

On the first day of class the professors introduced themselves and like any other nosy student I checked out the Center for Watershed Sciences website and looked at their research projects. After that it was quite intimidating working under these Professors, Doctors and published scientists. Little did I know that over the ten plus weeks we'd come to find out that these scientists actually are just Big Kids. I never would have thought that I'd be going down a natural water slide with one of them, watch two of them beat all the college boys at a rock skipping challenge, have one get overly excited about a Shakespearean frog play and see one being an MC in a bikini. It was so awesome to find out that scientists who are so passionate about their research also have a fun and energetic child side. One night we were sitting around the "campfire" and the professors were telling us about their different rafting stories. I was sitting there thinking how these college years were supposed to be the craziest years of your life yet I haven't done anything close to as crazy as their stories. I walked back to my sleeping bag and ran into another student who said the same exact thing. These "grown ups" have more interesting stories to tell, than us rowdy college kids.

The next night the professors told us about their different research and we got to hear about others graduate school experiences. It was a huge relief to find out that even these professors and scientists took some time off after graduating before going to graduate school. What is next for you? Is a very popular question thrown my way these days, since graduation is coming soon. I feel a lot better now about not jumping into grad school and don't feel bad when I answer this question with finding field work to do until I find what I am really passionate about and then on to grad school.

Not only was this trip a blast I also learned a lot from all our different five minute science talks. I wish more of my trips were spent with scientists spitting out facts about every thing we came upon. I left this field trip with being able to identify more bugs, more plants and trees, more fish, and more water characteristics than I was able to do before. But more importantly I left this field trip inspired and with the hope that someday I will get to be that Big Kid.