This summer working at the BRRC was an extremely rewarding experience. Not only did I get to work outside on the river, the environmental impacts of our work were visible every day. Working on the booms was a really interesting experience and I learned a lot about the practical side of environmental work. In school programs like the environmental club, the work I got to do usually ended at posters or the compost bins. It was great to be able to work on a larger scale in the river and learn more about the way the pollution in the Chesapeake watershed is managed. Compared to the other options for a highschooler’s summer job, being an intern here was miles above my expectations. I truly enjoyed getting to work with my hands and in the (admittedly disgusting) river water. I also got to see many animals and insects every day, including blue herons and frogs. I learned a lot about boats, the weather/tide patterns in our area, and the ways pollution can accumulate right beneath our noses. It is so important to be aware of the environmental impacts of actions we take every day, and the way they can build up and cause larger problems. Helping to clean up trash in the river has definitely made me think about the ways I contribute to pollution and reduce my footprint. This internship was also a great opportunity to gain experience working with equipment like the pontoon boats and learn new skills like how to remove the rim from a tire. Being a part of the BRRC let me meet many new people who I admire for their dedication to the river and the cause. My coworkers were friendly and passionate about the job, and made me feel welcome even though I was younger by a few years. They were always happy to help me grow, even when that meant re-teaching me a simple knot or helping me out of the water when I fell in. It was very valuable to me getting to speak to people who either now work in the environmental field or students looking to go into it, and hear about their path to the career. It also showed me how regardless of your plans and goals in life, it’s always possible to make the environment around you better. Even with the spiders, wasps, and poison ivy I worked around every day, this has been the best job I have had and I hope to be back at the river next summer.

Sincerely, Russell Dobry