

Journey By Sail

Florida may be the most typical spring break destination, but five IUP students had an unusual experience, spending five days aboard a 41-foot sailboat as part of Journey by Sail, an experiential learning opportunity supported in part by the Cook Honors College Achievement fund.

The goals of the non-credit experience included an immersive exposure to nature and team-building challenges, through learning to hoist sails, navigate, and cook on board. Participants literally "learned the ropes" as they explored the team-building operating and living aboard a sailboat together with a charter captain and trip organizer Ken Sherwood (IUP Professor of English).

Asher Skyles '24 (Physics/Pre-Engineering - Elderton PA) says "I loved being given the ability to do the first hand duties as a crew mate such as steering the vessel, or raising the sails" adding that "the opportunity to experience what it is like to be a true sailor at sea for a week was a unique opportunity . . . [one] I will remember for the rest of my life."

Other highlights of the trip included landing at Desoto National Memorial which marks the "1539 expedition of the Spanish Conquistador Hernando de Soto and his impact on the American Indian societies of the Southeast" and exploring the Anclote Key Preserve and Shell Key. Sea birds were a major attraction, and over two -dozen were identified by Isabel Allerheiligen '26 (Pre-medical Biology - State College, PA), whom the group came to identify as the unofficial naturalist; Izzy was especially keen to add the American Oystercatcher to her life-list of identified birds.

James Saylor '25 (Computer Science/Cybersecurity - State College, PA), who had never previously been on a sailboat, enjoyed learning to sail and kayaking. Another sailing novice, Angel Flores '24 (Economics - New Oxford, PA) tried his hand at salt water fishing though the crew ultimately did not get to enjoy a fresh contribution to the serf and turf dinner! Ben Swanson '24 (Economics, Ford City, PA) was one of two students who came to the trip with some sailing experience. Swanson began learning to sail with the IUP Sailing Club and is now president. One of his trip highlights was learning to steer the boat for this trip, a 41-foot Morgan Ketch with two masts and three sails – much more complex than the dinghies he learned on at Yellow Creek.

On night anchor watch, rotating pairs of students made sure the boat was safe and enjoyed observing constellations and watching a sunrise. We had dolphins chase the boat and cavort in our wake, as well as visiting us at anchor during sunset and after, their exhalations signaling their presence even in the dark.

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When five IUP students landed to Florida for Spring Break 2023, they ~~may be the most typical spring break destination, but~~ didn't head straight for the beach but instead for the Dunedin Marina, ~~five IUP students had an unusual experience, spending~~ where they boarded ~~five days aboard~~ a 41-foot sailboat ~~as part of~~ to begin their "Journey by Sail," an experiential learning opportunity supported in part by the Cook Honors College Achievement fund.

The goals of the non-credit-experience were nautical and social. The journey involved personal and team-building challenges – working with peers to operate the boat (hoisting sails, navigating, keeping a watch schedule, and cooking on board) – and ~~included an~~ immersion in the maritime history and ecology ~~of the Florida Gulf Coast. immersive exposure to nature and team-building challenges, through learning to hoist sails, navigate, and cook on board.~~ Participants literally "learned the ropes" as they ~~explored the team-building operating and lived aboard the SV Wind Star. living aboard a sailboat together with a charter captain and trip organizer Ken Sherwood (IUP Professor of English).~~

- Asher Skyles '24 (Physics/Pre-Engineering - Elderton PA) says, "I loved being given the ability to do the first hand duties as a crew ~~mate~~ such as steering the vessel, or raising the sails" adding that ~~"the opportunity to experience~~ experiencing what it is like to be a true sailor at sea for a week was a unique opportunity . . . [~~onethat~~] I will remember for the rest of my life."

