



## Having Fun While Fundraising for the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation

**K**ate Svitek Memorial Foundation committee members will remember the week of June 21, 2015 for years to come. All week the television meteorologists were predicting heavy rains. By Thursday, after hearing for days that record breaking rains were on their way, committee members decided to call the rental company and order more tents and marquis. Friday, the rain started, and Saturday it continued in sheets all day.

Some attendees cancelled due to flooded basements, flooded streets and FOFA (fear of floating away). The 130 attendees stayed dry in the tents – dancing all night – as the rain fell all night. The B-Street Band was amazing!! The band leader, Will, has been performing Springsteen songs for over 35 years, as he was the first Springsteen Tribute band.

Everyone had a great time and stayed dry!! The event and Ad Book raised over \$58,000 to be used for our Grants and Scholarships program.

See you back Under the Tent in 2017!!! For more photos see page 9.

**O**n April 12, 2015 the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation hosted a Wearable Art Fashion Show at Gallery 5 in Tequesta, Florida. The 29 women and 3 men in attendance were entertained with an informal fashion show, light refreshments and the opportunity to purchase anything in the store: fashions, art, jewelry and crafts. Paul and Paula Coben, the store owners, generously donated 10% of all purchases back to the Foundation. We raised \$2,978.95 from ticket sales and donations.

Thanks to all in attendance and special thanks to Gallery 5.



The B-Street Band



Owner, Paula Coben with ladies watching the fashion show



Nancy and Bob Clair



Left to right: Ellen, Debbie Adams, Joy Massoff and Debbie Isaacs

from **Ellen and Frank**

Dear Friends,

Every issue of the *Expedition* has a column called "Getting to Know Kate." This year, I am combining my column with the "Getting to Know Kate" column.

As I write this article, it is Thanksgiving week. Kate loved Thanksgiving!! All through her childhood, she loved to help me cook and set the tables. When she went to the University of Vermont and was unable to come home for Thanksgiving, she would make her own dinner. She encouraged all of her friends to give their Price Chopper (a Burlington grocery store) receipts to her. She collected the receipts and turned them into the store for free turkeys. She would then cook the turkeys and all the fixings and invite all her friends who also stayed in Burlington to celebrate Thanksgiving together.

Having survived the past 14 Thanksgivings without Kate is so unbelievable! As I mention to you year after year in this column, founding and maintaining this Foundation in her memory gets us through the days. I am always so proud of our accomplishments. This year, we had two fundraisers that raised over \$60,000. Many of our supporters registered for Amazon Smile and we get checks quarterly. Thanks to those who are already registered! If you haven't registered yet, please follow the directions in the ad that appears later in this issue and register.

We received two generous grants this year from the Faulkner Family Foundation and the Joseph Alexander Foundation. Two more new organizations requested and received grant money: First Descents in Avon, CO and Central Pennsylvania Conservancy in Carlisle, PA. This year we awarded 19 grantees \$86,200 in grant money.

All of these accomplishments are why I am so especially thankful during this 2015 holiday season and none of this could happen without wonderful supporters like you. You are the reason Frank, Michael, my Dad and I are able to get through the days and holidays without Kate.



*Ellen*



First Descents offers young adults with cancer free outdoor adventure experiences designed to empower them to climb, paddle and surf beyond their

diagnosis, reclaim their lives, and connect with others doing the same.

During the FD experience, young adult cancer survivors (ages 18 – 39) are exposed to unforgettable outdoor challenges designed to push their limits, thus allowing them to regain confidence and self-efficacy often lost to cancer. As an innovative model within the field of psychosocial support, the experience facilitates a natural healing process. Building on the success of the signature camp-based model, FD also provides year-round regional support focusing on long-term community creation.

First Descents has experienced considerable growth and positively impacted thousands of lives in its 14 year history. In 2015, FD hosted 40 week-long programs, and nearly as many single and multi-day community-based programs, achieving its goal of providing over 1,000 unique outdoor adventure experiences for young adult cancer survivors.

In 2015, First Descents served 442 first-time participants through its traditional week-long adventure programs for young adult survivors. Testimonials from this year's program evaluations are below:

☼ For me, a chance of a lifetime. Cancer patients will see this group of survivors who have overcome great odds. You have brought us together to share our lives, open our hearts, and realize our own capabilities, we will always love you.

☼ One of the best weeks of my life. The setting was magical, the people were delightful, the food was divine, and the adventure was charging. My heart is full. I've gained a new family. I'm already thinking about what new adventures lie ahead. How I can continue to connect with other survivors. How to keep my heart open. How to live more freely. I am truly truly grateful for the adventure. Thanks FD. There is so much life to embrace and this program was the reminder that I needed. One love.

☼ This program has changed my life. Before camp I felt like cancer had taken so much from me both emotionally and physically. I felt nervous about my ability to bond with people and whether my body would be able to physically handle kayaking. After camp, in a way I was thankful for



my cancer. It led me to First Descents. It gave me a new family. I have a new love for kayaking. I feel stronger and more confident than I've ever felt. Thank you for this gift, FD! I'm your latest, biggest fan!





Camp Thunderbird South Dakota (CTSD) serves children on the Rosebud and the Pine Ridge Reservations. Since 2008, our summer program builds skills in campers that will help them overcome the many obstacles they face growing up in the most

impoverished place in America. Campers learn how to set goals and push themselves, while maintaining their cultural identity and pride. We accomplish this through activities that will instill a love of nature and provide opportunities to explore the natural world.

This was our second year offering camps to elementary as well as middle-school children and including campers from both Pine Ridge Reservation and Rosebud Reservations. We had 7 adult volunteer staff and 5 junior counselors. Altogether, 41 campers in 3rd through 8th grade were able to have an exciting and educational camp experience. During the first week, the 3rd through 5th graders were picked up at their homes and we travelled straight to beautiful Stockade Lake in Custer State Park, where campers learned how to pitch a tent and went swimming. Campers spent two days canoeing, hiking and fishing. On the fourth day, we visited the School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City and had a tour followed by lunch in the cafeteria. Then we travelled to the Badlands National Park, where campers learned about astronomy from visiting scientists. The next day, campers constructed and launched rockets with park rangers, before heading home.



We decided to plan a longer camp experience for the older campers. The 5th through 7th graders also started at the Stockade Lake in Custer State Park. There we played team-building games, swam, built campfires, fished and many campers learned to canoe for the first time. It was wonderful to see so many kids try something that they thought was scary at first, only to realize it was fun! On our last day in Custer, we made the challenging 7 mile climb up to the dorms at the top of Harney Peak. The group then travelled to Rapid City, where we spent two nights in the dorms at the School of Mines. The campers especially enjoyed making use of the camps sports facilities and playing basketball and volleyball. We camped out at the Badlands National Park, where we explored the unique terrain and enjoyed watching the northern lights. On the last day of camp, we returned to Ghost Hawk Lake, where we hosted a dinner with families in the community before saying our good byes.



