

FYRES Students 2012-2013

In fall 2012, the FYRES class consisted of 23 students with diverse backgrounds and interests.

Katy Gerber



Major: Environmental Science and International Development Studies

Hometown: Maple Grove, MN

Campus involvement: Creation Care/Outdoor Recreation Living-Learning Community

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "I was excited to have field experience and have the opportunity to get my foot in the door of college-level research."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "Seeing fall colors from the top of the dunes."

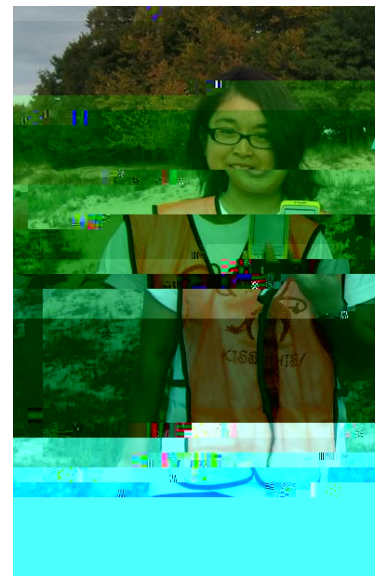
Sarah Harefa

Major: Psychology

Hometown: Indonesia

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "The opportunity to witness Michigan's dunes!"

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "Loosing [and later finding] the stylus of the expensive GPS and many other countless awesome experiences (along with supportive mentors and classmates)."



Elaine Hilverda

Major: Speech Pathology

Hometown: Grand Rapids, MI

Campus involvement: Student Martial Arts Club

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "My dad was in the Geography department looking for professors from when he went to Calvin and I was tagging along. He knew

Evan Legge



Major: Accounting

Hometown: Midland, MI

Campus involvement: Intramural Basketball

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "I heard about a class that gave the opportunity to go to Lake Michigan and study sand dunes every week. That sounded very interesting to me, so I applied for the course."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "Using the GPS (Juno) Units to map features on a dune, and running up and down the dunes."

Gabe LePage

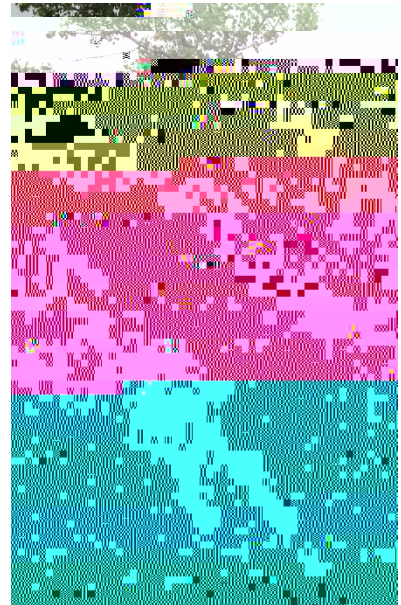
Major: International Development and Environmental Studies

Hometown: Nairobi, Kenya and Lookout Mountain, TN

Campus involvement: Outdoor Recreation/Creation Care Floor

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "It looked like a great way to mix my developing interest in Earth Sciences with my older interest in messing about outside. And having no experience with Michigan and fearing it would be flat and boring compared to Kenya and Tennessee, this was a sure way to prove myself wrong."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "It's remarkable how high you can jump from without injury on a hill of loose sand."



Michael Messina

Major: Undecided

Hometown: Oak Park, IL

Campus involvement: Ballroom Dance Club

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "I was considering a major in Environmental Science or Environmental Studies, and my advisor recommended I take this course."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far?
"I love that we get to go to dunes for our labs. Most labs meet

Josh Nieuwsma



Major: Environmental Studies

Hometown: Caledonia, MI

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "We get to go out to the dunes and use the equipment and techniques we learn about in class."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "I got to use the total station and survey part of a dune."

Krystal Perry

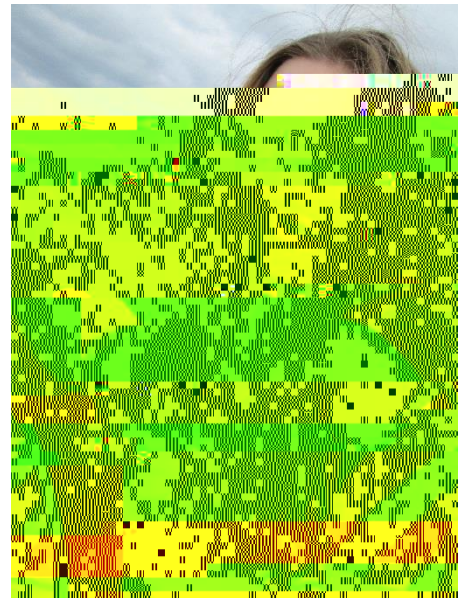
Major: History

Hometown: Davison, MI

Campus involvement: INTRO, Photography Club, Calvin Missions, Calvin Conservatives

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "The opportunity to be [out in] the field and do hands-on experience."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "Being given all this wonderful knowledge that will hopefully help me with my archaeology minor. I also love all of the lovely people I have met."



Eleighna Prather



Major: exploratory

Hometown: Muskegon, MI

Campus involvement: Intramural Volleyball, 1VR activities

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "The five credits. [Also] I'm not a huge science fan, so this FYRES course seemed the most fun and interesting. I've never taken a class like it before."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "Being able to work out on the dunes and being able to learn and understand techniques I never knew about."

