

FYRES Students 2017-2018

In fall 2017, the FYRES class consisted of 23 students that researched a variety of topics on the dunes including sediment movement, deer impacts, and forest pathogens.

Camilla Bjelland



Major/subject interest: Biology

Hometown: St. Peter, MN

What is an interesting fact about you? I once ran in a 200 mile, 12 man relay!

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? Getting outside and working hands on to collect data from the dunes.

What is a highlight that you have from your time in the course so far? Working on collecting wind data from Dune 8.

Major/subject interest: Environmental science, geology

Hometown: Rehoboth, NM

What is an interesting fact about you? I can spin books, laptops, and iPads.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? It was a class outside in a state park. It was a science class too.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? The beautiful areas we get to see every lab.

James Byker



Aidan Casillas



Major/subject interest: Environmental science

Hometown: Palatine, IL

What is an interesting fact about you? I am a great conversationalist.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? The hands-on research.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Finding a snake on Dune 8.

Claire Costello

Major/subject interest: Biology

Hometown: Fort Wayne, IN

What is an interesting fact about you? Salmon is my favorite food.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? The idea of learning about the coastal environment and stewardship of God's creation.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? My favorite moment was getting to the top of Mount Baldy after surveying the dune and seeing such a great view.



Andrew Crago



Major/subject interest: Geography

Hometown: Lewisburg, PA

What is an interesting fact about you? I lived in Prague for a year.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? Sounded like a great research opportunity.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Swimming in the lake.

Peter Duimstra

Major/subject interest: Undecided – interested in computer science and environmental studies

Hometown: Appleton, WI

What is an interesting fact about you? I love singing.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? Hands-on research opportunity.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Swimming after a long day on the job!



Robin Gelderloos



Major/subject interest: Environmental science, education

Hometown: Ada, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? I have 8 toes (+2).

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? The dunes!

What is a highlight that you have from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Relaxing at the top of the dune we had just measured.

Raleigh Haan

Major/subject interest: Undecided – interested in environmental studies, art, and medicine

Hometown: Grand Rapids, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? I have photography featured in a documentary called “Exported from Michigan.” It’s won lots of awards!

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? I love the earth and I love hiking and any outdoor activities.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Labs on the dunes on Thursdays and swimming after long, hot labs.



Nathan Hilbrands



Major/subject interest: Undecided – interested in environmental science and writing

Hometown: Grand Rapids, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? I'm a fourth generation Calvin student.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? My oldest brother took it and it sounded really cool.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Being the first group to measure Dune 2 was really cool.

Rachel Hubka

Major/subject interest: Spanish

Hometown: Grand Rapids, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? I played Scout Finch in my high school's production of To Kill a Mockingbird that took 2nd place in the State One Act competition.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? While I don't particularly love science, I learn a whole lot better when things are hands-on (plus I love my lakes and dunes).

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? One day out on the dunes it was super hot so when my group finished gathering data we all jumped in the lake and swam for a few minutes.



Sam Jacobs



Major/subject interest: Accounting

Hometown: Rockford, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? I can solve a Rubik's cube in under a minute.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? Having fun in a science class and getting out of the classroom.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Enjoying the outdoors and observing how beautiful Michigan is.

Caroline Komodore

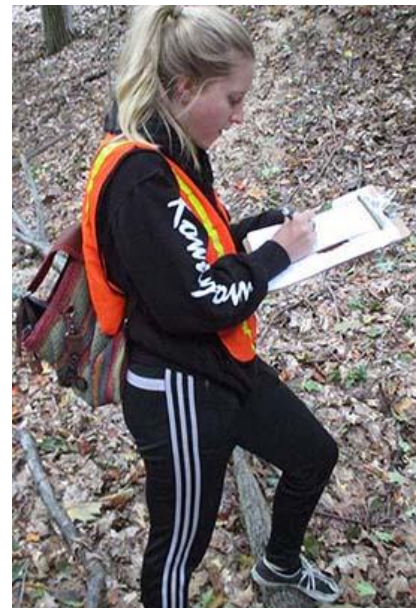
Major/subject interest: Environmental science/studies

Hometown: Denver, CO

What is an interesting fact about you? I love to ride horses.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? Being outside, having a fun class.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? The lab on the 28th was a lot of fun for me. I really like to get off campus to be outside.



