Liesel: Alright. What are we looking at over my shoulder?

Speaker 2: Bison, fence, green pastures.

Liesel: He's looking at us now.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Beautiful thing.

Liesel: Welcome to the Magic Mountie Podcast. This is a podcast that's dedicated to helping faculty and other college employees as they try and navigate the challenging fabric of serving students. Especially at Mount San Antonio College. But, everyone's welcome.

Liesel: On November 3rd of 2018 I took my public speaking class out to Catalina Island along with a group of faculty members who wanted to observe. And we also brought experiential learning expert Marco Benassi along who you might remember from a couple of episodes we did last spring.

Liesel: It's a little bit unusual for a speech class to do an island trip. The trip involved meeting up in long beach, taking the Catalina express boat, taking a bus up the hill to the airport in the sky, partially driving back toward Avalon and then hiking about five and a half miles together back to town and then returning home.

Liesel: It was a 12 hour excursion from start to finish and along the way my students performed speeches that they had written and prepared about all aspects of Catalina Island. Speeches about everything from the Ecology, Geology, the plant life to the death of Natalie wood, ghost stories and even some sites along the way like the port of Long Beach and the Queen Mary.

Liesel: The design of the course was intended to see how students giving speeches in the real life setting where they might actually deliver those speeches would be different than what they experienced in the classroom.

Liesel: We also wanted to explore whether or not the theories that we've been talking about of experiential learning really do play out with our actual Mount Sac students. Lets find out.

Liesel: Alright, it's about 7 A.M. and we've arrived at Catalina Express, I have not had any panicked students via text. So, there's really only one explanation for that, that I gave them the wrong phone number.

Student 1: Good morning everyone. We are at Catalina Express and we are getting ready to go on our trip with the faculty, everyone is kind of getting ready to pack up their food so that way we're not hungry on the trip. A lot of people are going over their speeches, we do have three speeches that we're about to get ready to do before we get on the boat, so everyone's just kinda getting their stuff together.

Student 1: Trixie how are you feeling about your speech today?

Trixie: Super nervous. We woke up super early today to figure out what was going on but now that we're here, we're all getting ready and trying to get ready for our trip. Other than that I think all of us are pretty excited for this trip, I think for most of us it is going to be one of our first times being in Catalina so being able to experience it with our classmates and also being able to hear the speeches that everybody wrote is gonna be exciting.

Marco: Does everybody have something in their backpack?

Trixie: I don't.

Student 1: But Peter how are you feeling about your speech today? What's your topic and how are you feeling about it?

Peter: It's on the fox and I haven't been thinking about it.

Student 1: No?

Peter: No.

Student 1: You're not thinking about it? Why not? Is it better to not think about it and just do it when it's time for action?

Peter: Yes. Don't think about it and think about how long the hike is.

Student 1: Oh. I agree. Now I think that you have one of the speeches in the beginning is that right? Okay so what's your speech on and how are you feeling about it?

Abigial: My speech is on the Queen Mary and I am terrified. I'm not gonna lie, I'm really scared. But, at least in the beginning I can get it over with.

Student 1: Right. So now you can just relax the rest of the trip, unlike me I'm at the very end so I have anxiety all day. Alright guys stay tuned for the rest of what we're gonna do today.

Liesel: So lets come over here and get in a little circle.

Liesel: Hey welcome everybody! This is our group today.

julie: Oh.

Liesel: Yes! A couple of things are gonna be really important today. Safety is really important. We're not on a vacation we're in a class, so it's important to remember it's not every person for themselves, we're traveling as a group so we want to keep an eye on each other. But something that's also really important is to be mindful that other people that are for instance on the boat with us or on the island with us are enjoying their day and a group can be a really irritating thing. We can be loud, we can forget the presence we're making so in addition to the footprint that we make in nature that we want to keep as small as possible we also want to keep our footprint on everyone else's experience to a minimum today and make sure they can enjoy and accomplish their goals whatever those are today as well.

Liesel: We have some faculty here who are joining us.

julie: I'm Julie. I'm a counselor with deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Heather: Hi my name is Heather. I teach in the child development department and I actually just heard about this opportunity on Tuesday and it sounded so exciting to be able to tag along with an actual class.

Tonya: Hi my name is Tonya. I am a marine geo scientist so I've never been to Avalon and I do wanna plan for the future to bring student groups over here and maybe with the trio program.

Michael: My name is Michael I'm an ESL counselor. The reason why I'm here is I'm interested in learning. I've done several of these activities with clubs before but never with an actual class.

Raul: Good morning everybody my name is Raul Tapia I am from the welding department over at Mt. Sac. Also fellow alumni, so go mounties right. One of the reasons I came here is cause I wanted to do interaction with students. A lot of students tend to think that we're big, scary and we know everything right? But we don't. We're here to learn too, just as much as you are. Just a little bit different angle.

