

Outdoor Action: Leadership in Service to Others



Thanks for making the Frosh Trip possible!

When we think about OA the first thing that comes to mind are trips—hiking to the top of a ridge, watching the morning fog burn off the river, cooking mac 'n cheese on an stove, making new friends and helping freshmen get off on the right foot at Princeton. But all of that only happens because of the incredible dedication of OA Leaders.

Outdoor Action has always been about *Leadership* (with a capital L). In this issue of Tiger Trails we take a look at the impact that OA has on the trail, across the campus, and beyond Princeton. This is such an important moment in OA's history. The University is more and more interested in Leadership Development and no group on campus is more qualified to be part of that effort than OA. There are an incredible range of opportunities—Whitman College is due to open in the fall of 2007 which will bring a sea-change to undergraduate residential life. OA should be a part of that process by developing programs in collaboration with all six Residential Colleges. We should expand our leadership training opportunities to develop programs for students involved in community service, University departments, and find ways to connect outdoor and experiential education into the curriculum through innovative involvement with things like Freshmen Seminars and the Writing Program. OA has just scratched the surface of what we are capable of providing to the campus. This is going to be the key focus in our fund raising over the next three years as we build an endowment for OA to support these important learning opportunities for students. Please help us move in that direction by contributing to OA's annual membership drive.

Rick Curtis

Rick Curtis '79
Director, Outdoor Action

OA's 32nd Annual Frosh Trip

Frosh Trip 2005 was extremely successful. We had 556 participants from the Class of 2009 and 156 student OA Leaders on 66 different

6-day wilderness trips. In addition we had 38 Support team members and 12 Command Center Managers for a total of 762 students involved in the program. This year's class is 1,220 so we enrolled 45.6% of the incoming class. There were trips in various trail areas in Pennsylvania, the Delaware Water Gap in New Jersey, Catskills in New York, and the Appalachian Trail in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont. Here are some comments from this year's participants.

"I feel really excited about starting school. Before the trip I was nervous and shy, but OA brought me out of my shell and now I am so psyched. It made all the difference for me."

"Before I came on the trip I didn't fully understand how perfectly fitting the OA trip was to introduce me to Princeton. Now I do. The information the leaders gave me and the camaraderie I developed with my peers is invaluable. I can't think of a better way to introduce someone to Princeton. I will never forget my experience."

"Initially, I was intimidated about climbing mountains because I am not very strong and had no experience backpacking, but each day the climbs seemed easier because I realized that I am stronger than I thought and I had the support of everyone else in the group."

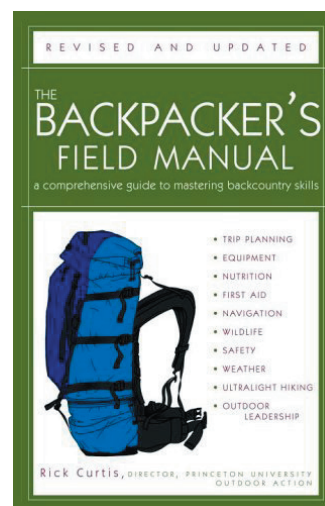
"I'm excited! I hope that everyone at Princeton is as cool as the people I met here. The trip made me even more certain that Princeton is the best college!"

"I was shocked by how much I learned, and I definitely acquired a stronger appreciation for the environment. I made friends with people I would normally never interact with. I lost a lot of stereotypes that I held towards certain people as well."

The Backpacker's Field Manual Second Edition Released

I am really excited to report that the second edition of **The Backpacker's Field Manual** was released in May 2005. I've been working on the new edition for the past year, expanding and updating

content. The first edition has sold more than 60,000 copies and is used by schools and outdoor programs around the country. The new edition adds updated information about new technologies, ultralight backpacking, GPS and outdoor leadership. I got great help from Bill "Tigerpaw" Plonk '83 about ultralight backpacking after his successful ultralight thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail in 2002. The rights to the book have just been purchased for publication in the UK and Canada so OA's influence is spreading! You can order a copy with your annual Friends of OA membership dues.



Leader Trainers Reflect on OA



GR46 in the Green Mountains in Vermont

Lisa Newman-Wise '05

Outdoor Action, an incredibly large and wonderful part of my Princeton Experience, is a component of the Princeton Experience for approximately half of the current student body and half of the alumni of the last few decades. OA is the only piece of my Princeton Experience that was with me from Day One through Graduation Day. I developed a small group of close friends through Frosh Trip, leader training, teaching HEART First Aid and the Leader Training Course, OA dances, time at the Climbing Wall, Leader Trainer meetings complete with dozens of pints of Ben and Jerry's, and more games of "Go Bananas!" than I can count. I made my best friends through OA, and I credit Rick Curtis with providing that medium for so many Princetonians.

