

2025  
**TRIP GUIDE**



# LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

A 30-day leadership adventure course for 11th and 12th graders



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## GRADES

11th - 12th\*

## TUITION

\$7,195

## DATES

6/24 - 7/23

- **For the 2024-2025 school year**
- **\*Students who have completed a gap year or one year of university** are also welcome to apply (max age is 19).
- **Included in tuition:** Food, lodging, and airport pick-up and drop-off; group and technical equipment; guided activities.
- **Not included in tuition:** Program and travel insurance; personal clothing and items; transportation to and from the arrival and departure airports





Take your love of outdoor adventure to the next level with our 30-day Leadership Summit course! Perfect for teens who want to strengthen their outdoor, interpersonal, and leadership skills, this capstone experience offers mastery in backpacking, mountaineering, and wilderness medicine certification.

Transition from student to leader, learning to plan and execute future outdoor trips or pursue a career in the outdoor industry.

Dive deep into outdoor leadership, group facilitation, wilderness ethics, environmental education, and team-building. Graduates of the Leadership Summit also have the opportunity to apply for Adventure Treks' internship program. Don't miss this chance to become a powerful leader!



# Who is Adventure Treks?

We believe in creating remarkable, life-changing experiences for teenagers. Since 1993, we've guided thousands of students through spectacular outdoor adventures across North America and the world. Our multi-week camps go beyond experiencing awe in the outdoors: While students explore some of the world's breathtaking landscapes, they're also developing confidence, leadership, optimism, and resilience—essential character traits that will help them achieve incredible things as they face the world.

**Adventure Treks is where teens break out of their comfort zones to discover their best selves, forge lifelong friendships, and grow into capable young adults in a supportive, technology-free environment.**

Our program is defined by an unmatched commitment to safety, communities that have resulted in consistently high return rates, and a focus on transformative personal growth. With the industry's best student-to-instructor ratio and qualified, caring staff leading the way, we foster an environment where everyone feels valued and inspired.

“Simply put, AT was one of—if not the—most formative experiences of my life. I wouldn't be the person I am today without the lessons I learned on those trips, and I'm still friends with folks I met 20 years ago.”

Brad Elkins, student from 2002-2006, currently a political consultant





To maintain physical and emotional safety as our top priority



To offer fun and exciting outdoor activities that help teens gain valuable life skills and a greater sense of self



To take a sincere interest in the growth and development of young people



To empower students to create an inclusive and reflective community that maintains a culture of kindness, sense of humor, and spirit of cooperation and volunteerism



To inspire young people to develop a lifelong love of the outdoors and conservation ethic



To be a sustainable and responsive business, with a focus on our families and the quality of our programs



We have one of, if not THE, **highest student and staff return rates** in the industry!

Academic  
credit through  
WCU

More  
experienced,  
mature  
instructors

All-inclusive  
tuition

At Adventure Treks, you can expect:

- The opportunity to earn 8 academic credit hours through Western Carolina University;
- The highest student and instructor return rates in the industry (consistently between 50–85%);
- More experienced and qualified instructors with a broad range and depth of knowledge, skills, personality dynamics, and experience;
- All-inclusive tuition;
- And a hands-on director team!

# LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2025 >> AT vs other programs

It's important to know the specifics of the program you're choosing. While every program operates a little differently, Adventure Treks' model is truly unique. We accommodate larger groups (up to 24 students), hire more instructors for each group with our 4:1 ratio, and have the highest retention with student and staff.\*

We recruit more qualified instructors with higher certifications and pay them a better wage than our competitors, ensuring that we're attracting top talent.

