

SMU OA Trips: Skydiving  
July 19, 2008

Consisting mostly of SMU alumni, our OA Trips group took off for SkyDive Dallas' location on Saturday, July 19, for folk's first taste of "pure freedom." Trip participants were: Young Lim, Marshall Anderson, Stephen Reynolds, Jeff Krigel, Margaret Noble and OAs Albert Mitugo and David Chambers.

SkyDive Dallas runs one of the only North Texas operations and what a class act. Not knowing what to expect (Bubba with a bi-plane and few chutes?), we were very impressed with the operations. From a very friendly atmosphere and people to the open facilities and private airfield, SkyDive Dallas was great. You would almost assume that skydivers would be a little "elite" but the folks there treated us very well and extremely friendly.

Our group was to enter ground school at 9 am so we ended up leaving SMU around 7:45 am. After ground school, two members (only two tandem jumps per flight) were scheduled on the Otter jump plan. We made plans to meet up with SMU student Danyelle Faulkner and Jeff Kauffman (08), both are SMU OA alum with trips to the Grand Canyon and Fiji. Jeff and Danyelle are avid skydivers with over 200 jumps between them. It was great to have them there. They answered many questions and provided some comfort and input for everyone. Of course, they weren't just there to socialize and put in two jumps each that day.

After a while Marshall and Steve were called back to get ready. They met their instructors and were briefly schooled in jump form and position. As we nervously watched them go to the pick-up area, the anxiousness began to hit everyone. As they got airborne, Albert and Young were called back. Next, Jeff and Margaret made their way to get suited up and ready.

It wasn't long before we heard the roar of the Otter above us, barely visible at 12K+ feet above. But soon, little dots would stream out from behind the plane and eventually, whoosh; you could hear the chutes open. As our jumpers made their turns and sweeps high above the ground, eventually landing safely back on earth, smiles were everywhere. Our group couldn't get enough so many paid the discounted 2nd jump rate to get another.

By 4pm, the heat, sun and adrenaline were enough. We packed up and headed back to SMU with memories that will truly be for a lifetime.