

project wildcat newsletter 2009



Dear parents, alumni, and friends,

This past fall may have been Project Wildcat's most successful trip to date— we had a record number of applicants and we led over 160 campers on a seven-day hike through trails in Michigan, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania.

We were extremely pleased with the outcome of our trips, and love it when we run into our campers walking across campus, now fully



assimilated into the Northwestern experience. Watching the participants evolve from anxious high school graduates to full-fledged college students during and after the big trip has been perhaps the most rewarding part of Project Wildcat. Already, we're looking forward to next year's trip, and hope to make it the best yet.

One of the best aspects of PWild is its affordability. In the midst of a growing financial crisis, we are reaching out to parents and alumni for support so we can keep the cost of PWild low.

So many different elements go into making PWild a successful trip, but without your donations we'd never be able to get it off the ground. We sincerely thank you for reading our newsletter, for supporting us, and for sending your kids to hang out with us in the woods.

Support Project Wildcat

PWild is by far the most popular of Northwestern's pre-orientation programs. Last year we saw a surge in applicants and we hope to keep the program at this size. To help future generations of Northwestern students have the PWild experience, we need more funds. With the economy and endowment in decline, we need your support now more than ever!

Where will my donation go?

- More scholarships
- Scout out new sites and expand program
- Replace and expand supply of camping equipment to rent out to campers
- Revamp emergency protocol system to ensure camper safety

Please send checks or cash to:

**Project Wildcat
1999 Campus Dr.
Evanston, IL 60208**



The People

We want our campers to begin freshman year with a real group of friends, feeling confident and ready to begin their lives at Northwestern.

Having a built-in group of friends when you begin college makes the transition infinitely easier. Many Northwestern students have said to us that they wish they did Project Wildcat, having seen how much easier the transition was for their peers who went on the trip.

Project Wildcat provides students with the amazing opportunity to meet people from different walks of life who they might otherwise not meet. Our campers are grouped together randomly – a PWild group may consist of an East Coast Medill student, an international student from Paris, a Music Performance major, a Midwestern engineering student and several others, all sharing indelible experiences for seven days in the wilderness. PWild gives students the chance to understand themselves and each other outside of the structured social setting of college. Northwestern students are often separated into like-minded groups based on their designated schools, group involvement and residence

halls. Campers will arrive on campus to find that the friends they have made on the trip are scattered all across the board. They will also find a community of campers who have had parallel experiences and adventures on PWild.

We work hard to ensure that the PWild experience transcends the week itself, and spills over into campus life.

The Places

One of the lasting impressions PWild leaves on students is a greater appreciation for nature and the outdoors. In part, we head into the woods as a means of getting away from the distractions of college life. But there's no doubt that the trip is more about the places we go than those we escape from. It's not easy to see the stars

with the bright Chicago skyline. P-Wild gives students that opportunity.

Spending seven days in the woods with everything you need on your back and traversing past stunning vistas and beautiful lakes is infinitely more valuable than sending the last week of summer sitting in front of the TV, and gives participants an entirely new view on life. With muddied legs and a sweaty t-shirt worn for a week straight, the day-to-day experience becomes about the connections made with other people, and not what you're wearing or how you look. For campers, who are on the eve of their much-anticipated initiation into college life, this understanding can make all the difference.

Hear it from them

"It was pretty much heaven on earth."
-2007 Camper

"The Pwild experience has taught me more important life lessons in college than any professor or class. It's not just a backpacking trip; it's one of the few chances you'll ever get to really figure yourself out."
-2006 Camper

"Through this unique and unforgettable experience, we are provided not just with a group of friends, but also a new-found self confidence that persists throughout freshman year."
-2008 Camper

