

Frosh Trip integrated into Orientation!

No you didn't read that wrong!

I am thrilled to tell you about this incredible change for Princeton and OA. Starting in September 2016, OA will no longer be an optional 'preorientation' trip, but will be an integrated part of the University's orientation for incoming freshmen. The Class of 2020 will participate in either the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip, the Community Action (CA) service trip, or a special on-campus program for fall freshmen athletes.

The positive impact of freshmen meeting each other through an intensive small-group orientation experience has been understood for some time. Over the past several years, through the work of a number of committees and task forces, it was decided that these experiences offered significant benefits for all incoming students to successfully transition from high school to college and that Frosh Trip, and other similar programs, should be integrated as a formal part of the overall freshman orientation experience. "Beginnings are important," Vice President for Campus Life Rochelle Calhoun said. "How students start their first year of college should help to set a positive tone for their next four years. This change in our orientation program is designed to help first-year students make a successful transition to Princeton and to create a strong sense of community."

There is no doubt that this change in Princeton orientation was influenced in large part by the growth and success of Outdoor Action. When I started as director in 1981 there were 220 freshmen participants and 44 OA Leaders. This year there were 721 freshmen and 227 OA Leaders. OA is the single largest college outdoor orientation program in the U.S. This phenomenal growth is based on one simple thing: OA works.

How did we get here?

The first formal Frosh Trip was in September 1974 for 100 members of the Class of '78. Since then the program has consistently expanded in size and scope creating innovative approaches to freshman orientation. The Community Action program was started in 1988 by the Student Volunteers Council, based on the success of the OA program. The rest is history.

Throughout the discussions about making OA and CA a formal part of the orientation process, people have referred to "the OA Curriculum" as the model for how a small group bonding experience can serve to support new students and educate them about life as a Princeton student. The important values that OA has always taught—Full Value Contract, Challenge by Choice, Respect for Diversity—will be an integral part of the foundation of the orientation process. This change is a wonderful validation of OA's contributions to Princeton. All OA Leaders should be proud of what you've given to so many generations of Princetonians.

What does this mean for OA?

The implications for OA are simply staggering. Starting in 2016, the Frosh Trip will be free to all participants. In addition, students will no longer have to pay to participate in the OA Leader Training Program. In preparation for 2016, the University has provided bridge funds so that all Leader Training during

the 2015–2016 academic year will be free to all students. Previously the fee to become a leader had risen to \$350 per student and while we did offer some financial aid, it was not enough to cover everyone and the fee was a significant barrier for some students. Now any student can participate, for free. As a result we had over 75 students sign up for Leader Training over fall break up from 48 last fall.

I cannot overstate how profound this change is. For the past forty-two years, OA has been funded primarily through student fees and from your annual Friends of OA contributions. Now the primary funding comes directly from the University with additional support from your annual Friends of OA donations.

New Goals for OA

With this new financial support from the University we have set a new series of strategic goals for OA—Leadership & Academic Year Activities. The OA "Leadership Starts Here" Initiative is a new program designed to take the fantastic student leadership model that we've built over the past forty-two years and offer that to more students on campus. Expanding what we can offer to create the next generation of great Princeton leaders on campus and after college is our top priority.

Many of you will remember that as far back as 1975 Outdoor Action wasn't only Frosh Trip, we ran trips throughout the academic year providing the same rich experiences to all undergraduates and graduate students. We had to significantly reduce academic year programming starting in 2001 due to lack of funds. Our second goal is to build a rich set of trips, expeditions and activities throughout the academic year directly funded by annual support from the Friends of OA and from our endowment funds. Your support will allow OA to expand our academic year programming, and most importantly, make sure that all students can afford to participate. What comes next for OA depends on you, our alumni and friends.

Thanks for your incredible ongoing support!



Rick Curtis '79 h04 h13
Director, Outdoor Action

From the Friends of Outdoor Action Board

This issue of Tiger Trails publicizes one of the most important changes in the history of Outdoor Action—the institutional recognition and assignment of OA as a integral component of freshman orientation. To quote a presidential candidate, "This is huge"—almost as significant as hiring Rick Curtis to be OA Director.

