

## 2019 Relay Team Profile: Rothrocks for Jocks

It's fall, so nearly any day in central PA, you might find geoscience students trekked out to check out a rock formation or other related bit of geoscience.

Less frequently glimpsed is the packet of geoscientists handing off a baton to each other as part of a 50-mile relay in Rothrock State Forest. That's the gameplan for the six-person team Rothrocks for Jocks when they churn out the Tussey mOUntaiNBACK 50 Mile Relay and Ultramarathon later this month.

"We didn't necessarily set out to form a departmental team, per se," said team captain Erica Pitcavage, a doctoral candidate at Penn State, "it just kind of worked out that way since we all spend a lot of time together."

Still, Pitcavage said this is not surprising venture for folks from Penn State's Department of Geosciences.

"Our department has a pretty social and active culture, so doing something like the Mountainback together was a natural fit. Myself and Meghan (the only non-geoscience person on the team) ran the relay last year and had a lot of fun, so we were interested in doing it again this year."



Pitcavage said the team members have trained both on their own and together in preparation for the race, during which the six runners will take turns and run in a preset order over the course's 12 segments, so each will run two times, for a total of 7 to 11 miles each.

"We have all been primarily training on our own but have been making an effort to go to the Discovery runs on Saturdays and have done a handful of other runs together as well."

The Tussey mOUntaiNBACK race puts on a free group run series, the Discovery Training Series, that covers all of the course's 50 miles over eight Saturdays.

Proceeds of this year's event will support Centre Volunteers in Medicine, a State College based medical and dental clinic that provides access to primary and preventive care for qualifying individuals living or working in Centre County who live in surrounding counties. For more information about Centre Volunteers in Medicine, visit <https://cvim.net/>.

*Photo: Pitcavage (right) and teammate Perri Silverhart complete the Laurel Run Switchbacker 10K, one of the Tussey Teaser Series races held on the course earlier this year.*