We could not have made these experiences a reality without your generous contribution. Thank you so much for your support.



## You shop... Amazon will donate .5% to The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation!!

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support KSMF every time you shop, at no cost to you! When you shop at **smile.amazon.com**, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to KSMF.

On your first visit to **smile.amazon.com**, you need to select The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation as your charitable organization to receive donations. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make on AmazonSmile will result in a .5% donation to KSMF. To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to **smile.amazon.com** from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to AmazonSmile to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate .5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and excluding shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service charges.



Please register at **www.smile.amazon.com** now.  
Thank you for your continued support!



# Grateful CAP Students Write About Their Outward Bound Experiences

Dear Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation,

Thank you so much for giving me such a great opportunity to expose myself to nature and develop some good skills I will find useful for myself. This experience has taught me that anything is possible as long as you try. Sometimes, I would just want to give up because it was very challenging. This course has helped physically and mentally. I made many new friends during this course that came from different parts in the country. I've made some really close connections with them, it made three weeks definitely go by fast. During this course, I learned that people can actually live without any type of technology. All I needed was a journal and a pencil to keep me entertained. But most of the time we had to do things as a team. We assigned chores everyday to different people. Also, we had to set up our camp, make our bear hang in which we keep all of our food tied together and hung up on a tall tree so that if a bear comes it won't take our food. Everything wasn't done for us all the time. Everyone in our group was very united and we all helped each other, nobody was left behind in our group. We all interacted with each other, some nights we would all circle around and we would listen to Evan sing the songs he had made or just talk about back home and what is happening around the world. My instructors were very awesome and funny, they would always make pranks on us and teaching us new things as we are hiking. One memorable experience I will never forget would probably be the last day of rock climbing. We climbed the mountain called "Table Rock" which was about 300 ft tall. I felt that I have accomplished something very huge when I reached the peak. The view from the top was just breathtaking, it was such a beautiful view and even though it wasn't easy for all of us it's definitely worth climbing it. This trip overall has taught me that I am capable of doing anything as long as I believe in myself and try. Therefore, I'm very thankful that you gave us this amazing opportunity. I just can't thank you enough.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Romero  
Age 15



Dear Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation,

I just want to thank you so much for this amazing 14 day experience. The Outward Bound Course is one of the most life changing experiences I have ever had. I have made very close friends that are relatable in personality. Also I know that I am Physically, Mentally, And Emotionally stronger than my mind tells me. I found this out when I wanted to quit and stop going up the Pilot Mountain but through the support of the group I reached the top. Another example is when I was running the 7 mile marathon and I wanted to quit but I got support from a couple of Outward Bound teachers and I actually finished minutes later. Through this awesome experience I became stronger Mentally. Furthermore I have better socializing and leadership skills. I appreciate so much, that you have given me a life changing experience.

Sincerely,  
Jordan Lopez

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generosity, without your help I would probably have never experienced such a life changing thing. Throughout my three-week course I was physically, mentally, and emotionally challenged. I was wondering how I could ever finish such a course. The course made me, actually taught me how to release my self-doubt. I learned to express confidence, and communication in hard times can get through almost any situation. I was pushed to a physical extreme I did not know I was even capable of. I am going to be completely honest I was not always happy about being there. It was rough, I wanted to go home and if another bug crawled on me, I was going to scream and run back home. It came to a point where they asked if anyone wanted to leave, I thought about it, but honestly I would have regretted it all the way back home. My course consisted of Rock Climbing, White Water Rafting and Backpacking. The Backpacking was the hardest part, having to balance all the weight and hike, while also trying to stay sensible while a 80 pound backpack is creating a hunchback. The white water rafting was to teach communication skills. Learning how to trust one another. How two people see different things but there is a common goal. I'll never forget climbing the mountain, blindfolded, in the rain! Outward Bound was not designed to be easy. It was meant to test, to help the students strive, survive and never to yield. I have learned so much and I am continuing to learn so much from the lessons I have brought back from Outward Bound, it has truly made the difference in my life and I will continue to keep it throughout my entire life.

Michael Scott

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

I would like to thank you for letting me see the world in different perspectives, change who I am as a person into a better, stronger one, and for giving me the chance of a lifetime. As a city kid, I do not have many opportunities to appreciate nature, or sleep with the earth. The only view I had was the unforgettable Philadelphia skyline that I would see in the distance and be proud of. That was the major thing that blocked my view from the rest of the world. I never knew there was so much out there. I never knew that nature is way more beautiful than any skyscraper will ever be.

I found this out in Outward Bound. I woke up from a dream, that I used to think was reality. Nature is the reality. Not buildings, and skyscrapers. Reality is the world that is hidden from a city kid. The world where nature is not only attractive, but something that brings the inner-self out of a person. Outward Bound not only taught me to be self-reliant, physically challenged and fit, but it also taught me to love the grass, and the small organisms that I used to kill everyday because they were insignificant to me. Another perspective of the world that was missing in my life was the urge to challenge myself. Outward Bound teaches its students to challenge themselves and give it all their best. Their motivation is what kept me hiking every step of the way, and rock-



climbing up every mountain, and canoeing to that destined location. The toughest challenge was during solo. I was truly alone. I learned so much about myself in three days that I would have in a year. It is absolutely inconceivable how one experience can change someone's entire life. I grew each day of the twenty-two day course. I have matured. I have learned to love the green that surrounded me.

Each night, I would look up at the stars, and thank you for this incredible opportunity. The journey was ours. And I am tremendously happy to say that you have changed lives, including mine, because of your enthusiasm in providing the time and money for someone else's enjoyment. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Samantha Romero

Dear Mrs. Svitek,

Thank you for this amazing opportunity you have given me. My Outward Bound experience has changed me in many ways. I have learned to be self-reliant and independent, but also to seek support from my crew members when needed. I have learned how to communicate and bond with complete strangers. Which is a very valuable skill to have in life. During my course I learned to depend on myself and I realized that I could do anything I set my mind to. I am the only person that can push myself forward and complete a task. Before my course I depended on others to do things for me. Being there opened me up to trying new things, especially food...