Chris Lantinga



Major/subject interest: Business and geology

Hometown: Grand Rapids, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? I mountain bike and surf.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? Learning how to research properly.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Nothing specific, just love all the things we are learning.

Gabriela Lantinga

Major/subject interest: Environmental science and French

Hometown: Toronto, Canada

What is an interesting fact about you? I used to be a competitive archer!

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? The opportunity of doing hands-on research this early in my college career!

What is a highlight of your semester in the course thus far? Running down Mt. Baldy!



Allison Lee



Major/subject interest: Geography and international development

Hometown: Winona, MN

What is an interesting fact about you? I taught myself how to read when I was 5.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? I really liked that it was a geography focused lab, and we got to be outside a lot observing our natural environment.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Vegetation Station! Also seeing the lovely Lake Michigan every Thursday.

Kate Mollison

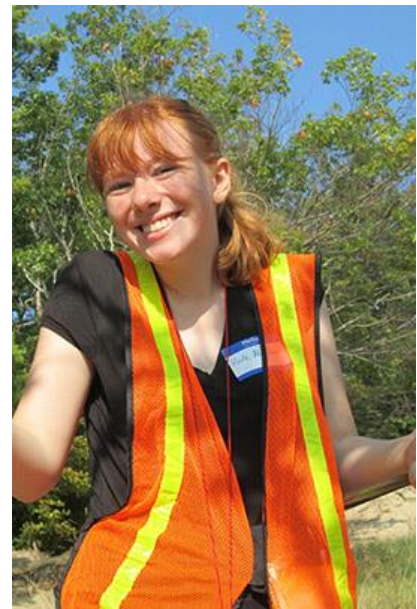
Major/subject interest: Secondary education in biology

Hometown: Grosse Pointe, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? At one point, I owned and took care of 20 different plants in my bedroom – and I brought most of them with me to school.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? I wanted to do something more with the sciences and the idea of getting out and off campus for class seemed like a really cool opportunity.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Getting to the top of the dunes and seeing that view is always a highlight.



Mitchell Niesar



Major/subject interest: Environmental sciences with minor in mechanical engineering

Hometown: Whitby, Ontario, Canada

What is an interesting fact about you? I play hockey for the Calvin team and have an 8 inch plate of titanium and 8 screws in my shoulder.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? The hands-on studying, as well as getting hands-on experience with research.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? The jumping and rolling down the dunes.

Alyssa Topping

Major/subject interest: Undecided

Hometown: Byron Center, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? I've visited 33 states.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? I was attracted to the idea of getting off campus for 5 hours, not only to climb sand dunes, but to do research.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? One of my highlights from this course so far is the feeling of accomplishment when I reached the top of the dune I was surveying.



Sam Van Berkel



Major/subject interest: Biology

Hometown: Rockford, MI

What is an interesting fact about you? I enjoy fish keeping and reptile keeping.

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? It is a research program, and I was interested in taking a research class.

What is a highlight that you have from your time in the course thus far? Catching a hognose snake during a vegetation study.

Klein VerhHill

Major/subject interest: Undecided – interested in mission work

Hometown: Pittsburg, PA

What is an interesting fact about you? I've never eaten meat before. Ever!

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? I was initially attracted to the FYRES course because I wanted to gain experience on a research team.

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? Catching an Eastern Hognosed snake on the dunes.



Kaitlyn Westra



Major/subject interest: Chemistry and public health with a minor in data analytics

Hometown: La Palma, CA

What is an interesting fact about you? Tuesday is my favorite day of the week!

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? I liked the idea of getting to do research during my freshman year. I also enjoy being outdoors and I love that I can get out onto the dunes for 5 hours every week!

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? My two favorite parts of this class so far were becoming GPS certified and swimming in the lake after collecting our data!