



## A Young Woman's Vision Now Circles The Globe



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**"I want to spend my life helping people to better understand our natural world and appreciate it in the same way I have done by becoming part of nature.**

**Our natural world is a powerful force and I want to try to provide people with the opportunity to grow through their interaction with the environment."**

*Kate Svitek, 1996*

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Kate, high school graduation, 1997

**I**magine if you will, a vibrant 17-year old high school student composing her college application — divulging her most heartfelt aspirations and dreams that were a natural and central part of her life.

This is a quote extracted from Kate Svitek's college application. Her authentic candor became the vision of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation.

How could anyone, especially us — her loving parents — have predicted that Kate's goals for her future would be recognized nationally and globally? This year the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation received applications from 67 organizations representing 33 different states and also inquiries from England and Australia.

*From these requests, this year the Foundation awarded \$151,640 to 41 different organizations across America.*

Thirteen new states represented for the first time include Alaska, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and Washington.

There were 20 new organizations awarded grants for the first time: Get Outside UT; Something Good in the World NY; Wrangell Institute AK; Grow Portland OR; Volunteers at Sippican Elementary MA; Des Moines County Conservation Partners IA; Project U.S.E. NJ; 100 Elk Outdoor Center CO; Life Expanding Adventure Program OR; Roanoke Outside Foundation VA; Harris Center for Conservation Education NH; Laketrails Base Camp MN; Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park; Wildlife Safari, NE; The Great Schools Partnership TN; North Cascades Institute WA; New England Science and Sailing Foundation CT; The Life School of Atlanta GA; Gateway to the Great Outdoors IL; and The Franklin School of Innovation NC.

We are all inspired by the testaments of the children and counselors who had



Kate, NOLS semester in Patagonia, 1999

the opportunity to experience the 'Great Outdoors' in memory of Kate. It is clear that without the financial support from the Foundation, this might not have happened.

Dear Friends,

I hope everyone is as inspired as I am by all the testimonials of the children and counselors who had the opportunity to experience the great outdoors in memory of Kate. It is quite clear that without the financial support of YOU, our wonderful friends and supporters, none of this could ever happen.

Our fundraising this year was spectacular! We started the year with our first ever Annual Appeal letter. Its purpose was to replace the funds raised by our ad book and we exceeded our expectations raising \$52,533!!! In February, our Sip and Shop 3 event at Evelyn & Arthur's raised \$11,234. Scarlet Begonias Fashion Show #2 raised \$8,838. In honor of Kate's 40th birthday, our Non-Event Event raised \$15,456. Your purchase of cards and contributions raised \$4,084. Your continued purchases at Amazon raised \$105. Additionally, we received a grant from the Joseph Alexander Foundation for \$2,500. All these projects raised \$85,912. What a year!

*Ellen for Frank, Michael and Bob Clair*

Ellen for Frank, Michael and Bob Clair (Kate's Pop-pop)



## New England Science & Sailing

Thanks to the generous funding from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, NESS's New London Initiative (NLI) has had a very successful year. Thus far in 2019, the NLI has served over 1,200 underserved students in the New London Public Schools.

This past spring 3rd-8th grade students participating in the NLI program had the opportunity to get out on the water during field trips and after school programs. Over 600 students kayaked



Alewife Cove, sailed the Thames River in dinghy sailboats, fished local waters, and explored a local tidal creek- a large majority of the students doing so for the very first time. This past fall, the NLI expanded to serve a new public charter school in New London, the Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC Middle School). Students at ISAAC now have 2 NESS Educators serving in their school providing critical classroom support in science and math. Also, this fall, NESS hosted its 3rd Annual Fishing Tournament, a free community event to expose urban youth to fishing. After the event, one parent remarked that he "loved fishing but, over the past few years, could not find the time to do it." He brought his son to our event and found that his son shared his love of fishing and plans to make more time in the future to go fishing with his son. NESS recently received the results of an independent evaluation of its NLI program for the 2018-2019 school year. The evaluation found that NESS participants were statistically significantly more likely to show improvement on non-cognitive skill measures than comparison students.





# Wissahickon

**CHARTER SCHOOL**

As we wrap up another school year, we are filled with gratitude for the support you have given our school and the opportunities you have provided our students. Just this past week, our Seventh Grade students jubilantly returned from the Kate Svitek Memorial Expedition, a two-day trip to The Discovery Center at the Philadelphia Outward Bound School. The first day of the Expedition was designed to enforce “positive challenges” and included activities such as zip-lining, rock climbing, and an aerial ropes course. The second day was preparation for a five-day Kate Svitek Memorial Expedition overnight camping trip the class will take in the fall as Eighth Graders. The second day featured group games, a hike on some of the Discovery Center’s extensive trails, and a camp craft. All activities were led by highly trained Outward Bound leaders.

We asked these students to share “the best part” of the Kate Svitek Memorial Expedition. Please see below for some of their responses.



*“Overcoming the fears I never knew I had from the beginning.”*

*“The best part was when I was climbing and my classmates and teachers cheered me on.”*



*“The best part of the trip was zip-lining. This is the best part because I took a risk and I felt proud when I finished.”*



**Thank you, Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for giving our students this unforgettable opportunity!**

## Thank You! Thank You!

Once again, the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation received a check in the amount of \$2500 from the Joseph Alexander Foundation. Mr. Alexander’s niece, Randi Windheim serves on the board of the Joseph Alexander Foundation and knew Kate when she was growing up.

**Ladies of Florida...**

**Save the Date**

**Great fun at Evelyn & Arthur’s  
Palm Beach Gardens store**

**Mimosas! Brunch! Seminars! Trunk Shows!**



**February 23, 2020  
11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

**Invitations to follow**



Thanks to the generosity of donors like the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Camp Rainbow served 463 enthusiastic and grateful kids ages 7-14 this year. We administered pre- and post-assessments to evaluate the campers' assimilation of Internal Developmental Assets (IDA). Our goal is to assist campers in increasing their IDA, the "building blocks of healthy development". Studies indicate that youth who possess more IDA have significantly increased chances of resisting high-risk behaviors and of achieving success in school and work.

The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation's grant of \$4,500 was used to cover the costs of 13 campers at Camp Rainbow. The grant allowed Camp Rainbow to accommodate more campers than it would have without the grant funds.

Beginning in March, Camp Rainbow sent out and delivered 3,000 camp applications in English and Spanish to Montgomery County school guidance counselors, social workers, and police officials. In May, we began preparing for the summer season from June 23 to August 2.

This year an expert in mindfulness joined our programming to help our campers develop skills in mindfulness, relaxation, and stress management. We expanded our WiFi coverage, sourced multiple laptops, and brought in people to lead STEM programming with the older campers. The focus was on engineering, problem-solving, and programming. For the first time we partnered with the Chick-Fil-A Leadership Academy to create service opportunities for teens. They helped to prepare camp before the season started. We partnered with a local tech school to create a new lifeguard stand and shelving units to replace old broken dressers. We rebuilt our food warmer, replaced many wood surfaces and railings outside, repainted the pool, and completely replaced the plumbing in one of our bathroom buildings.



My proudest moment of Camp Attaway's nature program this year did not actually take place at Camp Attaway. After years of trying different activities for our counselor in training (CIT) program, I believe that this year we finally hit the mark. Our two CITs this year have been attending Camp Attaway for a combined seven years. It has been fun to watch their confidence grow not only as campers but also as participants in the nature program.

One of our annual nature activities is seed planting. This takes place the first week of camp so that by week three the campers hopefully see the seeds beginning to sprout and grow. This is a great analogy when talking about the Camp Attaway program as we hope that over their time at camp our campers also begin to sprout and grow. Our CITs have participated in seed planting for many years and as I was brainstorming the CIT environmental project for the summer of 2019, I thought to myself they have planted so many seeds they could probably lead the activity.

