

## 2009 GIRLS' WILDERNESS PROGRAM

### 6-DAY LATINA GIRLS' COURSE

July 24-29, 2009

*Ages 13-16, or entering 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grades*

### **Comunidad Latina unida!**

Culture and community are important for all families and a great way to make sharing a new experience more comfortable. While we have Latina girls on all our courses, this trip is special because it has the added component of bringing girls together around cultural themes while having fun outside. You'll try rock climbing, express yourself with creative art projects, adventure on an overnight backpacking trip and have a chance to climb a peak. Latina women will be your leaders and mentors, providing a supportive environment and sharing their experiences and ideas about cultural identity and pride.

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### *Welcome to the Girls' Wilderness Program!*

You can expect your course to be fun, challenging, and different than anything you've ever done. You'll learn the outdoor skills that will set you up for a lifetime of adventures. You'll also stretch yourself, try new things, and learn things about yourself and others that you can take home with you. You'll laugh so hard that you can't stop. You'll get to know a group of girls in the kind of "real" way that makes the deepest friendships. And, better yet, lots of our course graduates tell us that when they returned to home or school, they felt more confident "being themselves" – trying new things, voicing their thoughts, and making solid friends.

### *Who Else is Going to Be On My Course?*

This course was created specifically for Latina girls, but all kinds of girls take Girls' Wilderness Program courses. Some girls who come are "outdoorsy," with previous experience camping and hiking, but most come just to do something adventurous and to meet new people. Everyone brings unique life experiences and perspectives to the course, and you'll leave the backcountry with a new group of friends.

### *What Will I Do on the Latina Girls' Course?*

This six-day course takes place entirely outdoors, and is a great way to enjoy the wilderness, make new friends and explore your Latina heritage! The first three days are spent at Blue Moon Ranch, a beautiful piece of land near Red Feather Lakes in northern Colorado. In this first part of the program, you will be building the skills needed for a three-day backpacking expedition in the Colorado State Forest, in the Medicine Bow Range just west of Cameron Pass.

At Blue Moon Ranch, you will practice basic camping skills: sleeping in tents, preparing meals on camp stoves, and learning the art of staying warm and comfortable in the outdoors. One day will be spent rock climbing, learning the knots, techniques, and signals used in climbing. You will also get to do art projects, play games and participate in fun activities that build the teamwork, communication and decision-making skills that will be needed on the expedition.

During the second phase of the course, you will backpack approximately two to three miles to a pristine area of the Colorado State Forest. Since you'll be carrying everything you'll need for three days, you'll be hiking with a backpack that weighs about 30-35 pounds. Women's Wilderness has a good selection of adjustable packs, and staff will fit your pack just for you so it's comfortable. This course is an introduction to backpacking for most participants, so we'll hike at a pace that works for everyone and take frequent breaks. After setting up a backcountry camp, your group will have an opportunity to climb a peak, using topographic maps and making

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route-finding decisions. A closing celebration on the last evening will celebrate the accomplishments and strengths that each girl brought to the expedition.

## *Where Are We Going?*

### **Blue Moon Ranch**

Blue Moon Ranch is a privately owned piece of land covering 150 acres near Red Feather Lakes, Colorado, approximately 50 miles northwest of Fort Collins. Rock outcrops, wildflowers, meadows, and forests cover the area, offering plenty of terrain for scrambling and exploring. A covered cooking shelter, propane stoves, and a “Sunny Jane” composting toilet provide a comfortable camping environment.

### **Colorado State Forest State Park**

With thousands of acres of lush forest, jagged peaks and alpine lakes, Colorado State Forest offers a true backcountry experience. The State Forest lies on the eastern slope of the Medicine Bow Mountains and the northern tip of the Never Summer Mountains, approximately 70 miles west of Fort Collins, Colorado. Elevations in the forest begin at about 8,500 feet and reach 12,644 feet. Turquoise mountain lakes are home to brook, native, rainbow and brown trout, and visitors might see moose, elk and deer roaming the vast stretches of forest. Colorado State Forest is a one-hour drive from Blue Moon Ranch.

## *What about fitness?*

Girls’ Wilderness Program courses are meant to be challenging, but do-able. Regular exercise in the months before your course will be helpful, but a positive attitude and a willingness to try are just as important.

