



# Strengthening Bonds



## Welcome to Fall Term!

*Cultural & Community Engagement hosted their annual Opening Celebration to kick off the beginning of the term. It is a time to introduce our new students and welcome back our returning students.*



## We survived a night in the woods...

*The ISOP family took off to the woods for the weekend! On our annual retreat to Mountain Shepherd Survival School in Catawba, VA, the group enjoyed a couple of days of bonding and strengthening our connections with each other. The goal for the team was to relax and get to know each other better. Collectively, the group achieved this and more.*

Unplugging from our family and friends, leaving social media behind, not knowing what's going on outside the group you're in can be unsettling. Despite this, Nana Camacho, shared, "The ISOP retreat gave me the opportunity to get off campus and disconnect from everything that was stressing me out." Without the distractions of the



outside world, we were able to connect deeper with one another and learn more about ourselves along the way. This was done through a handful of activities. We shared our goals and manifestations with each other as a means of support. A fan favorite activity was writing down our fears or things we've been carrying and setting them ablaze in a bonfire. We also roasted s'mores and sang songs. Our bonds continued to strengthen as we explored our cultural identities and ways in which we are all still connected despite our variances in

background. Coming back to campus was bittersweet as we didn't want to lose the connections we made as we were swept back into the hustle and bustle of campus life. A lovely lesson we all learned on our retreat would be the beauty of ISOP being a safe, family-based group we can always come back to and have fun together.