*\*Due to the student-led nature of this course, Adventure Treks maintains a 6:1 ratio on Leadership Summit.*

	<b>Adventure Treks</b>	<b>Outward Bound</b>	<b>Moondance Adventures</b>	<b>Wilderness Adventures</b>	<b>Apogee Adventures</b>
Student-to-staff ratio	4:1	6:1	6:1	6-7:1	6:1
Student return rate	Consistently 50 - 60%	*	*	*	*
Staff return rate	Consistently 60 - 85%	*	*	*	*
Group size	Max 20 - 24	12-13	12-13	12-13	12-13
Extra fees and rental gear?	No. All-inclusive	All-inclusive	Must purchase/rent backpack, sleeping bag, & sleeping pad	Must purchase/rent backpack, sleeping bag, & sleeping pad	Must pay for bike rental, backpacks, sleeping bags, showers, & laundry
Director involvement on every trip?	Yes	No	No	No	No
Average staff age	Consistently 26 - 28	*	*	*	*
Minimum medical certification**	Wilderness first responder	Wilderness first responder	Wilderness first aid	Wilderness first responder	CPR, wilderness first aid, lifeguard

*\*Info not publicly available*

*\*\*At minimum, Adventure Treks requires our instructors to be certified as wilderness first responders, which is an intensive 80-hour course that also includes CPR. Other companies only require wilderness first aid (16–20 hours) and CPR.*



## BACKPACK



## RAFT



## MOUNTAINEER



## WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER







<b>Day 1</b>	Arrive in Seattle, WA (SEA), and meet the group	Frontcountry camping
<b>Day 2</b>	Skills clinics and curriculum	Frontcountry camping
<b>Days 3–7</b>	Backpack in North Cascades National Park	Backcountry camping days 3-6
<b>Day 7</b>	Logistics (laundry, shopping, cleaning, organizing) and drive day	Frontcountry camping
<b>Days 8-15</b>	Wilderness first responder course	Frontcountry camping
<b>Day 16</b>	Curriculum and prep day	Frontcountry camping
<b>Days 17-19</b>	Backpack along the Olympic Peninsula	Backcountry camping days 17-18
<b>Day 20</b>	Curriculum and prep day	Frontcountry camping
<b>Days 21-25</b>	Capstone (student-led) backpack in the Goat Rocks Wilderness with a summit of Old Snowy	Backcountry camping days 21-24
<b>Days 26-28</b>	Prep and snow school day, then summit attempt of Mount Adams	Backcountry camping day 27
<b>Day 29</b>	Whitewater raft the White Salmon River	Frontcountry camping
<b>Day 30</b>	Depart from Portland, OR (PDX)	Back home!



**DAY 1**

Fly or drive into Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) and meet Adventure Treks and your new friends! Once everyone has arrived, we'll head to camp for a delicious welcome dinner.

**DAY 2**

Today, we'll begin our skills clinics to refresh our knowledge and learn new skills in camp set-up, tarp shelters, backpack packing, wildlife protocols, backcountry cooking, and more. We'll also begin talking about leadership in the outdoors.

**DAYS  
3-6**

Hike through the North Cascades, with huge glaciers framed by towering Fraser firs, deep turquoise lakes, and cascading rivers. This lush landscape offers multiple opportunities to marvel at its biodiversity—with a little bit of luck, you might even spot a few sun-bathing marmots, mule or black-tailed deer, and mountain goats scrambling up rock faces!

**DAY 7**

Logistics day! Students and instructors will work together to get laundry done, refresh our food supply, and do a thorough van clean-up. Then we'll get ready to dive right into our wilderness first responder course.

**DAYS  
8-9**

Not only is it important for outdoor enthusiasts to have a basic understanding of wilderness medicine, but the wilderness first responder course is also the standard minimum medical certification for outdoor leaders like guides, search and rescue professionals, and educators. (Adventure Treks alumni often go on to become instructor interns after having gained this certification.) It's an extremely beneficial course for anyone who takes extended backcountry trips and wants to pursue emergency medical training. Plus, you can earn 8 hours of college credit!





## DAYS 16-19

After a logistics day, get ready to explore the stunning coastline in Olympic National Park, one of the country's wildest and most beautiful beach hikes. You'll spot bald eagles, otters, sea lions, and seals while hiking with the Pacific Ocean on one side and sheer cliffs on the other. Camp on secluded beaches, surrounded by your best new friends, impressive sea stacks, and starry skies.

