

## OUTING CLUB

Dear Bowdoin College Community,

The past year at the Bowdoin Outing Club (BOC) began with another successful Bowdoin Outing Club Orientation (BOCO) trip program for the incoming class of 2019. Three-hundred-ninety first-year students participated on forty-two trips, led by one-hundred-ten upper-class student leaders. Five new Service Adventure Orientation (SAO) trips, collaborative efforts with the McKeen Center for the Common Good, combined service opportunities and outdoor adventures. These included trail work on the Appalachian Trail, farm work, and work with local non-profits in rural communities. Another exciting new trip opportunity was offered in collaboration with Associate Professor of Africana Studies and English Tess Chakkalakal. Following in Thoreau's footsteps through northern Maine, the group canoed down Chesuncook Lake on the West Branch of the Penobscot River, camped on Gero Island, and climbed Mount Katahdin in Baxter State Park, while discussing Thoreau's *Maine Woods* around the campfire in the evening.

The fall semester was filled to overflowing with a vast array of BOC offerings. These included whitewater raft trips, beginner whitewater kayak classes, backpacking trips in the Bigelow Range, the Pemigewasset Wilderness, and the White Mountains. In addition, there were rock climbing trips at Clifton, Maine and Sundown Ledge off the Kancamangus Highway, innumerable day hikes, stand up paddle boarding (SUP) trips, flat-water canoeing day trips and overnights, surfing, and sunrise beach hikes.

The Fall Leadership Training (LT) group began their eight-week program in September, and spent six of the next eight weekends in the field. These included a four-day introduction to canoeing on the East Branch of the Penobscot River over Fall Break, and a late fall Bigelow backpack traverse. The yield of engaged and committed BOC leaders from this group has been remarkable, as they began to lead weekend trips before the semester had even concluded! Over the course of the year, BOC staff also offered Instructor Training Courses in archery, raft guiding, rock climbing, SUP, whitewater kayaking and telemark skiing. Assistant Director of the BOC Sarah Johnson '13 further refined the BOC Leader Instructor Trainer (LIT) program that she created and piloted the previous year. This group of veteran BOC leaders committed themselves to further training and developing their teaching and mentoring skills, which were put to the test with the year's new leaders during LT.

After selecting the Spring and Out of the Zone (OZ) LT cohorts in November, we held the first BOC Intergroup Dialogue session with all three LT groups. This was one of the goals we had identified through a series of discussions on inclusivity at the BOC during the 2014-15 academic year. We have now incorporated this initiative into our annual LT calendar.

We continue to explore options to further develop the welcoming, inclusive and diverse environment that we envision for the BOC. Towards the end of the fall semester (and picking right up in January after winter vacation), the activities at the BOC tend to focus on cabin trips and evening activities centered around the Lentz Hearth at the Schwartz Outdoor Leadership Center. Fireside knitting, board games, homework and relaxing in the new hammocks are

popular pursuits on cold winter evenings. Offerings of fresh-baked cookies, chocolate chip banana bread, S'mores and hot chocolate always draw a crowd.

The Bowdoin Rod and Gun Club (BRAG), with strong leadership from Andrew Haeger'16 and Will Goodenough'16, had an excellent year. The fall saw numerous fishing outings, introducing students to the joys of catching fish on hand-tied flies. Esteemed fly-fishing alumnus, Macauley Lord'78, continued to make guest appearances at Friday afternoon Casting on the Quad sessions, lending his incredible store of fly casting knowledge and teaching prowess to BRAG's mission to inspire the next generation of Bowdoin sportsmen and women. As fishing opportunities dwindled, BRAG sponsored archery and hunter safety courses for the Bowdoin community, and provided another opportunity for Bowdoin students, faculty and staff to engage in these traditional outdoor pursuits. Throughout the year, BRAG leaders teach fly tying classes on Thursday evenings, so that members can learn the skills necessary to fill their fly boxes for their next fishing adventure.

Starting in early January, our Out of the Zone (OZ) LT students returned to campus for three snow-filled days at the BOC cabin in Monson, ME. After learning to snowshoe, Nordic ski and keep themselves warm in freezing temperatures, they returned to campus to join Fall and Spring LT for an eighty hour Wilderness First Responder course, taught by Wilderness Medical Associates (a Maine-based company and leader in the field of wilderness emergency medicine). This course not only prepares our trip leaders to deal with medical emergencies, but it also provides them with a constructive framework for approaching leadership decisions in the field under challenging conditions. Another dozen students arrived three days before the start of the second semester for the BOC Bike Mechanics Course. These students offer weekly bike repair/tune up sessions throughout the academic year for any Bowdoin community members in need of assistance.

Winter activities at the BOC are highly weather/snow dependent. Although we had an execrable snow year, we still managed to get over fifty students out on the slopes at Sugarloaf for several weeks of Telemark Class. Taught by Bowdoin Magazine editor Matt O'Donnell, BOC staff, student and alumni instructors, this is one of our most popular programs, and enables us to introduce dozens of first timers to the sport of skiing. Other winter activities included snowshoeing, Nordic skiing, avalanche awareness classes and trips to the BOC Cabin.