## *What Will I Eat?*

Spending all day outside will work up your appetite, and we’ll provide meals and snacks that taste good and give you the energy you’ll need for six days of hiking, backpacking and rock climbing. Meals are simple and hearty with a lot of variety. We’ll also make sure to pack enough dessert for everyone! We can accommodate some common dietary restrictions; please let us know if you have specific dietary needs.

## *What Should I Bring?*

You will receive a “What to Bring” list with your registration packet. Women’s Wilderness will provide all camping and climbing gear (tents, stoves, sleeping bags, sleeping pads and backpacks), and we have outdoor clothing and hiking boots to loan. Plan to bring everything you have from the “What to Bring” list to your Pre-trip meeting (held the night before we depart) and we’ll help you with the rest. If borrowing a backpack from TWWI, please bring your items in whatever bag is convenient for you!

## *How will I carry everything?*

One of the beauties of a backpacking trip is that you will be entirely self-sufficient during your course. This means that when you move from camp to camp, you’ll be hiking with a backpack that weighs about 30-40 pounds. Women’s Wilderness has a good selection of adjustable packs, and staff will fit your pack just for you so it’s comfortable. Since this course is an introduction to backpacking for most participants, we’ll hike at a pace that works for everyone and take frequent breaks.

## *Course Expectations*

We expect that you will come to your course with a willingness to learn, an open mind, ready to make new friends and have tons of fun! You can expect that we will listen to your needs and interests, and those of your group, and adapt the itinerary and course content accordingly. Your rights and decisions will always be respected, and no girl is ever forced or “talked into” doing something she doesn’t want to do.

## Pre-Trip Meeting

**At The Women's Wilderness Institute Office:**

**For Girls: 4:00 to 6:00 pm, on the afternoon before your course starts.**

**For Parents: 5:30-6:00 pm, on the same day as the girls' pre-trip meeting.**

You'll get a chance to meet the other girls on the course, make sure you have what you need, and borrow clothing and hiking boots if you need them. Your parents will have a chance to meet the staff and to get questions answered about the course.

## Itinerary

Each course is different, and the itinerary can easily change to accommodate the needs of each group. While weather sometimes influences our schedule, here's an itinerary of a typical Latina course:

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|-----------|--|
| Day One   | Leave Boulder from the TWWI Office at 8:00 am. Drive to Blue Moon Ranch, about a three-hour drive. Start learning the camping basics- how to set up the tents, how to cook in the outdoors, and how to stay warm and comfortable. You will spend the afternoon exploring Blue Moon Ranch, and doing group activities that help everyone get to know each other.  |
| Day Two   | A day of rock climbing! Hike up to the top of the small mountain that rises over Blue Moon Ranch, and climb the rock face to the top. There is a range of climbing challenges to try, so everyone can find success and challenge. In the late afternoon and evening you will celebrate your climb with art projects and a special dinner.  |
| Day Three | Transition day – say goodbye to your Blue Moon basecamp and head into the mountains! Camp at a Forest Service campsite near your trailhead and spend the afternoon preparing for your mountain adventure.  |
| Day Four  | Pack up the backpacks and go! Your staff will teach you how to pack your backpack, and after an hour drive over Cameron Pass to the Colorado State Forest, you and your group will head out into the wilderness with enough food and gear on your backs to last for three days. You'll learn how to read a map, how to cook on tiny backpacking stoves, and how to select a backcountry campsite. You will hike about two miles to a campsite near a peak. |
| Day Five  | You will have the unforgettable experience of getting up early to make a summit attempt. The peak is a walk up, meaning you will not need ropes, but you may scramble over boulders in spots. With an early start you should be back to camp by early afternoon, for time to explore the nearby lakes, write in your journal, or just celebrate the climb with your friends.   |
| Day Six   | In the morning you will pack up camp, hike back to the trailhead, and have a closing ceremony to celebrate your accomplishments during the course. The drive back to Boulder takes about 3 hours.  |

## Slideshow and Pizza Party

A celebration slideshow and pizza party will be scheduled on in late August for all participants, their families and friends.

## Cost

The cost of the Latina Girls' Course is \$690. Full and partial financial aid is available for participants from low- and middle-income families, and scholarships are determined on a case-by-case basis. Please request a financial aid form if you would like to apply.