



News: Top Stories

News

[Top Stories](#)

[Digest](#)

[Antiques](#)



[Dining](#)

[Entertainment](#)

[Classifieds](#)

[Classified](#)

[Local Information](#)

[Tides](#)

[Weather](#)

[About Us](#)

[Who We Are](#)

[Advertising](#)

[Subscribe](#)

'If I Pollute, It's Going to Affect Me'

By: LYNN KEYSER

CREST HAVEN— Brad Rosenthal isn't going to get rich being a New Jersey Watershed Ambassador, but there's an idealism for his work that shines through his bright blue eyes.

The 25-year-old Rosenthal is one of 20 Watershed Ambassadors in the state, one assigned to each watershed area.

The Watershed Ambassadors program, in its third year, is run by the state Department of Environmental Protection with funding from Americorps, a national service initiative started under the Clinton Administration ("a domestic Peace Corps," Rosenthal explained).

Working out of Cape May County's Department of Planning, Rosenthal focuses on educating the public about water quality and its long-range implications.

One of his jobs is going into schools and speaking to youngsters, as well as taking them into the field to show them how he conducts stream monitoring.

The stream monitoring process involves a "d-frame net," something like a butterfly net, that is pushed into stream banks and collects samples of the sediment. The samples of insects, worms and other small creatures living in the stream are compared on a data sheet.

"We know that certain bugs are more sensitive to poor water quality. If we do find a lot of different types of bugs, we know we have good water quality," Rosenthal said.

He said one of the most rewarding parts of his job is educating school children. Rosenthal recently took a group of eighth-graders from Middle Township on a biological assessment. He'll be doing a similar program with students from Lower Township later this month.

"I want kids to think, 'If I pollute this stream, it's going to affect me. It's going to affect my kids' lives.' If I can do that, I've done my job," Rosenthal said. The good news is, according to the young environmentalist, water quality in the Cape May area is "fair."

The sandy soil here means that water runs through it very quickly, Rosenthal explained. Because of that, a lot of nutrients don't remain in the ground.

The other noteworthy environmental feature of this area, he said, is its large amount of storm water runoff. Runoff can carry pollution, such as litter, petrochemicals, pet waste and other debris that can affect water quality, Rosenthal added.

Rosenthal said he's been interested in the environment since he was "a little kid."

He holds a degree in forestry from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and worked as a forester in upstate New York.

When he got married and moved to Cape May County with his wife, a native of the area, he looked for similar work.

"There's not much forestry here," Rosenthal said with a laugh.

He saw an advertisement and accepted the post as a Watershed Ambassador. The Americorps program tries to attract young people coming out of college who are willing to give a year to make a difference in their country's future.

Watershed Ambassadors receive a \$9,500 annual stipend and get a \$4,500

[Spout Off](#)

[Spout Off](#)

[Submit](#)

[News Notes](#)

[Cape May](#)

[Dennis / Woodbine](#)

[Lower](#)

[Middle](#)

[Sea Isle](#)

[Seven Mile](#)

[Upper](#)

[Wildwood](#)

[From the Publisher](#)

[Feedback](#)

[The Editor](#)

[General Info](#)

[About the Site](#)

[Email](#)

[Calendar / Events](#)

[Coming Events](#)

[Special Events](#)

[Trips](#)

[Submit](#)

educational award at the end of service which they can use to continue their education or pay off student loans.

Rosenthal said that while the pay is admittedly low, the job is rewarding, especially when he's able to "really reach some kids."

"I don't consider myself a strict environmentalist," he said. "Pollution needs to be controlled wisely. I like to think a healthy environment leads to good things — a healthy economy, healthy people."

All material copyright © Seawave Corp. all rights reserved.
Site design and development by [Element 23 Studios](#).