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CAMPUS NEWS**BU students to ride 1,800 miles to raise money for Alzheimer's research**

Sidney Slon/Pipe Dream Photographer

Raven LoPresto and John Conner, both seniors majoring in psychology, will be biking 1,800 miles from Binghamton to the Rocky Mountain Alzheimers Disease Center in Aurora, Colorado starting June 3.

Bicycle journey will take John Conner and Raven LoPresto from New York to Colorado
By MELANIE GULBAS - MAY 1, 2019

Two Binghamton University students will be biking 1,800 miles to raise money for the Rocky Mountain Alzheimer's Disease Center (RMADC).

Raven LoPresto, a senior majoring in psychology, and John Conner, a senior majoring in psychology, will be biking from Binghamton to the RMADC in Aurora, Colorado, leaving on June 3 and hoping to arrive by the week of July 9. In addition to raising awareness about Alzheimer's, the two will be raising funds for their charity, A Ride 2 Remember, via GoFundMe. The RMADC is a division of the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus and supports dementia and head trauma research.

Conner wrote in an email that he wants to raise \$5,000 to fight Alzheimer's disease in honor of his grandmother, Arlene, who passed away from it.

"Experiencing the effects of Alzheimer's [firsthand], both on the individuals and on the loved ones caring for them, was a major influence in my decision to get a fundraiser like this together," Conner wrote.

In preparation for the ride, Conner and LoPresto have been training since February. The two

have never participated in long-distance biking before, so their training is focused on building endurance and strength through interval training and weightlifting. Along with physical training, they have been completing nutritional schedules, mental preparations and are also familiarizing themselves with the bikes.

“It’s impossible for me to know just how tough this will actually be until I’m out on the road and that’s a scary prospect,” Conner wrote. “But I’m confident with proper training and preparation we’ll be able to push past any physical limitations!”

The students will be using an application called Couchsurfing to find accommodation hosts in various cities, living in two-person tents on campgrounds and staying in communes and hostels. They said they will try to spend as little money as possible and will be living off of the land by setting up camp and starting their own fires to make meals.

“The whole thing is a little nerve-racking, to be honest, but also very exciting,” LoPresto wrote in an email. “While we will be tired, hot and hungry, I think we’ll both motivate each other to push through and make the best out of it, knowing that it’s all worth it for the cause as well as our own personal growth!”

The ride will take them through eight states, across two rivers and up the Rocky Mountains to their destination of Aurora, Colorado. Their plan is to ride 50 miles per day to achieve the 1,800 miles in approximately a month and a week, but they said they are anticipating delays for weather and the chance that they may not ride the expected mileage each day.

LoPresto wrote that although she does not have a personal relation to Alzheimer’s, she does realize the direct impact it can have on families and friends. She wrote that she wanted to participate in the ride to raise awareness of the disease and said there is still a long battle ahead until a cure is found.

“We must keep trying,” LoPresto wrote. “Not to mention the fact that I simply couldn’t pass up on the experience of a lifetime, for a good cause and with a good friend.”

Conner wrote that he wants to help other recognize the importance of funding research that seeks to improve treatment and the detection of Alzheimer’s.

“The aspects of the trip I’m most excited for are the priceless experiences I’ll have visiting all of these places that I have never been to before, and the pride I’ll feel in contributing to such an important cause,” Conner wrote.