

# OUTSIDE IS (NOT) FREE: LOWERING THE BARRIERS TO ENTRY FOR FIELD-BASED COURSES

## INTRODUCTION

Field-based courses give students a chance to practice their skills in a different kind of classroom. By breaking down the physical walls of a classroom, faculty are able to conceptualize and execute educational experiences that maximize a student's ability to synthesize their prior-knowledge as they prepare for the workforce.

Adventure Media, a course developed by Jerod Foster and Justin Keene, is one such course. Students in adventure media take part in a week-long bikepacking expedition where they are self-sufficient in the backcountry. This year's TRANSFORMERS funding provided our students with 10 Big Agnes 3-person Copper Spur tents and 17 Big Agnes sleeping pads.

## BROADENING PARTICIPATION

The single greatest barrier to participation in field-based courses is the cost of equipment that a student will need in order to succeed.

By reducing the cost a student would otherwise incur to participate in the course, TrUE made Adventure Media a more inclusive, diverse course.

Specifically, through two affiliated proposals, the 2022 Adventure Media students were provided with sleeping bags, sleeping pads, and tents. These items represent a significant portion of the typical costs for our students.

## MORE THAN SHELTER

"Field-based courses like Adventure Media require so much effort, both mentally and physically, from a student. The resources that TrUE provided this year meant that our students would not have to spend any time worrying about affording shelter and some of the basic amenities necessary to be successful. This funding provided more than just shelter for a group of students on a bike trip. It directly aided in the President's initiative to provide every student at Texas Tech with a transformative experience before they graduate."

- Justin Keene, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Journalism & Creative Media Industries, College of Media & Communication



SEE THE ADVENTURE MEDIA'S 2022 CLASS PROJECT ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUTDOOR RECREATION AND MENTAL HEALTH.

## STUDENT IMPACT

This year's adventure media students came from multiple colleges on campus and from all over the world. Here is what they say about the impact of this funding on their experience in the course:



"As a full-time college student, I did not have the spare funds to buy the necessary gear required in Adventure Media to go bikepacking. I'm beyond thankful that I was provided with what was needed for me to participate in Adventure Media, since I can truly say that it has changed me for the better - through that class I've learned new coping skills to deal with stress from school, gained more discipline, and a new appreciation for teamwork and nature."

- Katie Mayon, Sophomore, *Animal Science Major*



"The generosity of the donors allowed for barriers to be broken down and students from all walks of life to come and experience the beauty and challenges of an Adventure Media course. By having the tools we needed to succeed in this course, I was able to fully focus my energy on movement through the bike and creating art through my lens."

- Gemma Folsom, Junior, *Creative Media Industries Major*