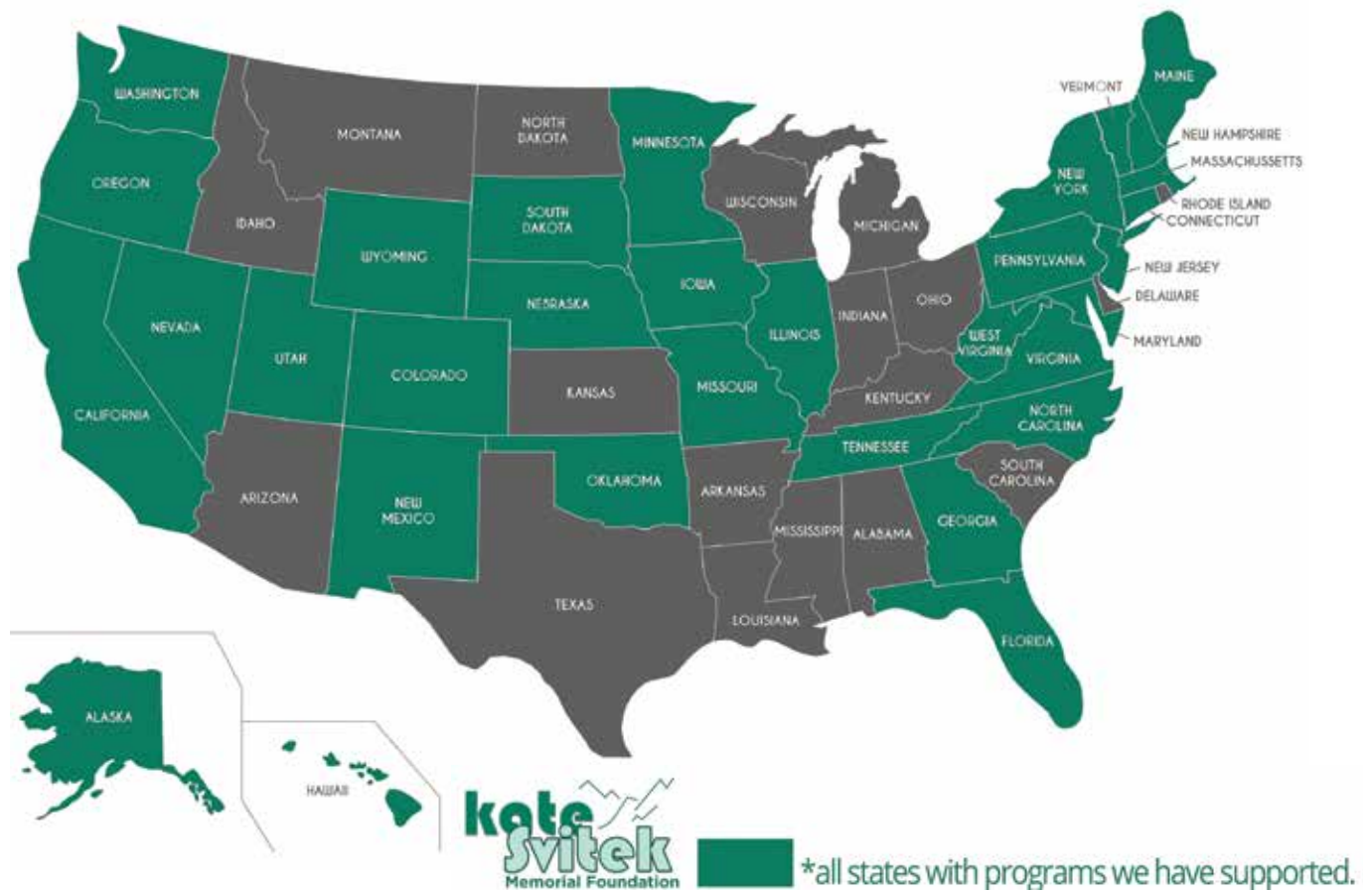




Nationwide Impact!

In 21 years, there have been 91 programs in 32 different states who have benefited from grants received from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation. Thousands of children and young adults have experienced the great outdoors because of Kate's dreams for her future.



This year we received 51 requests and gave out 42 grants. There were nine new programs including Achieve Tahoe (CA, NV), Linn County Conservation (IA), Living Tree Alliance (VT), Paradox Sports (CO), Riversport (OK), Saddle of Love (UT), San Diego Coast Keepers (CA), Second Chance Outreach (WA), and Something Good in the World (HI). The two new states are Hawaii and Oklahoma.

Message

Dear Friends,

I don't want to sound "like a broken record" but it is just so important for me to once again thank you, our amazing generous supporters, in this annual column. Your grass roots support helps us raise the money that allow Kate's dreams become a reality.

Our Annual Appeal as of December 20, 2022, raised a whopping, record-breaking \$69,886.17. Sip 'N Shop 5 raised \$6,443.51. Grants raised \$2500. Contributions raised \$7,831.69. Cards an additional \$828.09 and Amazon Smile raised \$268.18.

This year, we raised a grand total of \$87,757.64 and granted \$178,700 to 42 different programs. I know Kate would be smiling her beautiful smile to know how many thousands of children her Foundation has impacted since it's inception.

With our deepest gratitude,

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

Thanks to Damon Kardon, our social media guru, who sends out amazing monthly updates! If you do not receive them and want to, please send your email to Ellen at esvitek@comcast.net.



Adventure Works of DeKalb County is so grateful for your generous support in the amount of \$3800 this year. Your award this year gave us the opportunity to hire folks from the Trickster Cultural Center in Schaumburg, IL to learn more about Native American traditions and healing practices. Adventure Works

seeks to invite more diversity into our organization while learning how to be culturally responsive in the process. Tristan Podlasek (Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe) provided a very special training in how to erect a tipi. It was a much bigger challenge than any of us anticipated, and it provided a team building experience for our staff.

The folks at the Trickster Cultural Center educated us on proper uses of a tipi for people who are not Native American as well as what parts of their traditions could be incorporated into our adventure therapy groups and those elements that are off limits to people who are not Native American. Gina (Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation) and George (Yaqui, Mexican tribe) from the Trickster Cultural Center trained us in how to facilitate Talking Circles, which can be used to bring a group together to engage in healthy dialogue, conflict resolution, problem solving and restoring connection. This method of collective healing has been so beneficial to our youth and the greater community in DeKalb County. We've hosted many talking circles in the tipi using the backpack chairs we purchased with your grant as well. Talking circle groups this summer included elementary aged, middle school and high school aged youth along with caregiver groups, professional groups and our staff.

We are so grateful for your continued support and the impact your gift has had on our community!



One of the beloved annual traditions at Explorations Academy is when the Final X. Middle Schoolers headed off to Olympic National Forest and High Schoolers to the part of Stehekin that crosses with the Pacific Coast Trail. The name Stehekin comes from a Salishan word meaning "the way through." The town of Stehekin sits at the very top of Lake Chelan, in the middle of the North Cascades wilderness. It is both a geographical passage through the mountains and a cultural passage back in time. High School Faculty planned 2 different itineraries for this year's Final X; one focusing on history and the other on ecology of the Stehekin Valley and this unique passage through Washington's cultural and natural legacy. All students had opportunities to practice and lead in the areas of navigation, communication, self-awareness, collaboration, compassion, and courage.

In addition, they worked with Stehekin Fire department to eradicate invasive species and to ensure the area remains accessible to future groups. The trip was a resounding success with 100% of participating students earning credit for this course. We thank all the supporters of the school and especially the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for helping to make outdoor learning excursions accessible and for ensuring that similar opportunities will exist for future generations.



Living Tree Alliance hosted a two week fellowship for four young adults in their early 20s leading up to Living Tree Alliance's annual harvest festival. The fellows lived in community housing

provided by Living Tree Alliance. They gathered together each day for learning, preparing farm fresh meals, engaging in meaningful connection to nature, and involvement in the greater community. Each of the fellows held one of the eight main volunteer positions, to run our community festival which welcomed in more than 100 people to the land for a peak foliage weekend on the farm. In their preparations, they made art from our woodlot, harvested the fall crops, prepared garden beds for the next season, created signs, prepared healthy meals, designed programming and did the physical work together to set up the weekend community festival. Living Tree educators provided the fellows with multiple experiential educational workshops, and field trips to local hikes and nearby apple orchards. Fellows were introduced to the local trail network and were taught to make fires, chop wood, grow herbal medicines and lead outdoor art and farming programs for field trip participants ranging from 3rd-7th grade.



Their help was essential for not only running the festival but for bringing young adult energy to Living Tree's programming and to our community farm days. In addition, their thoughtful and mature feedback provided us with valuable feedback to continue building programs that bring both respite, inspiration and outdoor service opportunities to the leaders of tomorrow.