Through Frosh Trip, OA provides freshmen with friends and mentors, essential sounding boards during the uncertain first few months of college. Through leader training, OA allows students the opportunity to learn valuable first aid skills,

to put challenging abstract group dynamics and facilitation issues into concrete terms, and to lead peers, one of the most difficult but (as I've found in my few months in the workforce) most useful skills around. Through the leader trainer program, OA promotes a tight-knit community, volunteerism, continuous self- and program-improvement, teaching skills, patience, and "work hard, play hard"—all key for future personal satisfaction and career success. My OA Experience, and therefore my Princeton Experience, became more rewarding the more time and energy I committed to the program. Though this lesson (the more you give, the more you receive) may not be an accurate portrayal of all facets of life, it is incredibly refreshing and energizing to know that I was a part of such an incredible program.

I am now a Second Lieutenant in the US Air Force, trying hard to put everything I learned at Princeton to good use in a huge organization where change is about as likely as my seeing snow fall in the Mojave Desert of California that is my current home. I am more likely and willing to step up than my peers and have been able to spin most frustrating situations into learning experiences. The ability to lead from in front as well as behind, a skill I developed with much thanks to OA, is invaluable.

Being an OA Leader shaped my goals for post-Princeton in numerous ways. I want to work for an inspiring boss in an organization with a mission I believe in. Time outside is essential and looking out the window while commuting doesn't count. It's ok if I don't love it every day, because that means that it's challenging and interesting, and what's the point of doing anything if it's too easy? I want to have the power to make each day an improvement from the previous one. The lessons I learned and perspective I gained through OA help me try to improve even the littlest slice of someone's life on a daily basis, and that is something I will continue to strive for. I can look back on my Princeton Experience knowing that for four years, I made a difference, in OA and other activities, and skills I've taken away from OA will allow me to continue making a difference no matter where, when, or what I do.

Laura Smith '05

Over my four years at Princeton, OA taught me more than just fun and games. I learned how to lead and how to teach. Through being a leader trainer, I not only got extensive leadership training, but also learned how to critically evaluate the situation that I was in. The leadership training was immediately put to use after I left Princeton. After graduation, I headed to Alaska to work on a geophysical research project that installed GPS (Global Positioning System) monuments to better monitor earthquakes, volcanoes and how the North American Continent moves. The job required extended work in remote Alaskan villages and islands while working in groups of 3-10. At the beginning of the summer, from the office, I watched a month long trip of 8 people almost collapse, because of a lack of communication, lack of clear leadership, and overall negligence of the crew. I felt I had a perfect case study in front of me of how not to lead a group. A month later, I participated in my own 2 week trip with five others on Unimak Island, in the Aleutians, a chain of islands off the Alaskan coast. As a group, we had clear communication about safety and our daily activities. We also had a clear delineation of who was in charge of what, and most importantly we were constantly checking in with each other. As I participated and helped facilitate this, I felt OA watching over me. I also took it upon myself to make sure that while the focus was on work, that we had fun together, which would lead to greater trust and confidence in each other. Ultimately, our mission was successful and the group was happy and proud.

Through being a HEART first aid instructor, I got invaluable teaching experience, which is being put directly to use here in Vietnam teaching English with Princeton-in-Asia. HEART helped provide me with the confidence to stand up in front of 45 students for 3 hours and 45 minutes straight and it gave me the ability to sense the moods and comprehension of the class.



Group G12 on the Appalachian Trail in New Jersey

Dylan Fitz '05

Some of the most important experiences I had at Princeton occurred through my work as a leader, leader trainer, and Frosh Trip Coordinator. These activities impacted me to such a degree that they influenced much of what I did in other campus activities. For example, OA taught me to break down my leadership into its key elements and to continually reflect on my own roles, and this process helped me immensely as club soccer captain.

This year I am a Project 55 Fellow at The Food Project in Boston. I get to spend a lot of my time working with youth groups, and I am appreciative of the skills I learned through OA. As a leader trainer, I learned when to step forward and when to sit back as a teacher. With the youth, being able to sit back and not micromanage their work allows them to learn more and develop more independently. For example, we recently took several youth to a conference and gave them each specific responsibilities. By giving the youth independence and ownership, they were able to think things through, demonstrate their talents, and develop their abilities, with us there for assistance and feedback.

My time with OA has also reinforced my goals to teach and work with others in the future, both by giving me skills and increasing my motivation to do this kind of work. I will not settle for any jobs where I do not both help others in important ways and love what I do.

