# Table of Contents

Editors Page 3

**Tent Peg Articles** 4-45

- A Flying Duck 4
- Catz of the Fall 4-5
- From the Land under Sea to the Smoke above Mountains 5-6
- A Thank You to the Climbing Community 7
- A Journey 8-9
- Let Nature Provide 9-10
- Home is Where the Heart is 11
- #POWday 11-13
- Bright Colors and Stretchy Pants 14-15
- Life Changing Experiences 16-18
- The Crow 19-20
- Star Stories 20-21
- An Adventure into the Wilderness 21-24
- Shadows of the Wilderness 25
- Life is a Journey: From Brain Surgery to Now Different. 26-27
- I'm Addicted to the Outdoors 28-31
- Motel 6 31-32
- Way Up in a Tree 33-34
- Inside, Outside 35
- Death-March 36-37
- A Quest to Complete 37-38
- Silence is My Favorite Sound 39
- The Max Patch Experience 40
- Pinnacle of Adventure 41
- Humbling Respect 42-43
- Redemption Run 43-46
- Finding my True Path 47-48
- Finding Myself Through PRM 48-49

Special Thanks 50
Chancellor's List 51
Senior Seminar Symposium Flyer 52
A Note from the Editors

As you endeavor into reading this year’s Tent Peg presented by Parks and Recreation Management students, we can only hope that you find some sense of connection and value from the work that has been put into this process. We are incredibly proud to have a thriving group of students share their personal stories and memories thus far in their college careers, or perhaps what led them to where they are now. We hope that the words on these pages and the stories and people behind them come to life as you read. From each unique perspective of creativity, lifelong journeys, and what it truly means to be involved in this field, we can only hope that you as a reader can see how important these following pages are to us. Thank you for taking your time to read all of what’s inside. Here is glimpse inside of the diverse and beautiful personalities represented in our student body.

Thank you,

Lydia Izzell, Samantha Hinerman, Sutton Kanipe, Annalisa Orefice
A Flying Duck
by CP Stewart

It’s pitch black and freezing,
The wind is at our back.
We’ve been out here for hours,
and Dylan ate my snack.
“We probably won’t see nothing,”
he says as he packs a dip.
It’s three minutes till shooting
time,
as we hear the first wings whistle
and flip.
Finally, the sun rises from its slumber;
two Mallards lock up in our hole,
their green and blue feathers
glistening.
Dylan yells “Kill ‘em!” We made them roll.
The dogs jump in the icy water.
They love it more than us.
They bring the birds back…
another hunt without a bust.

Cats of the Fall
by Devon Stephens

We are Catamounts of the fall.
We are students who have to say
goodbye to a great summer.
We are enjoying the lake as much as possible before its freezing.

We are doing our best not to procrastinate on every assignment.

We are going to the games on Saturdays hoping for the best.
We are going all out this tailgating season.
We are driving back roads just to enjoy the scenery.
We are attending the occasional home volleyball games.
We are going hiking before it’s too cold.
We are driving up to the airport to watch the sunset.

We are juggling a job around school.

We are excited for Fall and Winter break.

We are fishing the Tuckasegee for outdoor therapy.

We are using Chilis' as an excuse for fine dining.

We are hunting the smokies for all the big game.

We are excited for Halloween and all that it brings.

We are contemplating on eating at the cafeteria.

We are never making the same mistake of taking an 8am.

We are tubing down the Tuck on a hot Saturday.

We are kayaking and rock climbing anywhere we can.

We are forgetful that we have another cafeteria to choose from.

We are buying ugly sweaters for the Christmas themed parties.

We are dreading but looking forward to getting past our finals.

From the Land under Sea to the Smoke above the Mountains
by Joris Stein

Once upon a rainy day, in an Irish muddy bay

A friend came by, his mood was high

And with a glister in his eye, he asked

What I thought of the U.S.A

“The U.S.A?” I muttered, with questions on my brows

The land of free, that’s full with dreams, which would make hope arouse?

“Exactly mate, that’s what I mean”, he responded with a smile

But don’t forget the guns, the hate and other things hostile
And so, the journey started, to an unknown land ahead
Accompanied by a bag of clothes, and my last Dutch cheese on bread
Born in a country under the level of sea, to the Smoky Mountain range
Arriving here with all beauty in sight, I wouldn’t make a change

The squirrels that greet in the morning, with a cheeky little grin
Makes the start of the day feel like, I am already on a win
Dodging skateboards, bikes and dogs, plus drops of fountain spray
Keeps you on your toes all time, and would make any man feel gay

Standing tall and proud, with memories of the earth embedded
Are the trees who kindly show us, their warming orange, green and red
Last sunrays shine through, and when night slowly begins to fall
Dots of light turn up, and fireflies calmly make their call

Serenity, purity and elegance can hardly be described by someone with a foreign tongue

So, my advice is to look, listen and embrace the wonderful play of the earth’s song
No need to look far, no need to look wide
Keep your eyes and ears open, and let your heart decide
A Thank You to the Climbing Community

by Macy Shelton

When I see this photo, I want to celebrate. I want to celebrate my friends, my school, the parks and recreation department, and this climbing trip that changed my life. I transferred to Western my sophomore year, and for the first couple of months, I was pretty isolated and uninvolved. It was at the 2018 Cullowhee Canoe Slalom that I met the guy in the very left of the photo. His name is Braden Tholkes. Not long after meeting Braden, he invited me to come to the climbing wall. I enjoyed the way it felt to move on the wall, and I was drawn to the climbing community. Everybody was close-knit and really goofy.

When fall break came around, Braden invited me to go on a climbing trip to Linville Gorge. I did not have any climbing gear and I did not even know how to tie a figure eight follow through. Braden, Andrew, and the others on the trip guided me through my first rappel and outdoor climb. We climbed five pitches of a route called the Daddy in Linville Gorge. It felt surreal to be so exposed and high off the ground; I was instantly hooked.

Ever since that day, the friends in this photo plus many others have helped me pursue what will hopefully be a career in climbing. It has been one year since this trip and I am still spending almost every weekend on the rocks with these PRM folks. They challenge me, teach me, encourage me, and make me laugh a lot. I cannot thank them enough for the patience and generosity they have shown me. Special thanks to Andrew Giles for not getting mad when I dropped one of his stoppers off the Nose at Looking Glass. Special thanks to Sam Wilson for not getting mad when I dropped one of his carabiners off the Nose at Looking Glass. I love you guys.
Everyone has a journey,  
a path they follow through.  

Despite the trials and tribulations,  
mine lead to WCU.  

I travel up the mountain,  
me and my hiking shoes.  

Two paths diverged ahead of me,  
which one shall I choose?  

A winding road continues,  
there’s not a thing to lose.  

I cross a narrow bridge,  
should I follow through?  

My instincts guide me on,  
I know what I should do.  