Marco: And I'm Marco, I've met most of you already. I'm from Chicago and do lots of these kinds of programs. So I'm real excited to share this experience with you.

Marco: So everyone take a step forward, one step forward. I want you to think of a word, a word that is going to embody you and your participation today. So this is going to be your word. So at the end of the experience when you look back and say did I embody that word? Did that word really reflect who I was, how I communicated with others, and how I went after the experience.

Speaker 20: Fun.

Speaker 21: Motivation.

Speaker 22: Enthusiastic?

Speaker 23: Positivity.

Speaker 24: Fierce.

Speaker 25: Exciting

Speaker 26: Oblivious.

Speaker 27: Positive.

Speaker 28: Fearless.

Speaker 29: Appreciation.

Speaker 30: Educational.

Speaker 31: Giving.

Speaker 32: Adventurous.

Speaker 33: Due diligence

Speaker 34: Relaxed.

Speaker 35: Energetic.

Speaker 36: Courage.

Speaker 37: Experience.

Speaker 38: Breathtaking.

Speaker 39: Funny.

Speaker 40: Optimistic.

Speaker 41: Adventurous.

Speaker 42: Awesome.

Speaker 43: Engaged.

Speaker 44: Endeavor.

Speaker 45: Joyful.

Speaker 46: Fun.

Speaker 47: Fearless.

Speaker 48: Lades and gentlemen may I have your attention please. All passengers holding their tickets for the 8:15 to Avalon may now begin lining up.

Liesel: How long do you think we have before they actually leave? Could we do one speech right now?

Speaker 49: Oh yeah.

Liesel: Yeah? You wanna do it? So why don't you stand right here by gate three. So get yourself comfortable. Marie you're going to have to project or maybe announcements that happen just keep going, just stop and keep going, like that

Speaker 48: Ladies and gentlemen can I have your attention please.

Liesel: Okay. Everybody give it up for Marie.

Speaker 49: Whoo.

Marie: Who here experienced the [inaudible 00:07:48] as number one?

Marco: So we're on the, we're on the ferry on our way from Long Beach to Catalina Island and it's been great listening to student speeches so far on the port and the Queen Mary. As we're passing it, really great way to conduct a class where students are doing actual practical speeches in the middle of field study and having to deal with all the environmental situations occurring, the additional passengers, the noises, just really a great experience off the campus outside of the classroom that makes everything so much more realistic and gives students a much greater sense of "oh this- is things that people do".

Abigial: It was nerve wrecking. My name is Abigail and I did the Queen Mary speech. It was nerve wrecking only because there were so many people, so many unfamiliar faces. But once you're up there you just focus on those people you know from class so it wasn't too too bad.

Liesel: How would it be different if we were in class versus here?

Abigial: It was actually really interactive. I feel like if it were in class I would feel a little bit more monotone cause I wouldn't have any need to really show, I just show a picture but since the boat was literally right there I was able all like "oh she's right there look this way and you'll be able to see her".

Marco: Its more real. I think they're forgetting about the fact that oh I get graded on these things and I mean you could tell the student on board was really committed to making sure we understood what the Queen Mary was and it was real. It was fun. It was like I forgot that I was in a class, I was just interested to get her information. That's it, a great experience. I don't think she'll ever forget the time she gave a speech on the ferry to Catalina. I mean this is a deep memory. As I think it's going to be for all the students as they give their speeches around the island today.

Liesel: So we have a special guest here today joining us for our trip for our speech 1A class. Tell us who you are and what you do here.

Annie Marshall: I'm Annie Marshall and I'm the Mayor of the city of Avalon on beautiful Catalina Island.

Liesel: And how did you end up joining us today? Who got in touch with you?

Annie Marshall: Rosie, one of your students called and said Mt. Sac was coming and asked me to come and greet the group. So I'm very happy to be here.

Liesel: Well we thank you so much for coming out and talking to the students. It was a real treat.

Annie Marshall: Well thank you! And go Mt. Sac!

Liesel: Yeah.

Liesel: This is Rosie, she's one of my students and we have to do interviews as part of the speech. So how did you end up getting the Mayor here?

Rosie: I e-mailed her and then I called her and I asked her a few questions and then I asked if she would be willing to talk to us when we came on the island and she agreed. After -

Liesel: That was totally you though, I didn't ask you to do that. You just thought it'd be cool?

Rosie: Yes. I thought it would be something amazing, something, you know we don't know everything about the island and who else than somebody who lives here and has some history here.

Liesel: That's great. And so what's your speech topic that you're going to be doing later?

Rosie: Film. The history on filming on the island.

Liesel: Very cool. Well we'll get to it soon, I know you weren't quite ready yet but soon right?

