

Camden Francis
Alpha Sigma Enrichment Scholarship
Final Report
September 9, 2014

My Summer with Bike and Build

First, I would like to thank the committee once more for their support and generosity in allowing me to participate in an amazing experience that I will never forget. The following is my final report, which details my summer activity, my goals, how I achieved them, and what I now feel I can bring back to the Alpha.

Summary: During this past summer I “pedaled for affordable housing” across the country with a non-profit called Bike and Build. I was proud to participate in the program with two other Sigmas, including Reese Wells, who received a grant for the Foundation two years prior. Alpha Sigma has had a long-standing tradition of sending Lodgers on Bike and Build trips and I was ecstatic to carry on the tradition this summer as well. Past participants had all ridden on the North Carolina to San Diego route, but this year I chose to break away from the norm, and instead chose the Northern United States Route.

We rode through the northern most part of the USA, hitting fourteen states and one province (British Columbia). We stopped and built in ten incredible cities including Buffalo, Bowling Green, St. Paul, and Whitefish (MT). Furthermore we cycled through amazing landscapes, such as Niagara Falls, The Adirondacks, Chicago, Glacier National Park, and the Cascades. We averaged seventy miles per day on the bike and we were on the road for 71 days, finally hitting the Pacific Ocean in Vancouver on August 21st.

Goals: Coming into this summer I had a multitude of goals I wanted to achieve. First and foremost, I wanted to successfully complete the transcontinental trip and become a master in regards the affordable housing cause. I also wanted to become a leader within the group and earn the respect of my peers. And finally I wanted to derive some sort of direction for my future and career. This goal was particularly important to me because I would have ample time each day to ride and think about my future plans going into senior year.

Goals Completed:

- Thankfully, I was able to complete the trip and improve my physical endurance along the way.
- The Affordable Housing cause is one that I will keep close to the heart the rest of my life. Over the summer I was able to give countless presentations to community members all across the USA. Furthermore, I developed a much greater understanding of why Affordable Housing is so important and how to better impact the issue through volunteering and spreading the word further in my own community.
- I felt that I became a leader early within the trip and assisted our four designated leaders throughout. The group responded to me when I asked for things and I helped lead a multitude of activities on the road, from cooking dinners, to leading presentations for community groups.
- Finally, I wished to derive some long-term plans in terms of my career. I am a double major in History and Peace, War, and Defense, which lends me a great deal of leniency in terms of career planning. So as I rode along this summer I

debated about different career paths I could go down and what would make me happiest in the long term. But as the summer progressed, I found that I still had not come up with anything substantial. So I began to reflect more upon what I *want* to do, rather than what I *should* do. I want to adventure after college and discover things that make me happy, so as to know what career will give me the most fulfillment. I want to explore out West, bike through neat places, and find out more about myself, and Bike and Build has given me the comfort to make this decision and foster passions to analyze in the coming year.

Giving back to Sigma: Now that I have completed this life-altering trip, it is time to come back to school and return to the place that I love, Alpha Sigma. In the past I have held the positions of Philanthropy Chair and the Number Two. After this summer I feel that my leadership qualities have greatly improved, which makes me quite excited to become a New Member Educator in the spring. I feel that the qualities I learned on the road, including the importance of listening, asking good questioning, and always hearing both sides of a story, will be invaluable to pass onto to future members of the Lodge in my final semester.

Besides the impact I will be able to have on new members, I also would like to help create a new culture within the Lodge in terms of fitness and adventure. In the past we have had brothers complete Bike and Build, but recently there has been discussion about a transcontinental trip with only brothers from Alpha Sigma participating. We have had about ten brothers express interest in the trip and I look forward to promoting and discussing the idea more. The plan is in its infant stages and could be years away, but I

believe the most important thing is that people are *dreaming* up what we can do as a collective unit and the possibilities are truly endless.

Thank you all for the amazing opportunity to complete this trip. It is difficult to put down in words both what I learned this summer and the gratitude I feel for being selected for the scholarship grant. I hope that this report, along with the photos below, is sufficient. I cannot wait to meet more in person and discuss the summer!

-Camden Σ '15



ALL MY BELONGINGS FOR THE TRIP



FIRST STATE LINE CROSSED



WE TOOK THE FERRY TO GAIN ACCESS TO NEW YORK FROM VERMONT, AND IN THE
PROCESS BIKED RIGHT THROUGH FORT TICONDEROGA



THE THREE SIGMAS ON THE TRIP (REESE, MYSELF, AND FULTON)



ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD, NIAGARA FALLS



ENTERING INTO OHIO AND THE HEART OF THE TRIP



CELEBRATING AFTER CONQUERING "HAYBALE COUNTRY"



ENJOYING A BEAUTIFUL SUNSET ON LAKE ERIE IN AVON LAKE, OHIO



ENTERING CHI-TOWN



HITTING UP THE BEAN IN CHICAGO



WISCONSIN WAS OUR NINTH STATE ON THE TRIP



THE BEAUTIFUL STATE CAPITOL IN MADISON, WISCONSIN



A BEAUTIFUL DOUBLE RAINBOW IN SOLDIER'S GROVE, WI





BUILDING A FENCE FOR A HOME IN BELOIT, WI



GARDENING IN ST. PAUL, MN



OUR BUILDSITE IN MINOT, NORTH DAKOTA. IN ONE DAY WE WERE ABLE TO BUILD THE
ENTIRE ROOF FOR THE HOME.