Parks and Rec emerged,  
another adventure to pursue.  

I take another step,  
what an incredible view.  

I stop and take a breath,  
this is my break through.  

My journey continues on,  
past my college pursuits.  

My major kept me up,  
I’ll miss the times I grew.  

Every step I take,  
my time is coming soon.  

It’s time to move forward,  
for another chapter is due.
I will miss the times I had, my incredible professors too. My experiences soared right by, outside the classroom.

My peers lifted me up, as they were hiking through. I’ll miss the perfect parallel, my major always drew.

It’s time to say goodbye, I’ll miss ole WCU.

The people that I met, deserve the finest brew.

This journey was the beginning, another adventure is anew.

Let Nature Provide
by Julia Riddle

I have always heard talk of how nature provides; you wish for something on the wind and then suddenly it will be supplied.

People spend their whole lives wishing for something that is given so freely.

They wait for the “right time” or the perfect opportunity ideally.

Yet the longer you wait, the longer you spend knowing that there is something for you right around the bend.

And while you sit there and wait it stays just out of reach.

You could be climbing mountains, traversing trails, or eating dinner.
with wild burros on a Mexican beach.

It is moments like these that blow everything else out of the water; they open your eyes, heart, and soul and make your whole world view broader. They’re what you will remember and carry with you for the rest of this lifetime or maybe even two. Because it’s moments like these that you simply can’t buy.

“The two most important days in your life are the day you’re born and the day you find out why.” - Mark Twain
There are many things that mean a lot to me in nature. Most of the things in this artwork are things that I love and care about. Forsythia, the yellow flowers, was the plant of my childhood, it always blooms on my birthday. Mount Pisgah, a distinctive mountain because of the cell tower on top, has always watched over me, and I noticed it because of how easy it is to identify. I absolutely adore topographic maps because of how fun they are to look at and discover. This one is of Candler and the mountain I live on. My house is hidden behind a gigantic pine tree so the pine tree is in there to represent my house. The four flowers on the hill represent me and my family's favorite flowers and how close we are. The daisy for my mom, the violet for my sister, the bleeding heart for my brother, and the painted trillium for me.
#POWday
by Cooper Reinert

In the winter of 2018, a small group of parks and rec students traveled to Utah for a course offered within the PRM program at Western Carolina University. The trip was a week long, and the 15 of us had the privilege of visiting four different ski resorts in our time there. We also had the privilege to speak with a handful of different people who represented some of the various realms of the outdoor industry. Although the most alluring aspect of this trip was obviously being able to snowboard on some of the best snow in the nation, speaking to the professionals we met out there turned out to be very inspiring. I wasn't expecting it, but almost everyone we talked to had something to say about sustainable tourism. This is not something I went in to this trip thinking about, but the conversation's I had opened my eyes a bit.

Ski Utah was the first company we had spoken with. They are a company that focuses on facilitating ski trips to Utah, and creating programs for kids to get out on the snow. However, what stood out to me the most during the Ski Utah presentation, was the initiative they have taken to lessen carbon emissions in Utah. They have partnered up with a handful of resorts, and an organization called Protect our Winters to create benefits, aka incentives to either carpool or take public transportation to the local ski resorts.

These incentives included things such as prizes for people who would post photos of them carpooling on social media with their hashtag, #POWday. People who carpooled would also receive
preferred parking at ski resorts. Carpoolers were also eligible to receive a two for one weekday ticket voucher for the resorts that have partnered with Ski Utah.

After another full day of skiing at Park City and Canyons, our class met with the mayor of Park City, Andy Beerman. He was a very chill guy, which is surprising given the responsibility of being the mayor of the largest ski resort in the nation. Andy spoke to us about Park City’s very ambitious goals to make the whole community of Park City run on 100% renewable energy by the year 2030. To me, this was a very impressive goal. Park City has already started converting all their public transportation vehicles to be 100% electric, and has put charging stations in for the community of Park City to use.

So why is it all so important? As many of you know, the earth is important. We need it, but it does not need us, which is why we must do all that we can to protect it. When I think of big corporate companies, I tend to think of terms like greedy, top 1%, and fossil fuels, but the people we spoke with who help run these huge industries gave me a new perspective. It was extremely inspiring to learn that there are big corporations out there actually making a difference amidst this daunting climate epidemic. My biggest hope in regards to climate change is that other large companies will learn to follow in the footsteps of others that set wonderful standards amongst the world of big corporation.
Bright Colors and Stretchy Pants

by Jack Privette

Over my past two years at Western Carolina University, I have become more and more involved in the realm that I now consider my home, the outdoors. I contribute this mainly to the sport of rock climbing. When I came to WCU in 2017 I only knew a handful of students that attended, and never really got to see them anyway. In the first couple weeks of school, I didn’t really have many friends yet and I was starting to question whether I made the right choice coming to school in this tiny little town. Now, my freshman year, I was living in Walker Residence Hall and my suitemate just happened to be Alex Cobb.

Alex has been a pretty avid rock climber since he was very young, about seven years old. One day Alex dragged me to the climbing wall here on campus and I fell in love with climbing. I fell in love with the challenge of climbing and the body movement was so cool and new to me. I have heard climbing compared to “vertical yoga”. Ever since that day, I have spent countless hours climbing outside, exploring the many different climbing destinations in the area, watching endless climbing videos on YouTube, and have spent WAY too much money on climbing gear. Now, some may argue that climbing is just like any other sport, but believe me, it’s different. Coming from playing five different sports in high school, to only climbing for sport, I know how different it is. For me, climbing offered so much more than getting a workout in a fun way. As an outsider to the sport, there are so many things that one doesn’t see. They can’t see the climbing community that helped me find my purpose in life.
and here at Western. They don't see the fact that climbing made me change my major. They don't see that climbing made me completely change my career path. They can't see the friendships that climbing has molded. They can't see the fun times spent with friends at Looking Glass, or the Obed in Tennessee, two popular spots for us WCU climbers. They can't see the endless learning opportunities offered in the sport. They can't see what they are missing out on. They can't see any of that. All they see is a bunch of weirdos wearing bright colors and stretchy pants surrounded by a plume of climbing chalk.

Today, I am still a climber, I work at the climbing wall on campus, where I got my start climbing. I own five pairs of stretchy pants and countless bright colored shirts. I am even more in love with climbing now than I was when I started. I am seeking to better myself in the sport by taking advantage of learning opportunities it offers. I plan on taking my Single Pitch Instructor course (SPI) offered by the American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) this winter and hopefully completing the exam in the spring of 2020.

To all non-climbers out there, we aren't scary. A little quirky, but not scary. Come join us and follow your stoke!
Life Changing Experiences
by Pressley, Kerra

All it takes is one moment to change your life. One event. One experience. One trip. When I signed up for the fall break whitewater kayaking trip in 2018, I thought I would be learning a new skill that could develop into a hobby that I would occasionally do in my free time. Little did I know that that trip would totally flip my world upside down.