Rosie: Yes. After I spoke to her and I cleared up some facts, yes very.

Liesel: Great.

joshua gutierez: My name is Joshua Gutierrez and right now we are on the trail on the bus and we're just enjoying the views from the bus and learning some of the history about the island. We got to see the zip lines and the famous Wrigley Mansion. The island has way more to offer than I ever imagined. I honestly would love to work out here and I could even see myself living out here now that I know how established the island is.

Ryan Erickson: My name is Ryan Erickson. My relationship to Catalina is that I lived here in my late teenage years.

Liesel: So how did you feel when I said we might take our class to Catalina?

Ryan Erickson: I was very excited and I knew that I would have some benefit to the class with my fore knowledge of the island itself.

Liesel: So how has that come in handy for our class?

Ryan Erickson: I think they've turned to me a little bit to try to find some information that they might not be able to find in books or on the internet.

Liesel: So are you learning something from their speeches that you didn't know even though you lived here?

Ryan Erickson: I've learned something from every single speech I've heard so far.

Alejandria: My name is Alejandra Gonzalez and we're on Catalina Island.

Liesel: And we're hiking. Have you ever hiked before?

Alejandria: I have but not recently. The last time I hiked was two years ago.

Liesel: So we just did a hill that was pretty brutal.

Alejandria: Yes it's very.

Liesel: Did you have any doubts about yourself?

Alejandria: I did. I felt like I was going to stop a lot but I didn't. I stopped less than I thought I would.

Liesel: And how are you feeling about the rest of the day? You feel like you got this in you?

Alejandria: Yeah. I'm very excited. I feel like it's a good experience so far and I'm excited to see what's next.

Raul: My name is Raul Tapia, I'm an instructor over in the welding department.

Liesel: And here we are hiking around doing a speech class on Catalina. You've been so great talking to all the students. Have you had any thoughts about welding students and I mean would you ever bring them here for any reason?

Raul: Well I would've loved to have known that they were, when they were building the new Vons and got to see all the structural steel.

Liesel: Ah!

Raul: It would've been a good opportunity.

Liesel: Good point. But there's probably other kinds of field trips that you might be able to find like the stadium.

Raul: Oh yeah. Last week we took them to see the stadium with all the welding connections that they're doing. We got to talk to one of the inspectors.

Liesel: At Mt. Sac?

Raul: Not Mt. Sac, over at the stadium they're building, a new sports complex. Very very fascinating. It was nice to see that the inspector was following up with basically everything we do and preach in the class as they say. So it was a very good eye opener for the students.

Liesel: That's great. Well good. Well are you having a good time on the trip?

Raul: Yeah. Just trying to catch my breath.

Liesel: Me too.

Peter: Littoralis Catalinae aka the island fox. First I will talk to you about the fox's role as a keystone species. And then follow up with the epidemic that nearly wiped them out.

Speaker 59: We are the bottom of a trail which is named Hermit Gulch, so there's a few of us behind. We're just resting before we go have pizza.

Liesel: Yeah and we saw some wildlife today. What did we see?

Speaker 60: There was a fox in the middle of the road right?

Speaker 59: Yes.

Speaker 60: What else did we see?

Liesel: Wait I hear a crow right now. We saw bison.

Speaker 60: Bison. That was pretty cool.

Liesel: Saw a dead deer.

Speaker 60: We saw the dead deer.

Speaker 59: Oh I didn't see it.

Speaker 60: Poor guy. It was gone.

Liesel: We missed the dead deer.

Speaker 59: I did see the deer.

Speaker 60: We walked right by it.

Liesel: Yeah yeah yeah. So how ya feeling right now?

Speaker 59: Definitely tired. I didn't know your students had so much energy compared to me. But I love it. And its been a while since I've hiked so thank you Liesel for inviting us.

Liesel: Of course, sure. What are you observing with the students behavior with each other that's different than a classroom?

Speaker 60: Well seems like they're a lot more tight outside the classroom than they would be inside. Kind of like they have to stick together cause if not- it's them against the world kind of thing. Definitely was having a conversation with one of the students about it and he's much more receptive to this than being in a typical classroom.

Speaker 59: The students are very well connected. I believe sharing an example that they seem like family members, they kind of look out after for each other. They talk like if they knew each other for a while.

Speaker 61: They took care of each other. And they group up, which is pretty good if they've only seen each other eight, nine times.

vivian reese: My name is Vivian Reese and we're in Catalina Island.

Liesel: And what are we about to do?

vivian reese: We're gonna board the ship back to home California, I mean L.A.

Liesel: So what kind of day has it been?

vivian reese: Its been an adventurous day, exhausting, full of emotions.