Spring Vacation saw the BOC staff journeying afield with student leaders on week-long trips to develop and hone technical leadership skills. One group paddled whitewater rivers in the southeastern U.S. with Assistant Director Sarah Johnson '13 and Director Michael Woodruff '87. They paddled whitewater classics including the Cheat River Canyon, the Tellico and Ocoee Rivers in Tennessee and Section IV of the Chattooga River on the South Carolina/Georgia border. Hot, sunny days on the Chattooga and paddling with friends of the BOC (including Roger Brothers'11 and Hannah Jones'12) were highlights of the trip! Meanwhile, many miles to the north, BOC Assistant Director Adam Berliner '13, led a group of seven intrepid BOC Telemark skiers on a backcountry skiing adventure in the Parc National de Gaspésie in the Chic Choc Mountains of Quebec. This group found bountiful fresh snow in which to hone their backcountry winter travel and avalanche safety skills. Assistant Directors Johnson and Berliner returned to the BOC for a quick turnaround before returning to the field

with the OZLT group for a winter backpacking adventure on the Appalachian Trail close to the BOC cabin near the start of the Hundred Mile Wilderness. This four-day adventure is one of the most challenging trips a Leadership Training group might undertake, and this group rose to the occasion. While further developing their personal winter travel skills, each individual also cultivated the leadership skills required to take care of others and contribute to the success of the expedition.

The Spring Leadership Training group returned from Spring Vacation to begin their fieldwork. The weekends in April included whitewater canoeing experiences on the Sheepscott, Piscataquis, and Dead Rivers, and an icy backpacking trip through the Mahoosucs. Balmy spring weather provided the backdrop for a delightful climbing and hiking weekend at Acadia National Park. The culminating expedition for Spring LT was a five-day whitewater canoeing trip on the East Branch of the Penobscot River in late May. The OZLT group joined Spring LT for two days on the East Branch after spending three days on the Jo-Mary and Debsconeag Lakes. This was the first combination of multiple LT groups on an expedition and was extremely well received! We are planning on further developing this model in future years.

While the Spring and OZLT expeditions were out on the water, Sarah Johnson'13 and OZLT'14 graduate, Olivia Bean'17 (BOCO Trip Coordinator 2016) were at Indian Pond in The Forks, Maine, facilitating a new BOCO leader training. They were assisted by several veteran student leaders, including Fall LT'14 graduate Connor Phillips'17, in his role as BOCO Logistics Coordinator 2016. The students in this training focused on canoeing, hiking and stand up paddle boarding skills, in addition to basic backcountry camping, cooking and group management. This was the first time we facilitated an Orientation Leader training session in May, and we were extremely pleased with the results! We plan to continue with this model going forward.

This past year was another hallmark year for BOC collaborations with other campus groups. These trips included the much-beloved Wild-Women series in collaboration with the Women's Resource Center, SUP and rafting trips with women's basketball, men's and women's soccer, and canoeing with the Latino Boy Brunch group. Other groups ventured out in the winter for snowshoeing, Nordic skiing and to the cabin including the men's swim team, the Latin American Student Organization, the Native American Student Association, the Korean Student Association, the Women of Color Coalition and the Slam Poet Society. A variety of Residential Life groups, including College Houses, First Year Floors and Res Life staff continue to take advantage of the BOC offerings, from hikes at Morse Mountain to cookies by the fire at the Lentz Hearth and trips to the BOC Cabin. These collaborations have become an increasingly important aspect of our programming and contribute to our stated goal of increasing accessibility for diverse elements of the campus community in our program.

As we finished the 2015-2016 academic year, we took the time to reflect on the past several years in the lives of our graduating seniors. Andrew Haeger '16 received the Danica Loucks '14 Award, for exemplary service to the Bowdoin community through his leadership in the Outing Club. Ben Pallant '16 was named the recipient of the James S. Lentz Award, given to the student who best demonstrates the outstanding characteristics of leadership that Jim Lentz strove to instill in the student leaders of the BOC during his tenure as Director from 1984 through 1992.

The coming year will be a time of transition as we say goodbye to Assistant Director Sarah Johnson'13, and we wish her well in her future adventures as she departs for a Grand Canyon river trip in September. Her invaluable contributions to the BOC and campus community will be long-remembered and sorely missed. With great loss comes great opportunity, and we are thrilled to welcome Anna Bastidas (Hamilton'13) as our newest Assistant Director of the BOC. She has extensive experience working with students in the field including, most recently, Coastal Studies for Girls in Freeport, ME and the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) in Lander, WY.

This past year was brimming with a variety of educational experiences for students and staff at the BOC, and we look forward to an equally exciting 2016-17 academic year, beginning with the 25<sup>th</sup> year of Bowdoin Outing Club Orientation Trips to welcome the Class of 2020.

Safe travels,

Michael Woodruff, Director  
Schwartz Outdoor Leadership Center