We provided them with connection to nature and the outdoors, environmental education, and skills for community living. The Fellows left with increased skills for running outdoor educational and community programs. In addition to engaging them while they were at the farm, we were able to engage the fellows before they arrived with some additional zoom education and community building activities. We greatly appreciate your support for this pilot project, and hope to continue to expand on it and offer this program again next fall.

The grant money from Kate Svitek helped cover the costs for housing, food, and education during the young adult fellowship pilot program.

Sip 'n Shop On February 27, 2022, the 5th Annual Sip and Shop Event was held at Evelyn and Arthur in their Palm Beach Gardens store. The ladies who attended had a fun afternoon shopping and Evelyn and Arthur gave back 20% of the purchases for a total of \$6,000. An additional \$443 was raised in donations

With the support of our South Florida friends over the past five years, the foundation has raised \$43,976. at these events.

Thanks to Evelyn and Arthur and their wonderful team of sales ladies and our own volunteer fashionistas Marcia Markoff and Bernice Glaser.



Ladies of Florida...

Come to

EVELYN & ARTHUR

*10937 N. Military Trail
Palm Beach Gardens*

on

February 12th, 2023



Meets

SIP & SHOP VI

Join us from 11am-4pm. Shop Sip n' Shop VI then attend your Super Bowl LVII party in style!

20% of all purchases given to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation



Grateful CAP Students Write About Their Outward Bound Experiences

"For me, this experience was mostly good. Some of the good things were the time we had to ourselves without having to worry about anyone besides ourselves and the things that we had to do. I also liked the activities we did, such as the walks because we are surrounded by nature and we had time to think about our feelings, emotions, and we shared among the group singing and talking. Also when we climbed the walls it was an activity that was a challenge for our bodies and we thought that we couldn't do it. And I also liked that we had days when we were the leaders of the group and having that role gave me that confidence when I saw the result of my participation in that role. I really liked it and I'm grateful because I found myself and it opened my mind, freeing me from some thoughts in me." ~ Angel

"I felt safe because whenever there was something dangerous they made sure the group was group safe. I grew so much from this experience because I learned how to adapt to different things outside my comfort zone. Another thing I enjoyed was working with a group because they made me feel like I could be myself. Also I learned to use the 4 pillars and can use them in my personal life. These 4 pillars could help me get through life and problem solve if needed. I feel like the course was an eye opener for me because I surprised myself and others. It also was an experience that you can't get anywhere else and made me realize that there's more to the world than just the city and the internet. This experience is something that I value greatly." ~ Noah

"This trip has been an amazing and different experience. There were a lot of ups and downs but we made it through happily and with smiles on our faces. This trip brought a lot of amazing views and entertaining activities. Some activities that I enjoyed from Outward Bound were rock climbing and the race. The rock climbing activity taught us the value of teamwork and how to overcome adversity. I would recommend Outward Bound to anyone that wants to have an escape or to someone that wants to have a new experience. I am forever grateful to have been selected last year to go to Outward Bound because it was one of my favorite things I have ever done." ~Imanah

"This experience changed me physically and emotionally. I pushed myself a lot throughout hiking. I was one of the slowest hikers in my crew and I felt like a burden but my crew members and instructors pushed me to not give up. Going uphill was very hard but I got through the normal hikes quickly. The support that I was shown was amazing. I felt very accomplished when we made it to our destination. Their support definitely helped me meet this accomplishment. This experience has also pushed me a lot emotionally. I missed my family so much and it was hard adjusting to a different environment. Having a support group that was feeling the same kind of emotions helped me power through it. We were able to talk to each other and depend on each other when we were feeling down. Overall, I had many great experiences. This was an opportunity of a lifetime. I am so glad that I had this experience." ~ Kajiah

"I don't regret the decision to go to North Carolina. I enjoyed every bit of it. Despite some of the hardships, it was fun because I had one of the best crew mates. Our first day there was very hard on all of us, we were all trying to get to know each other and adjust to a new environment. We learned so much. The instructor taught you everything the first day, and by the end of the day, we already knew how to do half

of the things they taught us, such as putting up our tarps and the bear hang. The tarp is where you sleep and the bear hang is where you put all of the things that contain smell, such as the food to avoid bears from reaching it. Each day you would move from one sleeping place to another, and it involved a lot of teamwork. Each person had to carry bags of food, water bags, and other necessary stuff, and we were supposed to leave the camp with no trace. It is very hard because most parts of the woods are gradient, meaning some trails are going up or going down.



You tend to forget you are walking because of how beautiful some parts of the woods are. If you were high enough you could see the mountains or waterfalls, also the air was very fresh despite how hot it was. Once you get to your new sleeping area, you start unpacking and organizing everything you have in your hiking bag. You and your crew mates have to visualize where the tarps are going to places, where the kitchen area is going to be, and where the bear hang is going to be placed. Everyone works together, you never feel left out. The nighttime was always the best time of the day, you aren't carrying heavy hiking bags, you don't have to do many tasks and you don't have to wear those heavy hiking boots. Everyone is just talking, laughing, and relaxing. Before going to bed, everyone sits in a circle and tells everyone something they liked about the day or what or who they are grateful for.



I looked forward to those little talks because everyone got to talk and it helped build confidence and trust with one another. This expedition was very hard but your crew mates and instructors are there to help you out. You'll never feel alone or left out if you speak up and communicate with one another. The journey would've never been fun without them. They will be your backbone, your friend, and a shoulder to cry on. If you love a challenge and want to experience a new environment and world outside of Philly, do this. You will leave North Carolina with loads of new experiences and memories." ~ Adalis

"Throughout this course, my crew mates taught me not to judge a book by its cover. At the beginning of the course, I felt like I was only connected to one or two other crew mates since we already knew each other and were pretty good friends. While being here with people I see everyday but don't speak to, I got the chance to meet them formally and

make a new friend. From this experience I gained a new perspective on my way of life. I learned to voice my opinions and allow myself to be helped, despite my pride and ego. Although we all went to school together I didn't get to know the amazing people behind the faces I saw every day. One of my most memorable experiences was rock climbing on the edge of a real cliff with my friends and getting to the top to see the view. Being able to experience that sort of beauty among others going through what I was going through as well was something amazing. Throughout my nine days of Outward Bound, I gained a new friend that I now not only see everyday but know the beautiful person. I am grateful to have had this experience and for the way it helped me grow as a person and as a nature-lover. If someone is given the opportunity to attend Outward Bound, I highly recommend it." ~ Gil

"I felt safe because of Michelle and Sean. They took very good care of me and I am super grateful for them. We also worked together to help out on the trail getting through the scary parts to all be safe and sound. Altogether I am thankful to just be able to share this experience with everyone that came on the trip with me. Some things were challenging but we made it through. I learned so much about myself and what I am capable of. I learned so much about both old friends and new ones. I learned that teamwork is very important in life. I am so glad to have had the experience with all of them." ~Julio

"I felt safe because I was sleeping near other people so I knew I wasn't alone. It was a safe environment overall as well. I really enjoyed my experience. I think it was very different from anything I've ever done. I loved the instructors and the way they helped throughout the entire trip. I enjoyed the challenges, especially the hiking. I loved the beautiful scenery and waking up to nature everyday. It was a wonderful bonding experience with my instructors and peers. My favorite activity was rock climbing. At the end of the week I felt like I was more accomplished both physically and mentally. I'm so thankful to be able to have this experience and all that I learned from doing it." ~ Natalie



With support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Los Angeles Waterkeeper (LAW) has continued our robust Healthy Habitats work, which seeks to achieve ecosystem health and resiliency for all the region's waters so they can support the communities and wildlife that depend on them. Over the past six months, LAW has engaged hundreds of volunteers in skill-building, specialized Watershed restoration efforts both on land and on the water, as part of our interconnected Creeks to Coast (C2C) Cleanup Challenge, Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Watch, and recently re-launched River Assessment Fieldwork Team (RAFT).

C2C Cleanup Challenge

Our innovative Creeks to Coast (C2C) Cleanup Challenge activates volunteers at cleanup events while gathering critical data to promote Watershed health and resiliency, and promotes public awareness about the importance of reducing our plastic consumption and the dangers of toxic runoff in our environment. Our fieldwork has directly improved the ecological health of our rivers, streams and coastline through hands-on restoration. During the grant period, through a mix of in-person events and decentralized (virtual) activations, the C2C Cleanup Challenge has engaged more than 350 volunteers at our 21 fieldwork sites in collecting pollution data on more than 32,000 pieces of litter and cleaning up thousands of pounds of trash.

Our River Assessment Fieldwork Team (RAFT) engages Angelenos throughout the County in conducting ecological health assessments along the LA River. RAFT's goal is to gather and assess data that will be used to inform decisions about future River restoration, while bringing community members together for skill-building, meaningful experiences along LA's namesake waterway and building a dialogue around holistic River revitalization. This year, LAW has worked to relaunch the program (since it was put on hold due to COVID in 2020), and reshape our data collection and training techniques to lower the threshold for participation and promote access for more volunteers.



