

Jennifer Strabbing - AmeriCorps Fall 2003-2004

**Washington Jr. High School and Audubon Summer
Playground**

I was first apprehensive about working with junior high school students, but it turned out to be the most fruitful experience that I have ever had during my college career. My greatest accomplishment was seeing the development and growth of a particular student with whom I worked closely. At the beginning she was very shy and struggled to get a C in Science. The day she told me she received an A on her science test was all the proof I needed that my AmeriCorps experience had made an impact.



The Fishing Derby, where we took kids to where they could learn about different types of fish, water safety, nature, and of course, how to fish!

Through my experience, I have learned that I am truly fortunate to have been raised in the environment that I was. A large portion of the students that I worked with had parents who were either dealing with their own problems or were not involved in the child's life. At times it was easy to become discouraged while working with these children, but realizing I may be the only constant positive role model instilled me with new energy and compassion. Because of this experience, I will continue to make service a part of my life.

Off site visits to city activities such as the Penny Carnival provided much needed suspension from the turmoil of home life.



Throughout my service, my experiences lead me to reflect upon my life, and the future of America. I was thankful every night after I left the site that I had been raised in an environment of kindness and affection, rather than violence and apathy.