Sincerely,  
Serida Rosa

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

I just want to say thank you for the opportunity you have given me. Outward Bound has not only changed my life, but it has also educated me. I have learned many things, such as, time management, which is something I never used to be good at. My Outward Bound instructors have also taught me craftsmanship and how I should always apply it to everything I do. I have learned self-reliance, which is learning to become less dependent on others. I have also been taught to have compassion for the people surrounding me. Additionally, I have learned some life skills that will definitely stay with me in the future...

Another thing I've learned is how to be self-reliant. Before Outward Bound, most things were simply handed down to me. I was dependent upon others. After this trip though, I realized that I can get a lot done on my own, I don't need anybody to do things for me. I became an independent individual, given the fact that I was also away from my family and was with people I've never met before. I had no choice but to rely on myself or my other crew members that were once strangers to me. With that said, coming back from Outward Bound has taught me not only to be self-reliant, but to also believe in myself. They've taught me that I can achieve anything as long as I set my mind to it. That is something I will never forget...

Once again, thank you very much for allowing me to learn how to manage my time more efficiently, use craftsmanship in my everyday life, and become an independent person.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie Romero

Dear Mrs. and Mr. Svitek,

Thank you so much for giving us this opportunity. I cannot begin to explain how appreciative I am to have taken part in an experience like the one I just finished this summer at North Carolina Outward Bound. Coming from a city like Philly I don't get many opportunities like this. I knew it was going to be a difficult experience, mentally, emotionally, and physically, and I have come a long way from just preparing myself for it. Coming to Outward Bound has really opened my life to new and fun situations, it has also really broaden my view on the world as a whole.

Taking the first steps into the lobby and meeting the people who would become my crew mates and soon my OB family was and has to be the most nerve racking moment I've felt that morning. I wasn't sure what to think, of myself and of my crew mates, but as more people began to arrive I soon realized I wasn't alone. The first few days were very difficult, trying to get used to the environment and making friends along the way, it was a bit to get used to. Being homesick was also a big part of it, even though I wasn't going to admit it.

For two weeks I've hiked through many different terrains, from going down rocky and mud filled ridges, to walking through streams, and up mountain side. It was by far the most difficult two weeks of my life, I got stung by bees, I caught a high cold, nearly died rock climbing, and by the fourth day my shoes were literally soaked in mud and water, but in the end it was all worth it. I have made wonderful friends and more importantly an OB family, and although I know (though hope not) that one day we will all outgrow one another, that in the end we can look back and realize that we were all connected in one way, through Outward Bound, and that is something not many have...

...On this course I had a goal, I've accomplished half of it, the half I can't picture my life without, and I don't think I want to. Thank you for giving me this opportunity, to make new friends, new memories and just be happy. If I could I would turn back time and do it all over again, "To Serve, To Strive and Not to Yield."

Tammy

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Svitek,

The opportunity you have given me was a key to finding one of the greatest experiences of my life. I humbly thank you for spending time and money to send a complete stranger onto an Incredibly expensive trip you aren't certain they would enjoy. The 22 days I have spent on the North Carolina Outward Bound School course has been absolutely life changing. From the personal endurance challenges of hiking miles on end to enjoying leisure and fun under the stars, I loved my time here. During the 1st week we mostly backpacked and hiked around the forest and slept on the floor with 5 other guys under tarps at night...The 2nd week was full of great events like rock climbing and the solo which were both extremely challenging, yet fun. The 3rd and final week consisted of a 13 mile white water canoeing trip and our hike back up to Table Rock and finishing up a wonderful trip. I am going to remember this for the rest of my life. I feel extremely privileged to have gone on this trip

in memory of Kate and I know she is smiling in heaven when she sees what you have unselfishly done in her honor. I once again thank you for allowing me to make and keep these new memories.

Sincerely,  
Zackery Cartagena



# National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)

Thank you for your support of NOLS students during this past year. Your contributions changed the lives of some very deserving students who are poised to move forward and change our world.

In 2015, more than 3000 NOLS donors joined you in raising \$2 million dollars, which made it possible for us to award a record \$1.7 million in scholarship funding for more than 800 students. Annual Fund support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation makes possible this sustained growth in funding and demonstrates your commitment to making NOLS wilderness skills and leadership education more broadly available.

Because of your investment in the NOLS Annual Fund, Maya Wheeler was able to participate on a NOLS course this year. Her thank you letter is enclosed for your enjoyment.

Maya Wheeler, from Arlington, VA joined an Alaska Backpacking and Sea Kayaking expedition this past summer. She came to NOLS through our Gateway Partner, the Student Conservation Association, in order to improve her leadership and fellowship skills, because as she notes, without followers there are no leaders. Outside of NOLS she keeps busy with school, baby sitting, and volunteer camp counselor work with Arlington Parks and Recreation. She hopes to attend Randolph University and study environmental science.

Dear Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation,

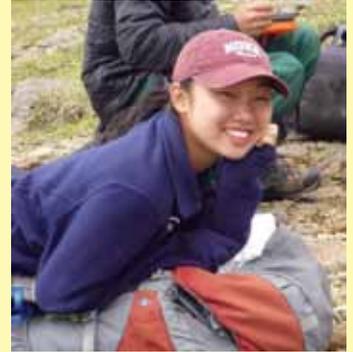
I want to thank you so much for the scholarship that gave me the

chance to do a NOLS course. I am so grateful for the experience. I had some of the best times of my life! I chose the NOLS 2015 Alaska Backpacking and Sea Kayaking course. During this combo course we started with backpacking in the Talkeetna Mountain Range for the first two weeks and then switched to sea kayaking in Prince William Sound for the last two. It was breathtaking to see such pristine land and the unique wildlife during our time out in the field. The people I met at NOLS are amazing! I already miss them all. I got to make a new diverse group of friends with whom I got to experience the Alaskan wilderness with. We formed special bonds that I will always remember and we will have our myriad of shared unique memories.

In addition to meeting great people, I also learned how to expand my leadership skills as well as my outdoor skills. I learned so much from my peers and instructors that I hope to build on what I learned and then share with others in the hope of inspiring them to be more involved with preserving nature. Being at the NOLS branch motivated me to take a more active role to be more conscious of the decisions I make from now on and the effects they will have on the environment. Overall, my experience at NOLS was a fun, exciting, unique, educational, beautiful, life changing, and memorable. I know I will cherish the memories and experiences from this trip for the rest of my life. Thank you again for making this once in a lifetime experience possible for me and others! I deeply appreciate it!