## DAYS 20-25

Another prep and curriculum day leads to our capstone backpack, where you'll apply everything you've learned about the outdoors and leadership to a five-day backpack in the Goat Rocks Wilderness, culminating with a summit of Old Snowy Mountain (7,900 feet)! This hike boasts unbeatable views of nearby Mounts Adams, Rainier, and St. Helens. Students will take charge of this expedition, from planning the logistics to the food to the scheduling and navigating. This is a hugely memorable trip that often ends up on college admissions essays.

## DAY 26

Our last logistics day of the trip. We'll pick up fresh food, clean out the vans, organize our gear, and get ready to climb one of the mountains we gazed at on our last backpack: Mount Adams!

## DAYS 27-28

The Pacific Northwest is known for its massive volcanic peaks that lend themselves to beautiful mountaineering opportunities in the summer. On Mount Adams, we'll learn how to use ice axes and crampons during snow school before attempting to summit the 12,281-foot peak.

## DAY 29

The *New York Times* has rated the White Salmon River as #13 among 46 places to visit worldwide. This Wild and Scenic River is federally protected, leaving the water and forestry in pristine condition. Teamwork is required as you bounce down fun, sustained rapids; laughter is guaranteed.

## DAY 30

We promise you this: You won't want to leave! But it's time for our adventure to come to an end. Relive every memory with a celebratory dinner, and exchange contact info with all of your new best friends so you can stay in touch.



Leadership Summit students will have the opportunity to earn up to 8 academic credit hours through Western Carolina University.

**Parks and Recreation Management (PRM) course 254, “Introduction to Outdoor Pursuits” (4 credit hours)**

This is an expedition-style course in a wilderness environment. Expedition skills are taught experientially to enable students to lead others safely using minimum impact techniques that preserve the environment. Modes of travel include backpacking, mountaineering, and rafting. Students will receive the wilderness first responder medical certification. This course is designed to give students the confidence and proficiency in understanding how to lead their peers in any environment, as well as giving them the skills necessary to work in an entry-level job in the outdoor industry. Students will be encouraged to develop their teaching and leadership style and personal philosophy about backcountry ethics.

**PRM course 357, “Wilderness First Responder” (4 credit hours)**

This course trains participants to respond to emergencies in remote settings. The 80-hour curriculum led by SOLO Schools includes standards for urban and extended care situations. Special topics include but are not limited to wound management and infection, realigning fractures and reducing dislocations, improvising splinting techniques, monitoring patients, and long-term management problems. Adult/child cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) with automated external defibrillation (AED) is included in this course.

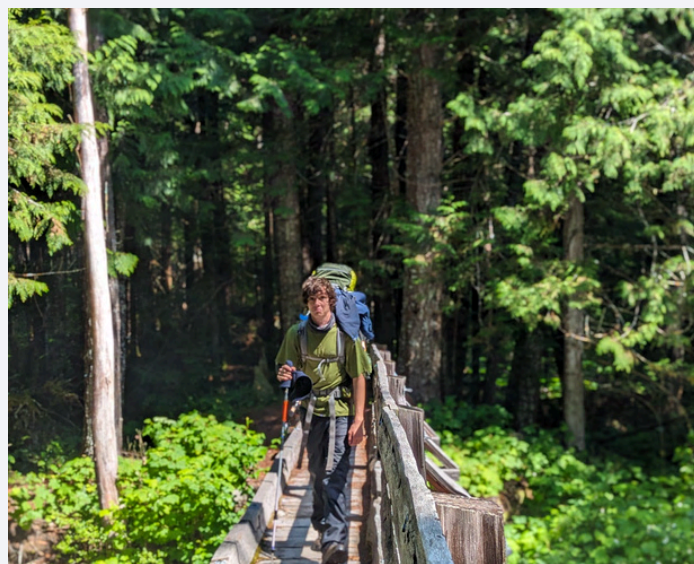
*Adventure Treks will provide instructions for applying for credit to all enrolled students.*



## **FUN, FRIENDSHIP, & A CULTURE OF KINDNESS**

First and foremost, you'll have loads of fun. Our goal is for you to return home having made lifelong friendships, tried and succeeded at new and exciting activities, and had so much fun that you can't wait to do it all over again next summer with your new friends. We want you to laugh a lot, be yourself, and feel appreciated for who you are. We create a strong culture of kindness and sense of belonging to a community in which everyone feels valued, included, and supported. You'll feel like you've gained a second family.

