

Sexual Assault Awareness Month @ IIT

Karla Talley
IIT WOMEN SERVICES INTERN

We take time to become more aware about the important issues surrounding sexual assault in the United States each April. “Every two and a half minutes, somewhere in America, someone is sexually assaulted,” and unfortunately, the walls of a university do not help to lower this number. As students, faculty, and staff, we must educate ourselves on how to prevent sexual assault acts towards others and ourselves. Women’s Services and Campus Life will be holding two main events to bring forth awareness about sexual assault and sexual violence.

The first event being held is Denim Day in the USA. On Wednesday, April 24th, you can actively show that as a woman or man, you are standing up against sexual assault and sexual

violence, and are in support of those who have been victims to these terrible crimes. Held each April during Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Denim Day recalls an Italian court case that sparked international outrage when judges did not convict a rapist because the victim wore jeans.

The judge ruled that because the victim was wearing tight jeans, she must have helped her attacker remove them, thus implying consent. Those in support of the victim were outraged and Denim Day became a way to speak out against sexual assault. For more information on the event, please visit denimdayusa.org. Whether your office usually wears business attire or is casually dressed, taking part in Denim Day will make a statement for all to see and hear!

The Office of Campus Life will have a day of support from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. where

students, faculty, and staff can stop by and sign the banner expressing why you are wearing denim. After signing the banner, you will be placed into our raffle to potentially win a Denim Day button, t-shirt, or coffee mug!

Another event, The Clothesline Project, which began in 1990, was a simple way for women to voice their stories and concerns about sexual assault. Simply put, women and men decorate a shirt with their own story or a story of a friend or loved one who has unfortunately been victim to sexual violence. After the shirt is decorated, it is hung on a clothesline for survivors to be able to walk away from, and for others to know they are not alone. “The Clothesline Project honors women survivors as well as victims of intimate violence. Any woman who has experienced such violence, at any time in her life, is encouraged to come forward and design a shirt. Victim’s families and

friends are also invited to participate.” For more information, please visit clotheslineproject.org. Join Women’s Services and Campus Life during the week of April 22 if you would like to decorate a shirt for the clothesline. April 29 from 10a.m. to 4 p.m., the clothesline will be hung in the Welcome Center for viewing and there will be another opportunity to decorate a shirt.

Education and prevention are the best ways that we can combat sexual assault and sexual violence. Women’s Services intends to bring to light these events, and offer the IIT community a chance to stand together against the problem. Please come out to each of these events and help us spread the word about ending sexual assault! Contact Alex Garrett of Women’s Services with any questions agarret2@iit.edu.

IIT Rock Climbing visits southern Illinois

Dan Zweig
STAFF WRITER

The IIT Rock Climbing club took an unorthodox trip to Southern Illinois to help a nonprofit rock climbing company called Access Fund establish a newly acquired rock climbing location: Holy Boulders. Holy Boulders, first revealed to us by the light of our headlamps, is an accumulation of beautiful sandstone boulders that offer some of the best bouldering problems and rock in Illinois.

Seven IIT climbers drove the 6 hours south through Champaign and Carbondale to Pomona, IL, on Friday night the weekend of April 12. Saturday morning after making eggs

and sausage around a campfire with maybe 12 others, about 30 additional people arrived to help the Access Fund Conservation Team.

The Conservation Team organized the volunteers into 5 teams: Camping area clean up, trail building, two staging area maintenance teams, and a climbing kiosk team. The IIT group spread out and helped build trails, build the kiosk, clear trees and leaves from around climbing areas, move unwanted rocks, and build a small footbridge.

At lunch, the IIT students regrouped for sandwiches, and then collected their climbing gear to take advantage of the new climbing area. Two marvelous cracks had caught our attention, and so we used our traditional climbing gear to set two separate anchors, dropped ropes down,

and each enjoyed our turns climbing high on the sandstone cliff line. We had the pleasure of belaying for a climber from the Southern Illinois University Carbondale Rock Climbing Club who used traditional climbing equipment to lead climb the crack that our climbers were struggling on.

That evening the Access Fund Team bought about 50 pizzas and we enjoyed the company of about 50 climbers and volunteers around an enormous campfire.

