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MINNESOTA STUDENTS SPEND SPRING BREAK AT USU

March 12, 2012 by cpehrson

While USU students head out this week on their Spring Break, students from Minnesota go back to school after spending their Spring Break on the USU campus last week.

On March 4th, eleven students from the Colleges of St. Benedict and St. Johns in Minnesota arrived in Utah as part of their schools’ “Alternative Break Experiences (ABE). ABE is a program offered by the Colleges to provide their students with exposure to other cultures, places and ways of life that will complement their academic experiences and, hopefully, inspire their lives.

CPD Volunteer Coordinator, Jeff Sheen, worked out an active schedule for each day the students were here that would give them many opportunities to help out with programs that serve people with disabilities, and connected them with host families to give them a more personal experience in the community.

Monday morning started early with a tour of the CPD and spending a little time with the children in the Up to 3 Early Intervention Program before sharing a potluck lunch with CPD staff.

The afternoon was spent out in the community helping with the Neighborhood Non-profit Housing that builds affordable housing for individuals with disabilities and low-income families. The first day ended at the bowling alley helping children with disabilities who participate in the TOPS Sports program.

The next two days, the students had a great time with the Common GroundOutdoor Adventures group helping community members with disabilities snowshoe and cross country ski at Logan Canyon’s Beaver Mountain Resort. This was their first time experiencing Utah’s fantastic snow and beautiful mountains!

Thursday found them down in Salt Lake City at the CReATE warehouse, a part of the Utah Assistive Technology Program, where they refurbish mobility equipment and offer them to people who need them at a discount cost. The students, along with five employees from CReATE/AT Lab and one from DSPD, recycled 54 devices weighing 7,960 pounds, giving CReATE some recycling income. In the four hours
they were there, the work accomplished would have taken CReATE staff nearly two weeks to do. You can read more about their day on the UATP blog.

Their last day was spent helping young adult students in the PEER program practice their social skills while they played games and interacted with the volunteers. The afternoon found them having lunch at the Developmental Skills Laboratory with older adults with disabilities and doing some fun activities with them.

All in all, it was a week full of service, fun, and new friends!