We get that you're trusting us with their summer, and we're going to help make it your **BEST SUMMER YET**. In fact, our students have such a great time that most of them return to us for multiple summers. You'll also come home with the confidence that you can do **ANYTHING** you put your mind to.



## **ON LEADERSHIP SUMMIT, EXPERIENCE IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

While our instructors are excited to teach new skills, we highly recommend that any new students applying to Leadership Summit have previous experience with multi-day, backcountry activities like backpacking. This is a physically and mentally challenging trip, and it's best if students arrive already equipped with some outdoor skills.

## **LARGER GROUPS**

Most programs cap their student groups at 12 or 13; the Leadership Summit trip will have a max of 18-24 students. There are lots of benefits:

- More students from a wider variety of backgrounds to befriend.
- The opportunity to spend time in the big group and in different smaller groups on the trip. In smaller groups, students get more personal time with each other and instructors and create strong bonds. In the large group we can all have fun together!
- Social dynamics are easier to manage. With a larger group, instructors can fluidly manage groupings to make sure everyone has an incredible experience and prevent exclusive cliques from forming.



## **21st CENTURY SKILLS**

Adding to a fun summer, we strive for our Great 8 Outcomes to be learned through new adventures, immersion in nature, and face-to-face interactions with peers and caring role models. Our model of using close-knit communities and exciting, appropriately challenging outdoor activities makes Adventure Treks the perfect place to improve the interpersonal skills young adults need to thrive in the 21st century.

## **SAFETY**

Risk management is at the core of everything we do. Adolescents need reasonable risk as part of their normal growth and development, but from the moment your children leave home until they return to you, minimizing this risk is our foremost priority. As we consider ourselves partners in the parenting process, we make every decision as if you were looking over our shoulders, and we have extremely thorough policies and protocols for each activity. By teaching students about judgment, probability, and consequences, we build a safety-conscious mindset that helps them learn how to make good decisions and take intelligent risks—habits that will apply to the rest of their lives.

## **EXPEDITION MENTALITY**

Strong, inclusive communities develop quickly when there is a sense of mutual respect and trust among all members. Students quickly grow to understand that a good community includes both physical and emotional safety, and they'll discover how one's actions can impact the group. We encourage teenagers to have fun, challenge themselves, try new things, pitch in on group tasks, and maintain a positive mental attitude no matter the circumstances. This is a core tenet of the Adventure Treks experience.



Adding to an insanely fun summer, we strive for our **Great 8 Outcomes** to be learned through adventure, immersion in an outdoor environment, and interaction with great role models—allowing students to improve non-cognitive, interpersonal skills needed to thrive in the 21st century.

- 1 Communication:** Few ideas are the product of a single mind, and being able to effectively communicate in a constantly changing world is a much-appreciated skill. Teammates need to be able to share ideas and build trust, empathy, and understanding.
- 2 Collaboration and social achievement:** The ability to work well with others is vital—even when your team is not of your choosing. Creating and maintaining fun, substantive social connections is a hallmark of success.
- 3 Creativity:** The ability to generate multiple ideas and think out of the box is engendered by a supportive and free-thinking community.
- 4 Critical thinking:** The world's problems don't have simple answers. These challenges require the ability to critically analyze a situation and formulate potential solutions that are not often obvious.
- 5 Leadership:** We solve problems in groups, which need leaders with heart that bring out the best in its members.
- 6 Self-management:** Lasting success requires the ability to postpone short-term gratification or personal needs in pursuit of important long-term goals.
- 7 Resilience:** Everyone encounters challenges and failures. Those who rebound from failure and see problems as opportunities will succeed when others give up.
- 8 Optimism:** An optimist believes that problems are temporary and that they has the ability through effort and persuasion to effect positive change.