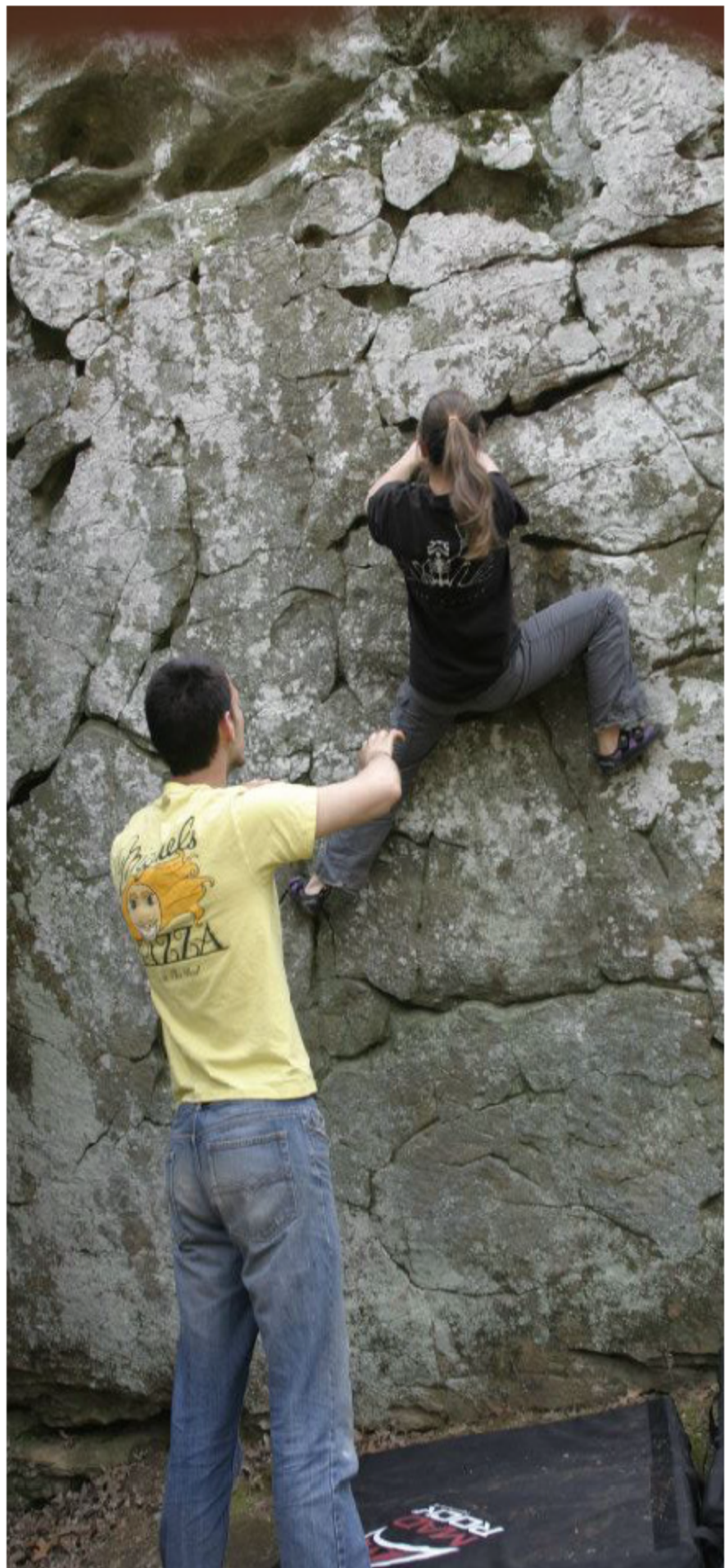
The Access Fund raffled off about 30 rock climbing items, from gear to gym passes, and the IIT students whipped out s’more ingredients for a fun night of just talking and hanging out with climbers from all over Illinois.

The next morning, the group decided to do

some of the more typical Holy Boulders climbs, bouldering routes on much smaller rocks.

The climbs never got above nine feet and the climbers were spotted by the other club members, with crash pads to cushion their falls if they ever did. We only did easy boulder problems that were zero risk. We had a lot of fun just enjoying the warm weather, climbing the new routes, and meeting other philanthropic climbers.

Overall, it was an amazing camping and climbing weekend outdoors, and a first for one of our students! Learn more about the Holy Boulders at accessfund.org or IIT Rock Climbing Club on our Facebook.



Photos by Dan Zweig