Because they had attended camp for several years, our CIT veterans were scheduled to spend a week of their Camp Attaway experience assisting in an extended school year classroom. They were tasked with helping the 1st and 2nd graders participate in this summer program. With some practice, review and support from the Attaway CIT counselor, our two CITs were able to take the seed planting activity that we have done for so many years at Camp Attaway and teach it to 20 younger children.

In the field of education, we often talk about the students who are able to teach others are the ones who have truly learned the material. I am so proud of our CITs and the work that they did this summer. They took the lessons that the nature program instilled in them and shared with the greater community. The financial support provided by the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation has truly allowed this program to flourish now not only at Camp Attaway but in the community at large.





**N**orth Cascades Institute is grateful for Kate Svitek Foundation's support of this past year's Mountain School program. Mountain School is the North Cascades Institute's 29-year old residential environmental education program in the North Cascades National Park. On average, American children spend over 7 hours a day in front of

electronic media and just 5 minutes outdoors! This year **over 2,700 fifth graders from 56 area schools** were bussed to the Environmental Learning Center for 3 days and 2 nights to learn about the natural and cultural history of the North Cascades. Spending the majority of their time outside, classes engage in 26 hours of experiential, hands-on activities in science, math, art, social studies, and conservation.

This past Fall, we extended the Mountain School season by three weeks to enable us to add the full Burlington Edison School District. Engaging the entire district embodies the Institute's commitment to equity. In light of disparities in familial income and resources from neighborhood to neighborhood and school to school, we subsidize tuition based on each school's percentage of students enrolled in the federal Free and Reduced School Lunch program. As a district, 49% of Burlington-Edison students qualify for Free & Reduced Lunch and 28% are English Language Learners. Fewer than half Burlington Edison fifth graders are currently meeting state science standards. Time outdoors improves physical & mental health, stress, and academic success. Immersive multi-day experiences, like Mountain School, amplify these outcomes.



**Your support subsidized the cost of Mountain School for Title 1 schools serving a high number of low-income students.** The cost of Mountain School per participant is \$325. Philanthropic support allowed us to subsidize the price of tuition for 96% of schools in 2019. The average tuition price paid by schools this year was \$155/student. **\$3,000 from the Kate Svitek Foundation covered the tuition (room and board) subsidies for one class of 20 students to attend Mountain School.** Support from grantors like the Kate Svitek Foundation allow the Institute

to serve a diverse socioeconomic constituency and instill a love for the outdoors that will stay with students for years to come. **Thank you for making this work possible!**



## Great Schools Partnership

**D**ogwood Elementary Community School and South Knoxville Elementary Community School would like to thank you for the opportunity to send 20 students and a teacher from each school to The Great Smoky Mountain Institute at Tremont (GSMIT.)

Through a community science approach, students gained hands-on experience with real research projects. On their three-day two-night excursion to the park, students were engaged as biologists when they hunted for salamanders in the local streams on GSMIT's campus. They became engineers when they learned how to build a fire in a Cherokee inspired friendship circle. Students then became team minded designers when they brainstormed in small groups planning the layout and components for their ideal national park. They asked a lot of

great questions and held really engaging group discussions. The knowledge that they were helping scientists learn something new about Great Smoky Mountains National Park



became a point of pride for our kids. They recognized they were contributing to something bigger than themselves and were eager to bring that back to their respective schools. Additionally, teachers from both South Knoxville schools were pleased to see their students interacting in collaborative problem solving, and mentioned the benefit these relationships will serve as the kids transition to middle school together.

Thanks to your funding, this trip to Tremont has taken our schools one giant step towards expanding the boundaries of the classroom into the wilderness. Proving that classrooms without walls can provide endless life-changing opportunities for our kids and thus our community. This trip has boosted teacher interest in taking learning outside. Not only has enthusiasm at both schools increased for the development of outdoor learning spaces, but there is also a strengthened partnership that has been fostered between GSMIT and the South Knoxville Community Schools.





The Outdoor Adventure Club (OAC) provides 12 months of outdoor adventure programming for under-represented and low-income youth aged 11-13 in Roanoke, VA. We kicked off the second year of the program with an Outdoor Mentor meeting to allow for all of the “Bigs” to meet one another and prepare for the coming year of activities. The first outing of the twelve-month program took place on November 9 at Mill Mountain Park and Explore Park in Roanoke, VA. Activities during the first month included icebreaker games, a campfire cookout, and canopy tree tour complete with high challenge course elements and zip-lines throughout.

The group also participated in a trail maintenance stewardship project, which included how to identify and remove a non-native invasive plant species, the Amur Honeysuckle. One of the goals of this program is to help the group realize that recreating outside does not always have to happen on warm sunny days and fun can be had outside year round.

One of the Littles said that his favorite part of the first outing was the “ziplines and the frights that came with it.” He said having his “Big” there helped him get through the scary part of the heights and that he was glad he tried it for the first time. He said he is most looking forward to skiing because he has never been before.

We facilitated an Eco-Awareness Survey measuring attitudes toward both pro-conservation and pro-environmental actions to the “Bigs” and the “Littles.” We recorded the baseline scores and will facilitate a second survey at the end of the program, and compare the results. This year’s program includes four returning matches (Big/Little) and six new matches.



The Franklin School of Innovation was a 2019 award recipient of the Kate Svitek Memorial Fund to support providing scholarships to students in need to participate in the school’s 8th and 9th grade adventure trips. By receiving this award, we were able to provide 4 full scholarships and 10 partial scholarships to students who wanted to attend these trips.

The 8th grade Great Smoky Mountain Institute at Tremont (Tremont for short) was a wonderful 3 days and 2 nights adventure trip that provided the opportunity for students to get hands on experiences with elements they learn about in class, such as weathering and erosion. The students took short out and back hikes from base to a waterfall, creeks, and surrounding areas where they were able to see different levels of the rock and discuss what the earth looked like during that time period. During other events the students were able to collect live species of animals from tiny macroinvertebrates to salamanders and examine them under a microscope and identify the species and what key identification features they had. Growth was not only seen academically, but also socially as students had to use team building to achieve goals. This trip prepares the 8th grade students for the more intensive 9th grade Outward Bound trip that comes next year.



The 9th grade Outward Bound trip was an adventure where students embarked on a 4 day expedition in which they backpacked, did rock climbing, navigated trails, participated in a 3-hour solo, prepared their own meals, and slept under tarps. While these were the activities on the surface, what students were really learning was much deeper. Through these activities, students learned to confront their fears, discover new tools for overcoming challenges, believe in themselves like they never had to before, find a personal positive attitude when everything around them was looking down, trust each other fully as they belayed each other on the rock wall, experience true reflection for 3 hours in the wilderness, and most importantly remain a compassionate crew member in the midst of struggle.





Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium implemented an Outdoor Adventure Fall Camp for young children (K-2) at the Lee G. Simmons Conservation and Safari Park located in Ashland, NE., approximately 30 miles from the Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium main campus. The project was created to give lower income at-risk children an opportunity to discover the outdoors through authentic experiences, discovery, and play. By targeting students at a young age, our hope was to develop lifelong advocates for nature and conservation.

Children were selected from families who attend one of the local adopt-a-school after school partnerships. During the weekend camp, students had the opportunity to explore native prairies and animals in Nebraska. Each session, students were exposed to literacy components, hands-on animal activities, and hiking opportunities. Students were exposed to outdoor education in a prairie environment which is very different from their inner-city homes. Materials were provided to students and their families to assist in re-creating their camp experiences in their own yards or at city parks.

Because so many of the students had little to no experience in nature outside of their urban neighborhoods, much of the first hour was spent with the students just being in nature, looking at the trees and the plants, searching for insects and birds, and listening to the sounds of outdoors. Overheard comments included lots of variations of "It's so big," and "What happened to the buildings?"

Students participated in a hike through the 440-acre Lee G. Simmons Wildlife Safari Park that included a mix of wood-walkways, dirt paths, and rocky hills. Animals observed and experienced included Grey Wolves, Barn Owls, a Black Bear, Sandhill Cranes, Eagles, Bison, White-Tail Deer, and even some hands-on time with goats and chicken.

