

# SUNY Potsdam Public Health & Human Performance

2021 Department Newsletter

Volume 8

To our alumni, current students, prospective students, and community,

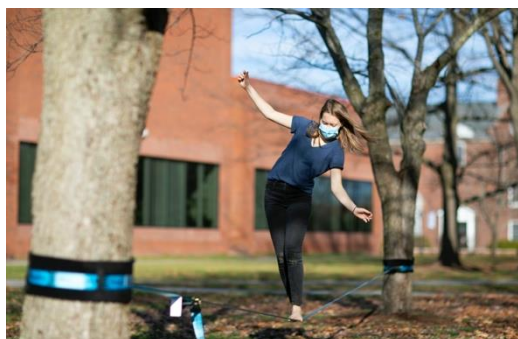
What a year for Public Health & Human Performance at SUNY Potsdam. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a terribly challenging and tragic time. Many of you were out there working to stop the spread or manage the challenges posed by the virus, and we are so grateful.

Interns in the field worked to:

- Deliver meals to homebound seniors
- Manage COVID-19 testing protocol within a senior care facility
- [Keep migrant children safe at a temporary housing facility in Texas](#), and so much more.

Current students work as contact tracers [on campus](#) and in the [community](#), and the university served as a [vaccination site](#).

Our faculty and staff found ways to teach successfully despite the challenges of distance learning, while students in our Exercise Science program found [creative ways to stay fit during the pandemic](#).



And as always, the Wilderness Education crew found their way to the backcountry. Their team worked to make their excursions more inclusive by raising [scholarship](#) money to cover program costs for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) students. See some alumni profiles below for more information about where WE can take you!

The past year has led to some faculty turnover, most recently with Drs. Sabena Thomas and Chris Torres leaving for other institutions. We wish them all the best in their new positions! [We're looking to hire](#)

two Visiting Assistant Professors in Public Health and a Lecturer/ Strength and Conditioning Coach in Exercise Science.

If you're interested in being included in a profile on the SUNY Potsdam website or in our next newsletter, please email me at [listersl@potdam.edu](mailto:listersl@potdam.edu).

Sincerely,

Sarah Lister, Assistant Chair & Internship Coordinator

## Notes from beyond!

[Melissa Cole '17](#) shares the following note about her life and the impact the Wilderness Education program has had on her success:

*Wilderness education taught me the foundations of effective leadership and teamwork which I have been able to apply to my everyday life and to my career. I have gone from leading backpacking trips through the Adirondacks to leading with science at Regeneron, a biopharmaceutical company bringing treatments to patients with serious diseases.*

*As a Biotech Production Specialist in Clinical Manufacturing, I have been able to experience first-hand what is involved in producing safe and effective treatments for those affected by serious diseases. My day to day work brings me to a process area where I purify therapeutic monoclonal antibodies involving liquid chromatography and viral filtration steps. In this position, every aspect matters as everything I do that day helps ensure patient safety. What I am helping to produce will ultimately be administered into a patient's body. The process of making a safe drug requires cross collaboration, strong leadership, dedication, and resilience – much like that of leading a group of backpacking students through an off-trail expedition through the thick pines and marshes of the Adirondacks. Both require a high attention to detail and problem solving to reach the desired goal. The goal may be very different; however, the soft skills required are paralleled. The lessons learned through Wilderness Ed also helped me navigate the hardships of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

*Throughout the pandemic, I had the opportunity to produce REGEN-COV™ (casirivimab and imdevimab), Regeneron's investigational treatment for COVID-19. This accomplishment was not one that came easy to say the least. Through many long hours in the process area, site restrictions and at home issues resulting from the pandemic, our Regeneron team effectively produced a record-breaking amount of therapeutics that in a very short amount of time. This was a very high stress time in which I relied on teamwork and the leadership skills rooted in my years of involvement in the Wilderness Education department. Wilderness Education taught me how to persevere when faced with difficulty and how to utilize the strength of individuals to reach a group goal. Being with a backpacking group that is lost in the woods, dealing with hunger, fatigue and group dynamic strains are similar feelings to working within the process area making a therapeutic that can help save lives. A strong mind and desire to persevere in the face of difficulty are the keys to success. For me, the basis of leadership and teamwork developed in Wilderness Education are translatable to the process area of Regeneron and to everyday life. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to be involved in something greater than myself by producing a treatment that can help the world and I thank Wilderness Education for helping me to achieve that goal.*

## Alumni Profile of Marguerite Mosher '20:



*Marguerite is currently attending Roberts Wesleyan College, and just finished her first year of a doctoral degree in Clinical and School Psychology. It was her experience in the Wilderness Education program at Potsdam that led her to this career path, as she realized she loved working with people, and enjoyed being with them as they reflected, learned more about themselves, and were challenged. As a part of her doctoral program, she is spending the summer working at an eating disorder clinic in Rochester, where she runs therapy groups, using skills she first learned and refined within Wilderness Ed. In this work, she often finds herself reflecting on pages of handwritten journal assignments about group dynamics on Leadership I & II.*

*In her (very limited) free time, Marguerite enjoys many of the hobbies she picked up during her time at Potsdam. Last summer, she went on her first solo backpacking trip, a longtime goal. Winters are spent snowboarding at local mountains. This year, she's spending her free days at her childhood summer camp, writing a manual for their low ropes course and helping to plan and prepare for the annual backpacking trip. She doesn't get to rock climb as much as she used to, but she's taken to keeping some gear in her car...just in case class gets out early!*

*100% of SUNY Potsdam students complete an Applied Learning experience.  
Support a student in the Department of Public Health & Human Performance by donating [here](#).*

