

EXCITING NEWS FOR DUBOIS CENTER AND THE ILLINOIS SOUTH CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Search Committee and the Executive Committee are pleased to announce the Illinois South Conference has extended a two-year contract with Hayley Elliott for the position of Acting Director of Outdoor Ministry. After an extensive search process which included: Zoom interviews; submissions of candidates' faith journeys and personal theology; a strategic plan of staffing, programming, finances, and partnerships for the coming year at DuBois Center; checking candidates' professional references; and an onsite tour of DuBois, the Search Committee unanimously recommended Hayley to serve as the Acting Director of Outdoor Ministry.

Hayley Elliott was born and raised in West Virginia, where love of nature and earth were instilled in her from a young age. She spent most of her formative summers at church camp and has fond memories of learning to swim, making friends, playing games, and learning the importance of faith formation in this setting. As she grew up, she began volunteering at camp and eventually became a camp counselor.

Hayley received a B.S. in Business Administration from Mars Hill University. Her undergraduate capstone project was related to the digital and social marketing of camps and how to reach new audiences and form new partnerships. After completing undergraduate studies, Hayley entered Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville, where she completed an MTS (Master of Theological Studies) degree. While in divinity school, Hayley furthered her commitment to youth education by working at a local elementary and middle school as the lead counselor in their afterschool and summer programs.

After graduating from Vanderbilt Divinity School, Hayley and her wife, Rachel, moved to Denver, Colorado so that Rachel could complete a yearlong CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) residency. During this time, Hayley worked full time as an anti-money laundering analyst while maintaining an additional role as a co-director for youth and children at Sixth Avenue UCC and sharing her gifts at LaForet Conference and Retreat Center, the Rocky Mountain Conference's camp.

Hayley is very passionate about outdoor ministry within the United Church of Christ and excited about the future of caring for God's creation and extending God's extravagant welcome at DuBois Center!

Hayley will begin her new ministry with us on Monday, April 5, 2021. In the meantime, the Outdoor Ministry Team has done a phenomenal job creating staffing, programming, and safety contingency plans to hold programming this summer in some form at DuBois Center with summer staff onsite to welcome children, youth, and adults to experience what makes DuBois Center such a special and sacred space.

The Illinois South Conference sincerely thanks the Search Committee for the time and energy they spent in prayerful and Spirit-led discussions, deliberations, and decisions.

Its members were:

Craig Bielke, Illinois South Conference member at large and leader of Conference-wide youth retreats held at DuBois Center

Hank Henderson, representative of the Personnel Committee of the Conference and member of St. John UCC, Trenton, Illinois

Rachel Kinzinger, representative of the Outdoor Ministry Team of the Conference and former staff member of DuBois Center

Nancy Wagner, current chairperson of the Outdoor Ministry Team of the Conference and member of St. Paul UCC, Lebanon, IL

Dr. Jill Baker, ex-officio member and Moderator of the Illinois South Conference

Rev. Shana Johnson, ex-officio member and Conference Minister of the Illinois South Conference

We can't wait for you to meet Hayley soon!!