I came into Western Carolina as a transfer student my sophomore year. I was an Athletic Training student, so most of my time was devoted to classes, studying, and clinicals. When I found out that Basecamp Cullowhee was offering a whitewater kayaking fall break trip, I knew I had to jump on it. I have always enjoyed being outdoors, some of my favorite things included hiking, hunting, swimming, wakeboarding, and flat-water kayaking. Being the water bug and adrenaline junkie that I am, I just knew that I would enjoy whitewater kayaking. I also figured that this trip would be a great way to de-stress and reset myself before classes begin again.

After a long couple weeks of waiting for fall break, it was finally time to load on the bus to begin our trip. After 4 days of paddling on 3 different rivers, I fell in love with whitewater kayaking. I also enjoyed getting to spend time camping with a group of people whom I have never met before, discovering that we all had similar interests. I also found myself looking up to Kay, who was the leader of the trip and is the Assistant Director of Base Camp Cullowhee. In an industry and sport full of men, I found it inspiring to see a strong female leader.

After the trip ended, I returned to school and begun the constant studying again. As the semester went on, I found myself procrastinating so I could go hiking or be outside. No big deal, I thought, I was still able to get everything done and get good grades. However, I started to get this feeling like there was something missing in my life.

Spring semester started off rough for me. I had to move
dorms due to a traumatic event that happened to me the semester before. Between all the meetings I had to attend, paperwork that I had to fill out, and moving my stuff, I started my year off behind. I tried with everything I had to catch back up, but I was not motivated to. I found myself, like last semester, procrastinating so I could escape to be outside. However, this time my grades started to drop. I found myself uninterested in the stuff that I was learning and miserable at clinicals. This was when I started toying with the idea of switching majors. After looking up the list of all the programs Western has to offer, I found myself drawn to the Parks and Recreation Management page. I also remembered the fall break trip that I went on and realized that I would love to be able to have a job like Kay’s. That was the “ah-ha” moment for me. That there was an opportunity for me to turn my one true passion, the outdoors, into a career.

I decided that I wanted to talk to Kay and talk to her about her journey in outdoor recreation, the jobs she has had, and if she has enjoyed it. I wanted to make sure that this was in fact something that I wanted to do with my life. So, I walked down to Basecamp, and because I am super awkward, made the excuse that I needed to talk to Kay to set up a payment plan for the spring break trip, knowing full and well that I had no intention of going. I then walked into her office, talked to her about the trip and talked to her about her job and her experiences. I walked out of her office 99% sure that I was going to change my major, with a list full of PRM professors that I could contact, and with a payment plan for the Rio Grande spring break canoe trip.
The rest of the semester was filled with joy and hope. I officially changed my major to PRM and dropped my clinical class so I could have more time to focus on myself. I went on more hikes and went on a life-changing canoe excursion. I started to go to roll clinics so I could learn how to roll a kayak. I decided that I wanted to get better at whitewater kayaking and figured that a great way to that would be by becoming a raft guide and living right beside a river. I quit my job as a nursing assistant, and by Kay's recommendation, got a job at WildWater on the Nantahala river.

I don't think that I would be where I am today if I had not gone on the whitewater kayaking trip. It was through that trip that I realized that a career in outdoor recreation is possible. It provided me a connection in which I could find out more in the profession. I also probably would not have discovered my love for whitewater. It's kind of crazy to look back and try to imagine what I would be doing right now if I had not gone on that trip. To be honest, I really do not think that I would be a PRM major. However, I know now that this is where I belong.
This picture was taken in Eden, North Carolina, outside an Aaron's and a Great Clips. The picture was taken from a LG 5SmartPhone camera. I took this photo from the inside of a car. The reason I took this photo was because this was the closest that I had ever been to a bird at the time. While I was waiting in the car with my brother, my parents went to get a few items, the crow landed on the roof of the car I was in, then landed on the hood of the car in the picture, and then the roof. I was able to take two pictures of the crow; this I think was the better one. It was raining heavily earlier and had now changed to less than a drizzle, but there was a heavy fog around the area. When I took that picture, I really liked how eerie it looked that the fog hides the details of the face; I think that it turned out good.

I have always found the Corvus genus to be very interesting. For me, there has always been something about crows and ravens that I thought was cool. Crows have been shown to be very intelligent birds, they are able to remember their parents and will visit them from time to time. They will also have different calls for relatives.
The Corvus’ image in culture depicts them to be mysterious birds, from Edgar Allen Poe's *The Raven*, to George R. R. Martin’s *A Song of Ice and Fire*. Older cultures will have them depicted as messengers of ill omens. Most notably the raven being a symbol of death. The crow is a symbol of bad luck. For me, the crow being a symbol of bad luck and death I find interesting.

**Star Stories**  
by Ryan Paquette

If stars could speak, what stories would they tell? I've always been fascinated with the universe and stars; how incomprehensibly old and seemingly eternal it is compared to our tiny little lives that seem to drag on yet accelerate faster and faster into an unknown existence. Call me a space cadet, but this fascination runs intrinsically in our story as humans, and, in particular, my story. I spent most of my days as a teenager backpacking up to the balds of mountains around my hometown of Franklin, NC, trying to catch a glimpse of clearer and more star-dotted skies, all while attempting to reach conclusions about my place in life.

*Photographed by: Ryan Paquette  
Silver Bald, Franklin, NC*

My want to feel like I belonged somewhere and on a good path was brought around from witnessing the death of my grandfather, and somehow being alone on the mountain afterwards felt undeniably safe and healing in some way. But, with all these excursions, came a lot of mistakes. I learned that I no longer felt the healing effects of nature when I was kept up all night from freezing temperatures, or when my cotton clothes were too drenched to sustain any kind of warmth. I realized that having a pretty hardcore bee sting reaction while having no source of water through an entire day hiking on the AT in July was not good. I
realized that I may need some help for educating myself in the art of outdoor recreation. And so, I changed my major for the third time to Parks and Recreation, and this preparedness allowed me to get a little creative with this little life of mine.

Since I changed my major, some things I've done include: a three-day canoeing trip in Canada with my best friend, a year living in Ireland surfing and getting a degree in Outdoor Education, living as a river guide in Colorado, living in a tent in my manager's front yard, and also the purchase of a van so I can keep this weird lifestyle of mine alive. And, wherever I go, even as the weather and climate change with every new location, the stars stay ever consistent. Gently flickering and quietly watching as they witness the story of everyone unfold into reality and then unto history, ever present as they were long before we ever were and long after we will ever be. My biggest hope is that I will live a life worth remembering, where even the stars can be so pleased as to welcome me back to their place of creation. They can flicker in my memory for the ones that I've left behind, just like they did for me and my grandpa.

