

FYRES Research Mentors 2012-2013

In fall 2012, the six Research Mentors included three geography majors, a geology major, an environmental geology major, and an environmental studies major.

Joe Arevalo



Joe Arevalo is a senior at Calvin College majoring in geography with minors in history and international development. He has worked in the department as a GIS lab technician and has assisted Professor van Dijk with her research on dunes at P.J. Hoffmaster State Park. His interests are torn between the physical and cultural spheres of geography and he hopes to find a way to integrate them. Joe is excited to be a FYRES mentor and learn more about the dunes while

doing research on them. He has been enthusiastic about dunes ever since childhood vacations to them. Joe hopes to pass on his enthusiasm for dunes to other students.

Ty Bleeker

Ty Bleeker is a senior who is double majoring in both Biology and Environmental Studies. Ty is interested in both plants and their relationship to geographic landscapes—this has led Ty into a variety of research projects which include investigating invasive species in New York and studying old-growth forest dynamics in Oregon. Ty grew up in Zeeland, Michigan, and had many fond memories of playing on the Lake Michigan sand dunes as a child. After graduation, Ty is planning on attending graduate school to study forest ecology and management.



Linden Brinks



Linden Brinks is a junior-year geography major. She has worked with the department as the map library curator and the seminar assistant. Linden has done research on the Great Sand Dunes National Monument. She has an equal love for both the cultural and physical aspects of geography. Linden hopes to see that being a mentor will provide her with the research skills that she will need to continue on with her education. She also hopes to look at

her experience with the FYRES: Dunes program as a memorable one. After college Linden is planning to take a few years off and then hopefully continue her education at the graduate level.

James Karsten

James Karsten is a Sophomore Geology major at Calvin College. He hasn't worked much inside the department yet, but was a part of the FYRES: Dunes course as a student in the fall of 2011. As part of that, he assisted in researching the effects of an invasive species, oriental bittersweet, on the topography of Castle Park Dune, along with former FYRES research mentors and Calvin graduates, Chris Maike and Kyle Whalley. Through that research James now has much experience surveying with the total station. His current plans after graduation include attending Graduate School, but his focus within the field of Geology is unknown. James is interested to see what the FYRES: Dunes course looks like from a different perspective and eager to see how he can help other students learn about researching Lake Michigan coastal dunes.



Steven Musch



Steven Musch is a senior Geography major with a minor in Environmental Studies. Steven spent the summer of 2012 at Lassen Volcanic National Park as a project coordinator for a research study on plant phenology which tracked the seasonal changes in certain plant species. Working for the National Park Service was a great opportunity to gain research experience and see the inner workings of a major government land agency. After

graduation, Steven plans on taking a year to work before going to graduate school to study either resource management or GIS. As a FYRES Mentor, Steven is eager to gain more valuable research experience and excited to be able to help first year students learn research methods.

Ann Parkin

Ann Parkin is currently a senior Environmental Geology major. She has had the privilege of working in the Geology department for the past three years. Her work in the department has included, studying the coastal environments of Lake Michigan with two other students during her sophomore year. During her junior year she worked as a FYRES research mentor and a teaching assistant for the introductory geology class. During



the summer between her sophomore and junior year she worked on a mountain ridge in Kermit, West Virginia. There she organized and directed summer camps for the kids who lived on the ridge. She worked in collaboration with three nuns to teach kids about the environments around them. Presently, Ann is going into her third year of FYRES:Dunes research, and is thankful for the opportunity to see the program through to the end of her career at Calvin. After graduation, Ann plans to work as an environmental educator, or work to help raise environmental awareness.