



## Ritt Kellogg Memorial Fund Registration

Registration No. 2XZ6-X4R9L

Submitted Jan 9, 2019 1:42am by Bradley Bollag-Miller

### Registration

2018/2019

Ritt Kellogg Memorial Fund

#### **RKMF Expedition Grant** Group Application 2018-2019

This is the group application for a RKMF Expedition Grant. If you have received approval, you may fill out this application as a group. In this application you will be asked to provide important details concerning your expedition.

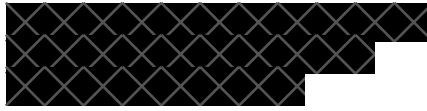
**Waiting  
for  
Approval**

### Participant



#### **Bradley Bollag-Miller**

Colorado College Student



### I. Expedition Summary

#### **Expedition Name**

Let the GA-MEs Begin: Thru-Hiking the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine

#### **Objectives**

Our expedition objective is to do a northbound thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail (AT). This famous and historic hike winds through 14 states on the East Coast and gets its name from the geologic formation that it follows.

Throughout this hike we hope to continue fostering a deep appreciation for the wilderness of the East Coast. While we both love attending college in Colorado, we are both from the East Coast (Zach Benevento-Zahner, Virginia and Bradley Bollag-Miller, Massachusetts) and feel that many of our classmates overlook the amazing opportunities for outdoor expeditions on the East Coast. Bradley has spent time backpacking the White Mountains of Vermont and Zach has backpacked throughout the Shenandoah Mountains. However, these are just a couple natural places in this region and we are excited to spend time hiking through beautiful East Coast nature such as the Great Smokey Mountains, Mount Rogers area, and Baxter State Park.

Finally, this will be the journey of a lifetime where we will grow our wilderness and backcountry skills, and push ourselves mentally and physically.

#### **Location**

From the top of Georgia to the middle of Maine, the AT consists of 2,190.9 miles of terrain that we plan to hike continuously. We will begin at the Southern terminus, Springer Mountain, Georgia and finish at the Northern Terminus, Mount Katahdin, Maine. The hike includes the Great Smokey Mountain National Park, Grayson Highlands State Park, the Shenandoah National Park, Vermont's Long Trail (some call the AT just a side shot of the older Long Trail), Maine's Hundred-Mile Wilderness, and Baxter State Park.

#### **Departure Date**

Mar 23, 2019

#### **Return Date**

Aug 16, 2019

## Days in the Field

147

### Wilderness Character

The Appalachian Trail is one of the most famous thru-hikes in the United States, alongside the Pacific Crest Trail and the Continental Divide Trail (collectively known as the Triple Crown of hiking). It is no surprise that the Trail has gained so much attention, seeing as it is the longest continuous hiking-only footpath in the world. With such an esteemed reputation, many people attempt to thru-hike the AT, but not so many find success due to the physical and mental rigors that being in the outdoors for such an extended period of time pose. In total, a completion of a thru-hike of the AT in elevation is equivalent to summiting Mt. Everest 16 times. While the trail meanders near small towns and resupply points during the hike we will strive to maintain the wilderness aspect in the spirit of the RKMF. We have strategically planned resupply points on or very near the trail so that we do not have to leave the trail to go into towns as much as possible. Furthermore, for the select few times that we do resupply in towns, because the trail actually runs directly through the town, we will work to limit time in town as much as possible. To maintain the wilderness aspect we will make sure to only trail camp and not stay in hostels or motels like many thru-hikers commonly do.

The significant length of the AT will offer us a highly varied wilderness experience throughout our time on the trail. The variation of terrain ranges from barren rocky mountain summits in the Northeast to the dense forests of the Great Smokey Mountains. We will further our education and love for the vast, wild, and majestic nature of the Eastern US from South to North.

## II. Participant Qualifications

### a. Participants' Graduation Date

Bradley Bollag-Miller (Baccalaureate May 15, 2021 and Commencement May 16, 2021)

Zachariah Benevento-Zahner (Baccalaureate May 15, 2021 and Commencement May 16, 2021)

### b. Medical Certifications

Zach is WFR certified and it will expire on January 17, 2020.

Bradley is currently enrolled in the Colorado College WFR half-block. Upon completion his WFR will expire in January 2021

### Does your group have adequate experience?

Yes

### d. Training Plan

Fitness Preparation:

We understand that the AT is an extremely long and rigorous challenge. In order to be fully prepared to embark on this journey we will go on 5 miles runs Monday, Wednesday and Friday and do core and upper body workouts (squats, traveling lunges, hip hinging, step-ups with trunk rotation and hip flexion, step back low rows, planks, and pushups as advised by REI Expert Thru-hiker Training guide) at least 4 times a week. In addition, before our thru-hike we will go on at least 2 long-distance hikes of at least 2 nights and 30 miles with packs containing the equivalent weight to the ones that we will be wearing on the trail. Furthermore, we both ski and because it will be winter until our date of departure we will stay active through that form of exercise as well.