So what's next? Well, enjoy the moment, catch your breath and then let's start building something new on this now solid program footing.

Once upon a time long ago, Outdoor Action had the resources to offer academic year programs and trips not specifically geared to leader training. Those outings faded without sufficient funding to support them. As of this coming fall, the Frosh Trip begins the academic year with full funding from the

What's Next for Outdoor Action?

University. While your prior generosity has been necessary to sustain Frosh Trip; your future support will be used to grow and expand Outdoor Action beyond Frosh Trip. The opportunity to offer engaging and exciting academic year programming is now.

I know you believe in OA, Rick, and his vision for the program. This year by contributing to the Friends of Outdoor Action you can launch the expanding future of OA. What you give will be used to boost OA to the next level of service: year-round, campus-wide access to outdoor adventure and leadership education

This coming Reunions will mark Rick's 35th year at the helm of OA. We hope that you'll join us at Reunions for a look back at OA's great history, share your ideas for OA's future and help us celebrate Rick's 35th year. We'll have more information about that event in the spring. Thanks for all you've done and all you are going to do. Let's make a great program even greater!

Tiger Cheers,

Glenn "Merc" Morris '72, President

Friends of Outdoor Action Advisory Board

New Endowment Fund

Caroline & F. Helmut Weymar Fund

We are really pleased to tell you about an incredible endowment gift made to OA this past April, the Caroline and F. Helmut Weymar Fund. The Weymar Fund gives us the ability to take OA Leader Training to a whole new level. This fall the Weymar Fund is supporting the first ever OA expedition with the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). This trip is designed for new OA Leader Trainers and will provide them with the same kind of advanced leadership development that NOLS offers to MBA programs. Elevating the leadership qualities of our Leader Trainers will significantly expand the quality of every new OA Leader that is trained this year. It is through endowment funds like the Weymar Fund that OA can go above and beyond what we've done before to provide an even richer experience for Princeton students.

Other Endowment Funds

Thanks to the incredible donations we have received from the Friends of OA over many years we have four special endowed funds to support Outdoor Action. Each of these funds supports the annual operation of the program including support to ensure that all students can participate

OA General Endowment Fund: This fund was established to support all aspects of Outdoor Action.

Kevin Callaghan '83 Fund: This fund was established by



Ready to Climb!

Kevin Callaghan '83, who discovered his love of the outdoors after Princeton, so that current students can have the opportunity to explore and adventure in the outdoors.

Josh Miner '43 Fund: This fund was established in memory of Josh Miner '43 who as the founding trustee of Outward Bound USA served a pivotal role in the growth of outdoor education in the United States.

Zander Scott '92 Fund: This fund was established in memory of Alexander 'Zander' Scott '92, an OA Leader who loved adventure.

Students Imagine OA's Future

Mitch Shellman '16

Leader Trainer from Couer d'Alene, ID

The camaraderie freshmen feel during Outdoor Action can be lasting. I'm from Northern Idaho, which is thousands of miles from my family and friends, meaning I knew nobody coming into college. But, I met two of my best friends during the trip and we still hang out three years later. It was the best college-entrance experience I could've hoped for. Once I got

What do You think of the news?

When the news went out about Frosh Trip becoming a full part of orientation and the new University support for OA, we heard from dozens of you. Check out what OA alumni(ae) had to say and tell us what you think at:

outdooraction.princeton.edu/alumni

back on campus, I realized how close of a group we'd become and that I could turn to them anytime. The trip didn't end on the trail—it just took a different path.

For a lot of people, OA is a singular event at the beginning of the year. You'll be reminded of a trip you led or were on when you pass people wearing their OA shirts or when you see the email about OA day coming up, but the lasting impact fades out on campus, losing the incredible momentum that Frosh Trip builds. People carry that energy and those friendships into new clubs and activities.

Yet, each year during Pre-Trip [the four days of refresher training right before Frosh Trip], I always hear people talking about how much they want to have more large-scale OA ac-



Celebrating on the trail with new friends

How can you Help?



