ATLAS Learning Academy
Achievement Through Leadership
Adventure and Service.
. . . .

"Let Nature be your teacher."
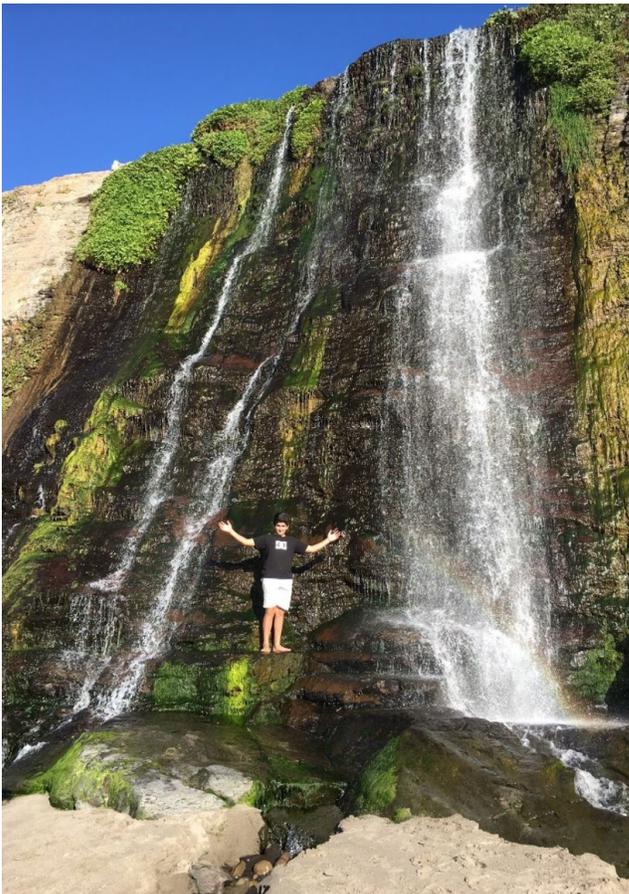**- William Wordsworth**

Backpacking on the Coast
Another year filled with Leadership, Adventure and Service.

In early November, ATLAS Expedition Leaders took 5 ATLAS students backpacking. None of the five had ever spent a night in the wilderness before, much less hiked multiple days with all their gear on their backs. The group was specifically put together with students who didn't know each other prior to the trip. By the end of the trip they had bonded in ways in which they would never have without coming on an ATLAS trip.

The experience began with students completing some pre-skills activities prior to a lab day. Included in the pre-trip skills were videos on the basics of backpacking, tent setup, gear overviews. setup and use of a JetBoil stove, as well as completing an online Leave No Trace course. Students wrote summaries of the videos and turned in their Leave No Trace certificates.

On the Monday before the Tuesday departure, students brought all their personal gear and food using ATLAS checklists shared over Google Docs to the pre-trip lab. Students were issued gear that day which included: sleeping bags, sleeping pads, sleeping bag

liners, tents, tarps, water purifiers, JetBoil stoves, canteens, down jackets, and a backpack. Students practiced their online learned skill of setting up and breaking down their tents before doing a "gear shakedown" with an ATLAS leader. During the "shakedown" students worked with the ATLAS leader to minimize duplicates, fine tune food supplies and do a general check for all the personal gear they were asked to bring. Finally, students learned the proper order to pack their backpacks so the weight would distribute in a way to make the walk much more pleasant.

To read the rest of the blog about the Point Reyes trip, see our webpage and go to the "Blog" tab at http://atlas.wpusd.org/Blog/index.html.