Over the multiple sessions, students grew more comfortable and familiar with being outdoors, which resulted in becoming much more willing to get dirty as they used some of the exploration tools to learn and play. Tools included a compass, bug catchers, notepads for making observations, magnifying glasses, and more. As students found plant and animal life, teachers used the phone-based app "iNaturalist" to help the students identify their findings.

Our goal was for children to spend quality time in nature so that as adults they will want to conserve the Earth and all living things. We believe our goal was met!



# VASE

Thank you for your generous grant award. Your monetary support helped us take 76 sixth-graders on an unforgettable 3-day/2-night trip to the Appalachian Mountain Classroom (AMC) Joe Dodge Lodge at Pinkham Notch, in Gorham, New Hampshire. This trip has become a tradition at our school for the graduating 6th grade class, but the changing demographics of our school and community have made this experience increasingly financially difficult for many families. Even with a significant amount of fundraising, the usual family contribution for this trip would have been a hardship for almost one-third of our students this year. Your grant significantly reduced the burden on our families, and we were able to provide support for all students who wished to attend the trip.

The activities in which the students, teachers, parent chaperones, and AMC field guides participated truly embody the mission of your Foundation. Students spent time each day hiking through the beautiful terrain surrounding the Lodge in the White Mountains, learning about the local ecosystem, and ways they could help preserve our natural resources and be stewards of the environment. In addition to learning about the outdoors, students were also able to engage in fun bonding activities with each other which, since many classmates are attending different junior high schools next year, made this trip a particularly special experience for so many of our students.

Thank you again for playing such an important part in this culminating educational experience, and enabling us to continue this tradition for our students, many of whom have never been able to experience the outdoors in this way.



The Harris Center Environmental Education program is in full swing! Harris Center teacher-naturalists (6) are going into 18 schools this fall semester; many of those classrooms will have follow-up sessions in the spring semester, including 12 additional schools. Approximately 2,000 school children are engaging in our programming this fall semester; 1,000 children will be added in the spring. Children are spending guided time in the natural world with Harris Center

teacher-naturalists, building upon what they have learned in classroom sessions.

Here are some examples of our programming this fall:

- In grade 2 (several schools), children are studying pond and wetland ecology (see photos).
- In grade 4 (PES), children are studying plant adaptations (see photos).
- In grade 4 (Jaffrey Grade School), children are studying flood ecology and the floods resulting from the 1938 Hurricane. Community elders spoke with the children to give firsthand accounts of their experiences in the hurricane (see photo).
- In grade 3 (several schools), children are studying the fall hawk migration, coupled with trips to the nearby Harris Center's Pack Monadnock Raptor Observatory.
- In grade 8 (two middle schools), students are sampling water in neighborhood waterways to determine water quality based on macro invertebrate findings.
- In grade 9 (Conval), high school students are conducting an energy audit on the Harris Center building as part of a heat transfer study.
- In grade 10 (Conval), students are setting up a salamander population survey site using salamander coverboards; data will be sent to SPARCNet's national database.

One student said, "I loved being in the woods. The woods are my home. Our house is my parents' home."

A public school teacher said, "We are so excited to be working with the Harris Center. The Harris Center naturalist was very knowledgeable about owls and conveyed this in an exciting manner. Many students tried calling for owls that night. The naturalist also gave me suggestions for extending the learning."

Harris Center teacher-naturalists are nurturing the next generation of nature lovers, providing children with strength and growth through their engagement with the environment. Nature, in turn, is being given a new generation of prospective protectors.



I can't express sufficiently the gratitude in my heart for the support we have received from you. Your monetary support by way of the KSMF Grant has truly helped us in our efforts to provide opportunity, education, and financial relief for our community youth to get outside and engage in outdoor recreation.

On February 2, 2019, Get Outside had our inaugural event, taking 150 kids up to Brian Head Resort for snowboarding and skiing. About 50% of these kids had never been snowboarding or skiing before, or had been just once or twice. While there was a 536 fee for the trip, there were still kids who couldn't go because of the cost. Support from the KSMF and other grants enabled us to take kids from low-income households who couldn't afford the activity fee.

We have also had numerous events for rock climbing, mountain biking, hiking, scuba diving, wakeboarding and wakesurfing, kayaking, paddle boarding, and other awesome outdoor activities. We also have these youth engage in service as part of the Get Outside program. We had 2 larger service activities. The first was cleaning a trailhead for hiking and mountain biking that has been overrun with garbage over the years. The second was hosting an aid station at the St. George Marathon. We handed out fruit, Gatorade, water, and snacks to the runners while giving moral support. In addition to providing opportunity for these youth, we are providing opportunities for the community to teach and support these youth by donating their time, talents, and gear to these kids. It has been inspiring to see so many members of our community rally behind our efforts. In just 10 months, we have already logged over 800 volunteer hours for our events.





## The College Settlement of Philadelphia

600 WITMER ROAD • HORSHAM, PENNSYLVANIA 19044

To prepare young people to make a positive impact on the world.

In the summer of 2019, in part because of a grant from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, College Settlement Camps of Horsham were able to provide Day Camp and Overnight Camp to 876 children and teens at our 235 acre property. The mission of College Settlement is to make an unique camping experience available to children regardless of their economic situation, and we provide this assistance with direct support to families through our Camper Fund. Day Camp was over enrolled this year, with 318 attending, of which 197 received Camper Fund assistance. Overnight camp had 578 campers, with 108 Camper Fund scholarships awarded.

Our campers are ages 7-14, and come from different cultures, neighborhoods and countries. We have continuously served children from Philadelphia as well as the surrounding counties with summer camping programs for more than 90 years. Day camp and overnight camp are in session from the middle of June to the end of August. We hire over 80 seasonal staff, including international students who bring culturally rich experiences for our campers. The camper's day is filled with activities that include our award winning biking program, swimming lessons, hiking, rock climbing, high and low ropes, life sports, crafts, canoeing and much more. We offer our campers a safe place to enjoy the outdoors, learn about themselves and the environment, gain positive self-esteem and develop leadership skills.

Over the years, our permanent staff have developed a finely honed curriculum that gives children enough personal choice to test and develop skills in preferred areas along with a stable structure that includes checking in with the community and counselors multiple times a day. The combination of caring, individual attention with group and team activities promotes a sense of autonomy and security. As campers master different levels of skills (for instance swimming and boating) they are assisted in whatever next challenge they choose to undertake.



## Grassy Waters Conservancy

Supporting the Everglades in West Palm Beach

215 campers, grades 3 – 8, participated in this summer's program at Grassy Waters Preserve. The program included campers at seven school and community campsites and a day at Grassy Waters Preserve. The goals of the program were to enable the campers to experience and appreciate the natural environment of Grassy Waters Preserve and to help them recognize that the natural environment is all around them and needs to be protected. To achieve these goals, each camp group experienced Project Wild activities at their home campsites and a visit to the Grassy Waters Preserve.

Two college students with majors in Environmental Studies were hired and trained by the staff of the Preserve to work with the students at both their summer campsites and at Grassy Waters Preserve. It was the responsibility of the interns to conduct a pre and post visit to each campsite, teach Project Wild activities which were tailored to the specific environment of each campsite and lead the students through a visit to Grassy Waters Preserve where the campers participated in a Swamp Tromp, Dip netting, and Canoeing activities.

During the Swamp Tromp campers waded into the Preserve and pretended they were members of a Florida Native American tribe as they slogged through the swamp. They learned how plants and animals adapted to live in this habitat, and which species could be used for food, medicine, and to build a shelter.

Through "dip netting" campers collected and observed the tiny marsh creatures that survive buried in the muck and suspended in the water. They learned the different methods each critter developed to survive in this wetland habitat and discussed how they think each animal would be affected by impacts to their habitat, like pollution or changes in water level.

