One Year After HOPE Crew
Shelby Reflects on Experience and Skills Learned with HOPE Crew

Last year, right around this time, corpmembers from the Michigan-based SEEDS Youth Conservation Corps were in the midst of rehabilitating the historic Goffar Barn at the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, alongside Lake Michigan. One corpmember, Shelby, was not only able to learn while on the job, she was able to take the preservation masonry and repointing skills she had picked up at the Goffar Barn to volunteer her time, and expertise, to another nearby preservation project.

**How did you first get involved with the HOPE Crew project at this site?**
I was looking for a summer job, and I had heard a lot of really good things about SEEDs. They sounded really cool, and everything they stood for, I stood for as well. So, I applied, got the job, and ended up on Kevin Summers’ crew. I had no idea what I would be doing, but I had a good feeling about it!

**What do you remember best from this project?**
Most of us went into the project not having any idea how to do any of the historic building methods that we would end up learning. There was a lot of learning at first: how to cut glass, how to build new windows, and restoring the existing windows. We did masonry work on the foundation -- mixing mortar (in hopefully the right ratios!) and fixing up the stonework. We used a Schnitzbank to replace wooden pegs that had rotted out, replaced a beam in the barn, and we actually jacked up the barn to lift it out of the soil so we could get at the foundation. There was really a lot to this project!

**What have you been working on since the project ended?**
Before the project, I had never even touched a saw, and I was too afraid to even go near one, but now I’m using a saw all the time. So, I was able to use that new skill to build my own chicken coop, which I think is pretty awesome!