Gear Inspection:

During the previously mentioned training hikes we will backpack with all of our gear to ensure we are not bringing too little or too much. We want to make sure that we are comfortable using all of the gear that we bring, so practicing beforehand is essential to being prepared for when we actually set foot on the AT.

Trail Marker and Navigation:

We have both grown up walking by the white blazes that make the Appalachian Trail one of the best marked thru-hikes according to the numerous blogs and experienced thru-hikers we have gathered information from. However, to further ensure we are prepared for the markings and signage of the trail we have been and will continue to familiarize ourselves with our copy of the *Appalachian Trail Thru-Hikers' Companion*, which provides elevation maps, detailed mileage tables denoting even the smallest landmark (ex: powerline crossing the trail, etc.), active/detailed descriptions from a thru-hikers perspective of all services (ex: water sources, mail drop locations, medical facilities, etc.) provided on or near the trail, and detailed maps of resupply locations.

#### Thru-Hiker Registration:

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) offers a voluntary online registration service for people thru-hiking the AT. Before we begin our expedition we will sign into this to ensure an added level of safety by having a formal recognition that we have started the trail. This will also be accompanied by signing on-trail registrations and other permitting forms which will provide yet another form of formal check-in that can be used to locate us in case of an emergency.

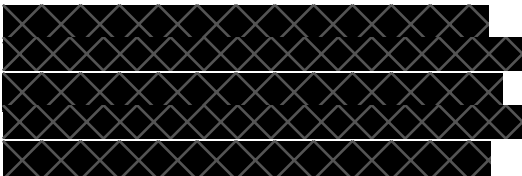
### III. Expedition Logistics, Gear and Food

#### e. Travel Plan

We will both fly from our respective homes on March 23, Bradley from Boston, Massachusetts (Logan Airport) and Zach from Washington, DC (Dulles International Airport) into Atlanta, Georgia (Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport). Once in Atlanta we will take Richard Anderson's shuttle from Atlanta International Airport to the trailhead at Springer Mountain.

Upon completion of the trail on August 16th, Bradley's family will meet us at Katahdin Mountain and drive us back to Boston. Bradley will drive Zach to Logan Airport, where he will then then fly back to Washington, D.C. from Logan Airport on the 17th of August.

#### e. Expedition Itinerary



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Re-rationing/Resupplying is critical to the success of any major thru-hike and the AT is no exception. From the numerous guide books we have read and previous thru-hikers we have talked with the more often we resupply the easier high mileage days are due to the nature of hiking with less weight. Extremely fast thru-hikes of the AT (sub 50 days) have only be done with extremely frequent resupplies. Although we plan to hike efficiently, we do want to enjoy the expedition. We plan to resupply about every 100 miles. The chart below details each stop where we will be either picking up a package or buying supplies for the next segment of the trail. Because many post offices and lodges will only hold boxes for a maximum of a few weeks, we will send resupply packages to places further along the trail from the trail. Towns to where packages will be sent are indicated by an \*. Towns from where packages will be sent to resupply points further down the trail are indicated by a #. Plain text indicates towns where we will resupply only for the next segment. A more detailed resupply sheet is attached depicting resupply stops, miles from the previous stop, days on segment, dates of arrival at resupply stops, information about towns, and important addresses (Bollag and Benevento Resupply).

Resupply Location	Pick Up Previously Sent Package	Address
Springer Mountain, GA (Southren Terminus)	N/A	N/A
*Top of Georgia Hostel & Hiking Ctr, GA	Yes (sent from Zach's home prior to departure)	Hiker Name c/o Top Of Georgia Hostel 7675 US Highway 76 East Hiawassee, GA 30546

		Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (3/27/2019)
*Nantahala Outdoor Center, GA	Yes (sent from Zach's home prior to departure)	Hiker Name c/o Nantahala Outdoor Center 13077 Hwy 19W Bryson City, NC 28713 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (3/31/2019)
Gatlinburg, TN	No	N/A
#Hot Springs, NC	No	N/A
*Greasy Creek Friendly, NC	Yes	Hiker Name c/o Greasy Creek Friendly 1827 Greasy Creek Road Bakerville, NC 28705 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (4/18/2019)
#Damascus, VA	No	N/A
*St. Lukes Hostel, VA	Yes	Hiker Name c/o St. Luke's Hostel 1404 Banks Ridge Rd Tazewell, VA 24651 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (5/2/2019)
*4 Pines Hostel, VA	Yes	Hiker Name c/o 4 Pines Hostel 6164 Newport Road Catawba, VA 24070 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (5/10/2019)
Buena Vista, VA	No	N/A
#Elkton, VA	No	N/A
*Sweet Springs Country Store, VA	Yes	Hiker Name c/o Sweet Spring Country Store 34357 Charles Town Pike Purcellville, VA 20132 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (5/31/2019)
#Boiling Springs, PA	No	N/A
*Port Clinton, PA	Yes	Hiker Name c/o General Delivery 6 Broad St. Port Clinton, PA 19549-9800 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (6/13/2019)
*High Point State Park, NJ	Yes	Hiker Name c/o High Point State park Headquarters 1480 State Route 23, Sussex, NJ 07461 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (6/20/2019)
#Poughquag, NY	No	N/A
*Tyringham, MA	Yes	Hiker Name c/o General Delivery 118 MAIN RD TYRINGHAM, MA 01264-9998 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (7/4/2019)
*Lodge at Bromley, VT	Yes	Hiker Name c/o Lodge at Bromley

		4216 Vt. 11 Peru, VT 05152 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (7/11/2019)
#Hanover, NH	No	N/A
*Dry River Campground, NH	Yes	Hiker Name c/o Crawford Notch Campground P.O. Box 177 Twin Mountain, NH 03595 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (7/25/2019)
*Oquossoc, ME	Yes	Hiker Name c/o General Delivery 92 Carry Rd Oquossoc, ME 04964 Please hold for Thru-Hiker ETA (8/1/2019)
Monson, ME	No	N/A
Katahdin, ME (Northren terminus)	N/A	N/A

### Food Storage

To prevent wildlife from getting into our food we will bring a 40ft nylon cord and two kevlar bear bags to suspend a bear hang using the counter-balance method. We will also occasionally have access to bear boxes at various shelters/campsites to store our food and other items that might attract wildlife. We will remove all of our food from its original packaging and put it into sealable plastic bags in order to reduce the risk of excessive trash, of which might attract wildlife if not properly disposed of. Our bear hangs will meet the following requirements as suggested by the National Park Service on their website: the rope must be attached to a branch at least 20 feet off the ground, the bag must be suspended at least 12 feet from the ground, and the hang must be 10 feet away from the trunk of the tree. Additionally, there are bear cables at various shelters throughout the trail that we will have access to for suspending our food.

Note: There is a section of the AT in Georgia from Jarrard Gap (mile marker 26.1) to Neel Gap (mile marker 31.1) where thru-hikers are required to use bear canisters if camping within that zone, but we plan to hike through that section without camping. Therefore, we do not need to use bear canisters during our hike.

### g. Food List

[Food \(Nutritional Info\).pdf](#) (60KB)

Uploaded 1/9/2019 1:40am by Bradley Bollag-Miller

### f. Equipment List

[Equipment List-3.pdf](#) (129KB)

Uploaded 1/8/2019 8:39pm by Bradley Bollag-Miller

### b. LNT Principles

Yes

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Yes, both Zach and Bradley are well-versed in the LNT principles. Bradley has experience teaching 13-15 year olds about the LNT principles both in a more formal academic setting and in a practical setting on sections of the AT while working for Camp Becket. Additionally, he continued his learning of LNT during his ALI Backcountry 2 training. Zach gained an in-depth education in LNT principles while attending a three week outdoor leadership course in the Wind Rivers Range of Wyoming. LNT principles are of the utmost importance to us as we are both dedicated to ensuring a healthy natural environment. From our previous experiences hiking short sections of the AT close to our homes we have both seen how well the AT is cared for despite the high number of hikers. During our thru-hike we will maintain

this standard in hopes to preserve this natural space as much as we possibly can. To do so, we have made a thorough plan for our thru-hike: travel and camp on durable surfaces, properly dispose of both waste that we bring and that we create, avoid bringing with us anything that we find along the trail (with the exception of pieces of trash), be extremely intentional with our usage and impact of fire and abide to national and local fire regulations, be cautious and considerate of wildlife that we could or actually do encounter, and respect the other visitors and hikers utilizing the AT.