As they learned to canoe, campers explored the Preserve and learned about its history, geology, and the importance of the greater Everglades ecosystem. They learned how wetlands sequesters carbon dioxide and how Grassy Waters Preserve serves as the water source for several of the local cities including the City of West Palm Beach. Each camper was given a reusable aluminum water bottle purchased by the Conservancy and they learned the importance of reusing these bottles rather than using and discarding plastic ones.

"My favorite part was going dip netting, going through the marsh, seeing a great horned owl and learning that all of the animals are an important part of the ecosystem." Alex, 3rd-4th grade camp at Renaissance Charter School

"I went to Grassy Waters and had an amazing time. It was a big risk because I never thought that I'd be in a lake with all types of animals." Kyy, 6th-8th grade camp at Gaines Park Girls Community Camp



**W**ISE's OWLS program gives high school students in Alaska's Copper River Valley the chance to learn outdoor and leadership skills while earning college and career readiness credit with Copper River School District.

OWLS starts with a 4-day introductory expedition, a backpacking trip in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. In early June, we hiked in to Caribou Creek Cabin, a



small backcountry cabin which afforded us a beautiful location for day hikes and lessons, and the benefit of amenities such as outhouse and secure bearproof food storage.

Skills lessons included packing, establishing camp, bear safety, navigating with map and compass, Leave No Trace Ethics, and risk management. We also taught and practiced personal and leadership skills such as group dynamics, conflict resolution, and leadership styles. Time for goal setting, reflection, and personal growth is also an important aspect of this program.

Destin decided to make a goal of becoming an accomplished backcountry chef. The first task was mastering the finicky "WhisperLite" camp stove, which he approached with singleminded determination. A few exciting and fiery moments ensued as he learned to pressurize, prime, and adjust the stove, earning the title of "Whisperlite Whisperer." He then made creative use of the limited ingredients available, serving up some excellent meals.

Throughout the summer, the OWLS kept journals of their personal wilderness adventures. The plan was for them to work together to plan, pack, and lead a second trip in early August, but

a series of schedule conflicts made this impossible. We decided to instead have them take the lead on family trips and document their experiences with photos and journal entries.

Here is what Linnae had to say after taking the lead on her family moose hunting trip:

I think that the planning process went very well. I was most involved in the cooking and least involved in with cleaning the moose we got.

I learned that it is kind of difficult because I was trying to please everyone who was there including me. The most challenging was finding a spot to set up camp, there were hardly any flat areas and there were bugs everywhere! The easiest was actually setting up our camp.

WISE has found the OWLS program to be immensely valuable and satisfying. As well as watching a group of young people grow as leaders, we have the privilege of having them help out with younger students on our programs. We believe that even if they choose not to pursue careers in the outdoors, the lessons in teamwork, self reliance, and resilience will be valuable life skills. We also believe that in every walk of life, people who have learned a stewardship ethic will have a positive impact on their community.



**T**hanks to the generous grant from the Katie Svitek Memorial Foundation, Something Good in the World (SGITW) has been able to continue to offer farm-based educational programs for free throughout 2019, in the Children's Peaceful Garden and on area farms.

SGITW has led monthly farm-based education workshops for refugee children from Central America. Sheltered at Abbott House, while seeking asylum, the students were able to learn how to farm sustainably in a new climate, how to use alternative energy systems, grow their food organically and economically, and supplement their table with healthy fruits and vegetables.

Students from The Sally & Anthony Mann Center, a shelter for traumatized youth, worked with SGITW to design and create their own "Sanctuary Garden" along the principles of our Children's Peaceful Garden. The teen girls at the shelter have been so excited to attract pollinators to their garden, and they have been harvesting their veggies and herbs to prepare healthy snacks.

The Ossining High School participated in our Sustainable Design program at Kitchawan Farm, and applied elements from our Children's Peaceful Garden to design and create their "Mindfulness Garden," to be used for quiet conversation, journaling, and contemplation, as an open space between classes. They chose drip irrigation systems, rounded garden shapes, drought resistant and pest resistant perennial plants, flowers that attract pollinators, birdfeeders, and delineating gardens with natural materials. The students said that they felt more present, more connected to nature, more mindful, when working in the garden.

The "Children's Veggie Garden" was planted by the Harlem Children's Zone students at Glynwood Farm, as they learned how to make their own healthy soil ("worm cake") and plant their own seeds, as well as to learn about honeybees and their products. The students transplanted their veggies into the ground, and learned how to harvest and prepare these into healthy snacks.

Thank you for believing in the importance of access to nature. Whether pulling weeds, hiking in the woods, harvesting fresh veggies, or rolling down a grassy slope, SGITW seeks to help all children to stay connected to joy of nature for as long as possible.

In 2015, at the request of teachers, parents and administrators, Grow Portland added school garden programming to its already robust community garden programs in the region. Since then, Grow Portland has served over 10,000 students in our garden school program; over 50% are students of color, and the bulk of our programming is primarily with low-income schools. We have worked with 20 school communities to improve garden sites and integrate hands-on, culturally responsive, environmental science education into the school day. Grow Portland is the largest provider of such programming in the Portland Metro area.



This fall, our professional educators are engaging 5,000 students each month of the school year, making science and math concepts come alive through hands-on activities coupled with outdoor experiences. By harvesting directly from school gardens, we are able to introduce fresh vegetables in the cafeteria to promote healthy eating choices. Even today, students are tasting local apples, harvesting fall greens, and learning about winter crops and worms. Because of foundations like the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, students discover and interact with the living world right outside our doors.



When asked why Garden School is important, our students responded: *"Because we get to learn new plants and bugs and new stuff to eat."* *"It reminds me of my grandma - she has a garden and grows Chinese vegetables."*

The LEAP team is honored to carry on Kate's efforts and advance the Foundation's mission to help others appreciate the natural world through interaction with the environment. In this pursuit, we operated seven Youth Wilderness Programs in partnership with six Oregon nonprofits between July and September of 2019. A total of 92 participants joined us on YWPs in addition to 25 care providers, case managers, and social workers.

These programs served teenaged participants who are overcoming extraordinary adversity and recovering from life-changing circumstances. YWPs consist of five-day immersive wilderness experiences and navigating whitewater rapids on the Lower Salmon River in inflatable kayaks. Paddling was initially challenging to most participants, but it enabled them to become emotionally invested in their journey and gain a sense of achievement through their progress. Each program began on a stretch of the river that allows participants to slowly gain competency with their boats through a graduation of Class II to Class III whitewater rapids. Participants claimed ownership of their experience and developed resilience by getting back in their boats if they fell out. Ultimately, they adapted to their new environment and felt supported by their peers and care providers.



We've illuminated the powerful stories of participants by collecting pre- and post-program feedback. One participant, returning for her second program, shared that "the bonds and friendships I made on this trip probably saved my life and helped me seek treatment for my depression." The partner staff who accompany each program have also given encouraging updates. Among them, one mental health professional remarked that she "saw growth in one of my clients over the course of 5 days on this program that can take months to accomplish in weekly counseling. The experience of disconnecting from daily stressors and making positive and trusting connections with others is a significant opportunity."

The generous grant of \$2,000 from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation helps us to keep these programs free to all participants and ensures that we can provide a highly-trained guide team, excellent equipment and river-appropriate clothing, and three nutritious meals each day to each participant.

## New Project – Annual Appeal Campaign

After 16 years of raising funds via our calendar/ad book, we realized the era of the ad book was fading away. In 16 years our ad book, the Under the Tent Events and Non-Event Events raised \$1,065,300!! Many, many deserving children and young adults have benefitted from the scholarships we have been able to provide.

