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Ashleigh Jardine
Andrews University

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Mission to Paradise

ASHLEIGH JARDINE

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." —Mark 16:15 NIV

"I wanted to be a student missionary so I could challenge myself and get closer to God," says Erin Powers, a student at Andrews University. "I wanted to mature both as a person and spiritually." This year, Erin is serving as a student dean at Hawaiian Mission Academy in Honolulu.



Erin Powers

Her decision to do missions began in 2012 when Erin was working at Camp Au Sable in Grayling, Michigan. It was her first summer as a full-time girls counselor, and she loved the relationships she was making with the campers and staff. Erin's cabinmate had been a student missionary before, and she enjoyed sharing her experiences with Erin and their girls.

"Hearing her stories about being a student dean sounded like counseling for a whole year," recalls Erin. "The idea was really appealing to me at the time." Though she never had considered it before, Erin prayed about being a student missionary, and soon felt God calling her to go overseas.

When she returned to Andrews that fall, Erin contacted Campus Ministries and began the search for student dean positions outside the United States. When she realized most positions had already been filled, Erin applied to Hawaiian Mission Academy. To her excitement, she was accepted to the school just before leaving for another summer at camp. Several weeks later, one of her best friends, Jordy Webster, learned he also would be a student missionary at the academy.

Since August, Erin has been in Hawaii leading dorm worships and spending time with the students. She occasionally helps with classes and tutoring, and enjoys the fellowship of her new school family.

Besides her ministry on the island, Erin has enjoyed six summers as a staff member at Camp Au Sable. There, she has worked many jobs — from the kitchen to the ropes course, to housekeeping and counseling.

"I just love what camp is about," Erin says. "Everything that happens there is very powerful. I'm so happy to be a part of that ministry."

When she finishes at Andrews, Erin hopes to work in the medical field where she can continue to serve others.

Ashleigh Jardine is a freelance writer from Berrien Springs, Michigan, where she is majoring in physical therapy at Andrews University.

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THE LAKE UNION HERALD STAFF

- P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287 | (269) 473-8242
- Publisher: Don Livesay president@lucsd.org
- Editor: Gary Burns editor@lucsd.org
- Managing Editor/Display Ads: Diane Thurber herald@lucsd.org
- Circulation/Back Pages Editor: Judi Doty circulation@lucsd.org
- Art Direction/Design: Robert Mason
- Proofreader: Susan K. Silkkers

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

- Adventist Midwest Health: Julie Busch Julie.Busch@ahss.org
- Andrews University: Rebecca May RMay@andrews.edu
- Illinois: Cindy Chamberlin CChamberlin@illinoisadventist.org
- Indiana: Van G. Hurst vhurst@indysda.org
- Lake Region: Ray Young rayforyoung@comcast.net
- Michigan: Justin Kim jkim@misda.org
- Wisconsin: Juanita Edge jedge@wi.adventist.org

CORRESPONDENTS

- Adventist Midwest Health: Christopher LaFortune ChristopherLaFortune@ahss.org
- Andrews University: Becky St. Clair stclair@andrews.edu
- Illinois: Cindy Chamberlin CChamberlin@illinoisadventist.org
- Indiana: Betty Eaton counselbetty@yahoo.com
- Lake Region: Ray Young rayforyoung@comcast.net
- Michigan: Julie Clark jclark@misda.org
- Wisconsin: Bert Wredberg bwredberg@wi.adventist.org

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