### Empty

N/A

## IV. Risk Management

### b. Objective Hazards

1. Weather
2. Water
3. Water Contamination
4. Wildlife and Plants
5. Hiking Injuries
6. Remoteness
7. Navigation (getting lost)
8. Criminal Behavior

#### 1. Weather

Over the numerous months we will be spending on the trail we expect to encounter and be prepared for a variety of weather. Due to our start time in March we will experience the first "shoulder" season according to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). The ATC explains that this means cold weather can be present with the occasional chance of snow as we hike into the Smokey Mountains. As evident in our gear list we will be prepared with warm clothing for the occasion of cold temperatures and/or snow. In the event of snow we will be extremely diligent in map reading. Our hiking poles will give us extra traction when hiking through the snow, and if the snow is deep we will kick in steps while crossing exposed trail sections to ensure stability. Furthermore, our northbound course was chosen to limit cold weather dangers. Our Southern start begins as warm weather arrives in Georgia and then we will follow the warm weather as it proceeds North.

As we hike we also expect to encounter rain, thunder, and lightning storms. As detailed in our gear list, proper rain gear will be carried for the duration of the trip. Additionally, we will line our packs with trash bags to ensure that all of its content is safe from rain/snow. Many hikers die from lightning strikes and we do not take the threat of lightning lightly. As we begin each new section of the trail we will check the weather report along with our topographic map to further ensure that we will not be reaching exposed sections of the trail as a lightning storm arrives. Another preventive measure we will take is to begin hiking early each day so that we can arrive at our campsites before potential evening summer lightning storms commence. In the event that we are caught exposed in a lightning storm we will move away from open meadows, lone trees, metal of any sorts, and leave our backpacks and poles to reduce the chances of getting struck. In the event that we cannot exit the exposed area we will seek the lowest place while being aware of areas that may flood. Lastly, much of the Appalachian Trail goes through uniform forest which is one of the safest outdoor places to be during a lightning storm, and as discussed before, we plan to take preventive measures to ensure we are within uniform forests when lightning storms pass us.

Finally, hot temperatures and high humidity leading to heat exhaustion, dehydration and/or sun rash/burn are additional hazards we may face during the hike. Proper sun protection will be brought with us as indicated in the gear list to prevent sun rash/burn. Furthermore, we will both carry ample water and gatorade powder to prevent dehydration. Before we begin each day we will examine our maps to identify where we will refill water throughout the day so that we are not unexpectedly stranded without water. We will regularly check in with each other to make sure we are each hydrating enough. If one of us is showing any sign of heat related sickness and/or dehydration we will be sure to take a break in the shade until that person has returned to normal because our safety takes precedent far and above any milage goal for the day.

#### 2. Water

Other concerns that we expect to encounter as we hike the AT are river, stream, and creek crossings. Before every water crossing we will make sure to choose the safest route across and pay special attention to any powerful currents, rocks, chokepoints, eddies, and strainers. The risk of drowning in even a few feet of water substantially increases if a heavy backpack is stuck on the person. We will always unbuckle our backpacks before we cross to increase our in-water mobility in the event that we fall into water. During crossings we will make sure to stick together to ensure we know if the other has fallen in and provide assistance for the other person's water exit. Zach and Bradley have both worked as lifeguards and have American Red Cross water rescue training in the event that an issue arises.

### 3. Water Contamination

While many of the springs, rivers, streams, and creeks where we will be getting our water from will appear clean from the naked eye, this does not mean that the water is not contaminated with Giardia and other serious water borne diseases. To mitigate the danger disease ridden water poses we will carry and use Sawyer water filters and have Iodine tablets as a backup to treat our water everytime we refill.

### 4. Wildlife and Plants

Bears: According to the ATC Black Bears live along much of the AT especially in the Georgia, Shenandoah, and Great Smokey Mountains National Parks sections. While black bears are less dangerous than grizzly bears found in the parts of Western US and Canada, they still present a considerable danger as we hike. We will take the following preventative measures the ATC recommends so that we do not encounter bears in the first place. We will make noise as we hike by whistling, clapping, and talking to make sure the bear has time to move away and is not startled. We will also prepare and store food properly to ensure that we do not attract bears with our food as seen in the food storage section. If we do encounter bears we will use these strategies as explained by the National Parks