Veronika Schultz

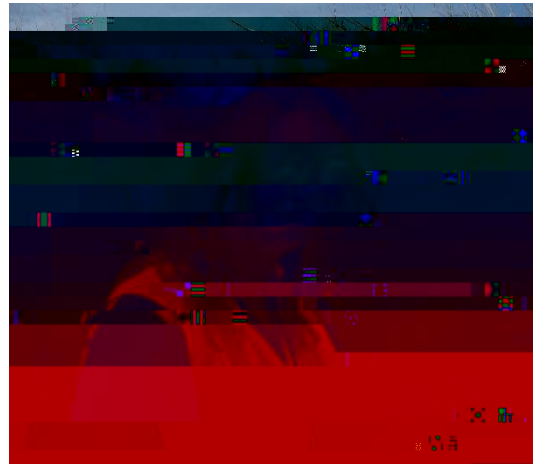
Major: Psychology

Hometown: Traverse City, MI

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course?

"Growing up a half hour away from Sleeping Bear Dunes, I was familiar with sand dunes but wanted to know more. I wanted to know how they formed and why environmentalists wanted to [preserve] them."

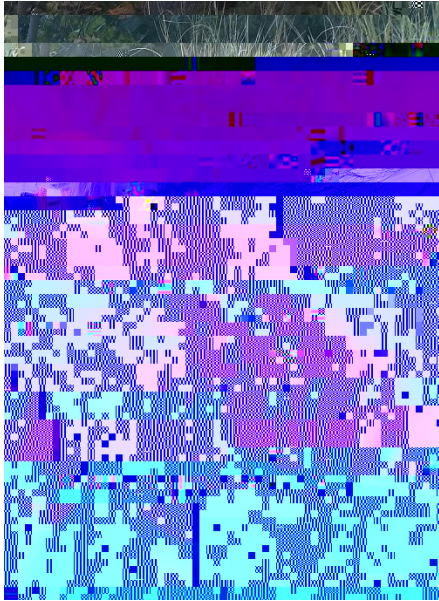
What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "Being able to hike on the dunes nearly every week."



Danny Shishler

Major: Spanit

Natasha Strydhorst



Major: Writing (tentative)

Hometown: Calgary, Alberta

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "The opportunity to spend time outside and actively researching every week."

What is a highlight of your semester in the course thus far? "The incredible views each week from the dunes to the lake. [Also] continual learning."

Jake Swineford

Major: Environmental Studies, Pre-Veterinary

Hometown: Aurora, IL

Campus involvement: 1VR Outdoor Recreation/Creation Care, Ultimate Frisbee, Jazz combo

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "I wanted an outdoor aspect in class, but also something that would be contributing to something meaningful and in my major."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "The lab work has been highly enjoyable, and while it is a challenging course, it is less rigorous than other science courses."



Lucas Vander Bilt



Major: Environmental Studies/ Biology

Hometown: East Grand Rapids, MI

Campus involvement: Rock Climbing

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course?

"The opportunity to get experience in research. I [also] enjoy learning outdoors."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "Learning about how to use all new kinds of equipment."

Ashley Van Wyk

Major: Business Marketing

Hometown: Grand Rapids, MI

Campus involvement: Young Life

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course?

"Rock candy at the FYRES information table during Passport."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "I love being able to leave campus to go out to the beach. The research we do is so much fun and interesting. It was a great way to meet new people."



Matt Williams

Major: Political Sciences

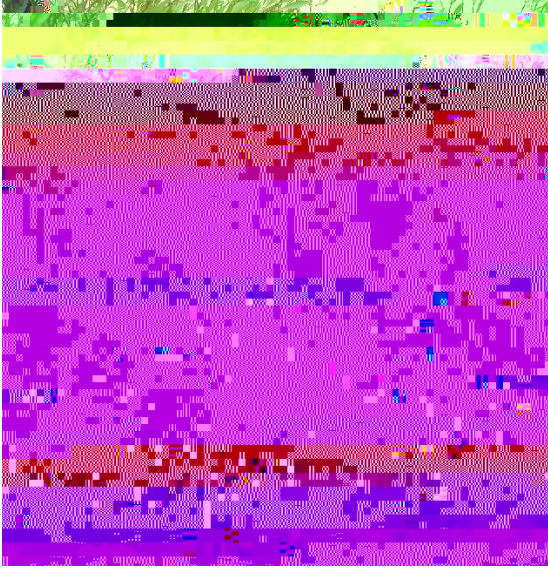
Hometown: Denver, CO

Campus involvement: Intramurals

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "The hands-on learning and being able to be outside while doing research."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far?

Jacob Zondag



Major: (probably) environmental studies

Hometown: Grand Rapids, MI

Campus involvement: Oratorio

What initially attracted you to the FYRES course? "The opportunity to learn more about the dunes on the shoreline that I love, and the opportunity to learn more about real world, hands-on research."

What is a highlight from your time in Geography 181 thus far? "One of my favorite things so far has been seeing the view that is unique to each day. Every time we go, the weather conditions are different and the sky is painted with different colors.

It is a beautiful, awe-inspiring atmosphere in which to research and explore."