This past February, we tried something new for the Foundation. We mailed our first annual appeal letter and it was met with great success. We raised \$52, 533!  
*Thank you to all who supported this project.*



We are deeply grateful for the financial support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation. In 2019, 100 Elk Outdoor Center was able to host 31 schools, 2,298 students, and 286 chaperones at our facility. Thanks to your funding, we were able to provide 10% financial aid to three title 1 schools who brought a total of 207 students for outdoor education. We also provided a 10% discount to a school that brought 74 students this year.

The overarching goal of our ecology hikes is for students to gain an understanding of the world around them and to start forming their personal relationship with it. At the beginning of a hike, we briefly cover general trail etiquette and the leave-no-trace concept. We follow by teaching the students the names and distinguishing features of the dominant trees around them, as well as each species' unique adaptations to the environment, for example the thick bark of a ponderosa pine that allows it to withstand forest fires. To accommodate various learning styles, we teach through a mix of conversation, activities, and games.



One of our guides shared, "From the start, one group had no interest in learning about the outside world, and the kids made their disinterest quite obvious. Instead of continuing with my activities, I put my plans on hold and suggested that we play a round of camouflage to which the children enthusiastically agreed. Once everyone found a hiding spot among the trees growing along the eastern slopes of the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness, the nature of the game forced them to remain still and take in their surroundings. Once the game was over, the children's attitude had changed entirely, and they passionately shared their observations with each other. The opportunity to play and observe nature on their own terms sparked the children's curiosity, and they continued to ask questions well into post-activity snack time."



I would like to again thank you for the generous grant provided to Laketrails Base Camp which enabled 40 youth from Apple Valley High School to attend camp this summer. I would also like to tell you a little about their experience paddling the Ontario waters and camping in wilderness areas of Lake of the Woods (on the Minnesota-Canada border).

The large group was divided into five smaller trip groups that traveled throughout the islands, bays, and inland lakes of Lake of the Woods. Over the course of a 5-day canoe trip, they learned how to paddle, portage, set up camp, build fires, cook over the fire, and much more. Each trip targeted different destinations such as Astron Bay, Chick Lake, Obabikon Bay, Turtle Lake, and Splitrock Island. While not every group reached its goal because of high winds and tough weather conditions that week, I believe each teen experienced a significant amount of personal growth.



Perhaps this short segment from one of the students' journals sums it up best:

*"I am writing this with pride because I know that what I did up north for 9 days was a giant leap out of my comfort zone. To say that a teenager who dealt with and is healing from severe anxiety and depression can find hope in one of the most unlikely opportunities is beyond unfathomable.*

*A year ago I could have NEVER imagined doing this. I was bed ridden for months with severe anxiety and depression, and it got to the point where I couldn't step outside of my own home. But a year later I'm here, blooming with excitement and surrounded by love from the people I met at Laketrails and by the second family my trail group formed. I am beyond blessed and grateful that I was able to experience the gift of Laketrails."*

It's hard to describe the levels of confidence, teamwork, and self-worth that grow from successfully completing a wilderness canoe journey, but all of us at Laketrails would like you to know what a great part you played in developing these characteristics in the Apple Valley teens. Their experience this summer continues to make a positive impact in their school climate this year.





**G**ateway to the Great Outdoors (GGO) was developed to provide low-income students across the US equitable access to comprehensive environmental education. By combining STEM instruction with outdoor learning, GGO enhances the quality of health,

science literacy, and environmental stewardship for children who would otherwise be excluded from this transformative experience. GGO presents children an opportunity to see, hear, taste, and touch more fascinating world than the one they've grown accustomed to.

With the help of the Kate Svetik Memorial Foundation, GGO was able to expand services to an additional GGO school group in fall 2019 at Fiske Elementary School. GGO has coordinated to begin a third school group at a new school, Gale Elementary School, in 2020. The GGO program ran continuously throughout the school year at Fiske Elementary. Each week, mentors came into the science classroom. They taught a hands-on lesson developed to match the students' classroom STEM curricula. GGO offered topics ranging from ecosystems & geology to agriculture & gardening to sustainability & global warming. Monthly outings were created to augment the weekly programming. These journeys included trips to local farms, hiking in state parks, canoe trips down the Mississippi River, and rock climbing. These outdoor adventures made possible by the Kate Svetik Memorial Foundation not only solidified the in-classroom component but enabled the students to learn outdoor skills, develop relationships with fellow classmates and their college student mentors, develop leadership skills, and ultimately, change their perception of science and the world around them.

GGO's innovative approach utilized classroom educators, corporate employees, and college students as volunteer mentors. The passion, talents, and relatable nature of college student mentors motivates the students to not only become active learners but helps them set their sights on pursuing higher education opportunities.



DES MOINES COUNTY IOWA

**W**ith help from the Kate Svetik Memorial Foundation, Des Moines County Conservation was

able to host our first ever Wilderness program for students living in southeast Iowa. The 2019 South San Juan Wilderness Trek is a two-week backpacking trip into one of Colorado's most remote wilderness areas. Financial support from the foundation helped provided equipment and resources needed for six students to participate in this program.

This Wilderness Trek is designed to immerse participants in a unique and exciting outdoor experience. Through a fun, supportive atmosphere, and structured risk-taking, students became more independent, responsible, and learned



to trust themselves and others. Through informal lessons and mentoring, students learned about the natural and human history of the land and acquired valuable outdoor skills. Our Wilderness Trek centered on four core focus areas:

#### **Stewardship:**

During this trek participants worked on a stewardship project designated by the Forest Service. This year's project included trail maintenance along the Opal Lake trail.

#### **Study of Wilderness:**

Throughout this trek, participants were challenged to form a personal definition of wilderness. After reading about different ideas and concepts of wilderness, trek leaders facilitated discussion on the philosophy, importance, and management of wilderness.

#### **Environmental Science:**

Trek leaders and land managers stopped for trail-side lessons whenever the opportunity came up. These mini lessons included aquatic biology, tree/flower identification, fire ecology, and more.

#### **Outdoor Skills:**

Leave No Trace, campsite set-up, backcountry cooking, water filtration, and sustainable camping and backcountry skills were gained.

Without programs that target and engage today's youth in diverse outdoor experiences we can expect to see decreased interest in the conservation and preservation of our wild open spaces and public lands. Programs of this magnitude are rare in Iowa. In order to expose and introduce Iowa students to a wilderness environment, we must take students out of state. Your foundation's support has provided an opportunity never before offered to students living in Des Moines County Iowa.



# Sip and Shop

On February 16, 2019, our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Sip and Shop Event took place at Evelyn & Arthur's Ladies Boutique in Palm Beach Gardens and raised a record breaking \$11,234!! Our fantastic supporters shopped until they dropped which enabled Evelyn & Arthur to present us with a check for \$9,600, the Niche Clothing Company gave a check for \$400 and donations added an additional \$1,234. The Florida supporters of the Foundation never let us down! Thanks one and all!



## 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](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://www.smile.amazon.com) now.

Thank you for your continued support!

# Scarlet Begonias Fashion Show

On October 3, 2019, 188 supporters of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation gathered at the Flourtown Country Club to enjoy a delicious dinner and fashion show sponsored by Scarlet Begonias, a woman's boutique in Flourtown.

The models were impeccably dressed in outfits selected for them by Scarlet Begonias owner, Karen Phelps. A fun night was had by all who attended. The event raised \$8,695. The women shopped at the store on October 4th and 5th raised \$4,800. Raffle sales during the evening raised \$1,105 and the rest came from donations from friends who were unable to attend. Many thanks to all who modeled, came to support the Foundation and shopped.





Dear Donors:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to experience an expedition in Alaska with the National Outdoors Leadership School (NOLS) all thanks to a full paid scholarship given to EMERGE Students. This backpacking expedition has taught me hundreds of lessons that will remain in my life forever; furthermore, my backpacking expedition help me connect with my inner self and nature, alongside meeting a lot of supportive people that became family during my period at Alaska.

During my expedition I felt the most “me” in my lifetime. I have never felt more joyful before the expedition.

