

CLIMBE: Long Name, Simple Idea

Elizabeth Hamilton

How are mere thoughts turned into actions? Just ask Dr. Dottie Shuman: Her idea of getting 8–12 grade students to experience science in nature was turned into the program CLIMBE.

CLIMBE stands for Center for Learning and Investigation in Mountain Backcountry Ecosystems. The idea for CLIMBE was started in 2004, but it wasn't until early 2005 that CLIMBE really took off. As Dr. Shuman said, "It was all God," and she was able to find Burroughs Wellcome Fund, which finances the development of biological sciences. The grant that she applied for was the Student Science Enrichment Program (SSEP), which has three objectives: interest (knowledge), enthusiasm, and orienting environmental science. The three year grant

provides CLIMBE with \$60,000 every summer for the program, which hosts ten students every week.

CLIMBE is operated by Montreat College's Outdoor Education department, and wouldn't be possible without the work of Brackin Kirkland. Brackin is a Montreat College alumnus and former OE major. He worked with Dr. Shuman on the logo for CLIMBE (which is a lizard), and works on the lesson plans for the students that attend the camp during the summer. Brackin also serves as the program director. Another important person on the team is Dr. Brian Joyce, the science coordinator.

Students who attend CLIMBE in the summer go through a competitive process. While the program attendance is free, students have to apply for the program online, and

must have recommendations from their teachers. An interest in environmental science is key, and the students must be gifted, as well. This also means that those who attend the program have to want to pursue a career in environmental science or some other field of science.

Students come for one week, arriving on Sunday. The first three years that Dr. Shuman and her team received the grant, CLIMBE focused on marine life and water quality in area creeks—so students, after arriving, were given a package of information to read about the aquatic subjects. Time would then be spent listening to lectures, and Monday through Friday the students backpacked on trails around Mt. Mitchell, identifying different marine life and checking the quality of the water.

This April, CLIMBE's grant ran out, and the program had to re-apply. The focus for the next three years will be weather and climate, and those who attend the program during the next few summers will experience some interesting things. Students will even get to spend a day at the National Climatic Data Center right here in Asheville. This is a wonderful new program for CLIMBE, which addresses global warming, an important issue in today's society.

Dr. Shuman and her staff hope that in the future they will be able to make the program self-sustaining, and no longer rely on the grant. They are also always looking for students, especially OE majors, to get involved with the program; they need leaders for each week of the summer to guide the students.

Because this program is funded by an organization that is not Christian-based, the staff members of CLIMBE are not allowed to make it Christ-centered. It is, however, a chance for the OE department to build its name and reputation as a representation of Montreat College.

This program started with just an idea and now it has become a reality. Dr. Shuman's biggest thrill truly captures the essence of the program: "I get so excited to see the students learn so much and then leave with a great knowledge of science," she says.

CLIMBE's full name may be long, but it has a simple goal in mind: urging children to follow their dreams, and pursue their passions.

Computer Club to Hold Raffle

Laura Hein

Maybe you have seen the flyers around campus advertising the computer raffle on Wednesday, December 12—or maybe you will notice them now that I have mentioned it. This raffle is hosted by Montreat College's new computer club, which is made up of Computer Information Systems majors who want to gain more experience with computer work. I recently sat down to have a talk with the club president and vice president, Brian Greene and Aaron Hughes, who are both sophomores and members of the baseball team.

The mission of the computer club is to "serve our community by providing computer troubleshooting, repairs, upgrades, and training assistance." Brian and Aaron expounded on this by explaining that the purpose of the club is to help CIS majors gain practical experience and be available to assist students with problems. They are not trying to

replace the technology department, but work with our existing technology department to gain experience in their major. They are helping Montreat College as well as the community, and run their club based on donations; no service fees are required for anyone. This is a great opportunity for CIS majors to expand their knowledge and for community members to receive good computer service.

The upcoming raffle is the kickoff for the club, and they

are custom building a desktop computer valued around \$2,500. Tickets are available in the bookstore and around the community for only \$10. Once all the parts are collected, the computer can be built by the club in just two days. There is no limit to the number of tickets purchased, which makes this a good deal and a great way to support our college students' professional endeavors.

For more information about the raffle, find a flyer or a club member, or contact faculty advisor

Dr. Jeff Teo. The e-mail address for service information is cismontreat@montreat.edu.



New Courses Approved by English Department

Laura Cook

The Montreat College English department has announced that six new courses will be introduced into the curriculum in the future—pending final approval by Academic Affairs—including three 300-level literature and writing classes, as well as a practicum for

the Communications major. The courses will center on contemporary (1970–present) and Renaissance literature, writing children's novels, and college essay writing. In addition to these offerings and the Communications internship, a 100-level Interdisciplinary Studies course will focus on training students to become Writing Cen-

ter consultants, a class that allows tutors to personalize their course development and curriculum. The department says that once these courses receive final approval, most of them will be phased into the curriculum within the next two academic years.

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