



Pacific Challenge participants have lunch in a spot that overlooks New Zealand's Mount Cook.

Courtesy of Pacific Challenge

Challenge

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the Pacific Challenge last winter, was one of the students who did the jump and had only two words to describe it: "just crazy."

Although most pursuits are organized by the program, students also have the chance to travel independently in smaller groups so they can meet the people of the countries and create their own adventures.

Kanes and a couple of other students met three New Zealanders during free time away from the group and decided to go cliff jumping on their own. This proved to be one of Kanen's most risky ventures because of the danger of getting washed against the rocks.

Rachel Sanson, a Pacific Challenge trip leader, said a sense of accomplishment is a common attitude among returning students.

"For some people this is a turning point in their lives, because they realize how strong they are as individuals," she said. "They learn

the extent to which they can challenge themselves."

Hughes added that the trip also helped participants form unique bonds and friendships.

"Being challenged together made us forget about our differences, and that we didn't all get along in a normal setting," he said.

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Alex Hughes
senior journalism major

Students trade off between staying in hostels and camping. The first camping site is usually the National Marae in Christchurch, New Zealand, a sacred worshipping ground for native tribes.

Members of the group take turns preparing meals throughout the two months. Hughes said he discovered new flavors during his stay in Australia, including the taste of alligator and vegimite, a popular, salty Australian spread. Vegimite packets are more common in Australian McDonald's restaurants than ketchup.

Students can obtain course credit from the University of Oregon and Minnesota State University through the environmental studies and international studies departments. Coordinators of Pacific Challenge also plan, for the first time, to offer a similar trip that travels through Asia and Nepal in winter 2001. Pacific Challenge will hold an informational meeting about the program at 7 p.m. in Room 238, Gilbert Hall, on Nov. 7.

Hughes said there was only one way to sum up his Pacific Challenge experience.

"[It's] everything crazy you've ever wanted to do in your life, and you get to do it all in two months," he said.



The Women of Gamma Phi Beta cordially invite the following Buckaroos to Barndance 2000:

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Alex Hughes	Greg Bae	Kevin Gelbrech	Pat O'Brien
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Bud Caplan	Heath Cornick	Luke Hart	Ross Snyder
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Casey Holdahl	Jason Kranz	Matt Hatfield	Santiago Ruiz
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