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.



Exploring New Horizons (ENH) restarted our 3 to 5-day residential programs in January of 2022 and served over 4,000 students. During the 2022-23 school year, ENH has over 7,500 students scheduled to attend our programs including 37% of lower-income schools, defined by schools with over 40% eligible for Free or Reduced Priced Lunch (FRPL). ENH has seen an increased

demand for our programs and we fully scheduled for this school year and have over 50 schools on our waiting list.

Schools need more support for outdoor education than ever before. As engaging in hands-on learning in the outdoors during the critical period of middle childhood can be the catalyst for life-changing emotional and intellectual development, it is more important than ever for all students to have equitable access to a week of outdoor school.

Prior to coming to outdoor school, the ENH staff worked to prepare classroom teachers, students, and families for their week of outdoor school. Throughout the week, students at Sempervirens spent 4 full days exploring the redwoods and creek and one day at Natural Bridges State Park in Santa Cruz. In the evenings, students went on a night hike, engaged in a Town Hall Meeting to debate a development issue, had a dance, and skit night where cabin groups got up on stage and acted out a concept they learned during the week. At Pigeon Point, students spent 3 full days at the coast, studying tidepool creatures' adaptations and exploring many coastal ecosystems. Students hiked in the redwoods at Memorial County Park, exploring the creek and discussing the connection between the redwood forest and the ocean. They went tide pooling at Pigeon Point Lighthouse and explored Pescadero Marsh. During the evenings they went on a

night hike and participated in an elephant seal puppet show. The objectives of this program were for:

1. More low-income students to attend our 3-day program.
2. Students and their school communities to be empowered and strengthened in the natural world.
3. Students to increase their knowledge about forest and coastal ecology, food webs, cycles, and to become more interested in learning about science and environmental stewardship.



One hundred percent of the 5 participating classroom teachers agreed or strongly agreed that after this experience students:

- Feel more connected to the environment
- Express more self-esteem
- Better understand ecosystems of CA
- Better understand their role as environmental stewards
- More comfortable being outside
- Strengthened relationships with teachers and peers
- Work better as a team
- More interested in learning about science

When asked 'What do you see your students doing differently after coming to outdoor school?' Teachers shared:

- More classroom cohesion and willingness to take a chance with academic learning
- Working better as a team/table group
- Talking and playing with students that they usually do not interact with.

ENH is grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for their support of our important work.



THANK YOU to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for your support of North Cascades Institute's Youth Leadership Adventures (YLA) program in 2022! Your grant helped to foster a passion for the outdoors in the 2022 cohort of YLA participants by subsidizing tuition and reducing financial barriers for diverse youth.

"Never in a million years did I think I would ever do a trip like this and this has been the best 9 days of my life." – Participant

Through deeply immersive wilderness experiences for high school students, YLA promotes social emotional learning and climate literacy, empowering youth to envision and build a just and sustainable future. Over the course of 9-day canoe and backpack trips, participants acquired the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to be comfortable and competent in the outdoors while simultaneously creating lifelong friendships, learning about and practicing collaborative leadership skills, and exploring a variety of pathways to engage in climate solutions.

In July and August, participants were spread across North Cascades National Park and in Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. We offered 6 trips this year, including 3 focused on backpacking and 3 that canoe-camped, and served 44 total participants. Backpacking trips traversed an average of 13.5 miles per person and canoe-camping trips paddled an average of 25 miles per person. They volunteered a total of 608 hours, including mending a trail that had been impacted by a washout, cleaning and reconfiguring campsites, maintaining culverts, and picking up trash.

Through written impact statements, participants reflected on skills learned, challenges overcome, and friendships gained. Their feedback was overwhelmingly positive and told countless stories of how being out in the wilderness—which was, for many, their first time backpacking, camping, and/or being in the National Park—was a transformative experience with significant positive impacts on their lives.

"I am bringing home knowledge and skills in the outdoors, more reformed ideas on climate change, confidence in myself, friendships I hope will last a lifetime, and so many memories. Also a bit of unwanted dirt." – Participant





As a result of the grant from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, we were able to give 20 students from Newark several outdoor education experiences this summer. The funding from the foundation allowed us to hold numerous days of team building activities and leadership courses

for the students in several parks around Newark, New Jersey. This was especially important and impactful for many students who were returning to in-person interaction with their peers in summer programming for the first time in several years. These early courses allowed the students to begin to know each other, build trust as a group, and build their confidence and leadership skills in new environments.

For their final big experience of the summer, the funding from the Kate Svitek Foundation allowed us to run a canoeing experience for students along the Delaware River. Almost all of the student participants were canoeing and learning to paddle for the first time, and we were very fortunate to have a beautiful, clear, sunny day to enjoy being out on the water. Many of the students shared reflections after the trip that the initial process of learning how to paddle was difficult, but they had a great time on the trip and felt much more confident and capable working with their partners to navigate their canoes by the end of the trip.

For many of the students who participated, getting a chance to be outside for much of the summer and have a completely new experience during the canoe trip was a welcome change from their traditional classroom learning environment. We hope to have many of them return to participate in additional in-person trips and outdoor expeditions we are planning for students heading into 2023, and we are incredibly grateful for the Kate Svitek Foundation's support to make sure our participants continue to have access to these kinds of transformative outdoor and experiential education programs!



Thanks to Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Grassy Waters Conservancy hired two college students,

Micayla and Chloe, as interns for Grassy Waters Preserve Summer Program. The interns worked ten weeks with 174 K-8th grade campers enrolled in six West Palm Beach summer camps. To start, the interns received training and became certified in both Project Learning Tree and Project WILD: programs that assist educators develop activities that help youngsters understand the importance of preserving the environment. This summer's program included each camp's visit to the Preserve, and a pre- and post- visit to each camp. During the Preserve visit the interns took the campers canoeing, hiking through the Cypress swamp, and dipnetting in the marsh. At the pre- and post- visits, the interns engaged campers in fun activities to learn about the Everglades and the animals that live there. During the post-visit the campers also made book covers describing their favorite activity.



The following are responses from some of the campers when asked about their experience:

"My favorite part was learning about Snail Kites living in the Everglades."

"My favorite part was swamp tromping and canoeing while learning about all the plants."

"I like watching the whirligig beetle swim. They are so fast and cool."

"My favorite part was all of us being together and learning about nature and all the different types of animals while we were exploring the great wilderness."



When asked to describe their summer experience:

- Micayla said: *"This opportunity helped me refine my communication skills, gain field experience, and gain experience as an educator in the environmental field. I have attained a new perspective for my future career endeavors thanks to my internship with Grassy Waters Preserve."*
- Chloe said: *"On top of a supportive staff, I value the opportunity to educate students and spend time in the Everglades. The internship provided me with a hands-on experience of a career that I hadn't considered for my future. My work over the summer has shown me a path that is not only rewarding, but also something I will continue to pursue in the future."*



The Harris Center for Conservation Education is very grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for the generous grant we received this year.

The grant money is being used to repair and update our taxidermy collection, which is used for educational purposes throughout the school year as well as in our camp programs. The taxidermy allows children to get as close as they want to these wild animals to really observe them, from beaks or noses to tails. This is an extremely valuable educational tool that the children greatly enjoy.

The mammals in our collection which are being repaired by a professional taxidermist are the beaver, raccoon, red fox, and long-tailed weasel, as well as the Saw-whet owl from our bird collection. The mounts suffer from the wear and tear of being transported to various schools and outdoor settings over the course of years of use; with repair, these animals will be like new again!

The new mammals that are being added to our collection are the Eastern chipmunk, Southern flying squirrel, Gray Squirrel, and perhaps a red squirrel as well. New bird mounts that are being added to our collection are “backyard birds” that children will be able to recognize in their own schoolyards or backyards: Black-capped chickadee, catbird, and perhaps an ovenbird or indigo bunting. The taxidermist is in the process of working on most of these and is trying to do as many animals as possible within the grant budget. We expect everything to be finalized by the end of November.

Thank you again for valuing exposing children to the natural world and for assisting us in our efforts!



Summer camp at Lacawac Sanctuary was a breath of fresh air for many families. The idea of their children getting out of the house and into nature, being active, and even the thought of seeing and interacting with other children was incredibly appealing. We provided eight weeks of camp, which encompassed grades pre-K through 6th. As

we are not 100% out of the clear, we remained lower in numbers than years prior out of an abundance of caution.

