

POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE ASSOCIATION

Voices ^{at the} *Seashore*

No Matter Where I Go



BY RASHON ROGERS

No Matter Where I Go

Bay Area native credits his love of adventure and the outdoors to exploring the beauty first closer to home, including Point Reyes National Seashore



BY RASHON ROGERS

When I look back on my life and the path I took to get to where I am, I can't help but think about how different it is from what I expected. I'm a 25-year-old African American male from the East Bay currently living and working in Japan. Of course, people move overseas all the time, but this is definitely not the life my family and I once imagined me living. However, I must say, I have to give thanks to the Bay Area for giving me the need to always find my next adventure.

Continued next page

The beauty and recreational activities at parks like Point Reyes can foster a love for, and connection to the natural world that stays with us for a lifetime. For Rashon Rogers, childhood friend of PRNSA education staff member, Brandon Barragan, an initial connection to nature was exactly what he needed to discover his passion for being outdoors. Join Rashon in his reflection on how the exploration of local parks with his grandfather grew into a love of adventure and outdoor exploration!

*– Donna Faure,
PRNSA Executive
Director*

Some of my most vivid memories are from when I was an elementary school student, and my grandfather would take me and my brother on walks through parks.


As I got a little older, the walks turned into hikes, and that was when I first discovered my passion for being outdoors, surrounded by nature. You may be thinking these are common activities for a lot of people. However, hiking and being outdoors in general is not a big thing in my family whose annual trip was always to Disneyland. In fact, my parents discouraged me from being in nature because it was “dangerous.” Being introduced to the local regional parks in the Bay Area sparked my interest for what else there was to see across the Bay and even throughout the world.

I started off exploring a few of the well-known places in the East Bay, like Tilden Park, Wildcat Canyon, and Mount Diablo. As I became a teenager, my curiosity continued to grow and I kept exploring all these local places that were new to me—only now, I was going alone because my grandfather was too old and I had no one to go with.

I remember being amazed at how beautiful the Bay Area was outside of the East Bay. I was so happy to finally be able to visit the places I’d only heard of from my grandfather. I explored from Point Reyes to Santa Cruz by myself. From the breathtaking coastal trails to the redwood forests, all I could think was, “Why would I ever go back to those crowded parks in the East Bay?” I will always go back to the parks I grew up going to as a kid, but there was just so much more I was itching to see.

Continued next page





To this day, my favorite hiking trails are in Marin County. I have been to several countries, but I just love how quiet and green the trails in Marin are.

Exploring the Bay Area on my own eventually turned to traveling the world and picking up new hobbies. I've picked up scuba diving, backpacking, snowboarding, and more since then, and my love for being outdoors and going on adventures will continue to grow. Since I have to stay in Japan right now for work, my current challenge is to climb a good amount of the Japanese Alps.

No matter where I go, no place will ever compare to the Bay Area. I am so thankful that my first experiences being outdoors were there. I always think about how if I did not have access to the hiking trails in the Bay Area, I probably would not be the person I am today. This is why I am forever grateful for being from such a place and will always encourage people to get out and explore the Bay Area, especially those who look like me and those who are looking to try something different.

Bay Area native Rashon Rogers has spent the last several years in Japan. When he isn't on adventures exploring the countryside, he can be found teaching English and working as a coder.