On the Appalachian Trail in Connecticut

tivities. Something to bring the leaders together like Pre-Trip and something to bring the participants together to swap stories and catch up from what is the craziest semester of their lives. A simple break from campus life by engaging in OA and using that chance to rejuvenate.

Up to now, OA has been perpetuated throughout the year mostly by ambitious leaders, those who love the program and pour the energy in to keep the energy of the trip alive throughout the year. But this coming year we have the chance to focus the program's time and energy on a truly significant framework for events throughout the year to bring together the campus community and make OA a constant presence throughout Princeton's campus. With a little help from the people who know how great the program is, we can offer that continuation that people long for, keeping the momentum of Frosh Trip throughout the year and engaging the campus like we have aimed to do for so many years.

Susan Farrell '17

Leader Trainer from Princeton, NJ

The feeling a freshman gets when they step off the OA bus is indescribable. They made it through 5 nights in the woods and can officially start their lives at Princeton. How they started their Princeton lives though, is everything. The beginning of college is scary, no; it's down-right terrifying. You are thrown from the world you knew into a world of bright, new peers, who all somehow seemed to have done more in their 18 years on this planet than you think you'll ever do in a lifetime.



Taking a break along the Delaware

This is where OA comes in. The Outdoor Action Frosh Trip brings people of all different backgrounds and experiences together in a way that takes away the pressures of school, in a way that facilitates group bonding and deeper connections, in a way that puts things in perspective. Frosh Trip has lasting impacts on friendships, personal confidence, and even how we look at the challenges Princeton gives us.

What a lot of people don't realize however, is that when freshmen leave Frosh Trip, they get to take little piece of it with them. They get to hold inside them that spirit they developed, of conquering any challenge, of the importance of time to reflect outdoors, of the amazing effect a group can have on its members in just the course of a few days.

This coming year OA has the amazing opportunity to extend this type of experience to trips during the year. Through OA, students could spend a weekend canoeing down the Delaware



Members of the Class of 2019 celebrate on the summit

River, hiking the Appalachian Trail, even cycling all over New Jersey. These trips could be an amazing opportunity to help Princeton students remember the value of the outdoors, the importance of time away from academic work, and the benefits of physical activity. More importantly, what these trips could really bring, is a little piece of the OA Frosh Trip spirit that so many of us held near and dear to our hearts. At the beginning of freshmen year, it rings strong throughout all of us, but as the year(s) go on, it starts to fade. We forget we can do anything we put our minds to; we forget we can be ourselves and accepted, scared and triumphant at the same time. OA is so much more meaningful than just a 5-day camping trip; it impacts all of our lives at Princeton in one way or another. By offering shorter trips on weekends or even just day trips during the year, Outdoor Action could continue to have such an immense impact on the student body of Princeton for the entire four years of our time here.

Help us build a year-round Program

These students have shared their aspirations for the future of Outdoor Action. You can help us reach these goals by giving to OA. Your gift will ripple out through the program and across the campus.

OA Alumni Adventure: Trekking in Patagonia

February 8-21, 2016



Photo by Christopher Michel @ChrisMichel

Patagonia, at the southern tip of South America, is one of the most spectacular landscapes on the planet with rugged peaks soaring over nine thousand feet, deep ice blue lakes, emerald green forests, wind-swept grasslands and some of the world's largest glaciers. Outdoor Action and Princeton Journeys are offering active hikers the chance to explore on foot the scenic wonderland of Chile's Torres del Paine National Park along with **Rick Curtis '79**, Director of Outdoor Action.

The Torres del Paine trek is considered one of the great hikes of the world with what is described as "jaw-dropping mountain scenery." This trek is the full circuit of the Paine massif, including the famous "W" route, and takes you through the kind of rarely traveled terrain you'd expect to find at the ends of the earth. You'll be accompanied by top local guides from World Wide Trekking as you hike deep into the remote wilderness of southern Chile.