Sincerely,

Maya B. Wheeler



In May 2015, The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation awarded the Central PA Conservancy a grant in the amount of \$4,000 for the 2015 Goddard Leadership Legacy Institute (GLLI), held from July 12-17, 2015. This grant support was critical

to the implementation of our week long conservation leadership overnight camp for middle school and high school youth, held at the Ironmaster's Mansion/Pine Grove Furnace State Park near Carlisle, PA. The goal of this program is to engage youth ages 13-15 in practical learning about the natural, scenic, historic, agricultural and recreational resources of Pennsylvania's South Mountain Landscape and in key lessons in leadership and citizenship from area teachers, practitioners, and community leaders.

This year, there were 10 exceptional student participants, 2 camp counselors, 2 teachers, and 1 director. Field-based learning (e.g., creeks and critters/water connections, forestry, agriculture, land-use planning) and leadership skill-building took place alongside recreational activities. The rising 7th, 8th and 9th graders explored personal leadership and teamwork; developed an understanding of conservation issues, local government and communities, and what it takes to work together to find common-ground solutions. Swimming, hiking, stream studies, nature walks, and land and water sports rounded out the camp.

*From Katy:* "During this amazing, life-changing week I learned about personal and group leadership, the environment

of the world and locally, along with gaining amazing friendships and having the best time of my life... During this [group project on LeTort Spring Run] I uncovered patience that I did not know I had... I learned that for different situations there are different leaders... The Goddard Camp is a unique camp... and lucky to have such amazing knowledgeable instructors... we did hands-on learning... wildlife... testing of the [stream] environment, wetlands, watersheds... The Goddard Camp is not only learning, but also [about] relating and interacting with other teens... The atmosphere of this camp is an amazing feeling; it is not competitive or judgmental, but a place where anyone can be the true person they are and ... be welcomed and treated the same... I thank you so much for giving me this wonderful experience and hope that all teens would take that first step..."

*From Jack:* "... When I first drove to the camp, I was a bit apprehensive because it seemed as though I did not know anyone but, as the week progressed, the eight other campers became close friends of mine. We all shared a passion to help protect the environment and make a difference.





# College Settlement of Philadelphia

We were so appreciative of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation support this year. The summer camp experience is full of adventurous activities, but some of those activities happen in the swimming pool and lake. The emphasis of our boating and swimming program is two-fold. Campers develop greater self-esteem and social skills while participating in traditional activities such as team sports, bicycling as well as our swimming and boating programs. The first activity at the start of every camp session are the swim tests.

Here is a message from our 2015 Pool Directors: A

massive highlight of this job is seeing the children's faces when they progress a swimming level. When they are able to swim the width of the red pool, learn new strokes and swimming skills, and when they grow with confidence in the water. This summer there were also three staff members who learned to swim and the staff morale to help and cheer on both the three staff and the campers is amazing. The medals and awards our campers receive send them home to their families and friends with a real sense of accomplishment.



## Venture Outdoors

Venture Outdoors was provided with the opportunity to co-host the Adaptive Paddling Workshop sponsored by the American Canoe Association. The four-day workshop was held June 25-28 at the organization's Kayak Pittsburgh North Park location.

Eleven staff and volunteers learned valuable skills in transferring individuals with disabilities in and out of kayaks, how to adapt a standard kayak for use by persons with various disabilities, and how to interact respectfully with disabled individuals. Below is the personal experience of Mike Adams, a supervisor for Kayak Pittsburgh.

Hi, my name is Mike Adams. Four days of a physical and emotional roller coaster ride, and I've safely landed as a new person. Please allow me to walk you (or paddle you) through the process of change.

Rewind to the day before class. As the Senior Site Supervisor of Kayak Pittsburgh, I had a lot of expectations to live up to.

Day One was all classroom. We spent most of the day learning the core concepts of adaptive paddling.

Day Two we were off to North Park Lake where we were dressed to get wet! As part of the workshop, we learned how to safely rescue people who have limited to no use of their arms or legs. At the end of the day we were assigned in groups and given the information on our participant. The



instructors picked me to be the lead of our group. My group was the only group of three. We were the Dream Team: the equipment manager Jim Smith, volunteer trip leader/nurse Mary Lynn Marsico and me—Mr. Kayak Pittsburgh. The information presented to us about our participant was definitely eye opening. The challenges that faced us seemed

impossible to overcome. At times, the thought crossed my mind "is it even possible to get this person on the water?"

On Day Three, we met the participants. I was excited and nervous. I'm not used to being around people with disabilities and felt uncomfortable at first. My participant showed up with a shirt saying "10 Fingers are Overrated". With a sense of humor like that, I knew we would get along. The "Dream Team" sat down with the participant and, after an hours and a half of figuring out what the participant needed, we got to work constructing a custom setup to make it possible to paddle. Oh yeah, did I tell you all we had to work with was three types of foam, some bike inner tubes and some duct tape? We finished the entire roll of duct tape and our build. We built footrests, behind the knee supports, compound sloped seat and even custom paddle grips with a little help from the head instructor.

To the swimming pool for a test! Our participant was in a wheelchair the entire time up until this point. I'm a tall guy and it was such a joy to spend time standing with my participant. Water really is the great equalizer!! The participant was a quick study in the pool. She made it easy with the help of my team to get her paddling.

Day Four: the final test. I was SUPER excited for this day. All the hard work was done. Three days of practice and testing for this. Now we relax and do what we are supposed to: HAVE FUN!! Despite the rain, we got to the North Park bright and early. Just like we practiced, the real world was no different than the dress rehearsal. Some minor modifications needed to be made on the fly but al-in-all, our participant was a "lean-mean-kayaking-machine".

Throughout the process, I grew not only as a kayaker/coach/outdoor enthusiast but also as an athlete and person. It taught me that any physical issues that I face are miniscule. Pure passion and heart can overcome even the biggest of hurdles.



# UVM Interns Share Their Experiences

(excerpts from thank you letters)

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

Thank you so much for choosing me as a recipient for the Kate Svitek Memorial Award. With your generous support I was able to work at a dream job in Alaska with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. It is an experience that I will never forget.

My internship's focus was on salmon population monitoring and research. I was working with the Fairbanks Field Office Subsistence Fisheries Branch. The main goal was to collect population and health data that can be used for the management of salmon species in the Yukon River Drainage.

I spent most of my summer at a video fish weir on the Gisasa River. This is a tributary of the Yukon about 200 miles from the ocean. We were a small crew of four and spent about 2 months in the back country. When we first arrived at camp we had to install the weir. This involved a few labor intensive days, but once it was done we were ready to count fish. The weir blocks fish passage upstream except a chute in the middle. The fish move through the chute and at the same time a motion camera records the fish so that we can count all of them moving upstream. The two main salmon species counted were chum and Chinook salmon. During that time I would also sample some of the fish. The fish were released alive so they could continue to move upstream and spawn.