An Adventure into the Wilderness
by Annalisa Orefice

Early Thursday morning, the sun is nearly out, and we are waiting by the van to depart on our big trip. In all, there are ten of us going: two male instructors, two female students, and eight male students. Pulling up at the entrance to the first trail head, the gravel road bumping us all around the van, the guy next to me informed us that he usually only showers about three times a year and only in rivers or lakes, so you can imagine that horrible stench I had to endure for over three hours.

The trail started by going straight uphill, knees to chest, with 50 pounds on my back. "Really Annalisa, what were you getting yourself into...," is all I kept thinking as we hiked for the next four miles. The weather, however, was perfect and we couldn't have asked for a better way to start our
trip. We ended up camping near a creek that night. The sound of the cascading water scraping against the rock ground, the shadows of the trees swaying in the wind against the tarp, as if the earth was still with everything moving in song around me, I knew I was going to push through.

Waking up at the crack of dawn was only the first of many on this trip. Since it was the first full day in the backcountry, I had some expectations to be filled over the course of the next few days: for the group, that we would grow, not just with each other, but with a spiritual bond and for the trip, that we excel together or alone until the end. For myself: to gain overall new experiences, and to hold myself high since this is my first multi-day, backcountry trip.

My instructor, Andrew, provided us with this quote: “A person who cannot move and lead at a somewhat normal life because he is pinned under a boulder has more time to think about his hopes than someone who is not trapped that way.”

~ Learning from Within

As we trucked on through our trip, many jokes were made between the group. While navigating, the group realized that today was going to be the fun day, also known as Creek Crossing Extravaganza! The feeling of the cold water flowing through my Chacos, on a nice summer day was a feeling I cannot forget. As we crossed, my friend Sam Wilson pointed out a rock with a lot of moss on it in a ‘fro’ type fashion. This was then forever known as the Bob ‘Moss’ Rock.

We finally got an easy, resting day, which we all desperately needed. While we went over the game plan of today, Glenn and Andrew casually mentioned to us that they think we are ready to be on our own. Everyone's jaw dropped, that one
smelly guy almost dropped his oatmeal, we were all bamboozled over what we just heard. I felt a piece of doubt cross my mind for a second, and then looking around at this motley crew, I knew that we could take on the challenge. We soon all got the same feelings and celebrated with the instructors until they decided to bid us ado. It's coming up on dinner time and I feel like nothing could go wrong since we have everything cooked, not a drip of rain showers in sight, and it was prime time for smells to start lingering and attracting some unwanted guest.

The once clear forest was suddenly covered in a thick, dark blanket; like the one I used to have when I was younger. If I had that blanket, I was able to pass into deep slumber just about anywhere. One side of this blanket was a puffy, wool felt and the other was a deep brown fur texture. A sudden movement went through the forest, loud hollers came from our mouths and hardy crashes of the pots in the cook sets as we chased the 6-foot bear away from our campsite. As the yelling and clinking came to an end, we were able to finally get to enjoy the rest of the night, sleeping under the stars after a beautiful day.

This was first time on our own we start to venture off in this mass, drenched, mossy forest. The sun is quickly being covered by gray clouds and temperatures start to cool. I notice tiny raindrops trickling down onto my glasses. All the sudden, we hit a massive down pour of freezing rain. My body was conflicted, one minute I was sweating, layer upon layer of clothes, and the next I'm searching through my gear trying to find my rain jacket. I couldn't complain though, after struggling the past couple days, through sweat and tears, it was nice to get a little shower.

We've finally made it to the top of the gorge, the sky was gray and covered in a dense fog, and we walked through the narrow, sloshy now newly mud trails. Feet were soaked until each of our toes looked like small, white raisons. We feared trench foot. Looking off the sides of the gorge, steep slopes going down both sides, the fog was so thick we couldn't even see the trees
passed a few feet. I gained a bitter-sweet feeling, I was looking forward to the top where we could look out over the forest. However, I was just happy to be there and experience all of God's beautiful gifts to us. Yes, including the rain.

As the night came through, we huddled together, and just soaked up everything around us. The sounds of cicadas chirping, the rain pouring, and the growls of our stomachs as we were about to endure our last potluck together as this group. I start to ponder the feelings I had before the trip, the doubts, the expectations, the adventure. The week after my first year of college seemed so far to me, that I was about to go back to this old life. I know I wasn't sure of anything in my life, but I do remember not wanting to not live my life (??). And to live my life, after being on this amazing, courageous and challenging course, I know it's to inspire others, just as my crew inspired me.
Shadows of the Wilderness
by Tori Mclean

Becoming a Parks and Recreation Management major has challenged me in so many ways, just like creating this painting has. Before I started, I was nervous. I had already changed my major a few times and I knew this had to be it. Before Parks and Recreation, I had never left my comfort zone. I wouldn’t try new things because I was afraid to fail. Whenever my friends wanted to go out on the water, I would always say “no” because I was too afraid of falling in or looking like I had no clue what I was doing. This fall, I signed up for a paddle boarding class, and I loved it. PRM has helped me to come out of my shell and realize that I’d so much rather be trying new things and failing, than sitting at home watching television or studying in the library. I know none of that relates to my painting, but to me it does. Artwork and crafts have always been something I loved to do as a kid, although nothing ever turned out the way I thought it would. As an adult, I had basically put myself in a “non-artistic” box because I wasn’t Picasso. I never did anything artistic as an adult unless it was related to camp. Until this year, when I started watching painting videos on YouTube and talking to some of my friends who loved to paint. I thought it looked relaxing, but I still thought my painting would turn out awful. One day, I finally had the guts to paint a wine bottle, and then I decided to paint this canvas. To me, the painting looks like a field in the neighborhood I grew up in. I used to spend endless afternoons in that field playing with my friends, this helped cultivate my love of the outdoors which is why I decided to be a Parks and Recreation Management major.
Life is a Journey: From Brain Surgery to Now
by Jessica Maddox

In the Fall of 2018, I started my first semester at Western as a transfer student. Western Carolina's campus is captivating when you have a love for the mountains and an eye for the beauty that surrounds this campus. I was so excited to be a part of a new community that greeted me with open arms, and I had made so many new friends within the first two months. I knew that I was going to love it here but what I didn't know was that September 7th, 2018 was going to be the day that I had to make harder decisions. I woke up at Harris Regional Hospital unable to recognize my family members, where I was, and confused as to why everyone was looking at me with such alarm. The only words I can recall being spoken to me was seizure and concussion. A team of paramedics rushed me into an ambulance where I was taken to Mission Health in Asheville. I will say that a one-hour trip to Asheville felt like twenty minutes when they have you on a cocktail of various medications.

