Gaby Benitez
Environmental Educator, Austin, TX
Austin Montessori School, 1998-2008

Austin Montessori School alumnus Gaby Benitez is an Environmental Educator for Keep Austin Beautiful, where she coordinates the organization’s Clean Creek Campus program and teaches the program's in-class and outdoor curriculum. Gaby began at AMS in the early Children’s House program and continued through the Adolescent Program at Gaines Creek, so through school year (kindergarten through 8th grade). After AMS Gaby attended Bowie High School in Austin, TX, and Duke University in Durham, NC, where she earned a B.S. in Biology and a B.A. in Environmental Science and Policy.

After college Gaby spent 9 months as a resident naturalist at the University of Georgia’s campus in San Luis de Monteverde, Costa Rica, where she led guided interpretive hikes of the surrounding cloudforest region. She also participated in an Americorps program, working at the Eno River Association in Durham, NC. Her current work at Keep Austin Beautiful engages 3rd through 8th graders all over Austin in watershed protection based learning, and culminates in an outdoor service project where students are able to help clean up and restore part of their local watershed, while learning about the natural world.

Asked how her experience with AMS impacted her later life, Gaby says that:

“[s]o many of my best memories from that time involve the time we spent outside- the camping trips were hugely formative and not only taught me leadership skills but also set me on the path to working in environmental and outdoor education that I’ve found myself on now. Additionally, I made incredible friendships during my time at AMS, and am still really close with them to this day, despite us having met in elementary or middle school!”

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