Thiamine sampling of Chinook salmon was another project I worked on. This was an exciting and active project. Thiamine is an essential vitamin needed for normal development in salmon. It involved helicoptering around the Gisasa River spotting female Chinook salmon. When we spotted some, we would land, then hook them and bring them to shore. There we would try to extract eggs for sampling, then took a fin clip for genetic sampling. This was an amazing experience and it was great to see the big female salmon.

While I was in Alaska, I took advantage of the extensive lands around me. I was able to camp and hike in Denali National Park. The park was beautiful and it was amazing to hike off trail. I did numerous other hikes around Alaska, seeing some of the massive state. I learned to fly-fish this summer and caught fish I had never seen before. These are all experiences that were possible through working in Alaska.

This internship was an unbelievable experience. I gained so many experiences and skills that will be beneficial for future jobs. This was a great networking experience and I met some influential professionals in the field who are great mentors and references. Working in a small crew, I got close to other crew members who also have experiences to share working in the field. Through my positive experience with this internship it may lead to a job with the same office post-graduation. This was all made possible through your generous award. Thank you again for your wonderful gift.

Sincerely,  
Amanda Adams



Dear Svitek Family,

This past summer you gave me a gift. The support I got from you allowed me to pursue an academic opportunity that I enjoyed, and will hopefully help further my career in the environmental geology field. For that I want to thank you.

My internship took place in the Geology department of UVM in the Biogeochemistry lab under Professor Julia Perdrial. I worked there four days a week in lab as well as in the field.

Getting fieldwork experience was a high priority for me when looking at options for my summer. The ability to be outdoors for a job is very attractive to me, as well as a lot of other Rubensteiners I'm sure, so I am happy I got this opportunity. Our research focus was on the soils of the Mad River floodplain in central Vermont. More specifically, we were interested in how land use along with increased flooding activity could alter floodplain carbon stability from a carbon sink to a carbon source.

We would go out and sample a healthy amount of soil samples in three different locations in both forest and agricultural land use areas. These locations would be stream bank, riparian, and forest or agricultural field depending on the land use.

I very much enjoyed this work, and I believe it is a great step in the right direction for my career. I appreciate it immensely, as I'm sure the other recipients of the award do. You have touched all of our lives in a positive way and I will not forget it. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
David Jaeger

Dear Svitek Family,

As the summer comes to a close I would like to take the opportunity to both share my wonderful experiences during my bird banding internship and graciously thank you for helping to make them become a reality.

During the summer of 2014, I was introduced into the astounding field of avian behavior during my research on nest construction. This led me to forming my goals of someday studying how climate change is affecting bird migration. The first step was to gain field experience studying and handling birds. And luckily I was accepted into the Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) program under the Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) and did just that.

I worked with one other intern, in the Sandhill Pine Prairies near Fort Bragg, NC. Each day we drove to one of six stations where we set up 10 mist nets to try and catch birds. We checked each net every 40 minutes. If a bird was caught, we worked very quickly to bring it back to the truck where there was a banding station. We recorded species, sex, wing length, weight, age, banded the birds leg and then let them go.

By the end of the summer I had banded 101 birds, handled 163, and in total we had over 260 in the net, with 38 species. We had more and more recaptures as the summer went on, including a Northern Cardinal male that was originally banded in 2007! We mostly had songbirds, the occasional woodpecker and even a few hummingbirds. We also caught three of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker, which has been rebounding wonderfully over the past decade thanks to the conservation efforts of Fort Bragg.

As you can see, not only was it a whirlwind of a summer but fit my desire to gain field experience perfectly. There are so many other positions out there that I found while looking in the spring that require previous banding experience because of the steep learning curve, and

now many more of them are open to me for after I graduate. My next interest is in mapping our individual migration routes using geo locator tags on birds to examine how climate is affecting their timing. This internship will open so many doors over the next few years.

So I thank you again for your generous support. It definitely eased a bit of the burden to make this summer happen as the position only had a per diem stipend and did not offer travel compensation between Massachusetts and North Carolina. I hope that I was able to honor Kate's memory by spending my summer outdoors reaching out to open the eyes of those around me.

Best wishes,  
Jessica Mailhot



Dear Svitek Family,

I wish to express my gratitude for your generous contribution towards my summer internship. It was thanks to your award that I was able to intern at Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve in East Bethel, Minnesota. Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve is a long term ecological research center. Research focuses on ecology and the services ecosystems provide to the planet and to human society. I helped out with the experiment BioCON (Biodiversity, Carbon dioxide, Oxygen, and Nitrogen). This research focuses on how carbon dioxide, oxygen, and nitrogen affect biodiversity and vice versa.

While at Cedar Creek, I had the opportunity to perform savanna surveys, run a TDR (Time Delay Reflectivity) probe, and conduct an independent research project. While conducting savanna surveys, I learned over 200 plant species and got to see many beautiful landscapes. I also learned how to conduct a TDR machine, which measures the amount of moisture in the soil.

Thanks to your contribution I was able to apply to conduct my first independent research project. I studied how the photosynthetic rate of *Acer rubrum* (Red maples) differs in monocultures vs. polycultures.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your generous contribution. With the award I was able to make the long journey from New Jersey to Minnesota. I was also able to live on site without worrying about paying for rent. Not only did I learn a lot from the internship, but I gained valuable experience from being hours away from home, on my own. I got to meet incredible people and even see the northern lights. All these experiences would not have been possible without your help. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to intern at Cedar Creek this summer!

Sincerely,  
Rachel Smith



# Memories From the Under The Tent Event



Stephanie and John Strotbeck

Glen Hyatt, Elsa Lu Berkowitz, and Gary Risler



Ricky and Herbie Cutler



Alfredo keeping rain off the tent roof.



Bruce Dorsey, Jennie Nerenberg, Rabbi David and Lauren Gerber



Gail Goren, Nancy Hyatt and Robin Risler





The summer of 2015 marked the 8th anniversary of Camp Attaway's nature program. The continued support provided by the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation allowed us to try out some new activities this year and explore different parts of the community around camp.

Campers had the opportunity to germinate seeds and were given the responsibility of caring for the seedlings throughout camp. Each day the campers watered the plants and as camp went on were able to watch as small vegetable and flower plants grew. This activity allowed the campers to not only care for something outside of themselves but also feel the satisfaction of successfully helping the plants grow and thrive.