Service <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/bears/safety.htm>

- Identify yourself by talking calmly so the bear knows you are a human and not a prey animal. Remain still; stand your ground but slowly wave your arms. Help the bear recognize you as a human. It may come closer or stand on its hind legs to get a better look or smell. A standing bear is usually curious, not threatening.
- Stay calm and remember that most bears do not want to attack you; they usually just want to be left alone. Bears may bluff their way out of an encounter by charging and then turning away at the last second. Bears may also react defensively by woofing, yawning, salivating, growling, snapping their jaws, and laying their ears back. Continue to talk to the bear in low tones; this will help you stay calmer, and it won't be threatening to the bear. A scream or sudden movement may trigger an attack. Never imitate bear sounds or make a high-pitched squeal.
- Hike and travel in groups. Groups of people are usually noisier and smellier than a single person. Therefore, bears often become aware of groups of people at greater distances, and because of their cumulative size, groups are also intimidating to bears.
- Make yourselves look as large as possible (for example, move to higher ground).
- Do NOT allow the bear access to your food. Getting your food will only encourage the bear and make the problem worse for others.
- Do NOT drop your pack as it can provide protection for your back and prevent a bear from accessing your food.
- If the bear is stationary, move away slowly and sideways; this allows you to keep an eye on the bear and avoid tripping. Moving sideways is also non-threatening to bears. Do NOT run, but if the bear follows, stop and hold your ground. Bears can run as fast as a racehorse both uphill and down. Like dogs, they will chase fleeing animals. Do NOT climb a tree. Black bears can climb trees.
- Leave the area or take a detour. If this is impossible, wait until the bear moves away. Always leave the bear an escape route.
- Be especially cautious if you see a female with cubs; never place yourself between a mother and her cub, and never attempt to approach them. The chances of an attack escalate greatly if she perceives you as a danger to her cubs.

If a bear does attack, the national park service recommends that we never play dead for a black bear. Furthermore, they write that we fight back anyway possible if we are being charged and to focus our punches and kicks towards the face of the bear.

Moose: Although it is unlikely that we will encounter a moose while on the trail due to their small East Coast population. However, if threatened moose can be very dangerous. We will follow the following guidelines from the National Parks Service to prevent and/or safely disengage from a moose encounter <https://www.nps.gov/wrst/planyourvisit/moose-safety.htm>

- When people don't see moose as potentially dangerous, they may approach too closely and put themselves at risk. Give Moose plenty of room! Cow moose are extremely defensive of their young so use extra caution around cows with calves.
- In the summer months, moose blend in well to their environment and can be surprisingly hard to see for such large animals. They are likely to stand their ground even when they hear people approaching, so pay close attention to your surroundings, especially in prime moose habitat such as willow thickets or around streams or ponds.
- If you do find yourself close to a moose
  - If it hasn't detected you yet, keep it that way.
  - If it knows you are there, talk to it softly and move away slowly.
  - Don't be aggressive-you want to convince the moose that you aren't a threat.
  - If you think the moose is going to charge you, take cover or run away.

Watch for signs that the moose is upset

If its ears are laid back and hackles are up it is likely to charge. Most of the time, when a moose charges it is a 'bluff', or warning for you to get back - a warning you should take very seriously! Once a moose bluff charges it is already agitated. If possible, get behind something solid (*like a tree or a car*).

Unlike with bears, it is okay to run from a moose.

They usually won't chase you and if they do, it's unlikely that they'll chase you very far. If a moose knocks you down, curl up in a ball and protect your head with your arms and keep still. Fighting back will only convince the moose that you may still be a threat. Only move once the moose has backed off to a safe distance or it may renew its attack.

Snakes: Most snakes along the AT are not poisonous but in Zach's experience in the Shenandoah Mountains there are Copper Heads which are very dangerous. To prevent unexpected encounters with snakes we will make sure to pay attention in-front of us looking out for branches or other debris that may actually be snakes. We will try our best to avoid exposed rock fields where snakes may be sunbathing. If unavoidable, we will make sure to not put our hands and feet in places that we cannot see.

Ticks: While bears would initially seem like the most dangerous animal on the AT, our biggest concern will be with ticks and the Lyme Disease many of them carry. According to the ATC, Lyme Disease cases have been reported in all fourteen states the trail runs through. Zach is especially familiar with Lymes because both his mom and brother have gotten the disease from tick bites received while on backpacking trips in his home state of Virginia. Thankfully the cases were caught early and were easily dealt with. To avoid ticks the ATC advises that we minimize contact with tall grass, brush and woody shrubs. If contact is unavoidable, we will apply bug spray with deet to repel the bugs and keep our pants tucked into our socks and our shirts into our pants to minimize exposed skin. We will conduct full body (including but not limited to the head, underarms, and groin areas) tick checks daily and promptly remove any ticks using a tick key. Throughout the hike we plan to continually monitor ourselves and each other for any telltale signs of Lymes such as flu-like symptoms of fevers, headaches, chills, and fatigue and/or the characteristic "bulls-eye" skin rash that can appear at the site of tick bites. If any of these signs appear we will get tested as soon as possible and begin taking Lyme medication. Furthermore, on completion of the hike we both plan to get tested for Lyme Disease to make sure we can start treating any unnoticed Lyme before it becomes a serious health issue.