## MEALS AT ADVENTURE TREKS

Students are always impressed by the food! Instructors will ensure there is plenty of food and plan balanced meals, and we eat family-style, sitting in circles so no one is excluded. There are always second portions (and usually thirds) available; meals include a good balance of protein and carbs; and we eat fresh fruits and vegetables often.

While instructors will have done most of the meal-planning and shopping before students arrive, trip meals are mostly executed by the students (with supervision). Beginning with a French toast breakfast on the second day, instructors will teach students about backcountry cooking and stove and knife safety. Then students will break into smaller groups to cook for each other to ensure that everyone is involved from start to finish.

*We can easily accommodate vegetarians and many food allergies, including peanuts, tree nuts, soy, dairy, sesame, and gluten. And we always have a wide variety of snacks available throughout the day. Adventure Treks may choose to operate a trip free of a particular food (e.g., peanuts) due to allergies.*

## CAMPING IN TENTS

We'll camp in different places throughout our trip. About two-thirds of our nights are frontcountry camping (developed campsites with amenities like running water and toilets) at a public or private campground. The other one-third will be spent backcountry camping in wilderness locations where we are most likely out of cell phone service and away from our vehicles, electricity, and other amenities. Multi-day activities like backpacking take place in the backcountry.



The PNW has some of the most stunning campsites anywhere in North America!

Adventure Treks was the most significant life experience of my adolescence. AT introduced me to a community of individuals who would go on to be friends and mentors for years to come. My love for the outdoors was born out of summers with AT, and so many choices I've made from where I've lived to what jobs I've taken... My path to a career in medicine was heavily influenced by AT experiences as an instructor. I simply can't imagine who I would be if I didn't spend summers with AT.

Lauren Liebling, student from 2004-2006, currently a physician assistant



## GEAR

Adventure Treks provides all outdoor gear, including a backpacking backpack, sleeping bag and pad, tent, cooking gear, and all activity-specific technical gear (like climbing shoes and helmets and rafting gear). Students will bring a daypack and duffel bag; clothing, footwear, and toiletries; and a few personal pieces of outdoor gear.

Before opening day, students will pack all of their items in a daypack and duffel bag; the daypack can be a school backpack and will act as carry-on luggage, and students will use this often throughout the trip. The duffel will be checked luggage and will act as a “closet” while on the trip: They are stored and locked in the U-Haul trailer that we tow, and students will pull whatever items they need for the next activity out of their duffels and pack them in their backpacking packs or daypacks.

## TECH-FREE EXPLORATION

Our students have an unbelievable amount of fun—all without their cell phones. We unplug from technology so that we can connect with our natural surroundings and each other and build strong, inclusive, and kind communities. Upon arrival to Adventure Treks, students will call home and then turn their phone off to be stored throughout the trip (minus a few designated calls home—more info on page 19). No time for Snapchat or TikTok at Adventure Treks, and best of all, students will quickly realize they don't even miss their phones.

Students are encouraged to bring a camera or GoPro for taking photos and videos!





## GETTING TO ADVENTURE TREKS

Students will meet us at **Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA)** on day one, and depart from Portland International Airport (PDX) on day 30. Most of our students choose to fly by themselves as they see this as a great exercise in independence. Our instructors will be at the airport to greet our students as they arrive by plane or car, and our office monitors all flights and is on hand to assist with delays and cancellations. Once your child meets their group, they'll call home to give a safe arrival notification.

While we provide travel guidelines and can help find flights that work, it is the family's responsibility to book travel. We will happily help coordinate travel for students traveling to and from the same home airports. For all students flying to Adventure Treks, we recommend purchasing refundable airfare and/or travel insurance.