The Paine Circuit is a great trek for the experienced hiker. We'll be staying at both refugios (hostels) and established campsites along the route. Travelers should expect 6-10 hours of hiking a day for eight days, totaling 70 miles. The altitude is low—never more than 4,000 feet above sea level. The trails themselves are challenging with lots of up and down, rocky terrain, some stream crossings and the chance for slippery and muddy conditions. *Why should undergrads have all the fun?*

For more information and to Register: <http://alumni.princeton.edu/learntravel/journeys>

Notes from the Trailhead

For more Notes from the Trailhead and to post, visit:
outdooraction.princeton.edu/alumni/trailhead

Francis Haines '41: There was nothing like this when I arrived at Princeton in 1937!

David Irving '58: September 2014 Vermont Bicycle Tours bike tour of the Dolomite region of northern Italy (Cortina to Verona with wife Barb). Keep up the good work Rick!

Alexander Ward '75: Spent 10 days in Yellowstone and the Tetons, hiking and watching amazing wildlife and scenery, back to someplace I hadn't been since 1975!

Christine Saada Blume '83: Way back in the Dark Ages (fall of 1979) I went on the Frosh Trip to the NJ Pine Barrens, and survived Hurricane Dennis. I was so thrilled my daughter Catherine Blume '18 got to experience the OA Frosh Trip!

Lisa Fernandez '83: For our 25th wedding anniversary in July, 2014 **Rich Remnick '83** and I hiked the southern half of the John Muir Trail in the CA Sierras. It was a sublime 12 day, 120 mile journey that renewed our bond with each other and with the beautiful peaks and headwaters.

Samuel Inman '85: Successfully ran 31 miles from the Grand Canyon's North Rim down to the Colorado River and back up to the North Rim in 9½ hours. No world or American record but a wealth of memories.

James Smart '89: We look forward to the great experiences that our son, Zach ('19) will have with OA this fall.

Cecily Baskir '96: My kindergartener son Elio proudly earned his Junior Ranger badge this summer at Mt. Rainier National Park, while his little brother Lior still talks about the volcano at Mt. St. Helens. They are starting to enjoy hiking, much to my relief!

Taylor Kimberly '96: Jud Brewer '96, Josh Roman '97, Pete Kovac '96 and

I recently got together with our families to celebrate 40th birthdays. We also got in a day of mountain biking at Kingdom Trail in VT. Lots of fun!

Denise Bressler '97: It was not a trail but it certainly was an adventure...I finished my PhD in Learning Sciences and Technology this year! And I rode my first century this year!

Mary Kathleen Czarnecki '00: Doing well out in Oregon's Willamette Valley Wine Country! We just had our second little boy in June—Jonathan—big bro Emmett has been welcoming! We welcome any tigers in the area to come visit us at our family restaurant: The Joel Palmer House.

Ryan Martin '01: Had our first baby (a boy, Innis)—we've taken him on a couple hikes. Plus many runs and bike rides. We're also taking him to Crested Butte, CO this summer for hikes and mountain air.

Kathleen Baum Mettenbrink '01: Still living in Lander, WY and working for NOLS Professional Training. Thanks for all your work out there!

Alana Benjamin '02: We have a 7-month old daughter Ella and are enjoying hiking, camping, and snowshoeing with her in Taos, NM!

Tenley Laserson Chopiga '02: Just got back from a mini leader trainer reunion in Seattle with **Sarah Apgar '02, Meghan Mullarkey Kiefer '02 and Wilkie Kiefer '04.** OA friendships are the best!

Maya Yamato '07: I am currently a postdoc at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. OA was the best part of Princeton.

Lucy Adeline Guarnera '09: I'm in the middle of my Psychology PhD at the University of Virginia—so right by the Blue Ridge Mountains, Shenandoah National Park, Old Rag, etc. My 18-month old Sammy and I love to hike with him in his baby backpack!

Meghan McNulty '10: Just want to say, "Thank you, OA!" It's what I think of every time I lace up my hiking boots.

Paul Ohno '14: Hiked 500+ miles of the AT this summer. Great time, OA definitely helped me get to where I needed to be to do that, so thanks!