



1. Name: **Anna Dinwiddie**
2. Graduation Year: **December 2015**
3. Favorite Outdoor Activities at UTC and in Chattanooga: **SUP boarding in the Tennessee River and hiking on Lookout and Signal Mountains.**
4. Job Title: **Assistant Director at Blue Ridge Outdoor Education Center**

5. What do you really do? **Originally I started as a seasonal instructor and I would teach classes to students as well as help maintain the program materials. I am in a supervisory position now, so a lot**

of what I do is helping to hire and train our seasonal instructors and supporting them in their day to day activities. We have different schools that will come up and do field trips with us ranging from just a day trip to multi-night trips and when a school is here I will act as the face of the program and the liaison between the school and our instructors.

6. Why did you choose HHP SLSA Outdoor Recreation as a degree program? **I was originally an Education Major, but after working at a summer camp after my freshman year I realized that I did not want to teach in a classroom, but instead wanted to work at a camp so that I can still teach without having to be in a classroom.**

7. What experiences helped shape you while at UTC (personally and professionally)? **I think what helped shape me the most was being made to get out of my comfort zone. I was able to do things like helping with research and doing outdoor activities that I had never done. Being pushed out of my comfort zone personally helped me step out of my comfort zone professionally and is part of what lead me to applying to my current job.**



8. What do you wish you had known/done while you were at UTC to prepare for the profession? **I wish that I had put myself out there more and been more involved in clubs and projects and I really wish that I had been involved with more research**



9. What kinds of things should someone do if they wanted to get your job? (Be honest about where they should invest their time – getting certifications, making connections, volunteering, academic achievement, etc.) **For my job specifically the big thing is putting yourself out there and applying to a lot of jobs even if it is to just get that connection at a certain company. You also have to be willing to work seasonal jobs for a while and willing to jump around from place to place. Getting certifications such as Wilderness First Responder or a High Ropes certification (for example) are things that can make you stand out from someone else.**

Something that I really look for in an applicant is excitement about teaching others and a willingness to learn.

10. What are the challenges and blessings of being in this profession? What frustrates you and what keeps you there? **Some of the biggest challenges are that you do sort of have to start out working seasonal jobs and jump from place to place for a few years. But, that being said, it can be really fun jumping around from place to place because you get to meet a ton of awesome people and live in a lot of really cool places. The biggest frustration for me is that there are some people who think that I don't have a "real job" and they think that I am just playing at camp every day. We work really hard and a lot of hours but honestly what keeps me here is that I work with a lot of great people and I can tell that I am making an impact in the students that come here. I get to see kids who have never really been outside before or are scared of nature go from that kid who doesn't want to touch dirt to the kid who is digging in a log to see what is there or is picking up bugs in the creek so they can figure out what it is. That to me is what makes this job the most worth it.**