Everything one needed was in our backpack living the “simple life” without worries helped me to discover a new lifestyle. We live in a world where the majority of the population is extremely superficial and materialistic, however, the feeling I experience during this expedition away from ‘fashion” and mirrors taught me to appreciate myself more not base on looks but rather on my strength and braveness.

When backpacking in the mountains everyone had the same goal, which was to get to the top of the mountain, to explore the unexplored and to discover a new side of themselves every day exposed to diversity and adverse situations. There was no time to stressed nor a reason to be worried. We were surrounded by wildlife, clear rivers, and gorgeous mountains that made our problems unimportant.

Yes, this experience was extremely challenging, but the challenges where the one’s that was what made the expedition special. Beyond a physical challenge it was also a mental challenge that challenged one to not give up but rather keep pushing. 68 pound of equipment in a backpack, with a group of strangers, and no communication with the outside word can be difficult but is what made me feel free and to be myself. On July 31, 2019 I wrote in my journal “Getting to the top of the mountain feels amazing the pain in your legs that with every step of the way keeps getting more and more intense is what keeps me going just having a different view every day that will not disappoint because everything is amazing. This is not an Instagram picture nor a snapchat story but rather our lifestyle.”

We also had bad days during my time in my expedition but that is what makes me look back and smile because I was happy. On July 28, 2019 I got attacked by bees when I accidentally stepped on their beehive on my way to the restroom. Also, to mention, the time I was the leader of the group and I had fallen down hit my knee on a rock. However, I stood up and keep walking because that is how life is. In adverse situations one should stand up and keep going.

Again, thank you so much for all the people that gave me the opportunity to experience this unforgettable and beautiful expedition. I would have never been able to experience this expedition without you. Your generosity has made my life more diverse and for that I am so grateful. May god bless you and your family.



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!**



**Shopping Event**

October 1<sup>st</sup>  
October 2<sup>nd</sup>  
October 3<sup>rd</sup>

1512 Bethlehem Pike  
Flourtown, PA

**Hope you all can join us!!!!**



Thank you for providing support to Neighborhood Bike Works' Youth Bike Education and Empowerment Program (YBEEP). Your contribution of \$4,500 in 2019 enabled us to increase mobility for young Philadelphians, introduce youth to 'new' outdoor places, and provide meaningful job training opportunities to 27 Neighborhood Bike Works youth graduates.

During FY2019, our programs such as Freedom Riders, Group rides, a camping trip, and Ride Club all served to expose youth to natural areas and encourage physical activity. Eighty-eight percent of youth surveyed reported that they plan to ride more as a result of their NBW class. We are especially proud of this enthusiasm for biking because youth exercise rates in Philadelphia are lower than that recommended by health experts.

According to a Philadelphia health initiative Food Fit Philly, only one in five Philadelphia teens gets the recommended daily hour of physical activity. By leading group rides to destinations such as John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge, Bartram's Garden, and other sites, students learn about new outdoor places that they can return to again and again. These sites are all within reach – our programs provide youth their own bikes, the knowledge to maintain them, and ride destinations within easy biking distance.



In FY2019, we distributed 158 bikes to youth graduates. This is a significant increase from 95 bikes distributed in FY2018. Each of these bikes represents transportation, independence, and fun.

In addition to our programs serving easily observable goals, they also build friendships, confidence, and mobility. Two Earn-A-Bike students captured this well, offering the following statements:

*"A bike means freedom to me." – Lucce, Earn-A-Bike student Fall 2019*

*"I learned how to ride a bike. I was so scared but I learned how to ride my bike on the first day and I am so grateful and thankful for this program." – Student at Girls High, Spring 2019.*



A Waterkeeper (LAW)'s Creeks to Coast program provided 116 high school students in LA County with hands-on and experiential learning opportunities in our waterways. We served 4 title I high schools in historically underserved areas: Aspire Pacific Academy and Aspire Ollin University Prep (Huntington Park), Los Angeles Academy of Arts and Enterprise (Northeast LA) and the New Earth Mentor-Mentee Program (tailored for previously incarcerated youth).

All students then participated in data collection at the LA River and on an MPA Watch Boat-Based Survey trip. We took students – many of whom had never visited the LA River or the ocean before – to more natural segments of the LA River, where they could see the waterway surrounded by trees and open space instead of the concrete and freeways that surround segments closer to our neighborhoods. After collecting samples at the river, students joined a MPA Watch trip, where they



helped our team collect observational data of human activity in LA's Pt. Vicente/Abalone Cove MPA. Students often saw sea lions, whales, sometimes literally thousands of dolphins, and a variety of other oceanic wildlife in their natural habitats. Although Creeks to Coast prides itself in its educational rigor, we cannot describe the excitement and reconnection to nature students experienced as they interacted with the water.



At the end of each semester, students completed reflection projects using the experiences and data they developed in the field. While some undertook research projects exploring environmental issues that impact their communities, others wrote and performed songs, created art pieces, or wrote essays to showcase what they learned. Several students also expressed interest in exploring environmental studies further. We thank the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for helping our team ignite a passion for the environment in our youths while developing the next generation of environmental stewards.



# Grateful CAP Students Write About Their Outward Bound Experiences

The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation offered my school 10 scholarships that allowed students to attend NCOBS. I really admire the foundation because it gives city kids, like me, the opportunity to experience something we didn't actually know existed. My name is Rachel Maldonado and I'm from Philadelphia. I never grew up in a good safe neighborhood, but I felt safe in my school and outside in nature. It was Kate's dream to educate and help kids like me find a new part of themselves. Family is extremely important to me and clearly this foundation as well. Keeping them in my mind and heart is what kept me stable throughout the two weeks I picked. A simple "thank you" isn't enough to express my gratitude. I learned how to paddle, hike, and to cook without a microwave or toaster. I don't think I could have made it to NCOBS without the help of a sponsor. My knowledge wouldn't have grown without my guidance counselors. At first, all I wanted to do was go back to provincial life with my phone and shower, but meeting people from Chicago, New Jersey, Washington DC and China made me feel at home. They made me feel welcome. Like a family. In conclusion, thank you so much for my new knowledge, mindset of myself as a person, and a new family. – Rachel



... It was very fun, but challenging at the same time. Something that challenged me the most was being on my own for solo day and the 7 mile run we had on day 13. Being on my own at night for a while was really hard to handle because of how scary it is. The 7 mile run was challenging for me. – Lynnette

... Outward Bound was a fantastic experience. Being in the woods for such a long time seemed impossible. At times it was frustrating, but overall the experience was truly phenomenal. All the memories I've made like hiking, rock climbing, and simple things like sitting around a campfire were without a doubt priceless. – Marcos

... I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you for allowing me to partake in such a life changing experience. Being on course for 22 days (3 weeks) was very exhausting, but fun. We rock climbed for three days and I was so afraid but conquered my fears. – Semaj

... The 22 days were amazing. The experiences and good moments each day of the course has changed my life. I feel so proud for accomplishing all my expected goals and for having a great time every single day during the course. I learned a lot of useful skills for my future. – Gregory

... This was an absolute culture shock. I would have never been able to experience North Carolina Outward bound without you. I am so grateful for the opportunity and scholarship. Thanks to you, I was able to face my fear of heights with rock climbing. My favorite memory took place on Table Rock. It was while rock climbing that my instructor and crew mate encouraged me to lean and look back and I'm so glad I did. The view was absolutely breathtaking. – Alexis

... While at NCOBS, I rock climbed, backpacked, and canoed on white water. Everyday was a challenge. Whether I felt homesick or just not up to hiking three miles with a heavy backpack, I still pushed myself to complete everything that came my way. This journey has taught me a lot and led me to finding how to live my life and step outside my comfort zone. Life is short and many take it for granted, including myself. The experience was unlike anything I ever experienced and will never forget the time spent here. I've learned many things that helped me physically and mentally. – Destiny