Plants:

Poison Ivy: We will not consume plants that we find on the trail and therefore the only hazardous plant along the trail that we expect to encounter is Poison Ivy. It can cause rashes and irritation if the oil makes contact with our skin. However, we have both grown up in the outdoors of the East Coast and are very familiar with the plant. Our Poison Ivy identification skills will help us prevent the discomfort it can cause.

## 5. Hiking Injuries

Rolled ankles, blisters, and pulled muscles are all injuries that backpacking can cause. Ensuring that we are physically prepared for the hike by following our training plan as outlined in the training section will prevent many rolled ankles and pulled muscles. Furthermore, we will make sure to break in our gear before use to limit the likelihood of blisters



developing while on the trail. While on the trail we will be communicating with each other to ensure that we are not overexerting ourselves in a way that could lead to long term muscle fatigue which would increase the likelihood of hiking injuries. Unfortunately, even with these preventive measures there is still a chance that we will experience small hiking injuries. We are/will both be WFR certified and feel well equipped to monitor and manage any hiking injury. Furthermore, our WFR training has provided us with the appropriate knowledge base to make the call to evacuate if any hiking injury is or becomes serious.

## 6. Remoteness

Solitude and peace of mind are major reasons that many people, including ourselves, are drawn to backpacking. However, this solitude and peace of mind can only be found with a certain level of remoteness and the associated risk that comes with that. In a remote area it takes longer for emergency personnel to respond in the event of an accident. As discussed in our emergency communication section we will be carrying our cellphones and this will allow us to communicate with emergency personnel in the event of an accident. To save more precious time during an emergency event we know the exact ranger station and hospital to contact because we have compiled a list of the nearest ranger stations and hospitals for each section of the trail in the emergency resource availability section. Lastly, we feel confident that our WFR training has prepared us with the skills to stabilize injuries until proper medical assistance can reach us. Cell service is known to be good along the trail but if we do have an emergency in a place with no service we will leave the injured person in a stabilized and easy-to-access location and then the other person will hike to find service/help.

## 7. Navigation (getting lost)

Founded in 1937, the AT is one of the oldest interstate trails in the country. The white blazes that mark the trail are an iconic sight for many backpackers. According to the ATC and our anecdotal personal experience, the trail is well marked and we do not see getting lost as a big possibility. Our plan to stick together and the sheer number of people on the trail limit our risk of getting lost. Finally, to further mitigate the danger of getting lost we plan to read maps carefully (especially at confusing trail junctions), and not blindly rely on other hikers for direction. If we do end up getting lost we will follow WFR protocol by staying where we are, blowing the whistles each of us have built into our packs, and displaying bright colors to help search and rescue teams find us.

## 8. Criminal Behavior

Due to limited police presence on the trail there is always the danger of crime. However, according to the ATC, this danger is often exaggerated; violent crime has occurred on the trail at a rate of less than two incidents every ten years for a path that over 3 million people use each year. While the chances of crime are low we will take a variety of preventive measures recommended by the ATC to mitigate the danger of crime. First, we will stick together and will not post our location in real time to any forms of social media. If we develop trail names and will make sure our families know what they are and we will give them an itinerary of where we plan to be and when. Next, the ATC recommends that we do not camp or stay in shelters within a mile of road crossings and keep our eyes open for suspicious people. Lastly, we will keep our wallets on us at all times making sure to not attract attention by flashing money or any other valuables; we will try to leave as many expensive things at home as possible. Lastly, we have tried to eliminate the need for hitchhiking as much as possible by mailing resupply packages to resupply locations near the trail, but if hitchhiking is unavoidable we will stick together and trust our instincts if a situation feels unsafe.

## Evacuation Plan

As seen below in the emergency resources section we know the location and phone number of the nearest hospitals and ranger stations for each section of the hike. We will begin self-evacuations if an injury occurs that we cannot treat ourselves. If the injury is relatively minor and the individual can walk out under their own weight this will be the best possible solution. We will hike out to the nearest accessible town or road (as done in our 12 day example itinerary, we will note road crossing/evacuation locations for each day as we plan segments between resupplies) and access the nearest health center. Throughout the hike we will always be together and will be able to assist each other if an injury occurs.

