The Priddy Experience Trip is a five day, community-service based, orientation trip for first-year and transfer students. The Priddy Experience is a part of New Student Orientation (NSO). First year and transfer students arrive on campus a week before classes start. There are a few days of on-campus orientation, followed by the off-campus orientation trip. The trips consist of seven to ten incoming students and two upperclassmen student leaders. Students volunteer in a front country, urban, or backcountry setting, tackling social and environmental issues including hunger and homelessness, education, LGBTQ issues, trail maintenance, and sustainable farming. The trips are spread out throughout Colorado and New Mexico, with one trip to Texas. Our backcountry trips are stationed throughout various Colorado mountain ranges including the Sangre de Cristos, the Collegiate Peaks, and the San Juans. In the past nine years, NSO has teamed up with over 100 regional nonprofits and national forests. All of the trips are led by current CC students, with the exception of a few backcountry trips that are led by recent CC alums as professional guides.

Incoming students are placed on trips based on a questionnaire they filled out during the summer. They meet with their groups during on campus orientation, where leaders facilitate ice breakers and “getting to know you” games. On Wednesday, the trips depart by van or bus and arrive at their volunteer site.

Each night, the students and their leaders discuss a variety of topics related to life at Colorado College. These topics include: academic expectations, campus social life, and the importance of culture. The nightly reflections allow students to express their fears and concerns about coming to college, and many learn they are not alone.

Thursday and Friday are volunteer days. Students perform a variety of volunteer work, ranging from building a part of the Continental Divide Trail, building backcountry campsites, picking organic asparagus, and cooking a meal for a homeless shelter. In those two days alone, the students complete around 10,000 hours of community service. On Saturday, the groups have a full day of exploring the area around them. Saturday activities include shopping in Santa Fe, summiting one of Colorado’s 14,000 foot peaks, soaking in hot springs, and going to an antique car show. The trips return on Sunday afternoon, ready to start class on Monday.

The trips create a truly special introduction to Colorado College. Trip participants form close bonds with their peers, as well as their leaders. Incoming students are now ready to start college with a solid group of friends. Thanks to the upperclassmen leaders, many of the first years’ questions about social and academic life are answered and their nerves are calmed.

A first-year wrote on their 2011 trip evaluation, “I genuinely enjoyed every moment of the past five days. The views and activities were all incredible, but the people I got to share them with were what made the experience great” (San Juan National Forest). These experiences are available to every incoming student without cost.

The trips, now completely overseen by the Outdoor Education Department, are an integral part of every student’s experience at Colorado College.

-Lauren Paley ’11

Happenings

MEETINGS:

Outdoor Recreation Club: Every Tuesday at 12:15 in the WES Room
Climbing Association of Colorado College: Thursday at 12:15 in Upstairs Worner Kayak Club: Roll Sessions and club meeting every Monday 8-9:30 pm—All skill levels welcome!

GEAR HOUSE HOURS:

Monday-Friday: 4 pm-8 pm

RITT KELLOGG CLIMBING GYM HOURS:

Monday-Thursday: 4 pm -10 pm Sunday: 6 pm-10 pm

TRIPS:

-Day Trips
BreakOut Saturday: Ronald McDonald House: 9/17
BreakOut Saturday: Farmfest 2011 in Denver: 9/24
ORC Day Hike Series: 9/17, 9/19, 9/21, 9/22
Outdoor Education trip to REI: 9/22

-Block Break One
BreakOut—La Puente
BreakOut—DAWGS
ORC—FOOT Trips
Cycling Club—Aspen Bike Trip

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Student Leader “Welcome Back BBQ” —9/13
ORC Retreat to the Cabin—9/16
FUCC Film Screening—9/23
FUCC Ski Pass Sale in Worner

Priddy Experience at DAWGS, Dalhart, TX
Thoughts from the field: Broken Hand Pass, NSO 2011

Although every year I have to ask myself, "great NSO or greatest NSO?" This year I didn't have to ask. The backcountry trip to Broken Hand Pass this year was the most cohesive, inclusive, and open group I have been a part of in any aspect of Colorado College. Lizzy Eichorn, myself, a third time NSO leader and Music Major, and our 11 first-year ducklings made our way into the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness to take part in two days of campsite building with the Rocky Mountain Field Institute to improve uncomfortable, eroding campsites into homey, sustainable ones. Our campsites looked so appealing that we had people asking if they could use them while we were still putting the finishing touches on the project. On the third morning of the trip we had a beautiful day to summit Humboldt Peak, a stunning 14'er looming above our campsite. The first-years on the trip are now so close that they have been taking time out of their busy first-year schedules to hang out together. Next year's class is going to have to really step up to be as cool as 2015!

-Brendan O'Donoghue ‘12
Photos: Clockwise Order

Students performing trail maintenance on Cross Mountain

Sunset over the Comanche National Grasslands

A CC student and a resident of the Trinidad Inn Nursing Home sharing a drawing

The La Plata group striking a pose

Trippees performing some heavy lifting at the Explora Science Center

Students from the Larga Vista Ranch and Dairy trip exploring Colorado State Fair on their cultural day

Photo by David Spiegel