

There are few experiences in my life from which I feel defined. The nine days spent along the Tuolumne River is one of them. After returning from this excursion, I feel changed. I feel more aware, I feel less fearful of the unknown, and I feel empowered. Albert Einstein once said, "Any fool can know. The point is to understand." Working with such beautiful minds that were paired with passion, I now understand more about my classmates, and even myself. I understand more of where I am going and how to get there. This was an experience I would not trade for the world. With a newly ignited passion, I am ready to divert from the roads most traveled and blaze my own trail. Although I am back in civilization now, my mind wanders to the river about 100 times a day-wishing my clothes still smelled like campfire and there was still dirt under my fingernails. Heaven is not on Earth, but there are pieces of it scattered here. Tuolumne River is one of my slices of heaven. I plan on returning sooner rather than later. I learned not only from Sarah, Carson, Ryan and Peter, but also from my classmates. Knowledge is not powerful unless it is shared. Thank you to everyone who made this quarter so enjoyable. I am now armed with more knowledge of my surroundings than ever, something that can never be taken from me. I returned to Davis with heightened appreciation for rivers, and with 13 new close friends. I am forever in debt for that.