



Greetings from White Sulphur Springs! Our new EXSEL class of 2018-2019 has been here exactly one month and we would like to share with you some of the highlights! We are so grateful to the WSS Weekend Warriors who stood in the gap helping serve our guests during the two-week EXSEL initial orientation. This facilitated the ministry team's training and preparation of the new interns for their varied responsibilities during the coming year. The initial orientation included:

- Settling into their new residences
- An overnight spiritual retreat including guided Bible studies, worship, prayer, thanksgiving, a hike to a secluded location for constructive solitude/silence and meditation, and finally an "Agape Feast"
- Reading and guided study of the Gospel according to John (one week, 3 chapters/day) with response questions and group discussions
- A special guided tour of WSS facilities and locations
- Thorough policy review and discussion of the "why" behind those policies
- Introductions to the entire ministry team
- Breakout discussions on relationships, and dinner for the guys at the Marrs' and the gals at the Robyn's.
- FBI and Pennsylvania Department of Human Resources background checks for child care
- A trip to Carlisle Barracks, PA for Department of Defense child care background checks through the Chapel program and a tour of the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (museum) at the Army War College.
- Multimedia and hands-on training in vehicle management/maintenance, horse wrangler duties, chain saw safety & operations, Challenge Course operations, residence care & maintenance, kitchen & food service protocols, hospitality & guest services, child teaching techniques & policies, Medical & First Aid Protocols, Radio Communications, Emergency Operations, Leadership & Professional Courtesy, etc.
- And a special Sunday evening gathering at the Marrs' home with visiting evangelist, historian, author, and speaker Bernie Beall and his wife Linda and one of their sons Daniel, of Great Commission Families [www.gcfamilies.org](http://www.gcfamilies.org)

Our heart's desire and the seminal goal of EXSEL are found in 1 Timothy 1:5, "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." (ESV). As we consider the fundamental purpose of White Sulphur Springs, together we are seeing that all our acts of service become an expression of our love for the Lord Jesus and His work. This context of serving guests, working hard, studying diligently, and living in community becomes tangible substance for moral development and spiritual maturity. One of our first Bible memory verses is John 15:5, "I am the vine and you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." (ESV). We see this truth displayed daily as we serve together here at WSS!

In just this last month, WSS has served 10 contracted groups and individuals representing over 650 guests. Every clean plate, every kind greeting, every saddled horse for scenic trail rides, every behind-the-scenes effort are outward expressions of God's goodness and beauty. They are moments packed with meaning and material for great memories. This is what our EXSEL Discipleship interns make possible every day here at WSS.

**Thank you for partnering with us in prayer for these young men and women who have committed to serving here through EXSEL. We truly appreciate your interest and participation in their lives!**



Ryan Mann   Jonny Arnold   Matthew Page   Luke Hoyman   Zachary Varner  
 Kate Huggins   Sarah Trudeau   Emma Reiss   Luke Bedrosian   Cora Houseworth   Katelyn Norman   Angelica Salazar

You may recognize Angelica and Sarah from previous EXSEL classes. They are 2<sup>nd</sup>-year interns, a new program which draws on the experience and maturity of graduated EXSEL interns who have displayed the leadership and technical ability to help guide and mentor our 1<sup>st</sup>-year interns. We are so thankful they accepted our invitation to join us!

May each of these young men and women be welcomed into a loving and vibrant body of local believers, unified in their reflection of the Glory of God, where they will experience tangible evidence of the love of God in the lives of their fellow Christians and both observe and experience the life-changing power of God as they serve faithfully in the work of God's Kingdom here at WSS.

#### **Some of the interns' Bible memory verses for Fall Semester:**

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 22:37-40 (ESV)

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:8-10 (ESV)

#### **Quotes from our first-semester discipleship text, Experiencing God (Henry and Richard Blackaby and Claude King):**

"A love relationship with God is more important than any other single factor in your life."

"The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through and in a man, who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him."

"When you believe nothing significant can happen through you, you have said more about your belief in God than you have declared about yourself."

"If God has a great task for you, He will expand your character to match that assignment."