

Australia New Zealand Leadership Adventure 2017

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What Did I Learn

- Learn the vibrant culture of Australia and New Zealand through a variety of adventures of snorkeling in the Great Barrier Reef, hiking in the Blue Mountains, sea kayaking in New Zealand and sight seeing in various locations.
- Learn and practice leadership theory within the field using experimental learning.
- Learn to contribute to a unique group of people through leadership while enrich my global perspective.
- Learn to perform strenuous physical adventure activities such as snorkeling, hiking, sea-kayaking, sky diving, and bungee jumping.
- Learn team building skills and learned to play 3 card games.

Experience Description

Adventure trip to Australia and New Zealand from May 8 to May 27, 2017. Trip starts on May 8 when we flew from Columbus, Ohio to Cairns, Australia, where the Great Barrier Reef is located. We spent some time on the beach and snorkeled with a marine biologist. We visited Hartley's Crocodile Park and Cairns zoo and saw lots of exotic animals that are unique to Australia. We also had a free day to do optional activities. I did sky diving tandem jump for the first time in my life. We left Cairns and flew to Sydney on May 14. The view of the Sydney Opera House in the night sky is breath taking. While in Sydney area, we took two-day excursion to Blue Mountains National Park just northwest of Sydney to explore the rain forest. We did lots of hiking in the rain forest and saw a flock of wild cockatoos right outside of our hotel in the Blue Mountains National Park. We left Sydney on May 19 and flew to Queenstown, New Zealand. It was winter time and snowing there. That was an interesting experience because it was May and summer in the United States and here it was winter and snowing. In New Zealand, the theme is nature exploration. We started at the Fiordland National Park in the southwest end of New Zealand, there everything is so pure and untouched. The night sky is so clear and we can see so many stars. We moved toward northeast every two days and did many interesting things along the way. We did sea kayaking, bungee jumping, sky diving, hiking and visited the location where the Lord of the Ring was filmed. We visited Queensland, Fiordland National Park, Arrowtown, Wanaka, and our final stop was Christchurch and we flew back from there to Columbus, Ohio on May 27.



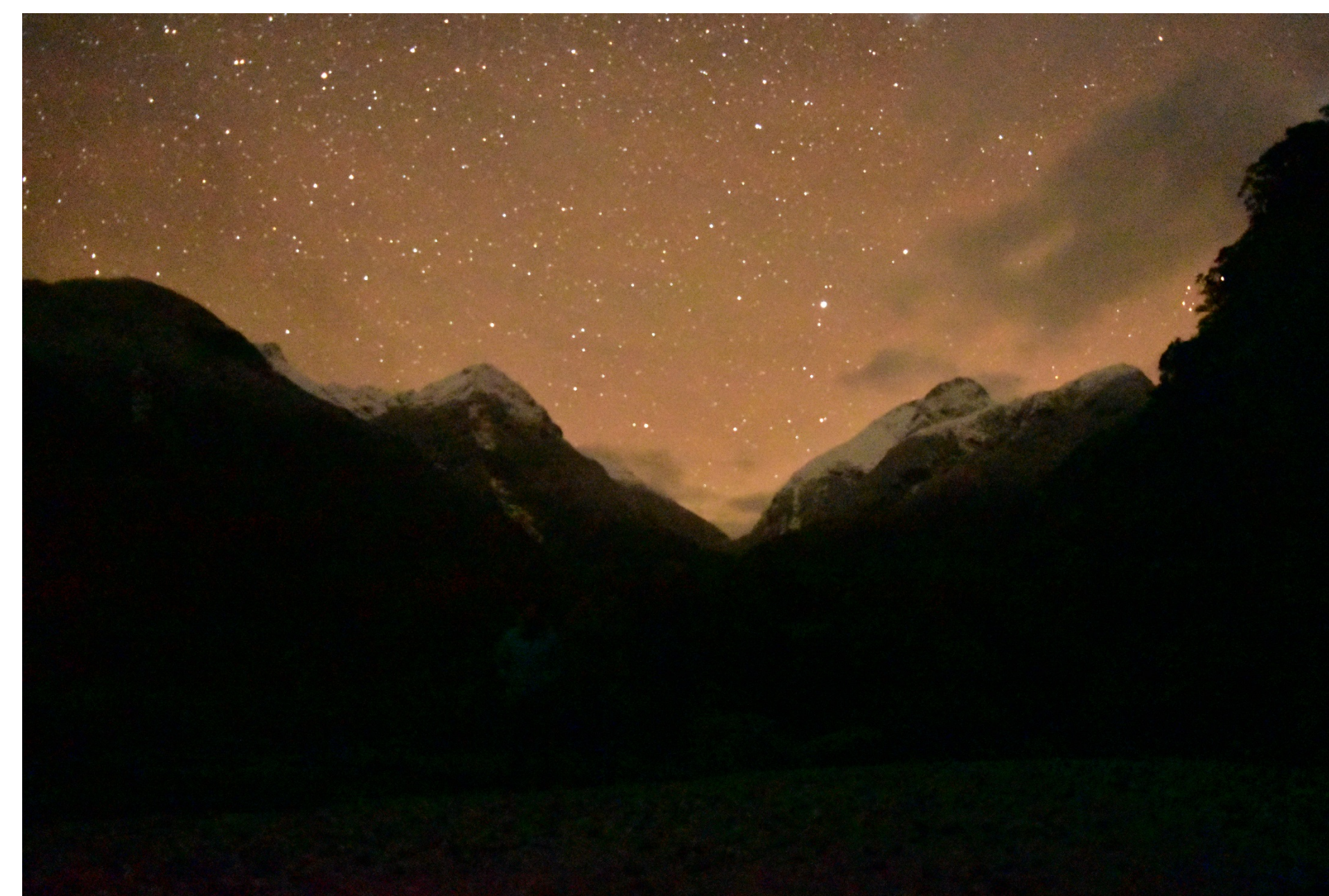
Our entire group of 24 people, 22 students and 2 trip leaders, picture taken in Fiordland National Park, New Zealand



