

Student traveler's days filled with adventure

BY ROBIN D'ANGELO
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On her first day of the Outward Bound adventure, Allison Campbell didn't see any wildlife or waterfalls, but she saw plenty of cameras.

They greeted her as she stepped off the plane at the airport in Denver, and followed her through several interviews prior to her journey to Utah.

"The stewardess on the plane to Grand Junction actually announced that we were celebrities," she said with a laugh.

Outward Bound!

On Day 2, Allison and her teammates took a two-hour drive to their first destination in Utah.

They were told immediately to run the two miles to their campsite, where they were each given 55-pound backpacks containing the supplies they would carry for the next two weeks.

"The first day, it took practically three people to lift one of the bags," Allison recalls. "By the end of the trip, I could lift it by myself."

On the fourth day of hiking, the team climbed Blue Mountain, which has an elevation of 7,000 feet.

The climb was difficult — the team covered about 3,000 feet every eight miles.

Taking the plunge

After completing four days of hiking, Allison's team was driven to Gates of Lodore, Colo., to begin whitewater rafting.

The team spent the first day learning the basics of rafting and first aid, then rowed 10 miles through Green River Canyon.

"It was a nerve-wracking whitewater rollercoaster," Allison said. "My adrenaline

was pumping the entire time, but when we looked back over the rapids we'd just crossed, it was so cool to know that we accomplished it."

On the second day, the team rafted 22 miles, and completed a four-mile hike and "trust hang," where one member of the group leans over the edge of a canyon wall backwards, supported only by eight pairs of hands from fellow teammates.

Going solo

Following the rafting portion of the trip, the team was driven to Laramie, Wyo. Although they didn't arrive until past 10 p.m., they had to immediately begin another challenge of the Outward Bound — the Solo.

Each member of the team was taken to a secluded, unknown area and left with only a tarp, their personal supplies and a hand-held video camera. The purpose of the Solo was to meditate and explore one's self and what one had learned on the Outward Bound adventure to that point.

In case of emergencies, team members wore bright orange whistles around their necks.

The climb was difficult — the team covered about 3,000 feet every eight miles.

The finals challenge

For the portion of the trip known as Finals, the team hiked eight miles to camp alone and climbed an area known as Twin Peaks.

Every member of the team was presented with an Outward Bound pin, which had a special meaning for them all.

Back at the hotel in Laramie, team members were interviewed once more and given a feast complete with pizza and pop and other specialties of civilization they had missed.



Allison Campbell



Mercy High student travels 'Outward Bound'

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It was a two-week adventure through three Western states, which included hanging off of rock walls, rafting a wild river and hiking through the wilderness.

There were camera crews filming at all times ... lightning storms, biting crickets, magnificent scenery and tall mountains.

And it all awaited a 14-year-old Orchard Lake resident who had never been away from home before.

Although she didn't realize it at the time, Allison Campbell's adventure really began when her grandmother saw an ad for the Discovery Channel's Outward Bound Kids adventure and suggested she try it.

"I made a 10-minute video and wrote an essay about why I would be interested in the trip," Allison said.

"I didn't really know what it was about, but I thought I would try it."

To her surprise, Allison received a letter several weeks later informing her that she had made the first cut, and requesting that she fill out an eight-page questionnaire.

Allison said she was asked questions ranging from her favorite TV show to how her friends would describe her, how her enemies would describe her, and whether she would ever consider skydiving.

Later, she was interviewed at a hotel near Wayne County Metropolitan Airport by the Discovery Channel's casting director. The interview was also taped.

Allison said she didn't think she would be chosen, especially since she was told she would be informed of her acceptance in March, which, by that time, was already several months past.

On May 18, everything changed.

Westward ho!

"I picked up the phone and it was Stacy from Outward Bound, asking if I remembered her," Allison said.

"I told her yes, and then she said, 'Congratulations! You're going to Utah!'" she recalls.

"I was so excited, and I almost didn't believe her. I think I was laughing and crying at the same time."

Allison had been the only person selected from the entire East and Midwest regions to participate in the filming of Outward

Bound Kids for a series of adventures in Utah, Colorado and Wyoming that began on June 20, only four weeks later.

Soon after her acceptance, the letters started arriving. They detailed what she could and could not bring on the trip and included forms to be filled out and signed. A physical evaluation would determine if she was able to participate in the strenuous and challenging activities that awaited her upon her arrival in Utah.

"I'd never even been to camp before, but I was excited about this," Allison said.

A sophomore at Mercy High School, an all-girls Catholic high school in Farmington Hills, Allison said she didn't get to see many of her friends during the summer and looked forward to meeting the other eight members of her team.

"Most of my friends were surprised that I was going," she said. "A lot of people at school wished they could go, also."

The program

Outward Bound was formed 60 years ago, soon after the beginning of World War II. Merchant seamen were dying in large numbers following attacks on their ships, unable to survive

Don't fence her in: Mercy High sophomore Allison Campbell enjoyed a trip out west, courtesy of the Discovery Channel's "Outward Bound" kids' adventure program. She spent two weeks in several western states on an adventure that included rock climbing and white water rafting. The episode will air sometimes in October.

the conditions at sea after a shipwreck.

Progressive educator Kurt Hahn, commissioned by the founder of Great Britain's Blue Funnel shipping line Sir Lawrence Holt, discovered that young sailors were less likely to survive the harsh conditions than older men, and decided that the problem lay primarily in self-confidence.

Hahn opened the first Outward Bound school in Aberdovey, Wales, in 1941. The purpose of the school was "to provide students with a series of progressively challenging opportunities for success." Through this program, students were said to have discovered that they possessed "far more than they knew."

The name Outward Bound was taken from the nautical term that refers to the moment a ship leaves its moorings, bound for the hazards of open waters.

Outward Bound is currently known all over the world for its extensive programs and learning experiences for people of all ages.

Allison Campbell's episode of Outward Bound Discovery is scheduled to air in October. The show normally airs at 10:30 on Saturday mornings.

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