



May 11, 2015

Dear Incoming Students,

My name is Magaly Gonzalez and I am a First Generation/Working Class student from Los Angeles, CA. I am currently a rising sophomore intending on double majoring in Biology and Spanish. If you were to tell me a year ago that I would be advocating my outdoor experience to incoming first-years, I would not have believed you.

During the summer of 2014, I participated in a Scramble where I had the opportunity to sea kayak around the beautiful San Juan Islands in Washington. I was not planning on going on a Scramble because of the cost of the trips. I remember looking through the Scramble booklet and putting it aside. I had never gone camping before, much less sea kayaking. To be honest, I was a little terrified and intimidated by the idea. I recall looking through the list of personal gear that was required and feeling overwhelmed.

Thanks to my sponsor from a college outreach program, I had help with the funds to go on a Scramble. I was able to transition into college by exploring and experiencing the beauty of the outdoors with future peers. Leaving the comfort of home, I became more confident. This new experience gave me the opportunity to open up to others and challenge myself with new experiences. Arriving on campus I felt better prepared for orientation and had the confidence to talk and meet new people. I was not as timid as I had been in high school.

As the idea of going on a Scramble was becoming more real, I took a look at the gear list. I borrowed some items listed from family members. I was also fortunate enough that my college outreach program helped me purchase the rest of the items. If some items seem out of reach, before you give up, make sure to check all your resources; thrift stores can be a great source for purchasing personal gear. Keep in mind that many of the items on the list can be rented from the OP, feel free to call for details.

The staff working at the Outdoor Program (OP) are wonderful and very supportive. I now realized that the OP has a great support system for students who do not have the funds to pay or participate in a Scramble. One of the ways the OP provides help for students is a scholarship to subsidize the cost for Scrambles. If you need more financial support the Dean of Students can help as well. Do not hesitate to utilize resources available to you at Whitman and do not hesitate to ask for financial help if needed. The OP is here to help. Your college experience is more than just attending classes. It is about creating friendships and self-growth. Scrambles are a great way to start your first-year. I hope you all consider applying to go on a Scramble and get to experience the outdoors. If you need help purchasing personal equipment or if you have questions or concerns about Scrambles in general, please feel free to contact Chloe Alley-Sarnack at email scrambles@whitman.edu or call the OP rental shop at (509)527-5965. The OP shop is open in the summer MWF 11am to 1pm and TTh 2pm to 4pm.

Sincerely,
Magaly Gonzalez '18