Looking Back on OA

It turns out OA was more than frosh trips, more than LTTs, more than Going Bananas, and even more than Rick himself. OA provided my best friends, OA created my community. At Princeton, my roommate of three years was a fellow leader, my best friend a leader trainer. When I went on a backpacking/road trip over the past summer, I of course had three OA leaders as my companions. Now I live in New York, where I share a very small apartment with a girl I first met on my LTT. I do not think it is merely coincidental that I am connected to so many of my close friends through OA.

We banter back and forth about how "hardcore" some trip was, we share our secret trail-tested cous cous recipe (the secret is in the raisins). We gripe about iodine, we pack for Winter Break in our backpacking backpacks just because we like the way they feel. But more importantly, our common ground stems from a set of shared values, values that brought us all to OA and values that the leader training program reinforced. OA emphasized reflection, alongside self-awareness and acute awareness of others. As leaders, we appreciated the silly and zany in life, while ever striving for that next level of understanding.

We continue to learn the endless applications of our OA skills. As it turns out, co-leader chemistry is not a spark we see only on frosh trip. Debriefing is not a skill reserved for sims. Risk management and group dynamics pop up in situations beyond getting your group lost in a thunderstorm. I've found them in unsuspecting places, particularly now in my role as a kindergarten teacher. In the classroom, my Leader Radar is always on.

These skills and these friends come together in the OA community, a community that transcends the sometimes-fleeting unity of a frosh trip. The OA community consists of friends who are more than folks I led trips with and enjoyed spending occasional time with, but are individuals I will long treasure. The OA community supports those seeking a more reflective, more aware, more thoughtful, and more communicative outdoor (or even indoor) experience. And I think we should all chug a honey-bear to that.

Jen Albinson '05



New friends is what OA is all about - PA64

OA Leadership Off the Trail

The impact of leadership education through Outdoor Action is seen across the campus. OA Leaders are involved in student government, on Residential College Councils, on varsity and club sports teams, in student organizations, as Residential College Advisors, and in community service. It is not possible to list all of the leaders who serve the University and outside community, but the scope of this impact can be seen by some of the many awards, prizes and fellowships that Outdoor Action leaders have received. Here are some from this past year.

Tamara Broderick '07 receives George B. Wood Legacy Sophomore Prize

The George B. Wood Legacy Sophomore Prize went to Tamara Broderick, a graduate of the Laurel School in Shaker Heights, Ohio. The award is given to a member of the junior class in recognition of exceptional academic achievement during the sophomore year. Broderick is an OA leader and a member of both the math club and Princeton Engineering Education for Kids (PEEK), a program through which undergraduates visit elementary schools and teach children basic principles of engineering using Lego toys.

Azalea Kim '05 receives Sanderson Detwiler 1903 Prize at Class Day

Azalea Kim, president of the Class of 2005 for the last two years, received the W. Sanderson Detwiler 1903 Prize, awarded to the senior who, in the judgment of his or her classmates, has done the most for the class. A Woodrow Wilson School major from Yonkers, N.Y., Kim served as a team leader for the Arts Alive program, a core member of the University Honor Committee and an Outdoor Action leader.

Princeton Seniors win Fulbright grants to study abroad

Ten Princeton seniors (including three Outdoor Action Leaders) have been awarded Fulbright grants to study abroad after graduation. The OA Leaders and the countries in which they plan to study are: Jessica Aisenbrey '05, Argentina; Germany; Laura Jones '05, Germany; Christopher Rizzi '05, Morocco. The Fulbright program was established in 1946 to demonstrate U.S. commitment to democratic values worldwide. It is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

Kyle Meng '05 wins Dale Fellowship

The \$25,000 Dale fellowship is awarded annually to a graduating senior to allow him or her "to devote the year following graduation to an independent project of extraordinary merit that will widen the recipient's experience of the world and significantly enhance his or her

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personal growth and intellectual development.” Meng’s project is titled “Unearthing the Dragon: Understanding How the Chinese Perceive Their Environment.”

Professor John Gager receives Berhman Award

Professor John Gager, a well-known faculty member in the Department of Religion, received Princeton’s Behrman Award for distinguished achievement in the humanities. John has been an Outdoor Action leader and an active mentor in OA’s rock climbing community since the early 1990’s. He served as master of Forbes College from 1992 to 2000. In 1998, he received the President’s Award for Distinguished Teaching. John is retiring in 2006 after more than 35 years of teaching at Princeton.

Jennifer Albinson ’05 wins Spirit of Princeton Award

Since its inception in 1995, the Spirit of Princeton Award has recognized a select group of undergraduate students who have made positive contributions to various facets of the University, including the arts, community service, student organizations, residential living, religious life and athletic endeavors. This award acknowledges those students whose service has gone unrecognized by the greater Princeton University community.

