www.wisecamps.org!

Thanks,

Melissa Baker & Jake Nonis

Executive Directors of Wise Camps