After I arrived and the next several days thereafter, the doctors did numerous brain scans and I was put into an MRI machine to which they wrap you up in a warm blanket that made you feel like a burrito. At first, the doctors thought I was just going to have seizures for the rest of my life until they found bleeding in my brain. The team of doctors at Mission Health found a mass that was located at my left frontal lobe. If we want to get technical here and say medical terms, it's called an Arteriovenous Malformation. It's something I've had since I was born and never knew about until I dropped down and had a seizure, but for now, we can just call it a brain defect. Fast forward a bit, I was discharged from Mission Health after a couple of days and went straight back to classes. If you've never gone to classes from just having a concussion before, prepare to fall asleep a lot in class. I found trying to catch up on my coursework and paying attention in class to be the biggest challenges, but I was so determined to finish the semester.
I was trying to balance between recovering, my classes, and being told I would need brain surgery immediately. I found this to be very disorienting.

It was then I received some sage advice from Callie Shultz, who if you don’t know, is an amazing human being. She sat me down and told me the words that I needed to hear which was you need to recover, get better, and just come back next semester and knock it out of the park. I felt like I was having to give up and stop my life for something that I didn't have control over. It was devastating and hard. I had my brain surgery on October 10th, 2018 at Duke Hospital and the operation took about nine hours. My brain surgeon and the team of doctors over there did amazing work. I was out of the hospital within three days with a wicked wound and now scar that goes from ear to ear. I recovered quickly and was able to attend classes in the Spring of 2019.

I think of PRM as a community, my friends and the professors in this program helped me get through that rough patch. I still have a card that one of my friends got a few PRM people to sign that meant the world to me. I have it hung up above my mirror so that I am reminded daily of why I love this major. Having this happened to me only solidified and made me want to work harder in my passion for the outdoors. I choose to include my brain surgery story because it not only impacted my life tremendously but my journey at Western Carolina. Life is, in fact, short, and so I not only ask you to embrace the journey but enjoy every minute of it.
Different.
By: Sean Kanters
Growing up in a big city, everything was busy...
different than Cullowhee which is so itty bitty.
From neighborhoods, to tall buildings,
relocating to the mountains, I was willing.
A magical place filled with dreams,
tall peaks and cold streams...
to start a new chapter of life.
Everything was different

I’m Addicted to the Outdoors
by Sutton Kanipe
I’m the second to youngest of 7 kids, this gave my parents better odds of having at least one good one. My older brother, Jonathan, was a still-born, so my good southern mother decided that she would have two more. I grew up in the outdoors, mainly because my parents kept us out of the house as much as they could, and because my brothers, dad, and dad’s best friend were all involved with Boy Scouts. My mama worked hard to take care of all of us and always made sure we had our trips paid for and helped us pack because we always waited till the last minute. Boy Scouts was my second life, I had school and other activities but I always put Boy Scouts first. I fell in love with the outdoors early and its addiction was strong.

I began backpacking around the age of 10. I remember my first trip was over Valentine’s Day weekend and I got hung in a tree by my pants while my friends hit me with sticks, hiked for miles, and slept in a barn with 20 sweaty
guys. My last thought while getting in the car to go home was: “I am never going backpacking again”, I proceeded to backpack multiple times a year for 4 years. During this time one of my friends I met through scouts was killed, along with his family, in a plane crash. The only time I was able to heal from this loss was when I was in the outdoors. A year later, I went on a 100-mile backpacking trip in New Mexico which made me fall in love with backpacking and the outdoors.

In 2016, I began working at the summer camp I had gone to as a kid, Camp Old Indian. I fell in love with the staff and teaching in and about the outdoors. Working in an outdoor setting further set in my outdoor addiction. Senior year of high school, after working at camp, I had to create a senior project, I chose to make a documentary on the Appalachian Trail. My goal was to document the changes in relationships with the people I backpacked with, but never knew how much I needed this project. I began these trips and senior year very excited, everything was going well until the spring. In the spring, one of my good friends, and an old camp counselor committed suicide. I was broken, in every way, shape, and form. I always use my humor as a coping mechanism, trying to create light in a dark situation, but this was the first time in my life where it wasn't helping. I still had to go to school, do my work, and be a ‘normal’ person but all I wanted to do was get away. My backpacking trips were the only thing I looked forward to, an escape to the one place where I felt I belonged and the one place I still felt close to the people I kept losing. I shared this feeling with my older brother Logan, who I barely spoke to, and he decided to go backpacking with me for the documentary. We shared experiences that we’ve never told anyone, laughed about family memories, helped ease the pain, bonded over everything, and created a friendship that we never had.

The outdoors has always been where my strongest friendships have grown, including one with my brother Caleb. Caleb was ‘different’ from the day he was born, he would avoid eye-contact, had different quirks, and
understood things differently. Caleb was born with mild autism, something I would never change for all the money in the world. Caleb loved the outdoors, he always liked to go camping and do any outside activity, and he felt like he fit in outdoors; just like me. Caleb and I both used the outdoors as an escape. Since people viewed Caleb as different, he was bullied throughout middle & high school to the point where the depression caused by it was so severe that he had to be pulled from school. From a young age, I saw how people treated my big brother and took charge of being one of his protectors. Caleb aged out of boy scouts but still wanted to participate because of my friends, myself, and the outdoors; I made sure Caleb went on whatever trip he wanted. As long as I was around, Caleb would do what he wanted and no one would say a word to hinder him. I saw how the outdoors set myself, and the people around me, free to experience life in our own ways.

I began school at Western Carolina University as a Political Science major and didn’t know anyone. I began to make new friends who I explored the mountains around Cullowhee with. I decided to try taking Parks and Rec Management classes and as we further explored the mountains and the outdoors, I finally decided that my outdoor addiction was too strong and declared a PRM major. I’m now over half-way finished with school, living and breathing the mountains every day. I still call and visit my best friends from Boy Scouts often, I go on outdoor trips with my college friends weekly, I go stay with Logan to hunt throughout the year, and I invite Caleb to stay with me to go explore the
Appalachian Mountains. As I grow older, new demons are created: my father battling the onset of dementia, losing more friends, and seeing my life change as I grow up, but I know just where to go when I have to fight them. I grew up in the outdoors, I found my life in the outdoors, I've fought unspeakable demons in the outdoors, and I've been shaped by the outdoors.

This outdoor addiction is one of a kind: it sets in early, doesn't let go, and is one of the few addictions that is a solution to, rather than a cause of, our personal demons.

**Motel 6**

by Mary Jarrett

"Motel 6" read the sign over the cabin door. This was one of the first things I noticed as I entered the cabin that would become my home for the first week of camp. As I brushed through the spider webs and opened the creaky door, I was welcomed into the A-frame cabin by an army of ants, two scorpions hiding under a mattress, a wasp nest in the ceiling, and a Frankenstein style mixture between a spider and a cricket that the staff lovingly refer to as "cave crickets." The only thing I could think was, “What am I doing here?”