Amy Saltzman ’05 Receives 2005 Pyne Prize

Amy Saltzman, an OA Leader and Leader Trainer from Gates Mills, Ohio, was selected for the M. Taylor Pyne Prize, the highest award that the University bestows on an undergraduate. Amy is concentrating in anthropology and also has done a significant amount of work in molecular biology. Saltzman has participated in the Undergraduate Student Government since her sophomore year, first as a U-councilor, then as academics chair and currently as U-Council chair. She played an instrumental role in reinvigorating the University’s preceptorial system, and help to craft a guide for students, preceptors and course heads. In recognizing her at the Alumni Day award ceremony, Princeton President Tilghman predicted that Saltzman’s “blend of passion and compassion will carry [her] far and, in the process, humanize and elevate any field in which she works.” Amy is currently working in South Africa with Princeton-in-Africa.

Kyle Jaros ’05 receives Daniel M. Sachs Scholarship

The award, one of the highest honors given to Princeton undergraduates, was established in 1970 to provide a senior with the opportunity to study, work or travel abroad after graduation. It will fund Jaros’ tuition and living expenses for next year as he travels to Nanjing University to continue Chinese language study and to research the relationship between Chinese nationalism and China’s foreign policy in the early 20th century.

Reunions & Commencement Events

The end of the 2005 academic year was extremely busy for OA with a number of events at Reunions and Commencement including rock climbing, canoeing and kayaking on Friday and Saturday. On Saturday after the P-rade we had an absolutely fantastic slide presentation by **John Mislow ’92** of his successful climb on the north route of Mt. Everest in May of 2004. John’s love for the sport of mountaineering and his expertise was evident in his stirring presentation. Come back and join us **June 1-4, 2006** for a full range of OA activities and speakers at Reunions.

For the latest OA Information
www.princeton.edu/~oa

Josh Miner ’43 Experiential Education Award Winners

Jane Fremon ’75

Jane has been a teacher for more than 30 years, teaching at the Roosevelt Public School in Roosevelt, NJ, while pursuing a master’s degree from the Bank Street College of Education, New York City. She went on to Princeton Day School, where she taught 5th grade English and history for six years. In 1987 following a lifelong ambition of starting a school that addresses the holistic learning needs of students, she founded the Princeton Friends School with 19 students. She and others believed that a school guided by Quaker values and practice would offer families in the Princeton area an important educational alternative. Eighteen years later, the school has blossomed with an enrollment of 125 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade and with thirty faculty and staff. Through her efforts and the efforts of the supportive school community the school moved into the new Schoolhouse on the grounds of the Princeton Friends Meeting. In the autumn of 2000, Princeton Friends received accreditation through the New Jersey Association of Independent Schools.

John Page Williams ’65

John Page Williams ’65 has been a member of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation staff since 1973, serving as a field educator, program administrator, and fundraiser while running field trips by canoe, outboard skiff, and workboat on every river system in the Chesapeake. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), founded in 1967, is the largest conservation organization dedicated solely to saving the Chesapeake Bay watershed. CBF’s motto, *Save the Bay*, defines the organization’s mission and commitment to reducing pollution, improving fisheries, and protecting and restoring natural resources such as wetlands, forests, and underwater grasses. CBF headquarters is in Annapolis, MD, and has state offices in Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania. Prior to his starting at CBF he worked as an instructor at the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School, was a teacher at Mercersburg (PA) Academy and St. Christopher’s School in Richmond, VA.

Notes from the Trailhead

Send us your latest stories on the enclosed membership form.

Heidi Harbison ’97 & Taylor Kimberly ’96 spent 2-months in Southeast Asia including trekking to Nepal. “Then we got married in the Adirondacks in Willsboro, overlooking Lake Champlain in June. We hope to get some skiing in this winter.”

Robin Hibbert Tindall ’97 reports that she just finished her MBA and is learning whitewater canoeing and enjoying backcountry skiing in the winters of Vermont.

Timothy Van Hooser ’01 is planning on climbing all of the highest peaks in each of the 50 states. That means some challenging ones including Mt. McKinley in Alaska. Tim is looking for advice on the big mountains as well as anyone interested in joining him on climbs.

Liz Condliffe ’02 joined the Wilderness Medicine group at University of Toronto and “am missing the WFR course that I never did manage to take, but having fun nonetheless. We are planning for a “Med WAR North,” a medical wilderness adventure race that is an interesting outlet for outdoor ed. Participants range from avid outdoorsmen to health care workers/students skiing for the first time.”

For more “Notes from the Trailhead” visit:
www.princeton.edu/~oa/alumni/