Bryn Loftness

Hiking 112

Instructor Jim Heaps

**Lower Blackridge Trail – August 30th**

This was our first official hike and boy was I unprepared physically. I was pretty exhausted and lagged behind Alyssa and Justin by like 10ft the whole hike. I was so embarrassed. It was so amazing to do the hike though. Afterward I felt dead but also so so alive. I had no idea what to expect and I was not disappointed at all. I was also able to really start getting to know Justin and Alyssa. They weren’t used to my excessive photo taking yet so I think I annoyed them a little. I feel like I made up for it however when I showed them the killer pictures I took. I love taking photos. Photos will last forever and I think one day when I am lying on my death bed I will enjoy looking through the tens of hundreds of thousands of pictures I took throughout my many exciting years of living.

This was my first time up in the Monument, and I was so excited. I was fortunate as a child to do quite a bit of traveling and exploring of the national parks throughout a lot of the United States. I have been to Zion and the Grand Canyon but not since I was much younger. I don’t have the most vivid memory of it, only through the many pictures my family took. It was beautiful but so differently beautiful than I had ever before seen or experienced. I have never had the opportunity to explore the massive landforms without the watchful eye of my family before; it felt very freeing.

I definitely made efforts to improve my appearance and physical ability during and after this hike. I pushed myself to try and keep up and to fit in with the more experienced hikers. This felt really rewarding and did a lot for me and my health; physical, mental, and emotional.