ALMOST DONE!



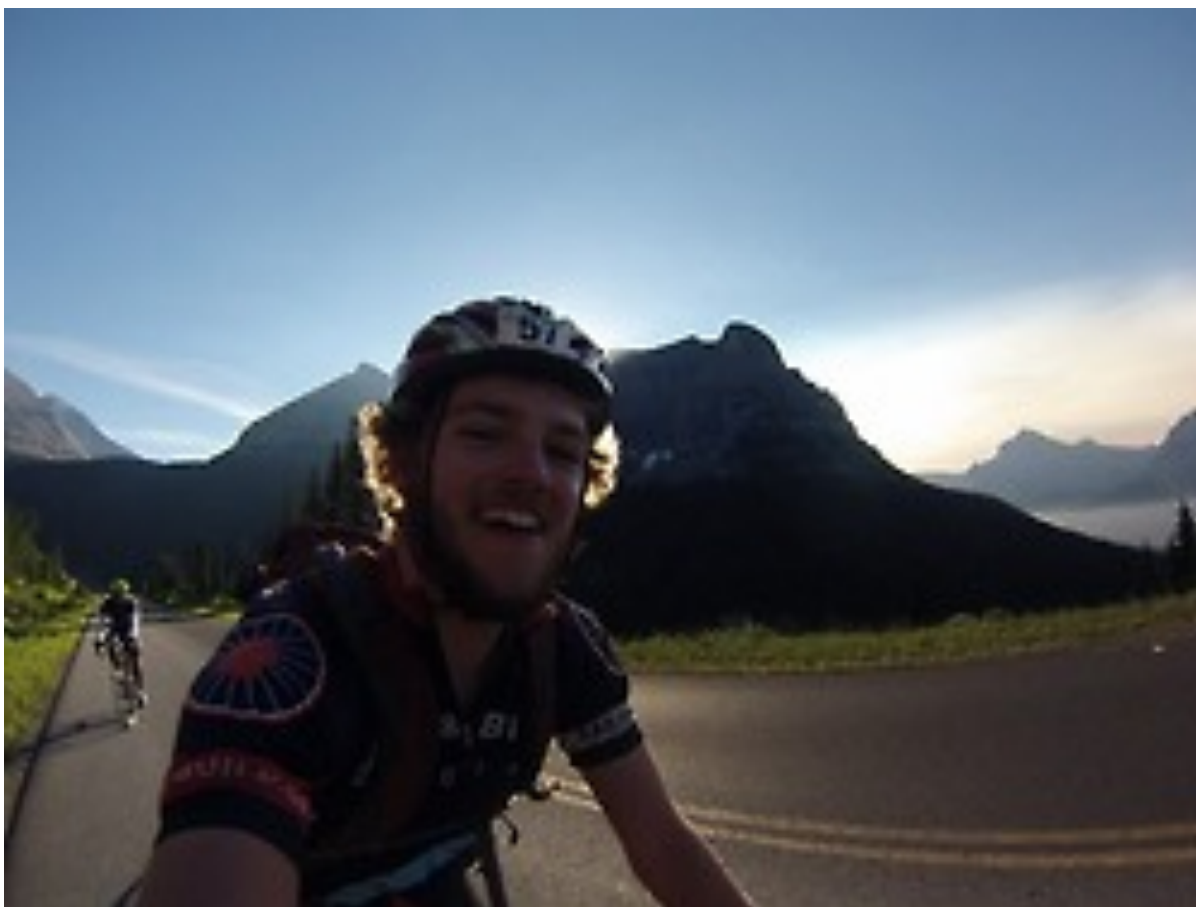
CARE PACKAGES HELPED KEEP ME GOING ON THE TRIP



ABBEY ROAD IN...DAGMAR, MONTANA?