During the first week of camp, Reptile Man returned with a menagerie of reptiles for the campers to learn about. Campers not only got to observe snakes and turtles but also got to touch them. Reptile Man explained what these animals need to eat, how they protect themselves and how they interact with the natural world around them. One camper said "that touching the snake was scary and exciting." He then said he was glad he took the chance.

The focus during the second week of camp was teamwork. Due to positive camper feedback from 2014, we played the game, Predator - Prey, again. Campers learned about the relationships between herbivores, omnivores and carnivores. They also learned that all animals need food and water and that sometimes animals will work together to survive. The campers were then divided into groups of herbivores, omnivores, and carnivores to play an exciting tag like game in which players had to collect food and water. Despite the hot weather, every camper played the game and had a great time!

The culminating nature activity of the summer was our return trip to the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge in Laurel, Maryland. The refuge provided a wonderful opportunity for campers to

explore several different habitats including a pond, meadow and forest. Another wonderful part of the refuge was the nature center. In the center, a staff member from the Wildlife Refuge gave a presentation to the campers about wolves and their environments. Our campers also went on a scavenger hunt both inside the nature center and out in the forest. On the scavenger hunt, campers were excited to see many tiny frogs, bright orange fungus, butterflies and osprey - no wolves. Campers were encouraged to keep a look out for signs of the prey - predator relationships learned in week two of camp. One group of campers hiked to the pond and worked together to complete several water quality tests including pH, Dissolved Oxygen and Nitrates. They took temperatures of the water in a few different locations. The campers searched for macroinvertebrates. Along with the results of the water quality tests and the discovery of macroinvertebrate, campers learned about the health of the pond. Finally, throughout the camp experience, we continued helping the campers learn the importance of recycling through Attaway's Go Green Initiative.



Having watched the nature program grow from the beginning, it is exciting to see what it has become today. The financial support provided by the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation has truly allowed this program to flourish and the campers are reaping the benefits. By showing campers how to feel comfortable in nature and by nurturing their curiosity in it, we are helping them become stewards of the Earth.

## Honoring Family and Friends

Each year the Foundation raises between \$1,200 - \$2,000 in contribution cards. For only \$10, you can purchase a beautiful card that can be used for recognizing births, special birthdays, get well, appreciation and sympathy cards. If you are interested, please email Ellen Svitek (ellensvitek@gmail.com) and she will send you a coupon book and return envelopes.

In December 2014, Kate's maternal aunt, Cissie Cohen, died and in her memory \$2500 was raised by family and friends. This past July, we lost our beloved friend, Jason Bercholc, age 27. His family also chose to honor his memory through donations to Kate's Foundation and \$1530 was raised.



## Save the Date

May 14th, 2016

Rye Whiskey Tasting and Tour  
at Dad's Hat Distillery

[www.dadshatrye.com](http://www.dadshatrye.com)



# Neighborhood Bike Works

With the support of a grant from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Neighborhood Bike Works was able to empower hundreds of Philadelphia's under served youth through our Youth Bike Education and Empowerment Program (YBEEP). On the surface, NBW offers young people something quite simple: a bike and the knowledge necessary to maintain and ride it. What's unique is how we use that "hook"—the joy and freedom inspired by bikes—to engage youth from distressed Philadelphia neighborhoods in healthy development. For us, healthy development includes learning life skills, adopting healthy habits, gaining awareness of the natural environment, and acquiring leadership and professional skills relevant to future success.

This year, we exceeded our goal and engaged 647 youth through YBEEP. NBW serves youth from all over Philadelphia, but most of our participants come from some of the city's poorest, most under served neighborhoods in West and Southwest Philadelphia.

For our 2014-2015 program year:

- 63% of participants were African American
- 61% self-identified as coming from low income households
- 64% were ages 8-13, 36% were 14-18

YBEEP participants enjoyed over 1,400 hours of intensive classes, job training opportunities, and outreach events this year. We offered our first-ever high school only Earn-A-Bike class, where teens learned bike mechanic skills alongside their peers. Young people in Ride Club explored Philadelphia landmarks and green spaces that some of them didn't even know existed, with bike rides to Cobb's Creek, Bartram's Garden, Mill Creek Farm, and the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge.

Here are a few of our achievements from our 2014-2015 program year:

- 82% of youth participants plan to ride their bikes more often after riding with NBW
- 85% of youth feel more confident in their ability to ride their bike in the city
- 86% will be more safe with their bike because of the things they learned with us
- 69% said that eating nutritious food is important to them.
- 65% reported they could identify the steps necessary to achieve their goals.

In addition to these outcomes, stories like Marcus' demonstrate the impact of YBEEP. Marcus transformed from a young camper at our 2014 North Philly camp to an effective and passionate advocate for cycling. Marcus comes from a low-income family with engaged, caring parents. Spanish was his first language. While Marcus was at camp, YBEEP coordinator Taylor noticed that he paid a lot of attention to the way she worked collaboratively with the older youth who were serving as assistant instructors. Marcus began to grow more comfortable and confident, so Taylor told him about YBEEP's advanced opportunities. In February 2015, he took the Leadership & Advanced Mechanics Course (LAMC), during which he came out of his shell even more. Marcus relished the opportunity to network with the mechanics from Philly bike shops who guest teach LAMC sessions. He also consistently inspired other youth who were less engaged to join in. Marcus then attended all three of our spring training sessions, and enthusiastically spread our message at community events, such as a bike safety check at the Philly Pump Track in Parkside. This summer he worked successfully as an assistant instructor for one of our new Freedom to Ride sessions at two community sites in West Philly. Marcus led some of the lessons himself and helped us keep a rowdy group of 11-18 year olds focused on learning. Marcus is only 15 years old, and we expect to see him grow into even more of a youth leader in the years to come.



## Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Once again this year the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation received a check in the amount of \$5000, from the Faulkner Family Foundation, a fund of the Pennsylvania Automotive Association Foundation. The mission of the PAAF is to support the charitable activities and good works of Pennsylvania's new car and truck dealers.

For the first time we received a grant from the Joseph Alexander Foundation in the amount of \$2500. Mr. Alexander's niece, Randi Windheim serves on the board of the Joseph Alexander Foundation and knew Kate when she was growing up.



With support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, we were able to hire two wonderful summer habitat management interns, Molly Atz and Matt Kelly, and offer these interns a more enriching experience than in the past.

Molly has an Associate's Degree from Montgomery Community College and a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Studies from Temple University. Molly is interested in pursuing a career in a non-profit conservation organization or doing research related to the environment. She is a hard worker with a positive attitude and an inquisitive mind. We have been lucky to have her.

