

FYRES Research Mentors 2011-2012

In fall 2011, the five Research Mentors included a geography major, three geology majors, and an environmental geology major.

Chris Maike



Chris Maike is currently a senior Geology major. He has worked within and outside of the department in a variety of positions. He worked last winter with 2011 Geology graduate Adam Koster studying niveo-aeolian processes upon P.J. Hoffmaster State Park dunes. He has also worked the past two years with ASTI Environmental conducting such duties as office work, lead-based paint inspections, and other various fieldwork. Chris is now working on research with Gerry VanKooten involving the chamber filling of ammonites. He is also a FYRES Research Mentor with four fellow upper-level students. Chris hopes

that the FYRES Mentor Program will allow him to reach out to freshman students and share his love for science with them through research. Chris upon graduation in May 2012 plans to attend Calvin's Geology Field Methods course. He also plans to attend graduate school in the fall of 2012.

Ann Parkin

Ann Parkin is currently a junior Environmental Geology major at Calvin College. She has had the privilege of working in the Geology department, as well as the world beyond it. During her sophomore year she worked alongside her fellow Geology majors, Adam Koster and Chris Maike, studying the environments of the coastal dunes on Lake Michigan. During the summer between her sophomore and junior year, Ann worked on a mountain ridge in Kermit, West Virginia. There she organized and directed summer camps for



underprivileged kids who lived on the ridge. She worked in collaboration with three nuns to teach the kids about the environments around them. Presently, Ann is a research mentor for FYRES:Dunes. The experience thus far has shown her what it is like to teach/mentor first-year students. She has thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and is looking forward to the rest of the year in FYRES:Dunes. After graduation, Ann plans to either work in a National Park as an interpreter –teaching Geology, or getting her Master’s degree through the Peace Corps.

Jared Stratz



Jared Stratz is currently a senior Geology major here at Calvin College. He has held many positions within the Geology, Geography and Environmental Studies Department including Lab Assistant, Geology tutor, Seismograph Technician, and Mineral Curator. FYRES: Dunes presents Jared with tremendous opportunities to educate and grow with those students who aspire to know more about science and research. Additionally, Jared is currently the Student Representative for the GEO Department and hopes that his

influence can bring about better relations between students and the faculty members. After graduation in May of 2012, Jared intends to either continue his education in graduate studies—focusing in Mineralogy and Environmental Conservation—or, quite possibly, take a year-long hiatus to join the Americorps in order to assist in their efforts to promote education and preserve our natural world.

Kyle Whalley

Kyle Whalley is a senior Geography major with an environmental emphasis and a Geology minor. Over the past four years, he has worked as the Meteorological Technician at Calvin and conducted a summer research project that studied “The Human Modifications of Ottawa County Dunes”. This project sought to document the characteristics of Ottawa County, Michigan dunes and to compare dune traits based on ownership. Kyle is also currently a FYRES research mentor as he is encouraged to teach and pass down knowledge to incoming Calvin students who possess similar interests in dunes. He is happy to have had a teaching opportunity of this magnitude. Following the end of the academic year and graduation, Kyle plans to attend graduate school for Natural Resources and Management studies.



Vashan Wright



Vashan Wright is a senior Geology major and Business minor. He has worked inside the Geology department as the seismic technician as well as a summer research for the FYRES research mentor program. Vashan is mostly interested in the structural dynamics of the Earth and wants to further his studies at a graduate university for Structural Geology, Seismology or Geophysics. Currently, he is one of the five research mentors for the First Year in Earth Sciences: Dunes course. Vashan hopes that this experience

will enhance his research and professional skills and will prove to be of very good use to him when he enters a graduate institution. Outside of academia, Vashan plays on Calvin College’s tennis team and is a resident assistant in one of the dormitories at Calvin College.