

Students give high marks to wilderness experience

By MARY FORAN
Of the Emerald

HEP students have overwhelmingly decided that a week-long Outward Bound wilderness adventure moved the University's High School Equivalency Program in a positive direction.

Evaluation forms asking questions such as, "To what extent did the Outward Bound experience increase your self-confidence or develop in you a strong commitment to finish the HEP program?" were returned this week with positive comments and criticisms to Jim Romero, director of HEP and advocate of the value of the Outward Bound orientation week.

The three-month HEP program provides GED preparation in five academic areas for students from seasonal farm workers background and is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Outward Bound School courses begin with intensive instruction in basic wilderness skills and proceeds to bigger challenges such as rock climbing and peak ascents.

"A true Outward Bound experience is a very grueling, 24-day experience," says Romero. "We tried to get them to modify the program and challenge our students in a five-day period." Romero says he didn't think it would go as far as rappelling off cliffs, though he's glad it did.

"Nobody was ready for it," says Loren Arey, one of the students who made it to the top of the Middle Sister. "We were warned the night before. Next time they should make sure everybody is equipped and let them know

ahead of time." Then Arey added, "They ought to emphasize that it's going to be a blast."

Romero says that the idea of a HEP orientation in the wilderness was a risk. "If we had told them too much, we might have scared them away." Romero says that none of the staff had been on Outward Bound before. "Now that we have the evaluations and experience, we'll know what to tell them next time," he said.

Some of the students had to hike in tennis shoes, Romero explained. "They didn't have hiking boots and we couldn't afford any more." Romero says that they bought \$400 worth of wool caps and pants, though most of the equipment and food was supplied by the Outward Bound program.

"There was a lot of complaining," says Romero. "They bitched and moaned that it was too hard, that they couldn't see the relationship of the experience with HEP. But it was neat to see their reactions when they got to the top." Romero says that "Now when they want to quit the program I can say to them, 'You're not a quitter. . . . You climbed that mountain one step at a time and you made it.'"

Romero says one reason he wanted to expose HEP students to Outward Bound was to give them confidence.

"Students didn't have a goal in mind. They didn't realize their own potential," Romero says, adding that the wilderness experience has given students self-confidence. "It's already had a fantastic impact on getting us through the first week," he says.

Arey says that he wouldn't trade the wilderness rock-climbing experience for anything else. "I learned I could trust myself more. . . . I could hang on with my fingernails if I had to." Arey led his group out of the mountains using the map and compass skills taught by Outward Bound instructors.

John Messersmith of Tulelake, Calif., says that Outward Bound taught him "if I pushed myself, I could go farther." He added, "It gave me confidence in myself. . . . It showed me that I can reach the goal I'm going for. If you put your mind to something you can do it."

Arey says that the leadership experience made him realize that he could do more than just listen in class discussions. "I have more confidence in myself," he says, adding that he'd like to go to the University after he's gotten his general education diploma. "I've dreamed of it all my life," he says. "I'd like to invent something. . . . like a car that runs on non-polluting stuff."

Arey and Messersmith would like to see a repeat HEP trip. "In fact we should have more programs like that. It brings people together, makes them suffer and see life as it is."

But the trip didn't excite all followers.

"You had to be dirty a whole week without taking a bath or washing your hair," says Jennie Tapia of Gilroy, Calif. "I don't see what that has to do with school. And I got a cold from it. . . . the only thing I liked was playing in the snow and coming back home."

Bernadette Bell of Fort Hall, Idaho, says her pack was too heavy and she wasn't used to walking.

"I didn't think I could make it up some cliffs, but I made it," she says. "I felt good just because I made it."

Persons interested in tutoring HEP students in basic academic skills can get credit through the ESCAPE program, says Romero. For more information contact ESCAPE, third floor EMU, or Romero, 270 Emerald Hall.



Photo by Dennis Hickok
Jim Romero, director of HEP, is an advocate of the Outward Bound wilderness adventure. Evaluation forms, returned to Romero by HEP students who went on the trek, have been filled with positive comments.

Filing process opens for student positions

Filing opens today for 13 ASUO positions, including spots on the Incidental Fee Committee and the Student University Affairs Board, says ASUO elections board member Nancy Dubuar.

All seven IFC positions are open in the upcoming election on Nov. 1-2. IFC members disburse almost \$1.5 million in student incidental fees at the University, and serve one-year terms.

Six of the 18 posts on the SUAB are available this year. SUAB members represent students from all academic areas, and act as a liaison between the students and the faculty. SUAB positions run for two years.

The six SUAB positions open

this year are: Positions No. 3 and No. 4, Business and Economics; No. 7, P.E., Recreation, Health and Dance; No. 10, Architecture and Allied Arts; No. 11, Fine and Applied Arts, Art History and Art Education; and No. 17, Undeclared.

Those interested in filing had better act fast, Dubuar says. The filing deadline for all positions is Oct. 17 at 5 p.m. Those filing must present their student identification cards and certificates of registration at the ASUO offices in Suite 4 of the EMU.

All candidates must submit a statement for the ASUO voter's guide by Oct. 17. No statements will be accepted after that date, Dubuar says.

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(room to be posted)**

Discussion will be on ballot measures #6 and #11

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