... I got to hike, rock climb and even bush waxing. I was also given the chance to face my fears with many challenges that I had to overcome. One of those fears was hiking. I never hiked before. It was extremely hard. The hardest part was going uphill. I learned many things during my time on course. For example, I learned self-leadership, self love, and most importantly self motivation. I also learned how to take ownership of my actions. Due to you sponsoring me, I was given the chance of a lifetime, and I am extremely appreciative. – Mark

... The biggest challenge that I faced was rock climbing. I was very afraid and thought that I could not do it, but with the support of my great instructor, Nat, I continued to try and finally I got to the summit. I realized that I am stronger than I think I am and I can do anything I put my mind to. I also learned to keep trying and to never give up. – Crystal

I would like to express my appreciation for making it possible for me to attend the North Carolina Outward Bound Course. It has been a great experience that I have been able to take advantage of by improving my physical and social skills. This course of Hiking and Rock Climbing has helped me to push myself out of boundaries that life in the city puts upon many people. In the city of Philadelphia, many people do not have the opportunity to hike trails and see beautiful views from the peak of mountains. Seeing many of these views on a daily basis made me appreciate the wildlife and nature that we are surrounded by. Not only that, but it gave me a sense of peace that I haven't felt in a long time. Also, hiking made me realize how strong I am physically and mentally. I came to the understanding that if I am able to believe in myself rather

Also, hiking made me realize how strong I am physically and mentally. I came to the understanding that if I am able to believe in myself rather



than doubt my potential, then I can do so many things. From hiking with a heavy backpack to rock climbing. I hiked, in one day, a total of 6 miles, which I thought was an amazing feat on my part. I rock climbed for an amount of three



days which was terrifying at first, but with the assistance of my instructor and climbing specialists, I completed my task. I had the support and cheering of my teammates during the many times I hung from the rope trying to reach the top of the rock. If it wasn't for their support and love I would have given up easily. Throughout these events I was able to realize that I actually mattered to other people rather than being similar to an "extra" in a movie. At the beginning of the program I thought I was not worth enough for people to even listen or communicate with. Negative thoughts such as this one demolished my self-esteem and how I viewed myself. During this course I became aware of these negative thoughts while also changing my perspective on certain situations which enabled me to socialize more with my teammates. Furthermore, the later led me to view myself in an entire different perspective with the help of my instructors. Finally, this one lifetime opportunity has changed how I think of myself in a more progressive and positive way which helps me understand the unlimited things that I am capable of accomplishing.

– Gabriel



First Descents (FD) remains grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for its support of life-changing outdoor adventure programs and ongoing psychosocial supportive care for young adults impacted by cancer. Together, we have inspired meaningful philanthropy and community creation to positively impact the lives of hundreds of survivors.

First Descents is a proven low-cost, non-medical healthcare intervention with a vision to become the global leader in adventure-based healing. To address the unique psychosocial effects of a cancer diagnosis at a young age, FD provides all-inclusive, week-long, multi-day, and single-day adventure programs nationwide.

Program offerings include a range of activities designed to instill healthy lifestyle habits, cultivate social connection, and empower participants. Ultimately, exposure to unforgettable outdoor challenges pushes participants' limits and initiates an organic healing process, thus allowing them to reconnect with their bodies and regain self-efficacy often challenged by cancer.

The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation plays an integral role in improving survivorship and quality of life of young adult patients. Awarded funding helped fuel a banner year for FD, providing more than 1,525 unique experiences across 168 adventure-based programs nationwide in 2019. Specifically, the Foundation's generous grant of \$2,500 provided direct support towards FD's survivorship programming in Oregon. Of note, FD executed 12 weeklong and local multi-day programs in Oregon serving more than 200 young adults. Multi-day programming supported by the Foundation included a rock climbing program at Smith Rock State Park and a surfing program in Pacific City.

First Descents is grateful for the opportunity to align with the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation's philanthropic interest in community initiatives, health and human services, and outdoor adventure to serve young adults impacted by cancer. Your belief in the healing power of adventure creates more opportunities for FD to scale programs and serve more survivors in the places they call home. Thank you for making our work possible!





Camp Kesem at Stanford offers a free weeklong camp for children with a parent who is currently in treatment for cancer, is in remission from cancer,

or has passed away from cancer. Campers build friendships, gain strength from peers facing similar challenges, and discover their own resilience. Beyond this magical week, counselors, campers, and their families gather at quarterly reunions, at camper and counselor-hosted events, and are present through families' hardest moments to form a year-round community.

In 2019, Camp Kesem at Stanford met, and often exceeded, the following four goals set by the leadership team, as measured by exit surveys: one, create a community in which all campers build friendships and gain support from peers; two, student counselors will serve as caring role models and will foster an atmosphere of trust and respect for campers; three, Outdoor Leadership Program campers (aged 14-16) will feel empowered to confidently face difficult situations and to lead their peers through them; and four, Camp Kesem at Stanford will foster a supportive community present even after the week of camp.

As one parent wrote of her child's experience with Camp Kesem, "There is a stigma regarding cancer [...] People are hesitant to bring it up. But Camp Kesem is a community built around cancer, a special one that you feel privileged to belong to. Whether you talk about it or not, there is a common understanding of how you got to where you are, and that you are part of the community. Camp Kesem put him at ease with what happened to him and set the stage for him to move forward."

For many children affected by a parent's cancer, Camp Kesem is the only place in their lives where this tragic experience can serve as a commonality. Even parents oftentimes cannot understand the experience their child is going through as well as peers at Camp Kesem can. We sincerely thank the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for their generous support of Camp Kesem at Stanford's efforts to empower children of these families to develop the tools and community needed to process their cancer experience.

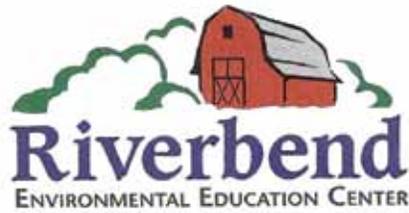


Touching, smelling, hearing and seeing, pre-school age children take in all that they know through their senses. Combine this sensory learning with natural curiosity and you have the perfect audience for teaching science. Bucks Audubon was very grateful to be able to continue our Head Start Science Enrichment program this year for 12 classrooms of three to five year olds, about 240 children, in Lower Bucks County.

Throughout the four-part, in-class program, we had the children running around flapping their "wings", singing songs about birds, and practicing the calls of local birds, like the Barred Owl's "who cooks for you" call. The Bird Explorer curriculum is full of these activities that engage the students with the topic and help to make learning fun. By incorporating developmentally appropriate activities, including songs, stories, movement, touchable artifacts, and crafts, the pre-school children receive a wonderful introduction to local birds and how birds' senses compare to humans. The children love learning about the large eyes of an owl and how they can't move them from side to side like we do, or the fact that most birds have no sense of smell but turkey vultures can smell things up to one mile away.

This wonderful program, in its fourth year, has become a favorite of the teachers at the Lower Southampton Early Learning Center. The generous support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation allows us to bring this truly meaningful program to children from low-income families. Many of these families do not have the opportunity to provide this type of enrichment experiences for their children. Thank you so much for your support!





This summer, Riverbend welcomed four habitat management interns who worked together gaining hands-on, outdoor experience on our thirty acre preserve in Gladwyne, PA.

Thanks to the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, we were able to fully support four internship positions, providing college students studying in environmental fields with sought-after, real-world experiences. The interns each brought their own unique perspective and love of nature to their time spent here.

Their experience focused on woodland restoration work that included planting trees, maintaining trails, and removing invasive plants and vines. This work is invaluable to us as it helps us to maintain and improve the landscape for the benefit of learning and to support a healthy habitat for wildlife to thrive. As the summer interns removed acres of invasive vines, planted many trees and native plants, they gained environmental stewardship skills, plant care and identification and tackled issues such as storm water management, climate change, and sustainable land use.