For most of our younger campers, Creature Feature (grades pre-K - K), Interpreting Nature (grades 1-2), and Exploring Nature (grades 1-2) camp was their first experience being away from their families and interacting with other children their age. This did come with some challenges, but our children could learn, play, explore, create, and grow on personal levels throughout the week and the entire summer. Our older campers, Wilderness Adventure (grades 3-6), Eco Investigators (grades 3-4), and our Earth Expressions camp (grades 3-6), settled into the week a bit easier and enjoyed being able to speak freely, learn, and make lasting memories.



One of the camp's largest goals besides inspiring an affinity for nature is to initiate leadership skills that aid in developing a greater self by giving way to confidence, decision making, and even being able to inspire others around you. Our campers more than excelled in leadership. Besides working on personal skills, campers also enjoyed learning about nature in a safe and enthralling environment where they did not realize they were learning. Campers participated in many hands-on activities such as fishing, crafts, building shelters, canoeing, and much more.



A common and much-needed theme throughout our camps this summer was “magic spots,” which have been given different names by many of our campers, such as “quiet time,” “Me time,” “Nature time,” and even “Bird time.” This time allowed our campers a special opportunity to select their spot and take time to be in nature alone. With many distractions in our children's lives, such as electronics, the hustle and bustle of life in the common city, sporting events, school, and even being home with family, this time was a rare opportunity to open up to the nature around them.

All of our camps have a screen-free policy. This came as a challenge with some of our younger campers (pre-K -2nd grade) as they felt disconnected from the world they knew. However, it pushed them to build connections with the people and surroundings they had right in front of them. By the end of the week, they spoke about looking for leaves and snakes instead of iPads and computer games.

Through the generosity of the Kate Svitek Foundation, we offered four nature day camps for grades Pre-K to 6th grade, two different art and nature day camps for grades 1st to 6th. Our camps continued to thrive with many having waiting lists to attend.



As the clinical director of Camp Attaway, after every camp session, I meet with every parent and their camper for a post-camp conference, during which time I share with the parent their child's progress during camp, and the

parents and campers share feedback with me about their camp experience. The following were camper quotes about our nature program: "I love nature." "I loved the hike. That's the most calm you'll see me with bugs."

"Nature is what gives kids curiosity at first." "It's fun, getting kids used to nature. Maybe they'll go outside more."

Sean Jones, a special educator with 8 years of experience directing the local county nature camp, returned to Camp Attaway for his second year for Nature with Sean. Our campers, who have severe emotional and behavioral challenges, have difficulty connecting with others and focusing outside of themselves. A core mission of Camp Attaway is to help our campers gain awareness of not only their own emotions and healthy ways to take care of their feelings, but awareness of the world outside of themselves, and to move toward increased connectedness with others and the world, and eventually a sense of stewardship for the environment. Thanks to the generous support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Nature with Sean opened our campers' eyes and souls to the natural world.



During each week of camp, a therapeutic theme forms the foundation of camp activities. During our first week, with social skills as the theme, campers planted seeds. Through the seed planting activity, which involved caring for the plants, checking on them and watching them grow, campers learned the connection between caring for a living organism and tending to friendships to keep them healthy and growing. Additionally, during the first week, campers built pine cone bird feeders, another activity congruent with the value of tending for others in your life.



During the second week of camp, following the theme of team building, campers collaborated in designing and creating insect and animal habitats, re-using materials, including cans, milk jugs and soda bottles. Later during this week, our favorite nature guest, Brian Krystal, AKA "Reptile Man," visited Camp Attaway with his menagerie of vertebrates. Campers learned about ways in which reptiles cope with their surroundings, adapt and learn to trust human creatures.

Many of our campers had spent the pandemic avoiding the outdoors, disconnected from the natural world while overly connected to their screens. During the final week of camp, maintaining the therapeutic theme of coping skills, the campers went on a nature hike at Patuxent Research Refuge. During their

hike, the campers engaged in a nature photo scavenger hunt, learning about the area's wildlife and vegetation habitat. The hike ended at the National Wildlife Visitor Center, where campers interacted with the educational exhibits and learned about global concerns, endangered species, and the life cycles of animals in our region.

Additionally, we brought back an old favorite, the Predator-Prey game, for the first time since before 'the pandemic.' In this game, the campers became parts of a simulation which demonstrated the relationships between living things in the environment. Teaching our campers flexibility and coping with life challenges is a key component of the camp experience. The predator - prey simulation not only showed the campers how animal populations are connected to resources, but also allowed the campers to use teamwork, problem solving and coping skills.

Thanks to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, we were able to carry out our goal for these activities to not only help campers feel comfortable in nature, but also develop a curiosity about it, a desire to spend more time in nature (away from their screens), and eventually understand how they can contribute to taking care of the world around them.



Funding from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation helped support a summer program for approximately 75 New London students that provided access to STEM-based ocean adventure learning. Students participated in a 5-day program where they had the opportunity to kayak Long Island Sound using sit-on-top kayaks, explore tidal creeks, learn how to identify local marine organisms, learn to sail on dinghy sailboats, participate in environmental stewardship, and much more! All



students that participated were students in the New London Public Schools, an underserved school district that is comprised of 86% of students from economically disadvantaged homes, 85% of students that identify as Hispanic/Latinx or Black, and 25% English Language Learners. A large majority of students participating got to experience these activities for the first time and most would never have access to outdoor recreation activities such as kayaking and sailing due to financial constraints and access to equipment and safety gear.





Thanks to the generous support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Gateway to the Great Outdoors (GGO) was able to take Chicago elementary and middle school students on a trip to the Indiana Sand Dunes National Park.

GGO staff led students on a hike from the trailhead to the beach, where students collected rocks, built structures in the sand, and had stone-skipping competitions. At one point in the hike, students climbed to the top of a tall hill and from an overlook were able to see a distant view of the Chicago skyline



across Lake Michigan. Students were excited to see this new perspective of Lake Michigan and the city, and remarked how it felt really good to completely immerse themselves in the wilderness. Students were also able to cook s'mores and hotdogs at the campsite and visit with farm animals at the Masse Homestead. The best part for many students was setting up their own tents and hanging out inside with their classmates! For many students, this was their first time leaving the city and experiencing the vast beauty of the natural world. They loved being able to run around freely and play with sand for the first time. Many students reported that the trip to the Indiana Dunes was their favorite from the entire year. One fourth grade student raved: "I love GGO because they teach us new things and help us learn more. My favorite activities were eating healthy and the trip to the Indiana Dunes. I like how nice GGO was and they helped us if we needed help. I think that GGO are my science angels and they are just the best people ever ever ever EVER!!!!"

When GGO returned to the classrooms this fall, students were already asking about when the 2022-2023 school year camping trip would be. In September, GGO staff and mentors completed an activity with students in which they raced to set up tents, and past GGO students were so excited to be able to show off their skills. GGO looks forward to taking students on a camping trip this spring at a campsite in Illinois. Funds from the Kate Svitek Memorial Fund enabled GGO to purchase tents, sleeping bags, camping food, camping clothing, site fees, food, and transportation for the trips. Without your support, GGO students would not have been able to have this transformative experience. Thank you.



For many of these young children, this was their first time on a trail in the woods, and students asked us as we entered the trail, "Is this the forest?" It's crucial for children to make connections with nature as early as possible, so that they

will become keenly interested in caring for their environment. Whether learning about the water cycle, or how to protect our water source, or what kinds of creatures live in our fresh water system, the kindergartners were excited to interact with the natural worlds. From the Hunterbrook Preserve to the Croton Dam to the Hudson River, the 5-year-olds developed a love of being out in the elements. Sometimes it was hot, sometimes it was rainy, but they never minded. No matter where we were this year, it felt like a miracle every time that we were together again in our favorite outdoor spaces.



The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation also generously supported our programs in Hawai'i for the first time this year! Something Aloha represents another miraculous undertaking that would not have been possible without this funding. Who would have imagined that Something Good in the World's Children's Peaceful Garden (Ka Mala Maluhia in Hawaiian) would be replicated in a rainforest? The district of Ka'u on the Big Island, where our programs are located, hosts more families living below the poverty line

than anywhere else on the island. The food sovereignty movement is crucial to assist with food security, and SGITW is leading the children forward in growing their own veggies, herbs, and native plants, so that they can share that information at home. Thanks to this grant, free educational programs took place with PreK through Grade 8 every week at the Volcano School of Arts & Sciences, outdoors in the Children's Peaceful Garden as well as at area farms dedicated to sustainable agriculture. All ages planted native Koa tree seeds, grew these into seedlings, weeded all of their gardens, composted and mulched, planted native plants and trees, and harvested local fruits and herbs to make into healthy snacks. It has been a total win, win, win!





Lucky to Ride successfully ran its Learn to Earn (Lte) program for 2022 thanks to the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation and other funders. Lucky to Ride worked with our agency partners, the

Sheridan school district, Denver school district, Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Denver and Uplift Denver to bring our hands-on STEM curriculum to students that these groups work with long-term. We served over 55 youth in 2022 for just this program, that was offered to classes of ten students at a time. Each class enjoyed over twelve hours of instruction broken into five to six sessions.