Matt is currently a freshman at Johns Hopkins University. He is cheerful and hardworking, and hopes to pursue a career in science or the environment.

The interns helped with many habitat projects at Riverbend. They planted, weeded, and watered our gardens. They pruned trees and shrubs, mucked out our ponds, cleared trails and prepared restoration areas for planting. They also planted, staked, and watered saplings, removed invasive vines, turned the compost pile, and seeding our meadow.

In addition, they did a great job working with the weekly teen volunteers this summer. The teens always enjoy having someone to work with who is closer to their age. Our interns gained a valuable opportunity to develop leadership skills, even running the program by themselves when called on.

This year we expanded the educational component of the internship to make the experience more meaningful for the interns, to further develop their leadership skills, and to assist them in their career development.

Thank you for supporting our internship program! Of course, the interns provided Riverbend with hundreds of hours of needed service. At the same time, we feel that we provided the interns with a valuable career-building experience. During their time with us they develop skills, expand their knowledge base, enhance their self-confidence, get an inside look into an organization and the various roles within it. They also enhanced their resume and made career contacts. Your support made a difference in the lives of a couple of young aspiring environmentalists!

### Reflections of My Internship by Molly Atz

Love of the environment has been a consistent force my whole life. Many weekends have been spent hiking the beautiful forests of Pennsylvania and sleeping under the stars. The appreciation for nature has translated to traveling to other areas of the country which are endowed with great natural resources. I have been fortunate to spend time camping in both Acadia and Rocky Mountain National Parks, and these experiences have been invaluable in shaping me as a person.

Spending the summer surrounded by trees and flowers in a beautiful reserve sounds like a dream. This was my reality working for Riverbend Environmental Education Center as a Habitat Management Intern.

Leading the Teen Volunteer Program was another facet of my duties at the preserve. Instilling a sense of value for nature is an important aspect of sustainability. Seeing a group of young people volunteering their time for the environment gives me hope for the future of our earth.

The leadership skills that I have gained throughout this internship, especially the coordination of volunteers, has been instrumental in my transition from a college student to an environmental professional, and the opportunity to network will aid me in my career search. It has been a privilege to have a glimpse of how a non-profit organization works.



On Friday, May 15th the Sandy Run Middle School Black Student Union participated in a community service project at Robbins Park. Under the direction of Lisa Fantini, Director of Robbins Park and Patricia Shisler, assistant teacher, the SRMS BSU students built bird houses which were donated by the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation. The students had a great time hammering and nailing the bird houses together with the help of the Upper Dublin High School community study seniors. We then went for a nature walk where students learned about native and invasive plants, poison ivy, and the effects of pesticides and fertilizer on streams and waterways. We discussed why bats are good, showed the students the baby bluebirds in their box and the tree swallow nest with eggs. The kids also learned about measuring birds' wing span.





# CENTER for AQUATIC SCIENCES

The Center for Aquatic Sciences wishes to thank the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for their help in sending thirty

two youth in the Community and Urban Science Enrichment (CAUSE) Program on an exploration of the Connecticut coast in June. The CAUSE program is designed to provide a nurturing environment for youth that allows them to learn new ideas, explore new places and push their limits. Through a challenging aquatic sciences curriculum, the youth, in grades 9-12, gain an appreciation for the environment and discover ways that they can help protect it, both locally and world-wide.

This year the students and staff visited Project Oceanology in Connecticut and spent several days exploring the coast through interactive programming, boat excursions and beach explorations. The youth conducted field studies of both tidal wetland areas and a barrier beach. They explored the history, geology and ecology of the Long Island Sound and met several of the animals that make their home in the Sound. Spending their days on a Project Oceanology boat, the students were able to pull otter trawls, study mud samples, perform fish respiration studies and explore the water around them.

These experiences, unlike any that the students could have in Camden, help shape and expand the youth's views of the world around them and what impact they can make. Several youth shared their thoughts of the experience:

### Lilly, Grade 9:

*This was my first time away from home and I was very nervous. I had never been away from my parents and we were going really far away. But I had a great time. I was most impressed with how we all came together as a team and worked together. When we went to pull in the otter trawl, it was too heavy, but we worked together and brought it up on the boat. Being with my friends and having so much fun, helped me feel safe and secure away from my family. Now I can't wait to go somewhere else!*

### Jayda, Grade 10:

*I was very nervous about this trip. I can't swim and was really worried about being out on the water and on the boats. I almost didn't go. The staff were really great about making me feel safe and I am really glad that I pushed myself and went on this trip. I really enjoyed getting to see the animals that we pulled up in the trawls. It was exciting to see all the animals that live in the area.*

### Crystelle, Grade 10:

*I had been on CAUSE trips before, so I was excited to see what new experiences we would have this time. I really enjoyed spending time on the boat and getting to explore the shore and look for crabs. It was a lot of fun to explore these new areas with my friends. It was also great to see how we all helped each other on the boat. If someone was struggling, we all came together and helped them out. We spend the whole year together - working together, but when you are out in nature, it is different...it is really cool to know that we can count on each other at any time.*



Once again, with the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, we were able to provide 145 preschool, elementary and middle school aged campers seven weeks of guest presentations.

- Storyteller Bill Wood, with puppets and simple musical instruments that engaged the children in entertaining and educational stories.
- John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove, with a live screech owl and taxidermy mounts to study raptor and bird adaptations and environmental issues affecting them.

- Naturalist and school teacher Nick Zurga, to teach campers outdoor survival techniques via equipment and a nature walk with hands-on wildlife study.
- Bob Furer from Bob's Critters, with snakes, turtles, spiders, and insects, to help campers learn about adaptations and the food chain.
- Dan Borkoski, beekeeper with Sun Bear Apiary, with visuals, live bees, and props to teach campers about beekeeping, including bee biology.
- A performer from Sciencetelling, with stories interwoven with science experiments using water.
- Elmwood Park Zoo, with live native animals to discuss their habitats, adaptations, and the effects of environmental hazards on our local wildlife.
- Great Valley Nature Center, with native and exotic animals, to demonstrate various adaptations and behaviors of these nocturnal creatures.

# Wissahickon Charter 8th Grade Experiences Outward Bound

Wissahickon Charter School, located in the Germantown region of Philadelphia, serves 400 inner city K-8 students. Our mission is to provide a community of learning with an environmental focus that stimulates the child's intellectual, social, and character development. The 8th grade Outward Bound Wilderness Expedition trip was the culminating experience for the students. Here are some excerpts from their thank you letters.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

What I enjoyed about the trip is hiking up that big mountain. Also, playing games in the dark which made it more fun. How I've grown as a person is I've overcome hard challenges.