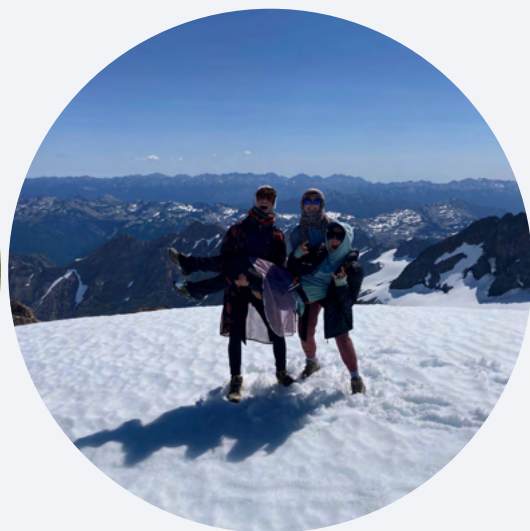
### ***If flying***

- Arrive SEA between 9 am and 12:30 pm
- Depart PDX between 6 am and 11 am

### ***If driving***

- A director will be in touch beforehand to confirm a time and meeting location.





## COMMUNICATION DURING THE TRIP

Instructors will take photos and videos throughout the trip, which the office will provide to families. Because of the wilderness nature of our trips, there are limitations regarding the frequency of updates and the number and size of photos sent to the office. During multi-day backcountry activities, trip updates will not be available until the group comes back into cell service. Our goal is to provide at least one update per week on each trip.

Written updates will be emailed to families. Photos and videos will be uploaded directly to an online album, and we'll send your child's specific album link about a week before your child's trip starts.

Additionally, you can expect one or two brief phone calls from your child during the trip.

The summer office hours are 8–6, but someone is always on call for after-hours emergencies. We'll provide an emergency contact number parents can use for urgent or time-sensitive situations, such as canceled flights or family emergencies. If your child's trip begins or ends on a weekend, the office is open and happy to assist with travel.

“AT dramatically boosted my ability to adapt to new situations and go with the flow. It was also a great social environment, and I'm thrilled whenever I run into someone I know from AT (which last happened in January 2024). It was great to spend summer with other people excited to try out new things, have fun, and be silly. Most concretely, AT made me a lifelong lover of the outdoors and taught me the skills I needed to enjoy it fully.”

Grant Clovin, student from 2009–2011, currently a lawyer

## **Weather**

While it will likely be warm and sunny most of the trip, we may experience drizzle and fog on the Olympic Peninsula, chilly temperatures on Mount Adams, or even snow in the Goat Rocks. Students should be prepared to drink lots of water to stay hydrated and always wear sunscreen.



“My experience with AT gave me a love of the outdoors and being in nature. It helped me build resilience and trust in my own body and my ability to push through challenges and setbacks. It gave me a sense of belonging and community with my fellow AT friends, as well as several very close friendships that made me feel seen and loved. I still feel like it was one of my most formative, treasured experiences of my teen years.”

Zoe Fishman Sitrin, student from 2004-2007, currently in product marketing

## **Did you know?**

- Olympic National Park is home to the bright yellow banana slug, which can reach 10 inches in length.
- There are more than 300 glaciers in North Cascades National Park—even more than Glacier National Park!
- This is also why the park’s lakes are so blue—they’re filled with glacial runoff.
- Washington is the nation’s largest apple producer.
- Peaks in the Goat Rocks are all remnants of extinct volcanoes, and the valleys were carved by ice-age glaciers; you can still see evidence of lava flows today.





# Ready to enroll? It's easy!

1

Complete our [online application](#) and submit a deposit to secure a space.

2

Submit admissions forms, including parent questionnaire, student questionnaire, health history, and character reference.\*

*A \$1,000 deposit must accompany the application to secure your child's spot, which will be applied toward the full cost of tuition. In the event a student is not accepted to Adventure Treks, the deposit is fully refunded. Please visit [adventuretreks.com/terms-conditions](http://adventuretreks.com/terms-conditions) for more information regarding our cancellation and refund process, payment options, trip insurance, and more.*

*\*New students will attend an interview to ensure a mutually good fit for Leadership Summit.*