A few months prior, I was sitting on my dorm futon scouring the internet for any summer camp that might be looking to hire inexperienced counselors. It wasn't long until my mom tipped me off to Camp Lookout- A place deep in the mountains of Georgia, run by a man she knew in her youth. After a short video chat with camp director Don Washburn, I knew I was meant to spend my summer there.

I was around fifteen when I realized that I wanted to open a camp catered towards children in the foster care system. I finally spoke it into existence during my very first advising day meeting, and now here I am really getting the training necessary to start down that path. So, I put old sheets on the green foam mattress and covered a hole in the floor, through which I could clearly see the dirt and grass underneath the cabin, with a
Nancy Drew novel I intended to read to campers. Don’t get me wrong, the creepy crawlers took a minute to adjust to, but they weren’t what made me question my arrival there. Instead, it was the not knowing. Not knowing the staff who had grown up as campers together here, not knowing the campers, and overall just not knowing what to expect from this summer. I was terrified that I would find a distaste for summer camps and have to rethink my entire plan. However, over the course of the summer I was proven wrong time and time again. I learned so much during my two minis as a counselor and resource staff member that could never be recreated in a classroom setting. The hardest children taught me compassion, patience, and the importance of loving first because you never truly know their situation. The staff taught me teamwork skills that go beyond ropes courses and climbing walls and into nights in the cabin when they are willing to tuck your kids in their beds because you are feeling so overwhelmed that you just need to step out for a second. The location taught me to love nature, every aspect of it. Even when nature is scary, you want it to be beautiful for your campers, so you make it beautiful for yourself. So, I love Motel 6, every crack, every bug, every cobweb, because that beautiful old A-frame gave me the bravery I needed to make my dreams a reality.
Way Up in a Tree

Lydia Izzell

Have you ever thought about what it would be like to be a tree? Imagine all the trees you pass throughout your day. I am sure these trees have seen a lot. Between you and me, maybe that tree has seen things it wish it hadn't. The truth is, that a tree lives to see the world longer than any of us ever will. Remember that tree you used to climb in your yard, neighborhood, farm, or park? Do you ever wonder what that tree sees now? There are trees along the highway, ones that live on mountains, and on beaches. Trees that are short, tall, lumpy, bold. However, I want to talk about one tree in particular. The tree that stands out to me is the one hidden on top of the mountain amongst other trees. This tree has not seen much human interaction, only when hikers come by, or planes from up above. This tree is unique in that it stands closer to an edge, and if it were to fall, it would plummet to the earth and reside on the leaves that have fallen from it. You see, this tree feels every ray of sunshine that seeps into its leaves and tingles down to the ground where it stands. Animals have found this tree as a home, buried inside and out. When autumn comes, the leaves start to wither, fade, and fall. Do you think that the tree misses its leaves? The tree then awaits the cold, bare and firm. The snow begins to fall, the tree remains tall and brave as the branches begin to fade into the mystical weather. The snow drips, and the sun remains, the tree continues to grow.

One day there was a group of hikers, the tree hears the hikers coming along and is excited to be a part of their journey. By the time the hikers reach the peak of the treacherous trail, they were exhausted after miles of hiking. The tree continues to listen to the hikers, as its leaves are back and can provide shade. The hikers then begin to
talk about the wanderings of where they sit, nestled into a crevice of the ground. They look out and realize that they were surrounded by trees, all lit by a single light of the sun. The hikers begin to talk about the trails that they’ve been on, the paths that have left them breathless, and the sun that has always guided their paths. The tree then began to realize that it, in fact, had not seen all that was around it. Thinking more, it began to feel insignificant considering it stood alone, in a tall area, where its beauty was not even admired. But, just then, the hikers look up towards the tree they sat underneath and began to realize how small they were. How this tree, always stood, rain or shine, always glazed into a wild creation. As they continued talking, the tree realized it was part of the reason hikers can go hiking, bikers can bike, or climbers can climb. It exemplified to stand tall, to work towards the top, and to stop and admire the process.

You see, I wonder what it's like to be a tree. I appreciate the beauty, calmness, and serenity found underneath a tree. I find a joyful sensation seeing the leaves fall, the colors beginning to change. I feel a sense of relief when the leaves fall, and all that's left is a silhouette in the skyline. I find wonder in the vastness of nature, the work of art that a tree can hold. I feel a sense of silence in between me and the trees. Yet, also, the wind creates a rhythm of prayer, swaying each branch. The trees stand above me, and I below them; them surrounding me, and me surrounding them. It's almost as if this tree was designed for a simple purpose of beauty. That this tree gives oxygen and allows me to give it life itself. I wonder if the tree really does notice me, in that way that I notice a tree.
Inside, it’s dark and damp.

There are doubts and fears that bring me to my knees.

Inside, I’m sad and alone.

It feels like there are mountains I can never summit.

Inside, I am nothing.

Just a speck in the void, oblivious to everyone and everything.

Inside, I feel lost.

Going round and round in an endless cycle.

But outside, it is bright and sunny.

Birdsongs fill the air and lift my spirits.

Outside, I find company with the trees and streams.

Those mountains are next on my list to conquer.

Outside, I am strong. Steady.

Having an impact and meaning something to everything. I am a protector, an advocate, important.

Outside is the cure for my inside.

Nature is the cure for my mind.

What is your outside?
Death-March
by Zach Hamrick

56 miles in three days. Four of the hardest rides in Pisgah. That’s Death-March. This is a mountain biking trip held by Falling Creek Camp for 5 of the most talented boys in camp. As a mountain bike counselor, we would hand pick these boys during an “initiation” to the trip. For any boy who rides mountain bikes a lot, this trip is all you work for in camp. I had no idea the way one trip could impact one’s life. On the first day of the trip, we rode a trail in Pisgah National Forest called Black Mountain. These boys had never been on a trail of this magnitude before and they weren’t expecting 4 miles of steep gravel road climbing. We got to the top of the hill and we still had three more miles of steep terrain that we hike-a-biked on. During the hike-a-bike, one of our campers exclaimed “This climb will never be worth the downhill. Why did I come on this trip?” we told him to be patient and keep his spirit high. We got to the top and there was a spectacular view. It was a little overlook over all of Looking Glass Rock and the surrounding landscape, a gorgeous spectacle. The boys regained motivation. We start descending the trail and everyone began hooting and hollering. By the time we got to the bottom the boy who said the climb wasn’t worth it, was now saying that was the best thing he’d done in is life. That was the best thing we, as counselors, could’ve heard that day. Throughout this trip, us three counselors and five boys created a bond. As weird as it is to say, those boys became some of our best friends at camp.