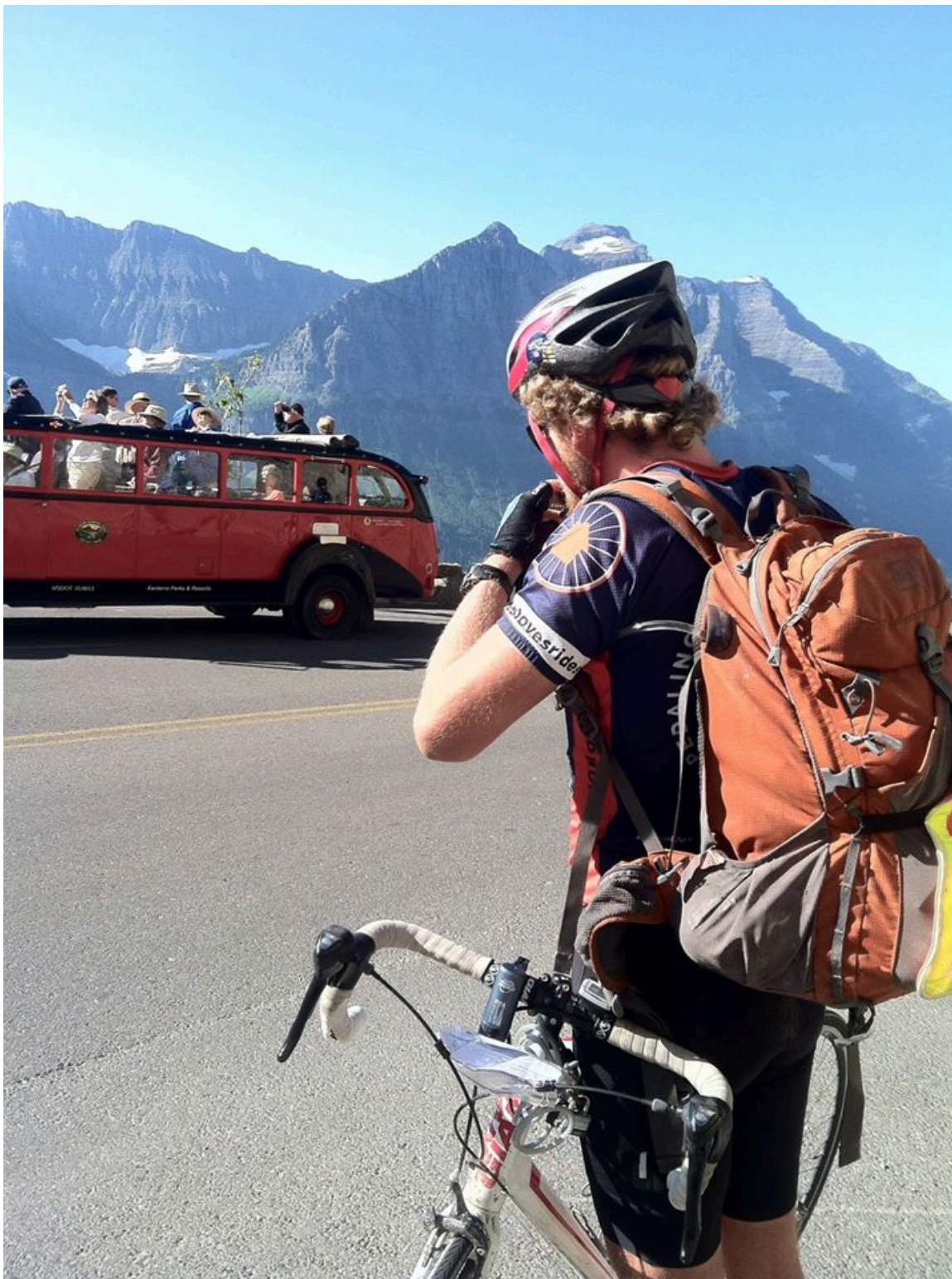
HANGING WITH PAUL BUNION IN BEMIDJI, MN



CLIMBING “GOING TO THE SUN” ROAD IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MT



CROSSING OVER THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE IN GLACIER



PAUSING ON OUR DESCENT TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING



ANOTHER BUILD DAY, PAINTING THE BACKSIDE OF A HOME



ONE OF OUR SIX MOUNTAIN PASSES IN SIX DAYS WHILE TRAVERSING THROUGH
WASHINGTON - OUR LAST STATE



WINDING OUR WAY TO THE CASCADES



THE CASCADES NATIONAL PARK, WA. THIS WAS TAKEN AFTER A 16 MILE CLIMB TO

WASHINGTON'S PASS



AN EMERALD LAKE IN THE CASCADES



CROSSING INTO BRITISH COLUMBIA, TWO DAYS BEFORE VANCOUVER



I WAS THANKFUL MY PARENTS WERE ABLE TO MEET ME IN VANCOUVER FOR THE
CELBRATION AND CONCLUSION OF OUR TRIP



STANLEY PARK, VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON, AND OUR FINAL DAY HITTING THE PACIFIC

OCEAN



71 DAYS, 3,900 MILES PEDALED, \$160,000 DOLLARS RAISED, AND 10 BUILD DAYS

PLEASE VISIT FRAMDEN.TUMBLR.COM TO SEE MANY MORE PHOTOS FROM MY BLOG FROM
THIS WHOLE SUMMER!