## Strayer Middle School Students attend Pre-Oceanography Program at Chincoteague Bay Field Station

Students from Strayer Middle School learned about the marine ecosystem during their pre-oceanography program at Chincoteague Bay Field Station located in Wallops Island, Virginia, near Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Assateague Island National Seashore, and NASA's Wallops Island Launch and Flight Facility. The program included laboratory and field experiences at all of these locations, following a comprehensive approach to studying the marine environment and their role in conservation. Field trips included a boat trip to sample chemical, physical, and biological aspects of the marine environment as well as explorations of a salt marsh, protected barrier island beaches, and an intertidal zone.

### Student Testimonials:

*"The instructors opened my eyes to things about the environment I never noticed before."*

*"This trip exposed me to the diversity of wildlife and how I can help to save all of the species."*

*"I've heard that there are five people and five events that shape a child into the adult they become. This trip may have been one of those five events. Thank you for the unforgettable adventure."*





Funds from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation enabled Green Valleys Watershed Association to plan and obtain quality guest presentations for our eight weeks of our 2019 summer Nature Day Camp. The programs assisted K through 7th grade campers to better understand and appreciate what our natural world has to offer. Here are descriptions of a few of our excellent programs:

**Willistown Conservation Trust – Blake Goll, Education Coordinator for the Trust,** presented an informative talk on local songbirds, as well as how to help create and conserve habitats. Blake also discussed the method and importance of bird banding, and shared the equipment with the campers.



**Cold-Blooded Ideas – Phil Witman** brought his extensive collection of live, local and exotic, amphibians and reptiles. The children learned more about the life cycles of these animals, as well as their adaptations and habitat needs.

**Robyn Wood, Watershed Educator – Robyn** helped campers learn more about water use and conservation, with hands-on activities from watershed curriculums that engaged campers in their learning.

**Indian Run Environmental Education Center – Center staff** shared a three-toed box turtle and a garter snake to teach campers about conservation of native Pennsylvania species, and the laws and issues faced when wildlife are taken from their homes.



Once the leading steel producer in the US, Johnstown is now ranked as the poorest city in Pennsylvania. In the advent of economic decline, the immense outdoors recreation opportunities that envelop the city are seen as the great hope for revitalization. Many of its waterways and landscapes, however, remain tarnished from the industrial past. Moreover, education and access to outdoors activities are limited, particularly for much of the youth population facing hardship in their lives. With support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, the First Waves Johnstown Program provided solutions for engaging underserved youth in outdoors recreation and empowered them to contribute to the conservation of the region's watersheds.

The program began with on-water workshops that employed the pursuits of river surfing and whitewater paddleboarding to engage local teens. Volunteers from local paddling clubs provided water-safety and 1:1 mentorship for the youth participants.

The students learned to surf standing waves and descend whitewater rapids. Their self-esteem swelled as they overcame challenges and embraced new experiences. One student explained, "You're scared at first but once you hit the water you're fine!" Another described, "Everyone should come to first waves. It's amazing. It's scary at first but you're going to do great."



In addition to learning to paddle and surf, the workshops provided participants with an education in the art of filmmaking. They learned to document their experiences using cameras, microphones, and other filmmaking equipment. Each student orchestrated interviews, shot video of the action, and ultimately used professional editing software to create their own short-films.

Furthermore, First Waves integrated an inaugural water-sampling workshop to establish base and continuous data on stream health. The students learned to use various instruments to assist in the study. Lastly, First Waves continued its Native Tree Planting Program at Greenhouse Park. The students learned about watershed ecology and how trees benefit the environment and daily lives. Next, they worked in teams to plant native trees along the Stonycreek River.

By connecting river surfing with elements of conservation and education, First Waves has forged a path for Johnstown's youth to influence and improve the city's present and future.





**T**hank you so much for your generous grant award in support of our 2019 7-Day Outdoor Adventure for students from Newark! As a result of your support, we were able to have thirteen students ages 11 to 13 from schools all across Newark have access to an affordable, enriching, week-long outdoor experience that had them

visit numerous sites from August 6 to August 12. The students on the program had the opportunity to experience several areas in our Wildcat Mountain Wilderness center within Wawayanda State Park, including the Monksville Reservoir. For many students on the trip, it was their first experience venturing outside of the City of Newark and having the opportunity to spend six nights camping out under the stars. During the week-long course, participants hiked an average of 3 to 5 miles per day in a variety of scenic outdoor settings.

As part of the trip, the students had the chance to engage in a wide range of outdoor activities, including camping, hiking, canoeing, swimming, and archery. Throughout the experience, they kept a journal highlighting many of the new experiences they had and skills they were learning. A few of the trip highlights included the students learning how to set up tents, how to paddle, how to build a fire from scratch, and of course making s'mores. Despite some rain throughout the 7-day course, the students got first hand experience in learning how to stay safe and sheltered in the rain, and summed up their learning experience in that regard with two great quotes: "You never know what to expect" and "When life gives you lemons, balance them."

Your support was instrumental in helping to provide this outdoor experience to Newark students who otherwise would not have access to these types of opportunities. Because of your support, they were able to experience outdoor activities across the state, learn new skills, and develop invaluable leadership skills and newfound confidence. One of our core values in our Wildcat programming and outdoor courses is "Challenge By Choice" - thank you for helping us provide this amazing opportunity for reflection, challenge, and growth to the students on this course!



**Y**our support of Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Philly STRIDE (Strengthening Transformative Relationships in Diverse Environments) for the summer of 2019 is deeply appreciated. Through your generosity, you promote the value of inclusion, which is so central to our BYM camp ethos. At our camps, we work to promote community and equality while upholding the values of integrity, simplicity and peace.

Philly STRIDE campers attended Catoctin Quaker Camp throughout all three summer sessions. Nestled in the Catoctin Mountains just north of Frederick, Maryland, the camp offers serene opportunities to enjoy nature through hiking, swimming, climbing and canoeing. Although the camp is located adjacent to protected Maryland State forests, Catoctin Quaker Camp itself offers 383 acres of woodland. In addition to many cabins, the camp houses an infirmary, small lodge, dining hall, bath-house, craft building, creeks, a field for sports, basketball area, a pond, vegetable garden, and several fire circles. Campers spend their days not only exploring outdoor activities, but also in service projects, chores, and singing. Spiritual development is nurtured through daily silent worship at the fire circle, regularly scheduled campfires, and in less formal ways by example and through continuous sharing of care and love.

Altogether, seven STRIDE campers benefitted by their summer experiences at Catoctin Quaker Camp. Ranging in ages from eleven to fourteen years, our STRIDE campers included four female and three male participants. Not only do these youth from the Philadelphia area gain experiences at Quaker camp that they otherwise might not encounter, but they also enrich the camp experience for others. Again and again, feedback from camp participants touts the value of the community engendered by its diverse members. Please peruse the camp feedback quotes at the close of this report.

Feedback from our immediate STRIDE summer campers was recorded by our camp staff and volunteer drivers:

Allegra: "Hi! Had a super time dropping off Sophie and Lendsey yesterday. Sophie's mom Ivonne is awesome!!! So excited about camp, about Philly, Puentes, life, etc. We had a great drive together. Sara Hunsberger, Joaquin and Joni Jeter were a great welcoming committee, as was their counselor Clare and everyone else. Here are a couple pics from Ivonne (my phone was dead at camp)."

Peter: "Campers delivered safely! Their moms were so sweet and so thankful they almost had me in tears when I dropped them off. Speaking of which, Sophia has some tears as she hugged her counselors goodbye, and Lendsey (who is very quiet) said, "I love Catoctin!" with a big smile when we talked about them returning next summer. I think we've got these two hooked! Made me very thankful for all of you and all the work we all put in during the year!"





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*We would like to hear from you. Please consider a gift to the KSMF that will bring us one step closer to delivering Kate's dream. We welcome suggestions or ideas regarding fundraising events or programming. Perhaps you have a unique outlook or proposal, a special contact in the environmental or wilderness fields, or know of an organization or student in need of our support.*

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