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During this second section of the program, I was becoming more familiar with the people and environment around me. Something that I think really helped me bond even more with the other interns and mentors was the overnight camping trip.

Making our dinner together and setting up tents and struggling to finish a long uphill hike created stronger bonds between us, and watching the stars late at night helped us all learn new things about each other. When we returned, it seemed like we all were more comfortable talking and working together than we had before.

Something else I took from that trip was the new and valuable knowledge I gained about the earth we stand on. I had never known before that some of the rock formations at Pinnacles National Park were made through different types of volcanic eruptions and flows. For instance, the rounder, smoother looking rocks we had encountered on our hike were formed by slow movement of lava that cooled. In contrast, I had also seen sharp looking rocks with specks of what seemed like crystals, which I learned were the products of an explosive burst from a volcano.

Additionally, I've learnt even more new things about R than when I had done my last post. Now that we're diving more deeply into the research and analysis portion of the internship, we've moved away from regularly reading scientific papers and toward learning how to do more complicated concepts on R. Coming into the program, I had never learned coding or programming- the most I knew was that there were computer languages and things people used to apply those languages, like Python. I never actually knew how to do any of that myself.

Now that I've had this experience, though, I'm figuring out how to make different types of plots in R- with help from the team. I'm getting better at uploading things to GitHub using the terminal, and some of the things I struggled with before aren't as much of a challenge as they once were.

Ultimately, I'm glad for this opportunity and hope to continue learning and growing!