Over the course of the program, youth received training and hands-on practice in basic bike maintenance skills and safe bike riding skills. Our highly-trained instructors used our curriculum framework to help participants link the basics of bicycles to key STEM ideas like Systems, Simple Machines, Energy, Force, and Friction. The bikes helped our instructors bring these abstract concepts to life for the youth in a practical and fun way. The participants walked away from the program with more than just a deeper understanding of bike safety and maintenance, or even a new interest in STEM concepts. They each earned a refurbished, geared bicycle of their own, a bike helmet, a bike lock, replacement tube, bike chain lubricant and two tire levers. In the low-income communities with which we work, owning a bike can be a rarity. The youth value having something that belongs to them alone. Furthermore, a bike represents the freedom to move around the city independently. These youth are now able to get where they want to go in a way that improves their mental and physical health.

The goals of Learn-to-Earn are to: 1) reduce barriers that prevent disadvantaged youth from owning and maintaining a bike of their own; 2) teach safe riding skills; and 3) use the bike and understanding of bike mechanisms to demonstrate concrete,



hands-on applications of STEM concepts such as systems and simple machines. We expected participants will achieve the following objectives:

- 90% will demonstrate that they can change a flat tire on their bike.
- 95% will demonstrate they can reset and maintain a bike chain.
- 90% will demonstrate the ABC Quick Check.
- 90% will demonstrate safe riding skills during group rides.
- 75% will demonstrate an increased understanding of STEM concepts by describing connections between science and the bike.
- 75% of participants will evidence positive change in their attitude towards science.

In 2022, all of these goals and objectives were consistently met by the youth who completed our classes. Bike maintenance skills (changing a tire, resetting a bike chain, ABC Quick Check) and safe riding skills were measured by instructor observation, and instructors recorded that over 95% of all participants demonstrated these skills, with most classes achieving 100% success.

The baseline and final assessments showed that the program participants had successfully understood the framework of the class. At the end of the program, the students were able to independently identify most of the vocabulary taught in this framework. Participants also discussed that they felt more comfortable with these concepts and that some of the “mystery” associated with science was removed. Last but not least, all of the youth who finished the program left with their own bikes! Youth were extremely appreciative of the opportunity to earn their own bikes, and expressed how much they looked forward to riding around in their communities.

Lucky to Ride serves young people from target Denver neighborhoods in southwest and northeast Denver. Together, 67% of residents of these neighborhoods identify as Latinx or Hispanic, 6% identify as Black or African-American, and 20% live below the poverty level.



Philadelphia STRIDE was able to support eighteen campers to attend the Baltimore Yearly Meeting summer camping program. With the help of the Kate Svitek grant, we provided COVID-19 testing, tuition, gear, logistical support, and guidance during the orientation process for these campers. Fourteen campers went to two of the three residential camps, Catoctin and Opequon. At Catoctin, with its grounds spread throughout a wooded ridge, campers had access to a pond, colloquially labeled as “The Goon,” for afternoon swimming, as well as a large field where all-group evening activities were held. At both residential camps, campers undertook the task of completing

overnight camping on the Appalachian Trail and canoeing trips on the Potomac River. At Opequon, where many families are drawn to the emphasis on daily art workshops, STRIDE campers created natural art installations that have become, if only for the duration of the summer, part of the physical infrastructure, and which has left a loving mark on camp, both literally and figuratively. At the end of the summer, one parent of an Opequon camper, whose family was going through a particularly hard time, expressed their gratitude for the camping community’s flexibility in helping to make their child’s experience at camp as healing, healthy, and fun as possible.

STRIDE used a restorative justice approach to advocate for a justice-centered incident report. This justice-centered incident report went into effect this summer, and STRIDE is looking forward to implementing new changes. STRIDE is committed to all campers’ physical and emotional safety, health and development. We discussed how our procedures could often affect students of color disproportionately. While it’s true that the summer camp season is essential for the program, STRIDE is a year-round program. The groundwork laid during the camp off-season is also necessary, and it helps create wonderful summer experiences for returning and prospective campers.





Kate Svitek Foundation's contribution provided support to Neighborhood Bike Works' Youth Bike Education and Empowerment Program (YBEEP). This enabled us to increase mobility for young Philadelphians, introduce youth to 'new'

outdoor places, and provide meaningful paid job training opportunities to 27 NBW youth graduates.

Our programs such as Freedom Riders, Group rides, a camping trip that included a 90-mile ride to and from the campsite for 10 NBW youth, and Ride Club all served to expose youth to natural areas and encourage physical activity. Ninety-six percent of youth surveyed reported that they plan to ride more as a result of their NBW class and one hundred percent of students reported they feel more confident riding their bikes. NBW youth collectively rode 6,085 miles!

We distributed 46 bikes to youth graduates. Each of these bikes represents transportation, independence, and fun. We expected to serve 125 unique youth in our classes.

Our Youth Council organized a Holiday Bike Build, in which 14 youth earned paychecks refurbishing 64 bikes and distributing them to those in need in our community. The impact of this program is all-encompassing; youth earn a decent wage, gain more confidence in their mechanical skills, have opportunities for public speaking at the giveaways, and get to give back directly to their communities all while demonstrating their leadership abilities.

In addition to the goals achieved above, we piloted a Mountain Biking Skills course for 10 youth in April of 2022. Our Board Secretary, Kurt Morris, is a head coach for NICA (National Interscholastic Cycling Association) in Delaware County and teaches mountain biking in the spring, summer, and fall. When he heard that some of our youth expressed interest in learning BMX and Mountain Biking, he offered to teach an introductory course to gauge interest. We will be offering this course again along with a BMX Skills Course in the spring.



We believe all children should have access to outdoor recreation and nature experiences. On behalf of our summer camp scholarship recipients and their families, thank you for making that possible. Your support is truly appreciated.

I cannot fully express my gratitude for the scholarships both my grandsons have been given to participate in the camps at RIVERSPORT. I have adopted my grandsons who are both on the autism spectrum with a little ADHD added to boot. They are wonderful boys, but I would never be able to provide anything like the camps they have been able to participate in including kayaking and whitewater rafting. Knowing they are going to camp brings the most excitement and happiness these boys experience during the summer. They are so excited to share their stories with everyone they can. The youngest boy has additional behavior problems that all of your incredible counselors work through, so he can continue to enjoy himself along with his brother. Thank you for helping these boys experience and understand how much joy life has to offer. *-Holly*

Being a single mom, it's hard to place my son in activities that allow him to face his fears. RIVERSPORT has been a lifesaver. My son has gained confidence through participating in the activities and receiving encouragement from other campers and camp leaders. I can't express my appreciation to RIVERSPORT for the opportunity. *-Nikesia*

When we moved to Oklahoma with three young kids, we heard whispers of the strong community and togetherness Okies have...at RIVERSPORT camp they learned so many fun skills and also made exciting childhood memories with friends. RIVERSPORT has also been at the center of community for us, with many other OKC public school families attending because of the scholarships...we were even able to send our most interested son to Kayak Team practices multiple times a week and through the winter months. He learned so much about staying in shape, being outdoors, and having fun competing. It has been inspiring. We would not have been able to afford to let all of our kids be involved if it weren't for the helpful gift of scholarship. Thank you! *-Kristy*





We are deeply grateful for the financial support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation in 2022. Our mission, “Revealing the Possibilities Within,” is at the core of all we do at the 100 Elk Outdoor Center.

Green Valleys Watershed Association (GVWA) utilized the \$1,750 provided by the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation grant program to purchase snorkeling equipment. This allowed for creek snorkeling to be offered in our summer camps. GVWA will continue to expand on its snorkeling offerings, but this grant provided the base upon which we can build a successful program.

Keith Williams, author of *Snorkeling Rivers and Streams* and *Snorkelhead: Adventures in Creek Snorkeling*, and owner of the snorkeling company, Freshwater Journeys, was present for the August 3rd snorkeling event. GVWA's Watershed Educator, Alex Runde, who has more of a background in teaching ocean and estuary snorkeling, was happy to learn from him, while still educating campers further downstream.

The French Creek upstream of Phoenixville, PA is an Exceptional Value stream (the highest designation of a stream in Pennsylvania) in which cold and warm water species of fish can easily be observed. Despite its relatively suburban location, the stream feels very remote and undisturbed, contributing to urban campers' unique experience.

A 6th grade camper, Declan, described their creek snorkeling experience as, “not something you do every day. I snorkeled on vacation in Florida, but never knew so many cool fish were in our rivers. My favorite were the white suckers that are kind of everywhere”.

Local creek snorkeling expert, Keith Williams, said, “it is great to see another organization get started with creek snorkeling. That's what I like to see; we need more of this. The connection to water quality, and recreation, and education is tangible”.



