



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service Earth Team

Volunteer Showcase

Earth Team Provides Opportunities in Job Shadow Internship

Ben Miles is going to the University of Nebraska this fall and credits his experience as an Earth Team volunteer with his decision to study agricultural engineering.

Ben's high school counselor helped enroll Ben in the Job Shadow Internship, which matches students' interests and strengths with possible careers. Ben's interest in ag engineering made him a natural fit as an Earth Team volunteer with the Sioux Falls, South Dakota NRCS office.

During his time with NRCS, Ben worked closely with agricultural engineers and civil engineering technicians to design terraces and grassed waterways. He also helped design an animal waste system from the initial work on the computer to staking the structure out in the field.

"Being able to look at the design for that system in the office really helped me understand what was happening on site," said Ben.

Ben also received field training on using the rainfall infiltration kit and helped certify Conservation Reserve Program practices such as field windbreaks and filter strips to ensure they met NRCS' technical requirements. Ben was able to measure some of those sites with the GPS Garmin tool and use ArcMap mapping software and the agency's Web Soil Survey.



Earth Team volunteer, Ben Miles (r) helps NRCS agricultural engineer, Justin Bonneman, stake out an animal waste structure.

Ben volunteered to come back after graduating to spend a few full days going back out to the field to see the progress on the animal waste system and see what an agricultural engineer and civil engineering technician do every day.

The Job Shadow Internship program is an excellent way to guide students who may want to become future NRCS Employees. It is a win-win for NRCS and the Earth Team. To see if the Job Shadow Internship program is available in your area, contact your local high school counselor or FFA Advisor.

The Earth Team is the volunteer component of the Natural Resources Conservation Service. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the National Earth Team Office at 888-526-3227 or visit:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/EarthTeam>

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer & Lender