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First Year Trips set the tone for my time at Dartmouth. I honestly believe that my Dartmouth experience would be radically different without Trips. It's a time of inclusivity, friendship, and general craziness. All the excitement and anticipation that builds up during the summer before coming to Dartmouth combined with the fun of Trips makes for the most amazing five days of your life.

- Pen Vineyard '11, Austin, Texas

The entire summer leading up to my first term at Dartmouth, I worried that I may have made the wrong decision. I hadn't been able to go to Dimensions, and was worried that I wasn't going to fit in at school the next year. However, DOC Trips changed all that - I knew immediately, from the incredible outpouring of energy and welcoming, that I was at the right place. I made friends immediately on a trip that allowed me to explore the Dartmouth community, getting acquainted with both its incredible natural surroundings and those who are lucky enough to call it home.

- Ethan Weinberg, '12, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey

Before DOC Trips, I had never spent any time in the outdoors. My idea of a hike was a brisk walk through a paved nature preserve, and even that was pushing it. So as you can imagine, I was terrified when I was assigned to Moderate Hiking. But as soon as I arrived on campus in September, I was welcomed by the Trips team, and all of those fears disappeared. I don't want to give too much away, but I will say that I left Hanover Elena Falloon from Munster, Indiana, and I came back to campus as Elena Falloon, proud member of the class of 2011 and die-hard Dartmouth student.

- Elena Falloon '11, Munster, Indiana

When I came into Hanover and saw all of the excitement around Trips, it got me so excited to become a part of it. All of these upperclassmen were putting in a lot of time and effort to make the freshman feel welcome, and it worked. Every other freshman I talked to was just as excited as I was about what was happening around us, and this energy remained throughout the whole Trips experience.

- Jake Routhier '10, New Canaan, Connecticut

DOC Trips marked the first time I truly realized that coming to Dartmouth was a good idea...maybe one of the best ideas. I was probably naïve to think that one week at the beginning of my freshman year could give me an accurate idea of what Dartmouth is all about, but frankly, it did. The degree of energy and enthusiasm that I experienced during Trips was overwhelming in the best of ways, and made me feel genuinely welcome and comfortable in my new home.

- Hamish Tildesley '11, Vancouver, Canada

My DOC trip was the best introduction to Dartmouth I could have asked for. My trip leaders were two fun, well-informed upperclassmen that ALWAYS had free time to answer questions or grab lunch post-trip. My "trippees" were a diverse bunch from all over the country (we still have reunion dinners!). I was not an outdoorsy person at all before I came to Dartmouth, and to be honest, I still don't consider myself one. But forcing kids to become outdoorsy? That's not what DOC trips are about!! It's a time to forget about high school, grab a kayak or paintbrush or a mountain bike, explore the unknown with eight other people, and make some fantastic friends along the way!!

- Allie Miller '10, Sherman Oaks, California

I'll be the first admit, I was scared out of my mind when I read those fateful words "bring only one bag" and deodorant was listed under "optional." I was never the camper or the outdoorsy type, but my freshman DOC trip was truly a magical experience and something I will never forget. Experiencing New Hampshire's wilderness with my smelly future classmates, forced us all to let down our guards and escape our comfort zones. I can't imagine my Dartmouth experience without having my DOC trip as the ultimate introduction to my freshman year experience.

- Rob Avruch '11, Westlake Village, California

Go on a trip. You might meet your best friend. I did. And that possibility is worth doing almost anything. Just do it. Stretch yourself, reach beyond your comfort zone. You won't be sorry.

- Sarah Schewe '12, Eden Prairie, Minnesota