Liesel: Like what?

vivian reese: Well we went on a hike and for some of us it was little hard and that brought up a lot of emotions.

Liesel: How did the class get along?

vivian reese: Great. I think we connected more. I think it will be a little different when we meet again next Thursday. I think we all bonded for sure.

Liesel: Alright we're pulling into the harbor and one of the first people you heard from today. I've got her again here at the end of the day, what were some of the things people were saying this morning before we left?

Student 1: That they were very nervous to start with their speeches but that they were excited and they did mention they were tired.

Liesel: Already?

Student 1: Yeah already.

Liesel: So how did they do on their speeches?

Student 1: Everyone did excellent. I think that everyone did so much better outside of the classroom than we did actually in the classroom. I feel like everyone's capabilities were to another level. Everyone did really really great.

Liesel: It was super fun to have everybody refer to things in their speeches. So what was yours about?

Student 1: Mine was the casino. Avalon Casino. We were not far from it so I was pointing and had everyone turn over there so it was really helpful to have it there next to us. Outside of the classroom, it's just a different experience. It does bring out a lot of different things that you don't expect a student to bring out in a class, outside is more comfortable. And then also you build personal relationships with your peers. Its just a very very exciting experience to have. And I still learned so much about my classmates today in these couple of hours than I have over the last few weeks.

Liesel: Marco how did we do?

Marco: It was amazing to see students speaking about things in front of audiences with those things right there in the distance. Talking about buildings or the marine life or the bison and then having a buffalo up on the ridge looking down on us while the student is speaking about the history of bison on the island. It was real, it was connected, it was outside of the microscope of a normal classroom and into the real world. You could just see the difference in students and how they reacted to the environment and they grew. I really believe they grew. And to see faculty watching how students were engaged in the process, academically engaged. It was really rewarding. For me I was just blown away by the work that the students had put in prior to the trip to really give their best effort on the island. And I think the faculty also had a great opportunity to interact with students in a much more peer like situation where they could really find out about who they're teaching. And that's rare, because I think as faculty members we're sometimes a little detached from what's going on in our students lives. And Mt. Sac's students have stories.

Liesel: One of the tricks, I think is trying to motivate people to do the extra work that it takes to do one of these trips but for the faculty who went and hopefully for some of you who are listening out there its sort of an undeniable effect that it has on students when you do it. I hope listening to this episode makes you know the why because sometimes when you're hitting a lot of "no's" administratively or you're running into hassles trying to get the money and the paperwork together and the permits and all the crap you gotta do. The why has to be there or you give up.

Marco: It was powerful. I will say this though, I also think the faculty members realize that these experiences are fluid and things are going to change, and you have to be flexible and you have to adapt and you're in an environment that's not as controlled and you have to let go and you have to realize that the things that really govern most education are hallmarked by control. You seat them the way you wanna seat them.

Liesel: And if you're the kind of teacher who like freaks out because you can't get the power point to work you got some growth to do to be able to do one of these.

Marco: You just have to realize that you're in a dynamic environment things are gonna happen. The weather is going to change, students are gonna get tired, and you're gonna get tired and you just have to adapt and just realize that the take aways are not going to be as structured as they are in the classroom. But then at the end of the day when you ask students will you ever forget this experience they say no. This will be something that these students always remember, the time that I went with my speech class to Catalina Island, and we hiked and gave speeches all over the mountain, all over the island. They'll never forget it. It's a deep learning opportunity that they will connect to in their own lives.

Speaker 64: Being here today reminds me of all the connection I have with the actual student outside of class.

Speaker 65: For me this always a great example, when you see something like this that you need guidance first and have being shown something first and then you feel like it's going to be so much easier to do. So for me that was that moment so that I knew okay you have to get permits to get onto the land and all of that. So then there's seeing the camp, just seeing the campsites so know this is what they will look like. For me that's important when I want to plan trips, and that's to me a reminder when we're teaching our students it's always best to show them something once first yourself and then send them off on their own.

Speaker 66: I'm never gonna forget this experience much like these students are never forget this class. And I was just so proud of the students and you could tell how much work they put into it. Wonderful thank you so much for doing this.

Speaker 67: This is actually the only class that I've felt super comfortable in and I feel like I know something about every student. Which is pretty cool because every other class I just go to class and I go home. I don't get to interact with the students as much as I did in this class.

Liesel: You feel like you're known? Like people know you?

Speaker 67: Yeah.

Liesel: Hey thanks so much for joining us for the magic Mountie podcast. We love your likes, we love your shares, and we love your comments so please engage with our community. Download from wherever you love to get your podcasts, Itunes, google, rate my professor, we're there. And we want you to be back with us next week. Remember any opinions that were expressed in this podcast do not necessarily represent Mt. San Antonio College or any of its agents. We'll see you next time.