The next day was the hardest day we threw at the boys. We climbed seven miles up a trail called Laurel Mountain. It was a
good long climb until about the end. There was a mile of the steepest hike-a-bike any of us had done. We got to the top and we were covered in fog. We couldn't see 10 feet in front of us. Man were those boys excited for the downhill, Pilot Rock! This trail was also the hardest trail we took any boy down all summer. There were so many tight switch backs, the biggest rock garden they've ever seen, and large rocks all along the trail. Little room for error. You know what? Every boy made it down without breaking themselves or the bike.

The next day, we rode Spencer Branch and Trace Ridge in the Mills River area of Pisgah. This day was a more chill day. I shuttled the five boys and two other counselors to the top of the trails, and they all had a blast doing it.

While this trip was the best trip of the summer, it wasn't about the riding. It wasn't about the trails. It was about the bond I created with the boys on the trip and how they looked up to us. That was the most rewarding feeling one could take away from this trip, Death-March.

A Quest to Complete
by Emi Grill

A goal I've desired for years,
A quest for me to complete.

A goal I've had since I was a child,
A quest I want to complete before I'm old.

A goal that was once a silly kid's dream,
A quest that is now a grown kid's mission.

A goal that I know will be tough to conquer,
A quest that I will achieve through strength.

A goal I know that will take years to finish,
A quest that I'm willing to embark on.

A goal that was just some child's words,
A quest that is now an adult's journey.

A goal to explore this vast state,
A quest that will be achieved.

A goal to be able to tell my children of my adventures,
A quest that I hope to complete.
A goal made from a bucket list,
A quest that will complete the bucket list
A goal to hike all of the NC trails,
A quest that is almost complete.
A goal to hike and complete the Appalachian trail,
    A quest to complete.
    A goal that I will always remember,
A quest that I will never forget.
This photograph was taken from a trail located on Western Carolina University property. Photography is the category of art work selected for this assignment. Life's journey has provided passionate inspiration. Numerous messages can be interpreted through this captured shot. My art work represents life, and is about the following:

Nature's indubitable lessons consistently display organic truth. Comprehension becomes available as moments develop and distractions disappear. Transition of seasons, weather and emotions are translated through unspoken messages.

Nothing stays the same forever. Natural growth involves change with adaptation. No matter where you go, there you are. Perspective thrives amongst the unknown as mystery follows this unpredictable, outdoor planet.

Mother nature will not hesitate, wear a mask or redirect with lack of confidence. A universal pulse forms an entire connection within our planet Earth. Frequencies travel as neurotransmitters communicate with feelings. Signals and senses absorb points of view.
Tomorrow is never promised. The struggle is real. “Just be” and honest perception will find you. Outdoor recreation will continue to speak after mankind’s existence. Live in the moment, find enlightenment and seek peace.

Let silence intoxicate the soul.
The Max Patch Experience

by Hunter Cooke

After a week of classes stressing about what is due and when it needs to get done, it is nice to get out of the house and really take in what Western North Carolina has to offer. One of the things that I love to do to unwind is to go backpacking. My favorite hike that I have done is the Max Patch Trail on the state line of North Carolina and Tennessee. It is not the longest of hikes but at the top the views are, in my opinion, some of the best around this area. I got out of class on a Friday right before the spring semester was over and just had the idea to go camping tonight, so I got my pack together and hit the road.

On most hikes I do, I only carry the bare necessities, but Max Patch was so short of a hike I took a speaker with me. When I got to camp, I played some classic rock and started to drift away with the beauty of the mountains and the cool Carolina breeze.

Many times, when I have gone backpacking, I get to camp, set up, and just go to bed—I call it the Hiker’s Midnight. While I was at Max Patch, I did not encounter this, I stayed up most of the night watching the stars on the clear night and waiting for the sunrise the next morning. All in all, nothing compares to the beauty that the mountains of Western North Carolina have to offer.
This is a picture of Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico at sunset on the last night of my trek at Philmont. Philmont is a high adventure scout ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico. Philmont is focused on back woods backpacking. They have trails over 140,000 acres of land. During my trek, we hiked 110 miles in the northern part of Philmont and summited Baldy Mountain at 12,441 feet. This was the last scouting trip I was able to do as a youth in scouting with my troop.

With my troop, I attained the rank of Eagle Scout, and from first grade until my senior year in high school, I have been a part of scouting. I have been on countless camping trips from backpacking trips to camping out of a car. I have tied thousands of knots for many different uses. I have learned basic first aid and have been in many first aid scenarios. I have kayaked and canoed hundreds of miles on rivers and in the ocean. I have learned how to navigate using various methods day or night. I have hundreds of hours in leadership in different areas. I have worked at two summer camps with youth. This picture represents nineteen years and thousands of hours of camping, running through the woods, hiking, knot tying, first aid and leadership all in one picture. It has also led me to what I wanted to major in college, Parks and Recreation. This led me here to Western Carolina University and the Parks and Recreation department at WCU, and I would not have it any other way.
This photo carries a ton of weight, the photo shows the two sides to this earth. The humanistic and the natural. The two sides seem not to care about one another. As man and his company came into this and carried their ego with them along the landscapes, he has left scars. Scares that will eventually disappear with the passing time. The ego of a human has no comparison, these mountains, these animals and these plants have no ego. They are simply existing. So why does man have such an ego? The landscapes we play in demand respect from us. If we cease to respect them, we cease to live. But there are also the landscapes we play in. The mountains, rivers, fields, oceans, and forests we play in do not have such an ego. These lands do not care who you are or what you do. This photograph reminds me of this every time I look at it. While in the mountains or below I am deeply humbled. Nature and all its beauty has been here hundreds of thousands of years before man and will continue after man is gone. While we play in these mountains, we must earn the respect of these vast landscapes as one mistake could be death. Will the landscapes care then? No. We must learn to accompany these spaces. We as humans are just a speck on the planet. The best way I can put this is the analogy of google earth. If one zooms in on themselves and then zooms out slowly, we become just another spec on the map. Then slowly you disappear and become nothing. You are
swallowed by the vastness of the earth. So why the ego? Because man by nature needs something to conquer. How can you conquer something that will be there after you are gone? The late Alex Lowe once said “I appreciate why I come to the mountains not to conquer them but to immerse myself in their incomprehensible immensity, so much bigger than we are; to better comprehend humility and patience balanced in harmony”. I often think about this when I am in nature. It is deeply humbling,

Redemption run

by Zac Buys

Do you think water is wet?
Excuse me?
Is water wet?
Why are you asking?
In case I flip.
I think that if you flip you will get wet, so in the end it doesn't matter, as anything that touches water gets wet.

Do you think I will flip?
I think that you could flip, but you could also not flip.

So, will I flip?
You have run harder stuff than this and not flipped.
I have also flipped on flat water.
Yeah, and that was kind of funny.

You have flipped on this rapid before, right?
I have, I have also swum on this rapid.

What about hitting your head?
...Yes, last spring. Kinda hurt.