In the event of a serious injury where the individual cannot walk out on their own we will call the closest ranger station for assistance. As discussed in the hazard section and later in the emergency communication section we will be carrying our cellphones. There is reported to be good service along the trail. If we do have an emergency in a place with no service we will leave the injured person in a stabilized and easy to access location and then the other person will hike to find service/help. The injured individual will be left with a written copy of their SOAP notes (this includes a

summary of events, observations, patient exam results, vitals, history, assessment, plan, and anticipated problems) and they can give this copy to medical personal if they arrive before the other person returns.

We will both have the proper WFR technical skills to handle a variety of self-evacuation scenarios. Among those technical skills we will know how to manage sprained ankles, temporarily brace broken limbs, stabilize spinal injuries, dress head injuries, clean and prevent infected wounds, solo body roles, write SOAP notes, and complete full patient assessments.

**Special Preparedness**

While neither of us have medical histories that warrant special preparedness, we will constantly check in with each other throughout the hike to ensure that we are both in great physical and mental shape. If something does occur that negatively impacts our health we will be proactive in addressing it and seek help as soon as possible.

**e. Emergency Resources**

Due to the vast distance the AT covers the emergency and rescue resources will vary throughout the trip. One overarching emergency resource that we will utilize during our hike, as previously mentioned, is the ATC's voluntary thru-hiker registration that we will complete before beginning our hike. Additionally, we will sign on-trail registration forms that will provide emergency personal location specific information if needed.

Furthermore, for each segment of the trip, broken down by resupply locations, we have listed the nearest medical and emergency rescue resources. From a variety of blogs and our conversations with previous thru-hikers, cell service (Verizon in particular which we both have) is good along approximately 80% of the trail. This is in large part because the trail winds near numerous towns due to the density of the East Coast. Therefore, we will use cellphone service if we need to contact an emergency or rescue resource. In the event of no service one of us will hike to find service and call the nearest emergency resource.

Resupply place	Nearest Medical Facilities	Park Stations or other Emergency Resources
Springer Mountain, GA (Southren Terminus)	Stephens County Hospital 163 Hospital Rd, Toccoa, GA 30577 +1 706-282-4200	Chattooga River Ranger District. 9975 US-441, Lakemont, GA 30552. +1 706-754-6221
Top of Georgia Hostel & Hiking Ctr, GA	Stephens County Hospital 163 Hospital Rd, Toccoa, GA 30577 +1 706-282-4200	Nantahala Ranger District. 90 Sloan Rd, Franklin, NC 28734 +1 828-524-6441
Nantahala Outdoor Center, GA	Swain Community Hospital 45 Plateau St, Bryson City, NC 28713 +1 828-488-2155	Nantahala Ranger District. 90 Sloan Rd, Franklin, NC 28734 +1 828-524-6442
Gatlinburg, TN	Swain Community Hospital 45 Plateau St, Bryson City, NC 28713 +1 828-488-2155	Sugarlands Little River Ranger Station. Park Headquarters Rd, Gatlinburg, TN 37738. +1 865-436-1200.
Hot Springs, NC	Lakeway Regional Hospital. 726 McFarland St, Morristown, TN 37814. +1 423-522-6000	Big Creek Quarters & Ranger Station. Big Creek Entrance Rd, Waynesville, NC 28785. +1 865-436-1297
Greasy Creek Friendly, NC	Select Specialty Hospital - Tri-Cities. 1 Medical Park Blvd 5 West, Bristol, TN	Watauga Ranger Station Cherokee National Forest 4400 Unicoi Dr, Unicoi, TN 37692. +1 423-735-1500

