



## Mount Lemmon Challenge



Hiking up the Mount Lemmon trail in the Gold Canyon Area.

Not long ago, Sycamore Canyon Academy's Conservation and Transition Phase students participated in the Mount Lemmon Challenge. Canyon State Academy student athletes also participated in these events. This Challenge was created so that student athletes from Canyon State Academy and Sycamore Canyon Academy could come together as one team,

strive towards their goals and work collectively to achieve them.

The first day of the event included seven different challenges: Monsoon River, The Other Side, The 20 Steps of Doom, Spider's Web, Ants on a Log, Traverse, and the Human Knot. One of the most challenging events was the Monsoon River. In this specific challenge it was essential that students work together cohesively as a team.

Teams were tasked with designing a cantilever bridge above the Monsoon River in order to make it across without touching the water. This event was even more challenging as they were allowed only two wooden planks and a 12 foot rope. With that being said, they used the wooden planks to stand on one side of the bridge and their weight to support the bridge. The rope acted as a balancing tool as each student athlete took his turn crossing over the bridge. Their teamwork paid off and they successfully completed this task!

After finishing the seven challenges that first day, they went back to the site, set up tents and built a bonfire so they could camp outside that evening.

Everyone woke up well refreshed after a good night's sleep, and ready to tackle the new challenges of the day. The first challenge was a seven mile hike up to Rice Peak and seven miles back down. Some of the great things about this challenge specifically were the exercise, working together as a team, and pushing themselves through to the end. Following this challenge they cooked hamburgers outside, ate chips, popcorn, watermelon and S'mores. By far their most enjoyable and entertaining part of the day was the water fight and getting Program Director Shipman, Shift Supervisor Honeycutt and Group Leader Yslava wet!

As stated by Student Athlete Angel Cruz, "Something that my teammates and I experienced from this challenge was that there was no way we could have done this by ourselves, we really needed the support and motivation from each other." The Mount Lemmon Challenge was an outstanding experience for all!



Student athletes perform the Traverse Challenge overlooking the San Pedro River Valley

*Contributing Writer Student Athlete Angel Cruz*

## First Canines Graduate Program

Moo and Mel, one-year old Mastiff / Pit mix brothers, were found as strays wandering in Patagonia. They were scheduled to be euthanized in early February, but were rescued by FAIR, the Foundation For Animals In Risk.

FAIR is a non-profit animal rescue organization committed to rescuing animals, finding them permanent homes and educating the community about responsible pet ownership through volunteer programs.

An innovative partnership developed between Sycamore Canyon Academy and FAIR, which created a dog-training program that would develop skills for student athletes to carry into their human relationships and for rescued dogs to carry into their adoptive homes.

Two volunteer trainers, Jay Smith and Julie Hall, taught a 10-hour class in dog care, and positive, reward-based training methods. Students who were interested in becoming trainers took a written test, submitted applications, and interviewed for student trainer positions. Four students were selected.

On March 4, 2010 the first two dogs, Moo and Mel, arrived on campus and a six-week training session began. The dogs lived in cottages with the students, and the student trainers were responsible for the dogs' every daily need: training, nutrition, grooming, exercise, and affection. The volunteer trainers were on campus for a few hours every day to conduct basic obedience training with the student trainers and dogs.

On April 15, 2010 Moo and Mel successfully graduated their basic obedience training.

According to student athlete Benjamin F, "This experience has been very rewarding for me. It has taught me a lot about patience and caring for animals."



Mel and Moo, shown here with their handlers, recent program graduate Benjamin F. and Student Athlete Alejandro F.

*Contributing Writer Marie Culpepper*

# Grand Canyon Trip



Staff and students pose in front of a breathtaking view at the Grand Canyon

At Sycamore Canyon Academy there are many “norms”, rules that aren’t written down. Some examples are striving for good time management, staying focused, and having a positive attitude. During conversations student athletes remain engaged, maintaining eye contact and good posture. Those who successfully follow the guidelines set forth become “status” students and earn additional responsibilities and privileges. Field trips are one benefit of earning their status, and a trip to the Grand Canyon was a recent reward.