I don't want another concussion.
Me neither.

If I hit my head will you help me again?
Of course. I got your back.

Last time we got Bojangles, you brought Bojangles to me in the hospital.
You saying you want some chicken?
Not if it means I have to go back to the hospital.
Yeah, Bojangles is not worth that.

I am scared.
I know.
Have you been scared kayaking?

Of course.

My biggest fear is not coming back. So many times, I have been afraid, and sometimes I just walk away. The goal of kayaking is to do it today, and then again tomorrow.

So, you get scared on the river?

Yes. Yes, I feel fear, but that does not mean I am afraid of it.

Are you going to say that we have nothing to fear but fear itself?

No.

I was going to say that fear is real, and we all feel it. But what matters more than what we are afraid of is what we do with it.

What does that mean?

It means that I can feel fear but not be afraid.

Feel fear but not be afraid?

Yes, fear is real, but it is an emotion, it is feeling. You miss your mom. Right, you have been at summer camp for the past three weeks, but right now you are not thinking about her. You are thinking about kayaking right? You can choose to not miss your mom right now, as there are bigger and more important things to think about, like kayaking.

Yes, I miss my mom, and I don't miss her I need to go kayaking.

Exactly, let's go kayaking.

So, you are saying that in the same way I miss my mom but put it aside to go kayaking, you put aside your fear and go kayaking.

Yes, but I never forget the fear, the fear is also what keeps me from doing stupid things.

Like what?

...

Thinking running it was a good idea to run the Nantahala Falls in a pool toy.

So, you have fear, but don't feel it and know it is there.

Exactly.

What happens if I flip, hit my head, and swim?

Then you flip, hit your head, and swim. And I will be there for you.

Okay, I think I am ready.
You okay?

Yeah, I am okay, the water is cold, but I didn't hit my head.

I am glad.

What do we do now?

Redemption run.
Finding my True Path
by Brianna Blanco

This picture was taken near the summit of Max Patch in the Pisgah National Forest in the Fall of 2019. During this camping trip, I experienced a setting that would not be forgotten. I got to look up in the sky to see the fluffy shapes of clouds passing by while looking down into the valley of the mountains to see a blanket of clouds covering the roaring hills. It was a surreal feeling knowing that I was a part of the layers of the atmosphere. As a whole, this image represents all of the things I have come to love and enjoy which are: hiking, camping, hula-hooping and spending time with quality individuals. As a child, I never had the chance to experience the outdoors for what it naturally is. I thank Western Carolina University for being in such a rich, vibrant and naturally beautiful mountainous area so I can explore endlessly on my journey here as a Parks and Recreation Management student. Being able to find who I am and want to be has been easy after I decided to change my path here at Western. The journey of a Pre-Med student to a Parks and Rec student has made me more
comfortable and confident in who I am as an individual. I am now aware that loving what you do is more important than how much money you will be making in the end. Recreation has played an important part in my life ever since I transferred to Western the spring semester of my freshman year. One day during my freshman year here, I decided to pick up a hula hoop and learn some cool tricks. It is my recreation whenever I go anywhere in the outdoors now. It has shown me a path of clarity, gratitude, and enjoyment and has eased away my anxiety and depression. Being able to be a part of a community that promotes recreation and the well-being of individuals warms my heart as much as my hoop does. On the path I am on now, I have gotten to experience new forms of recreation such as hiking, camping, kayaking, rock-climbing, and paddle boarding. Not only do I get to experience all of these, but I have gotten to form friendships with a fun-loving community of individuals who share the same passion as I do: having fun. Being a Parks and Rec student has shown me that I can teach recreation to anyone in the community, as well as given me the confidence to spread the teachings of the hooping art upon others. I cannot wait to see what is on my path ahead, but I can promise anyone that I will be fulfilling my dreams of promoting health and wellness through many forms of recreational activities.

Finding Myself Through PRM
Tori Blake

In my freshman year of college, I focused on Elementary Education as my major and I felt that this wasn't something that I wanted to pursue as a career. In my junior year of college, I changed my major to Health and Physical Education because it involved me being able to work with children. However, I still felt that this was also something that I didn't see myself pursuing as a career. I concluded that I wanted to work with children in an outdoor setting which lead me to find Parks and Recreational Management.
When I switched my major to PRM, I also felt like the people in the major were very nice and down to earth. We shared a similar thing in common: having a love for the outdoors. When I was younger, I was a girl scout and I absolutely loved being able to experience the outdoors and being involved in the community while working with others. When I started cheering, I couldn't continue girl scouts and didn't get to have much leisure time. I made a lot of new friends in the major, I finally felt at peace and felt like I was able to fit in with this awesome group of people. I was able to go on hikes, stand up paddle boarding trips, caving trips and kayaking which opened my eyes to new sports and activities that I fell in love with. Stand up paddling is my favorite water sport and I wouldn't have known about this if it weren't for PRM. These trips taught me new skills, not to take moments for granted, enjoy nature and my surroundings, and to take risks. I believe that I have pushed myself in ways that I have never done since being in PRM. I have grown mentally, physically, and emotionally. I know I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for PRM, and my classmates and professors within my major.

Going on these adventures through PRM has been life changing, mind changing, and gave me time to reflect on myself as well. It gives me peace when I am anxious and relieves the stress from everyday life. Being a college student can be very hard—you find out who you truly are and are living in the golden days (??). College is all about creating memories and I have many memories to take away from being a PRM major at WCU.
On behalf of the students of the Parks and Recreation Management Major, we would like to give great praise and thanks to the professors of the department. The professors within the PRM major are different than any other, they spend every season, summer, fall, winter, and spring, teaching and engaging with students. They take time out of their day to interact, relate, and socialize with students and are always ready to help with any problems. These professors don't just teach their classes and go home, each professor works constantly to improve their classes and themselves for their student's benefit. They care about each of their students and want nothing more than to see them succeed. Each one always has an open door, heart, and mind.

Once again thank you to each professor, without you some of us would not be where we are today.
PRM Chancellor’s List

The Chancellor's List is an honor and designation that recognizes the exemplary accomplishment of students who have earned a 3.8 GPA during the previous semester at WCU.

The following PRM students made the Chancellor’s list for the 2019 spring semester:

- Caleb Adcock
- Tori Blake
- Heath Boyles
- Zeb Brown
- Jake Burcaw
- Joey Gonzalez
- Cheya Gordon
- Keely Greene
- Colleen Harbarger
- Samantha Hinerman
- Rebekah Hines
- Lydia Izzell
- Ashley Johnson
- Sutton Kanipe
- Paula Keeter
- Jessica Maddox
- Will Mangum
- Madison Ravn
- Jamie Rhodes
- Julia Riddle
- Hayes Stanberry
- Megan Stevens
- Chris Tarpey
- Conner Taylor
- Zoia Torre