Campers also remarked that the water was quite “refreshing” on the day this photographer was present; August 3rd, 2022 saw a high temperature of 91°F, so wetsuits were present, but not necessarily needed for this particular day. As our creek snorkeling program evolves, they will be an integral part of accessing streams with varying conditions.

Even the chaperones present at creek snorkeling locations often comment on the extraordinary event that they witness. A camp counselor and environmental educator, Sarah Crothers, remarked, “I didn't think you and the kids were going to go in that far, but that was really cool! The ones who came out for a break said they really enjoyed it, and they seem to like pointing out to their friends where they can find fish”.

Green Valleys Watershed Association is extremely grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for their grant in 2022, and previous years. We hope you see the value in our burgeoning snorkeling program, and we look forward to growing as demand for unique hands-on environmental education expands in southeast Pennsylvania. Thank you!

In 2022, 100 Elk hosted 29 schools, 1,848 students and 269 chaperones at our facility. Thanks to the funding from Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, we were able to fund 100% of the cost of outdoor education delivered to 142 (4th and 5th grade) students at a Title 1 school in Denver with our “100 Elk to you” program.

In total, the funding we received from Kate Svitek Memorial Fund enabled 178 students to experience our programming: team and character building, canoeing, an exploration of horsemanship, high and low ropes challenge courses, archery, climbing, hiking and an intro into wilderness ecology. Most importantly, students overcame limitations and “revealed the possibilities within.”

The following activities were part of the 100 Elk Outdoor Education programming in 2022:

- 1) Challenge activities, including two high ropes courses and a zipline, archery and horseback riding
- 2) Community-building activities, including canoeing, low ropes courses and team-building sessions that focus on problem-solving, improving communication skills, and fostering and supporting friendships.
- 3) Ecology activities, which help foster a love for and understanding of the outdoors; Eco hikes that encourage the sustainability of our forests along with survival skills; engaging in group games that simulate how ecosystems and the food web work.

Here are some comments from our participants:

“I was one of the many students that came to your program. It was really fun and I had a great time. I was treated really nicely and felt loved and valued. You really made my 4 days. Thank you!”
– 6th grade student

“We are all ecstatic on this end. You have no clue how happy you've made these kids.” – Trip Leader for Sopris Elementary School (Corral Program beneficiary)

“Thank you for supporting me on the high ropes course... I thought I would fall off the wobbly bridge but you helped me do the whole thing and you helped teach our group new things during ecology and service... thanks for helping me overcome my fear of heights...” – 6th grade student

“... you really helped me on the ropes course when I was going on the giant swing because at first I thought I was going to fall off. But you encouraged me to get on... and I loved it... It was fun to do the echolocation game because it was like running around trying to catch a grasshopper when you're blind. Thanks again for being the best counselor because you were always there when I needed you and I think you're super cool.” – 7th grade student

“Thank you for taking us on the ecology hike! I did not know that Ponderosa needles came in packs of threes, but I did know that Aspens have sunscreen coating them!” – 5th grade student

“Thank you for making backcountry school so much fun! I loved dragging logs from one place to another, building shelters, and fires (learning how to).” – 5th grade student



With help from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Linn County Conservation was able to host our first-ever Wilderness program. The Trek is a new innovative program designed to create a multicultural community of outdoor recreationists and leaders through wilderness exploration, challenge, discovery, and personal growth. The

primary goal of this program is to offer safe, equitable access to a backcountry wilderness experience that develops outdoor leadership and recreation skills for all Linn County youth. Support from the foundation has helped provide direct financial access and equipment for eight students to participate in this program.

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
- Study of Wilderness
- Environmental Science
- Outdoor Skills

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. To expose and introduce Iowa students to a wilderness environment, we must take students out of state. Thanks to support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Linn County Conservation was able to break down barriers to offer a Wilderness opportunity to students living in Linn County Iowa.

In these trying times, I know many of you are staying out of the stores and malls. If you have chosen to shop Amazon, please sign up for Amazon smile so the Foundation can earn .5% of your purchases. Your purchases stay private, we only get a quarterly check and no list of who bought what! An easy way to help raise funds and stay safe!! This year we all raised \$268.18!!!!



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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.

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Thank you for your continued support!



In 2022, the Youth Backcountry Camp (YBCC) Program has expanded its impact to serve more underserved and underrepresented youth from the Tahoe Area and beyond. Thanks to the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, the program has awarded us some heart-melting stories to reflect on the experience.

The TRTA's first-ever Youth Backcountry Camp trip in partnership with the Washoe Tribe was something special. The opportunity to facilitate a deeper connection between tribal youth and their ancestral lands during the immersive wilderness experience was an honor. The group caught fish in Round Lake, identified colorful butterflies and moths with their nature guides, and scrambled up granite boulders to find scenic views of Da ow (the lake). The intersection of Washoe history taught by adult chaperones from the Tribe and the wilderness skills taught by TRTA staff allowed youth to find safety and belonging among the natural spaces of their ancestral lands.



A long-standing partnership with a local organization, SOS Outreach, doubled in capacity this season. 22 youth from diverse backgrounds and communities around Lake Tahoe ventured out onto the trail with the TRTA through two custom backpacking experiences. Older and more outdoor-savvy SOS youth embarked on a test of leadership and challenge by hiking over 20 miles and summiting the tallest peak in the Basin, Freel Peak. The younger group of participants discovered the Tahoe Rim Trail's prime learning environment to build independence, resiliency, and an appreciation for the natural world.

The TRTA welcomed a new partner group, Improve Your Tomorrow (IYT), to the Youth Backcountry Camp Program in 2022. This organization, based in Sacramento, mentors and supports young men of color throughout grade school and college to tackle systemic barriers and close the opportunity gap. This partnership brought an experience unique and impactful to the lives of youth coming from unstable families, homes, and countries. For all eight youth, it was their first time in Tahoe, first time backpacking, and the first time they felt welcome in an outdoor environment as people of color. The Director of Strategic

Partnerships with Improve Your Tomorrow, Charles Bolton, illustrates this "journey of a lifetime" through his reflection of the experience:

"The backpack boys and I set out on the journey of a lifetime last week. Eight diverse young men ranging from incoming high school students to 11th grade, joined me on a backpacking trip in Tahoe. Because of the unique nature of the trip, parents agreed to share very little about the experience prior to departure. When the guys found out they would not have phones, no access to a traditional bathroom, and no cabin, they just knew this was a joke. It wasn't!

We began our journey with a 3-mile hike up the mountain. We played games, got to know one another, and laughed as we hiked through the meadow. The boys were becoming familiar with SOS participants working together to make lunch.

SOS participants feeling accomplished and united after persevering through a challenging hike. This was exciting to watch, considering that 8 hours before, the Black students and Afghan students were experiencing an awkward ride in the car. I did not engage as I believe our students are aware enough to work out their differences.

We barely made it up that hill. This difficult task created a brotherhood. By the time we made it to the top, we were communicating differently. We knew we had a purpose, and we were progressing towards a goal.

The first night was incredible. As we sat on the cliff overlooking the lake, Brothers shared stories about themselves. Though the stories were deep and personal, our brothers felt like IYT was their breath of fresh air. They vowed to enjoy the trip and comfort one another as best friends.

They felt a connection. Leaders allowed them to have feelings and embrace their emotions.

Through sickness, mountains, and meadows, we made it. Brothers sat in a circle and expressed their joy for one another. They used words of affirmation to express their care and dedication to one another. This incredible weekend with no phones gave our Brothers motivation and passion to get through a test or barrier that comes their way."



Check out the new pictures for all of this year's great events!



Please take some time to visit our fabulous website! www.katesvitekmemorial.org



We have been surrounded by birthday wishes and birthday presents all year at College Settlement. We celebrated our Centennial at every opportunity! We reintroduced our signature community event, June Supper, we hosted a once-in-a-lifetime Birthday Party for campers and their families in September, and we had a wild night at our Centennial Gala at Camp in October.

Our 100th Summer of Camp was another long stride forward as we continue to overcome challenges and invent new methods and new programs. Here is a short list of this year's highlights: we opened a new climbing wall and swing-by-choice, began a partnership with the Temple University Police Urban Bike Club, the Elliott Pool was completely renovated, our Teen Adventurers returned to the Spruce Run Outpost, international staff returned after a two year absence, and we adopted a mama goat and her two kids!

Perhaps one of the most important results of celebrating our centennial was the response we received from College Settlement Alumni all over the world. Hearing from people that have been a part of our family for many years was a reminder of the life-long positive impact that our summer camp experience has had on so many people and their families. College Settlement Alumni were engaged in so many ways this year. We would not have had the success we did without their encouragement and support.



The Sauvie Island Center hosted six weeks of spring field trips, providing 250 elementary school-aged children the opportunity to spend a full day exploring and learning on the grounds of Topaz Farm.

