

**SAM NOBLE MUSEUM - ERNESTO VARGAS**

Speakers: Ernesto Vargas

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>> ERNESTO VARGAS: I am Ernesto Vargas. I am nineteen years old and I am from Oklahoma City. My seventh grade geography teacher, Ms. Fox, handed me a flyer that in her words was perfect for me. That was Oklahoma science adventure back in 2008.

Oklahoma science adventure is one of the middle school programs at the Sam Noble in the ExplorOlogy Program. And through that program I was able to travel the state along with museum faculty to do science which included jumping into ponds and examining fossil trackways. That is my first experience with a museum, a fantastic one.

The museum's programs have influenced me greatly. Through these programs was the first time I asked myself what is science? What does it mean to be a scientist? What do I want to do in the field?

Through these programs, Paleo Expedition and Oklahoma Science Adventure, was when I reconciled these questions and I believe that helped me grow as a person.

What I gained from them was a passion for science and a passion to share that with others. This of course includes teambuilding, confidence building, and building relationships with others.

I think the museum serves a function of being a gathering place for people really of all ages that want to pursue learning, educational resources, or just build connections with their community.

Whether it is just the city of Norman, the city of Oklahoma, or the scientific community, I think it fulfills its function above and beyond.

In my third year of participating in programs of museum which was Paleo Expedition as a pure mentor to other students, I remember digging fossils in the Oklahoma Panhandle, specifically Jurassic dinosaur fossils. Then at that moment I realized that I was more excited in other students having and just experiencing these things than myself experiencing them.

I think that's when I realized what I wanted to do with my life and it's to make these experiences available to other people and make sure they learn the lessons I learned in these programs.

I worked as a docent in the Hall of Ancient Life and I spent around 100 hours they are talking with people, just sharing experiences with others. I think that may have been my favorite part of the museum because of how much interaction I have had with the community there.

A win for the Sam Noble Museum is also a win for the community because it shows how integrated the museum has become in this community. This could only further show how programs such as ExplorOlogy, other events, social media, even volunteer programs could further influence this community.