Sincerely,  
Michael Lucas

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

I appreciate that you supported Wissahickon Charter School on the Outward Bound outdoor backpacking trip. I think that it was a good experience for me.

I feel like I grew as a person. Some things I grew on is teamwork. Another thing was knowing what to do if I'm in a forest by myself. The last thing is challenges. I learned that if I have a challenge, I can face it.

Sincerely,  
Delvin Hickerson

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

Thank you for supporting our Outward Bound camping trip. Some ways I grew during the camping trip is I am more helpful, I go to sleep and wake up earlier than before and I am more responsible. Some fears I conquered during the trip is being in the woods alone and being on top of a mountain.

Sincerely,  
Kyle Howard

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

My experience with Outward Bound was fun, cool, and awesome. The things I enjoyed in Outward Bound was rock climbing, the games, learning history about Outward Bound and the food. For example, in rock climbing I was so close to the top, my favorite games is the zoo and camouflage and my favorite history story is about the man who started O.B., my favorite food is the mac and cheese.

Sincerely,  
Yohnae Brown

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

Thank you for supporting the trip. The things I enjoyed about the trip were the actual hiking, then at the end when we were on top of the mountain looking at all the land we covered.

Sincerely,  
Andre Williford

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

I am so thankful for the both of you for supporting the trip funds. This trip was not what I expected in a good kind of way. What I enjoyed on the trip is getting to know people I don't talk to in school and bonding with one another. I have grown so much as a person. I've learned to take other people's feelings into consideration when being a leader and what it takes to be a leader. And to listen to what anyone has to say. Thank you Mr. and Mrs. Svitek.

Sincerely,  
Jada Lewis-Edwards

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

Thank you for financially supporting the trip. I really enjoyed this opportunity of going on this camping trip. As a 8th grader I grew as a person by learning to take ownership and being responsible for myself. Helping others is what I did on this trip. Motivating others is another thing I accomplished.

This trip was actually very interesting. I got a chance to bond with a lot of people I don't talk to often. Now I have more friends and I'm more social, and that's how I think this trip changed me.

Sincerely,  
Michelle 'Shelly' Lucas

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

The week of camping was overall ok. I grew as a friend and a leader by leading my group on hikes and to set up camp.

Sincerely,  
Quamir Rothwell

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

Thank you for letting me go on this 5 day trip. I grew as a person while having fun. Now I know how to collect firewood, to get and purify water, and start a fire with flint and steel. And now I can rock climb, belay, and read a map.

How did I overcome obstacles. I overcame them by believing in myself and my team. And I stuck to my guns and even when I was just left behind I still maintained my kindness and I never just left someone there.

The thing I enjoyed most about this trip was rock climbing and being at the top of the mountain looking over the woods and being on that rock with my team knowing that we could make it through.

Sincerely,  
Jordan Norris





First Waves is an initiative that teaches teens facing adversity to surf and standup paddleboard on local waterways and provides a hands-on education about filmmaking and watershed conservation. It is a collaborative project of Paddle Without Pollution, SurfSUP Adventures, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Pittsburgh Filmmakers.

The project consisted of three workshops: river surfing and filmmaking; conservation, filmmaking, and watershed cleanup; and, finally, filmmaking and editing. First Waves offers a comprehensive approach to connected education for under served youth while also showcasing and improving the region's waterway resources.

The river surfing and filmmaking workshop enabled the participants to learn the basics of making films and the various technologies they used in the program, such as waterproof cameras.

During the conservation workshop, the kids participated in a stewardship event, cleaning up a lake and documenting their work. They learned about the causes of the pollution they were seeing and how the choices they make in their everyday lives influence our watershed.

The editing workshop focused on a variety of elements of filmmaking and editing. The participants edited their own interviews and created a film using professional-level editing



software. The workshop also focused on collaborating for the official video documenting the First Waves project.

First Waves' youth participants expressed a variety of impressions. However, the prevailing themes were new experiences and a transformed outlook on environment. In a survey taken after the program, one student explained, "(First Waves) meant a new experience and meaning in my life." Another student said, "I learned to take better care of the environment, how to paddleboard, and I got to meet new people."

Other students emphasized the program's capacity to help them overcome challenges, work together, and believe in their ability to make a difference in their community. One student said, "(First Waves) meant that if I put my best foot forward then I can really accomplish things." Another explained, "The team work part of it I will use my whole life."

These statements from surveys send a powerful message about the impact of the program on both youth participants and mentors. In addition to the survey, however, First Waves utilizes the art of filmmaking to tell the story of these young adults and show what their experience meant to them. Through comprehensive interviews, these stories will unveil the true impact of First Waves for the world to see, learn from, and incorporate in their own lives when the film is completed.

We are deeply appreciative of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for enabling us to have a positive impact on the lives of under served youth.



One hundred and eight children attended our six weeks of Farm Camp. They participated in five days of fun, learning and eating on the farm. They learned about plant parts by walking through the farm, and finding and tasting examples of each part. They learned about wildlife and the food web by exploring a forested area of the park. At the Pollination Station, children see pollination happening right in front of them, while learning about the role pollinator's play on the farm and in our food supply. Our camps also include activities in the Grow Lunch Garden, where children plant, tend, harvest and eat fresh vegetables from their own field. Each day of camp involved harvesting vegetables from the Grow Lunch Garden to supplement their own lunches.

Wednesdays included a special treat, as we were joined by chefs from New Seasons Market, who cooked with the kids. The Farm to Table cooking projects varied from zucchini boats filled with a vegetable and marinara mixture and topped with personal flags to Panzanella



Salad. Each meal included a salad with lettuce, fennel, grated beets and topped with edible flower petals. It is always fun to see how much kids can eat when the meal is fun, fresh and hands-on.

Throughout the week of Sauvie Island Center farm camp, kids kept a daily journal of reflections, observations, memories, anticipations and inspirations recorded during their 30 minute "sit-spot" or "special spot" time. Campers were encouraged to transition silently like a fox to their individually chosen spot in the forest or pioneer orchard to connect with the land and themselves through focused journal activities and open observation / absorption time. A number of kids each day said that special spot was their favorite time of the day.

Once again, each child kept a Veggie Passport in the front of their journals, to keep track of the vegetables they tasted during the week. These were some of the crops tasted during the week: Beets, kale, onion, peach, celery, broccoli, chard, fennel, mint, spinach, lettuce.

*"This week helped me feel more relaxed in nature- every time at my special spot, I felt happier and safer" -Jamison*

*"It was my first time in a vegetable garden, so yummy!" -Maddy*





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