Thanks to funders like the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, we are able to keep costs down for paying schools, and offer scholarships to low-income schools. In the spring of 2022, all of our field trips were offered on a sliding scale. Approximately half of the students (100+) visiting took advantage of the scholarship program, with their schools either paying nothing for the full field trip and transportation or paying only a below market rate fee and having transportation covered. The remaining groups provided their own transportation, and paid the below market field trip fee. Fifty children received full scholarships. More than half of our students were from low income neighborhoods (as defined by the Department of Education) and/or elementary schools where the majority of students identify as BIPOC (black, indigenous, people of color). We know from research and 15 years' experience that children of color often feel disconnected from nature compared to their white counterparts.



We also know that children near the poverty-level and/or BIPOC students tend to suffer disproportionately from upstream public health issues such as obesity and diabetes. Our programs, and scholarship funding, seek to mitigate these impacts. With your support, we continue to provide nature-based learning opportunities to children living in underserved communities.

A visit to the farm on a spring day brings to life the Next Generation Science Standard lessons that students have been studying all winter. Every field trip is a new adventure as we dedicate a full day to exploring three of the five different parts of the Sauvie Island Center's curriculum.

Plant Parts

In this module students searched the garden for various parts of plants. They were asked to identify all six parts: roots, stems, leaves, fruits, flowers and seeds. Students also tasted - and enjoyed - many different plant parts including leaves of kale and strawberries. We incorporate multimodal learning (visual, oral, and tactile) to support a variety of learning styles and cultures. When studying plant parts, we lead students in the plant dance, pairing motions with sounds as we learn about each part and its function. Students from Harrison Park dissecting and planting seeds.

Here we study the cyclical nature of farming, following the process of growing food from Seed to Harvest. Much of this module is spent in the Grow Lunch Garden planting and tending to the garden. Students dissect seeds and learn about how naturally occurring phenomena (like rain and sun) help plants to grow. Students from James John Elementary identifying the different stages of the plant life cycle.

This section is dedicated to our hard-working friends of the farm, pollinators. Students explore the important role pollinators play in our food supply as they identify plants that have or will be pollinated. They also learn about how bees use their bodies to gather pollen. Using cotton swabs that mimic the fur on bee legs, children act as pollinators, gathering pollen from flowers then depositing it on other plants. This lesson illuminates the process of pollination, helping children to understand how pollen is transferred by pollinators. We end our field trip days with a closing circle. Here we invite students to share stories or their favorite parts of the day. Many told us that they tried - and liked - vegetables they had never tasted before. Others enjoyed learning something new, including one young man who told us that "bees use their fuzzy fur to gather pollen and put it in their pollen baskets."



The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation 2022 grant award in the amount of \$2500 supported San Diego Coastkeeper's efforts in implementing our Science to Stewardship environmental education program during the 2021-2022 school year. In this program, we partnered with Montgomery High School and provided a 5-part multi-engagement program for 120 ninth-grade students totaling 600 student engagements over the course of the school year. In Engagement one, students engaged in a hands-on lesson about watershed physics and dynamics during an in-classroom visit where they developed a watershed model to conceptualize water flow rates and the physical landscapes that make up a watershed in San Diego. Engagement one provided an overview of the Science to Stewardship program and introduced students to the program goals and steps to becoming environmental stewards with San Diego Coastkeeper.

During engagement two, students engaged in a virtual field-trip experience provided by park rangers at Otay Valley Regional Park introducing the ecological abundance and biodiversity of species within the park and some of the problems pollution and climate have brought to the native landscape. For engagement three, students explored the connection between the health of watersheds and the health of their communities through an at-home trash-assessment. Students collected trash and conducted a data analysis to understand what pollution is present in their watershed and draw parallels to pollution present in Otay Valley Regional Park. For engagements four and five, students were introduced to their student-generated action projects and given project guidelines for activating their voices and using their experience and knowledge in the Science to Stewardship program to develop pollution-based solutions for Otay Valley Regional Park. Students presented their projects and shared through their experience how they foresee helping park rangers in educating park visitors about the impacts on the environment and how they can support clean-up efforts and climate change solutions. The generous gift from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation supported this no-cost program in providing students from Montgomery High School with place-based experiences to understand the positive impacts of environmental stewardship in their community and connect them to green spaces in their own backyard.



I am pleased to submit this report to the Katie Svitek Memorial Foundation summarizing your support of \$3,500 for Achieve Tahoe's Winter Adaptive Snowsports Program in 2022.

Our Winter Program provides daily adaptive private skiing and snowboarding lessons for all skill levels (beginner to advanced) from December through April, conditions permitting. Our adaptive equipment and techniques include Alpine skiing, snowboarding, three-track skiing, four-track skiing, mono-skiing, biskiing, and tetra-skiing. We offer lessons at Alpine Meadows, Palisades Tahoe, and Northstar resorts, where participants can select the terrain and resort of their choice. Each lesson includes a full-day pass to the resort, a half or full-day one-on-one private lesson, and a full-day rental of our adaptive snowsports equipment.

Generous support from the Katie Svitek Memorial Foundation enabled Achieve Tahoe to award 18 scholarships to participants who otherwise be unable to participate in our programming (\$2,250), in addition to underwriting a portion of the cost for a brand-new adaptive snow slider (\$1,250).

Scholarships allow us to achieve inclusivity and enable access by reducing and even eliminating financial barriers to participation in our programming. Adaptive snow sliders consist of a mounted metal frame attached to the participants' skis

and tethered by a certified instructor. This configuration allows participants a high level of independence while accommodating various levels of mobility and upholding the most stringent safety standards.

Thank you again for your and the Katie Svitek Memorial Foundation's support of Achieve Tahoe's Winter Adaptive Snowsports Program. Your funding helped us extend opportunities to participants who otherwise would be unable to engage in our programs and purchase a vital piece of equipment. Enclosed with this letter are photos of our Winter Adaptive Snowsports Program participants using snow sliders during their lessons.





In April, we were supported by the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation to fund \$3,000 in adaptive climbing trip scholarships.

Our anticipated scholarship total for the trips happening within the grant period is \$3,113. We will have given 13 people scholarships. We anticipate the number might be higher for our ice trips but not lower – these

are our most popular trips, and scholarships are often requested. We will check back in after our Ice Trips with updated photos and numbers.



“What I noticed at Shelf was that Paradox lets you learn and do other things rather than just the act of climbing. There’s more to climbing than just climbing; it’s belaying, it’s being a part of a team, it’s cleaning a route, it’s learning knots, you know, there’s a lot of things to climbing that aren’t actually climbing. I felt really safe, comfortable, and happy because I was able to do other things like belay and tie my own knot. It was so cool to do everything as if we were a team of climbers rather than an organization doing a clinic or something like that. At the same time, everyone learned and was safe, but it was really cool to be taught where to go if Paradox isn’t there, if you are just climbing with someone in the community. And hopefully, a lot of people in the community will see that you can be safe too, even if you have a barrier or an obstacle. You can do everything the same way and safely.”



“Shelf Road and Paradox brought the joy of climbing back into my life. Climbing was something I only dabbled with after my initial injury in 2008 where I took a ground fall bouldering and broke my right tibia and fibula at my growth plate. This injury led to 11 surgeries with number 10 being my amputation. I suffered with limb difference and chronic pain for 13 years and amputation has allowed me to live my life to the fullest and participate in sports I was not able to before.”



“If you are thinking of trying it, go for it! You will feel safe and supported the whole time. Challenging yourself can be so rewarding, especially with such a fun group of guides and other adaptive climbers. I left feeling strong, brave, and proud! Ready to take on the world, or at least more mountains! I can’t wait to try another trip!!”



FRIENDLY REMINDER

If everyone on our mailing list bought one \$10 card a year we would raise \$20,000! SO, I am asking you, our valued supporters, to think of Kate’s Foundation when you want to recognize a birthday or anniversary, a promotion, the birth of a baby, a get well card or memorialize a loved one.

Just go to the website for a form or email Ellen at esvitek@comcast.net and let her know who the card should be sent to and for what reason. She will send out one of our beautiful all purpose cards.

Cards are only \$10 each and the Foundation makes \$9.45 per card! Let’s support the Foundation instead of your local card shop!



Grant funds will be used to introduce youth experiencing homelessness to backpacking in wilderness areas. Trips will be offered on full scholarship, and will be designed to build on introductory outdoor skills the youth have developed on previous trips, with the vision of inspiring a rising generation of outdoor leaders.