With a six hour drive ahead of them, fourteen students and three staff members loaded up and took off. Many agreed that the road trip was the best part since they were allowed to spend the money they had earned a few weeks prior. For the first time in a while, Hot Cheetos and Dr. Pepper were on the menu! The group stopped for lunch at a little family-owned diner

located on the original Route 66. There they enjoyed hamburgers and French fries.

Their first scenic destination was the Grand Canyon Caverns, which was an awesome experience. They learned about the history and wide array of amazing formations inside them. Their campground was located at the south end of the Caverns’ entrance. It was here where they set up camp, pitched tents and got together for some recreation time and football.

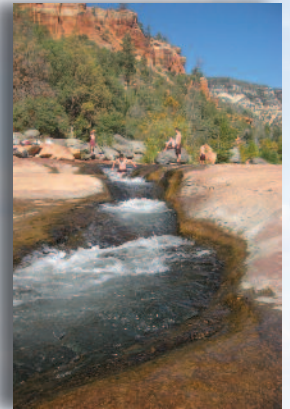
Dinner was an American classic, hot dogs and S’mores. They stayed up late, planned sieges on each others’ tents and put shaving cream in each others’ boots. After tiring themselves out, some chose to fall asleep under the stars. They got to sleep in the next morning and made their breakfast at the campground. After packing up their belongings and cleaning up the site, they were off to their next stop, the Grand Canyon - 100 miles away.

The Grand Canyon was amazing, and at first glimpse, the vast, gaping expanse was awe-inspiring. The group continued along the lookouts for a few miles, stopping to take pictures and examine the beauty of the canyon.

Once they reached the end of the Bright Angel Trail, they decided to split up. Some student athletes returned to camp with Shift Supervisor Honeycutt while others continued along the canyon’s edge, finishing the South Rim Trail with Mr. Petrella and Mr. Shipman. By the

time the second group returned to camp they were exhausted, but much to their surprise, the first group had already prepared dinner. That night they ate well and went to bed early.

Next stop, Slide Rock! Everyone was ecstatic and hurried to jump into the water as soon as they arrived. Most were shocked to find the water was freezing and became a little less enthusiastic about swimming. Regardless, a great time was had by all going down rock slides and jumping into icy water.



Everyone enjoyed going down Slide Rock!

Later, they ate lunch under a ramada, gathered their things, and began their journey back to Sycamore Canyon Academy. The van was quiet on the ride back, while everyone fell asleep dreaming of the great time and memorable experience.

*Contributing Writer Student Athlete W. Carr*

## Interview with Program Director - Ike Shipman



Program Director, Ike Shipman, and Student Athlete Garza enjoy the scenic view.

### THE FIRST OF A TWO-PART SERIES

Student Athlete Daniel Brown decided to speak with Ike Shipman, Program Director at Sycamore Canyon Academy. They met up at his office on a Friday morning. They had a good conversation and this is what Mr. Shipman had to say about the Program and himself.

**Q.** How are you doing today Mr. Shipman?

**A.** Fine, thank you for asking.

**Q.** I would like to start off by asking you some questions about yourself. How long have you been working at Sycamore Canyon Academy?

**A.** I have been working here for about three years.

**Q.** What do you like most about Sycamore Canyon Academy?

**A.** I love everything about being here - the environment, the students and the staff.

**Q.** How long have you been working with youth?

**A.** I have been working with youth about 13 years. I love what I do and wouldn’t want to do anything else.

**Q.** What do you like most about working with youth?

**A.** I like the fact that youth are creative, unique and are their own individuals. I like helping and watching students develop and become young men.

**Q.** What kinds of extra-curricular activities do you and the staff have set up for the students at Sycamore Canyon Academy?

**A.** I love getting students involved based on their own interests by having them experience things they haven’t before. For example, hiking, mountain climbing, horseback riding, and archeological digs.

**Q.** What are the goals for Sycamore Canyon Academy?

**A.** The goal here at Sycamore Canyon Academy is to help the students find the best in themselves.

**Q.** What should the students gain from the experiences here at Sycamore Canyon Academy?

**A.** They should gain confidence, self-respect, respect for others, accountability, leadership and empowerment.

Make sure you don’t miss out on part-two, where we’ll discuss program elements, parental involvement and student issues.

*Interview Conducted by Student Athlete Daniel Brown*