I was holding a koala bear at the Cairns zoo, picture taken in Cairns zoo, Australia



A flock of wild cockatoos outside our hotel, picture taken in Blue Mountains National Park, Australia



Night sky in New Zealand, seeing so many stars picture taken in Fiordland National Park, New Zealand



Kayaking in Lake Wanaka, this is the clearest lake I ever seen. Picture taken in Lake Wanaka, New Zealand



Night scene of Sydney Opera House, Sydney, Australia

Favorite Parts of My Experience

This is the trip of my life time. I have been to foreign countries before. I have been to Italy and Costa Rica. This trip is by far the best. I see and learn so much. I have several favorite moments from this trip.

- 1) Snorkeling at the Great Barrier Reef and look down at the clown fish. This reminds me of the movie "Finding Nemo". However, this is real
- 2) Holding a koala bear. This can only happen in Australia.
- 3) Seeing the Sydney Opera House. I saw the picture of Sydney Opera House before. It is a totally different experience when you stand there and look at it
- 4) Seeing a flock of wild cockatoo right outside of our hotel. I am a bird lover and I have a pet bird and I visit pet shop often to see parrots. Seeing these beautiful birds in their natural habitat takes my breath away
- 5) Kayaking as a group in Lake Wanaka, New Zealand. it was one of the clearest lakes that I have ever seen
- 6) View the night sky in Fiordland National Park, New Zealand, seeing so many stars with no light pollution.

How Did the Experience Impact Me Personally

I believe the friendship we formed on this trip will last a lifetime. We had such a fun and nice group of people. There were a total of 24 of us. We got along so well with each other despite our different background, different career choices and different years at OSU. I have been on several group trips before, and I think this is by far one of the best group of people that I have had the honor to be associated with. This trip not only gained me 23 friends, but also allow me to see the world only a handful of people in the world get to experience.

The Impact of This Experience

This trip totally changed my perspective of the world we live in. Where we live is only a very small part of the world. The world is so large and very different from where we live. I will go experience the world whenever I can. I feel fortunate to be able to go on this trip as part of the STEP project because this is my senior year at OSU and I had the opportunity to experience the part of the world that is half globe away with the amazing group of people.