	37620 +1 423-844-5916	
Damascus, VA	Select Specialty Hospital - Tri-Cities. 1 Medical Park Blvd 5 West, Bristol, TN 37620 +1 423-844-5916	Grayson Highlands State Park. Grayson Highland Ln, Mouth of Wilson, VA 24363. +1 276-579-7092
St. Lukes Hostel, VA	Princeton Community Hospital. 122 12th St, Princeton, WV 24740. +1 304-487-7000	Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. 3714 VA-16, Marion, VA 24354 +1 276-783-5196
4 Pines Hostel, VA	Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital. 1906 Belleview Ave SE, Roanoke, VA 24014. +1 540-981-7000	US Forestry Department. Highway 615 , New Castle, VA 24127, New Castle, VA 24127 +1 540-864-5195
Buena Vista, VA	Carilion Stonewall Jackson Hospital. 1 Health Cir, Lexington, VA 24450. +1 540-458-3300	Blue Ridge Parkway Ranger. 29132 Blue Ridge Pkwy, Vesuvius, VA 24483. +1 540-377-2015
Elkton, VA	Sentara RMH Medical Center. 2010 Health Campus Dr, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. +1 540-689-1000	Swift Run Gap Entrance Station. Elkton, VA 22827. +1 540-999-3500
Sweet Springs Country Store, VA	Frederick Memorial Hospital. 400 W 7th St, Frederick, MD 21701. +1 240-566-3300	Visitor Center Harpers Ferry National Historical Park 171 Shoreline Dr, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425. +1 304-535-6298
Boiling Springs, PA	UPMC Pinnacle Harrisburg. 111 S Front St, Harrisburg, PA 17101. +1 717-782-3131	Michaux State Forest. Shippensburg, PA 17257 +1 717-352-2211
Port Clinton, PA	Northern Berks Family Medicine. 31 Industrial Dr, Hamburg, PA 19526. 484-628-8000	Tuscarora State Park Office. 687 Tuscarora Park Rd, Barnesville, PA 18214 +1 570-467-2404
High Point State Park, NJ	Middletown Medical. 8 Forester Ave, Warwick, NY 10990. +1 845-986-7474	High Point State Park Office. 1480 NJ-23, Sussex, NJ 07461. +1 973-875-4800
Poughquag, NY	MidHudson Regional Hospital. 241 North Rd, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. +1 845-483-5000	Ranger Station. 300 Lake Dr, Newburgh, NY 12550. +1 845-564-0608
Tyringham, MA	Fairview Hospital. 29 Lewis Ave, Great	Tolland State Forest office. 410 Tolland Rd, East Otis, MA

	Barrington, MA 01230. +1 413-528-8600	01029. +1 413-269-6002
Lodge at Bromley, VT	Springfield Hospital. 25 Ridgewood Rd, Springfield, VT 05156. +1 802-885-2151	US Forest Service. 2538 Depot St, Manchester Center, VT 05255 +1 802-362-2307
Hanover, NH	Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. 1 Medical Center Dr, Lebanon, NH 03766. +1 603-650-5000	Rochester Ranger Station. 99 Ranger Rd, Rochester, VT 05767 +1 802-767-4261
Dry River Campground, NH	Primary Care At Memorial Hospital. 3073 White Mountain Hwy, North Conway, NH 03860. +1 603- 356-5472	Androscoggin Ranger Station 300 Glen Rd, Gorham, NH 03581 +1 603-466-2713 ext. 0
Oquossoc, ME	Rumford Hospital. 420 Franklin St, Rumford, ME 04276. +1 207- 369-1000	Rangely Lake State Park 32 HC, Rangely, ME 04970 +1 207-864-3858
Monson, ME	Mayo Regional Hospital 897 W Main St, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426 +1 207-564-8401	Peaks-Kenny State Park 401 State Park Rd, Dover- Foxcroft, ME 04426 +1 207-564-2003
Katahdin, ME (Northren terminus)	Millinocket Regional Hospital. 200 Somerset St, Millinocket, ME 04462. +1 207-723-5161	Baxter State Park. 64 Balsam Drive, Millinocket, ME 04462. +1 207-723-5140

## Emergency Communication

We will each be carrying a cell phone (service provided by Verizon) with portable solar chargers to ensure that we have access to communicate with emergency resources if need be. The need to reduce the amount of weight carried over the long duration of the trip means we will not carry a satellite phone. Because of the trail's close proximity to small towns and resupply locations throughout the duration of the hike, it will not be difficult to find cellphone signal if an emergency occurs. This is not to say that some sections of the hike are more remote, but in the event of an emergency we will be able to hike to service quickly. Therefore, cellphones are the best option for our expedition in terms of weight efficiency and ease of communication with emergency resources.

## V. Budget

### Budget

[Budget.pdf](#) (79KB)

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### Transportation

275

### Food and Fuel

2308.02

### Maps and Books

7.97

**Communication Device Rental**

0

**Permits/Fees**

20

**Gear Rentals**

0

**Total Funding Request**

2,500.00

**Cost Minimization Measures**

In order to minimize the cost of our expedition we will be ordering food in bulk, and have done significant research into buying food with the highest caloric value per dollar (still keeping in mind taste). However, simply due to the length of our expedition a large food budget is unavoidable. Furthermore, many thru-hikers regularly stay in hotels, motels, and hostels along their journey. We plan to never use these resources unless it is extremely necessary, and plan on only camping throughout the duration of our hike. Additionally, we will avoid staying at campgrounds that charge a fee, unless extremely necessary.

**VI. Expedition Agreement****Expedition Agreement**

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