~~Other highlights of the trip included~~ One afternoon, the sailors launched kayaks to ~~landing at~~ go ashore at the Desoto National Memorial which marks the "1539 expedition of the Spanish Conquistador Hernando de Soto and his impact on the American Indian societies of the Southeast." ~~and~~ Exploring the Anclote Key Preserve and Shell Key, the students found ~~sea~~ birds were a major attraction. ~~and~~ Over two-dozen birds were identified by Isabel Allerheiligen '26 (Pre-medical Biology - State College, PA), whom the group came to identify as the unofficial naturalist; Izzy was especially keen to add the American Oystercatcher to her life-list ~~of identified birds.~~

On night anchor watch, rotating pairs of students made sure the boat was safe and enjoyed observing constellations and watching a sunrise. Dolphins chased the boat and cavorted in its wake, as well as visiting at anchor during sunset and after, the sound of blows signaling their presence even in the dark. Students also saw evidence of a Red Tide bloom (*karenia brevis*), discovering a sea turtle carcass which they reported to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

While he had never before been on a sailboat, James Saylor '25 (Computer Science/Cybersecurity - State College, PA), ~~who had never previously been on a sailboat,~~ enjoyed learning to sail and kayaking. Another sailing novice, Angel Flores '24 (Economics - New Oxford, PA Gettysburg) ~~tried his hand at salt water fishing though the crew ultimately did not get to enjoy a fresh contribution to the~~ worked diligently to provide his crewmates the ~~surf~~ "surf" component for a surf and turf dinner!. Ben Swanson '24 (Economics, Ford City, PA) ~~was~~ One of two students who came to the trip with ~~some~~ prior sailing experience, Ben Swanson '24 (Economics, Kittanning) ~~Swanson~~ began learning to sail with the IUP Sailing Club as a first year student and is now club president. One of his trip highlights was learning to steer ~~the boat for this trip~~ a cruising ; a 41-foot Morgan Ketch ketch with two masts and three sails – a ~~much~~ more complex ~~the boat than~~ the dinghies he ~~learned on~~ sails at Yellow Creek.

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When five IUP honors students landed in Florida for Spring Break 2023, they didn't head straight for the beach but instead for aiming for the Dunedin Marina instead of the beach, where they boarded a 41-foot sailboat to begin their "Journey By Sail," an experiential learning opportunity supported in part by the Cook Honors College Achievement fund.

Participants literally "learning the ropes" as they lived aboard the SV *Wind Star* were Isabel Allerheilgen '26 (Pre-medical Biology - State College), Angel Flores '24 (Economics - Gettysburg), James Saylor '25 (Computer Science/Cybersecurity - State College), Asher Skyles '24 (Physics/Pre-Engineering - Elderton), and Ben Swanson '24 (Economics, Kittanning).

The trip was organized by Dr. Kenneth Sherwood (English Professor), who regularly teaches in the honors college and also advises the IUP Sailing Club.

The goals of the non-credit experience were nautical and social. The journey involved personal and team-building challenges – working with peers to operate the boat (hoisting sails, navigating, keeping a watch schedule, and cooking on board) – and immersion in the maritime history and ecology of the Florida Gulf Coast.

Skyles says, "I loved being given the ability to do the first hand duties as a crew such as steering the vessel, or raising the sails" adding that "experiencing what it is like to be a true sailor at sea for a week was a unique opportunity . . . [that] I will remember for the rest of my life."

Sherwood reminds everyone in the IUP community that while a sailing adventure in Florida may be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, the Sailing Club teaches new members to sail every Sunday, weather permitting, during Spring and Fall semesters at nearby Yellow Creek State Park. Club information can be found at <https://iblog.iup.edu/iupsailing/> as well as Facebook, Instagram, and Crimson Connect. The goals of the non-credit experience were nautical and social. The journey involved personal and team-building challenges – working with peers to operate the boat (hoisting sails, navigating, keeping a watch schedule, and cooking on board) – and immersion in the maritime history and ecology of the Florida Gulf Coast.

Participants literally "learned the ropes" as they lived aboard the SV *Wind Star*, captained by retired teacher and charter operator Harry Matheus. Asher Skyles '24 (Physics/Pre-Engineering - Elderton)

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Google Photo Folder Link (for any downloads): <https://photos.app.goo.gl/VYt9D4dDDrNKY3Mn8>