

During the 2006–2007 Christmas break, students and faculty from Montreat's Outdoor Education department traveled to Bolivia as part of their participation in a class known as Wilderness Journey. Students included Chris Austin, Laura Hein, Sarah Schrum, Will Tourtellot, Josh Weathers, Josh Woodward, and Todd Yancey. The trip was led by faculty members Dottie Shuman and Dave Sperry, and recent Montreat graduate John Jordan.



This Wilderness Journey course had three main components: exposure to Bolivian city culture, exposure to Bolivian village life, and a trek through Bolivian mountains. The team visited the cities of La Paz and Cochabamba and then connected with Camp Kewina (just outside of Cochabamba) for their trek and time in rural Bolivia. Jake Wetzel, the founder of the Outdoor Education department, spent many years at Kewina developing a Christian camping ministry. After spending time at Camp Kewina, the group trekked at high altitudes—often over 14,000 feet—and experienced challenges designed to push the students to deeper levels of understanding in the areas of stewardship, leadership, community, and discipleship.



Two of the group's most significant experiences took place in the village of Candelaria, where Camp Kewina is located. They were able to visit a local orphanage, as well as spend a full day with a Bolivian family and experience life as Bolivian villagers do on a daily basis. Another significant activity was helping with Kewina's annual Christmas Party, through which approximately 400 rural children experienced the love of Jesus while receiving simple gifts and watching a Christmas presentation.