Peak 7 Adventures is grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for their generous gift of \$3,500 in funding to open outdoor spaces to youth experiencing homelessness. We had an amazing summer season, serving over 1,800 youth from across the Pacific Northwest. We are pleased to report that the provided funding was specifically used to scholarship four groups of youth who had the opportunity to engage in wilderness backpacking experiences. The groups had amazing trips to a variety of Washington State National Parks, including two trips to the Enchanted Valley (Olympic National Park), one trip to Tokeak Point (Olympic National Park) and one extra adventurous group who successfully summited Mount Ruth in the North Cascades National Park! We are so excited to share that the youth found their backpacking adventures both challenging and rewarding, in line with our mission to provide first-rate trips that challenge youth physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally.



The Headwaters to Ocean summer camps were back and better than ever this year. Their success was made possible by your generous support; we cannot thank you enough! We truly believe there is nothing quite like summer camp, where kids can play, explore, be curious, and grow. Our campers, ranging in age from six to 18, all experienced something new, exciting, and engaging this summer.

We were able to host six summer camps with hands-on, feet wet education about the place we call home. Our 2022 programs included two new options for young explorers: Healthy Habitats and Investigating Invertebrates. We also held two sessions of our H2O (Headwaters to Ocean) Day Camp, we had an overnight camp for middle schoolers focusing on restoration, and we co-led an 11-day exploration throughout the Copper River Watershed with high school students. Campers explored the rainforest, visited glaciers, waded through wetlands, investigated ocean ecosystems, and learned that from Headwaters to Ocean, it's all connected.



The photos show some of fun experiences campers had throughout the summer.

In the Science Center's vision, our region maintains resilience by fostering strong connections between self, surroundings, science, and society for all members of the community. Education, for all ages, is a cornerstone of this vision.



Thank you again for your generous support in helping us create lifelong memories for the next generation of nature-smart leaders.





Saddle of Love is a 501(c)(3), non-profit Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) program located in Park City, Utah. Our mission is to instill trust, self-love, and life coping skills to youth through Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP). We partner with horses for the exploration of self-awareness, connection and

confidence to help troubled youth gain new perspectives on life. We provide a therapeutic setting in Park City, Utah, to ride and bond with horses to implement the EAP program.

The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation graciously awarded Saddle of Love \$3,500 which was used to provide a full scholarship of tuition for a 12 year old suicidal teen

girl named Alissa to attend our EAP Program. Alissa attended one-hour sessions, once weekly, for 14 weeks. Each session was led by a licensed psychotherapist and a certified equine specialist teaching psychotherapy techniques and horsemanship skills. She started our EAP program June 6th reporting suicidal thoughts, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and refusal to go to school. She was failing most of her classes at school and engaging in self-harm. During the course of her treatment underlying feelings of abandonment and a sense of not belonging surfaced from being adopted and being Latino in a primarily white community and school. We helped her process those feelings using talk and narrative therapy and helped her get involved in a positive support system by joining clubs at school such as Latinos In Action Club where she made friends. This gave her a sense and purpose and passion to attend and do well in school to make a difference representing the Latino population. She eventually took on a leadership role in this club volunteering to read to Kindergarteners and becoming a big sister to a younger Latino girl.

Partnering with our therapy horses, helped her gain this leadership role through raising her confidence and assertiveness by learning how to tack and maneuver her 1000 pound therapy horse through difficult obstacle courses and mountain trail riding during her EAP sessions. We taught her breathing techniques,

guided imagery, muscle relaxation and mediation while riding her therapy horse to help decrease anxiety and panic attacks. We set up difficult obstacle courses for to maneuver with her therapy horse that elicited frustration. In the moment we then taught and practiced frustration tolerance techniques with her therapy horse. We

then assigned homework and role-played various scenarios how to internalize and generalize these positive coping techniques to real life situations at school,

home and in daily living. Her self esteem and confidence started beaming out on the mountain trails as she learned how to manage very difficult mountain terrain on her horse. She also participated in culinary therapy session with other teens her age working on teamwork, communication, following directions and social skills. By the time she graduated on September 8th she reported no suicidal thoughts and no self harm. She was getting all A's and B's in school, felt reduced anxiety and panic attacks and a sense of belonging with friends.

We are so grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for providing this invaluable opportunity to this young lady and possibly saving her life from suicide. She is also very grateful for the opportunity and comes back to volunteer on our therapy ranch with other teens which continues to provide social connectedness for her which a top protective factor against suicide and depression.



"Hi, My name is Alissa. I am 12 years old and just graduated from Saddle of Love. I did horse therapy with Little Bits who was my favorite horse. She was really sweet and loving towards me and made me feel love and accepted. She always hugged and kissed me. I learned a lot at my horse therapy how to breath and calm down when upset or anxious and do things instead of hurting myself. I had never ridden a horse before. At first I was scared but ended up taking Little Bits on trail rides which was so fun. She taught me I can do anything in life even if I am scared. I love coming to the ranch and helping with all the animals. Thank you for letting me come."



We can not thank the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation enough for their continued support of the Schuylkill Center. Last summer, the Center held its second full summer camp since the pandemic's start.

With an emphasis on free play, Schuylkill Center summer camps give kids the unstructured time vital to their development.

The camps also offer children something equally important: daily immersion in nature. Being in nature profoundly impacts children of all ages, but it can be challenging for parents to find safe, engaging, and accessible spaces for their kids to get that nature time.



Summer camps surrounded by nature offer one solution.

If you came to Camp Schuylkill on a hot day, you would have seen our campers running through sprinklers, picking wineberries, lifting logs to count the slugs and pillbugs, and balancing on tree stumps. Except for wearing face masks indoors and maintaining physical separation among camp groups, it looks like a typical summer at the Schuylkill Center.

The benefits of spending time in nature for kids and adults are well-known. When the pandemic was in full force, and lockdowns closed schools and businesses and canceled public and private gatherings, people largely responded by taking to parks and nature trails; it was one of the safest ways to spend time outside of the house. Many campers reported that the grown-ups in their lives committed to regular walks to balance out their increased screen time.



We are delighted that kids arrived each morning eager to explore our trails and play games with their new friends. They were making up for many months of lost connections and stalled friendships, missed celebrations, and postponed playdates. Summer camp gives them a chance to recapture the magic of childhood.

Thanks to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, the Schuylkill Center purchased equipment and supplies to expand our efforts to inspire new connections to nature with our community.

Support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation allowed the Watersmith Guild to provide First Waves programs to underserved youth throughout Pennsylvania. The programs stemmed 4 demographics and targeted environmental justice and access for both urban and rural communities. Through diverse workshops, the Watersmith Guild empowered 73-students with skills and opportunities to improve their lives and create lasting improvements on local waterways.

To fulfill the mission of inspiring appreciation and enjoyment of waterways, First Waves initiated youth to the captivating experiences of river surfing and standup paddleboarding. Some of the programs also included activities like flyfishing to evoke a broad sense of opportunity for teens that otherwise never experience outdoors pursuits. One student described, "My favorite part about First Waves was the paddleboarding because it was really calming, and it was nice to learn something new." "I wish I could go do that again, it was really fun," described another.



Moreover, the workshops empowered students to reflect their enjoyment of the waterways by performing conservation projects. The outcomes included native tree plantings along a class-A wild trout stream, macro-invertebrate and water samplings, interactive wildlife and watershed lectures, and stream cleanups to remove litter. Describing the opportunity, one student said, "I like how we looked at the bugs in the water. That was the best thing I've ever done."



Throughout the workshops, the students also worked alongside instructors to learn the art of filmmaking and digital media. They learned journalism and technical skills to conduct on-camera interviews and worked in teams to document all aspects of the programs.

"I like the filming process because it gives you a chance to be creative," explained a participant. In classroom sessions following the on-water workshops, each student was tasked with completing a short documentary about their experiences at First Waves. The students presented their films to peers, mentors, and families at the end of the Summer. The outcomes amplified the creativity of young voices to inspire others to care for, engage with, and enhance the vital outdoors resources around us.





Wissahickon

CHARTER SCHOOL

After more than a year of remote learning and far too many canceled trips and events, we entered the 2021-2022 school year with both hope and caution. Students and staff were eager to return to their normal routines and beloved traditions.

Our Outdoor Program (at least in its traditional form) was one of several events absent from our curriculum for the entirety of the 2020-21 school year and much of the year before that. These trips are trademarks of a Wissahickon education, none more so than the culminating Kate Svitek Memorial Expedition. This weeklong backpacking trip with Outward Bound, which you have graciously made possible for so many years here at Wissahickon, is the pinnacle of our students' middle school years. It is an achievement they look forward to, and it is a celebration of the experience and knowledge they've gained throughout their years with us. We are so grateful that we can offer them this opportunity.

While we had to push this year's trip to the Spring, rather than our normal Fall timeline, we are nonetheless incredibly proud and grateful to report that the Kate Svitek Memorial Expedition returned to both Wissahickon campuses this Spring! While the number of participating students was smaller than they were pre-Covid, it was a promising return and provided us with great hope and confidence in our ability to safely hold outdoor trips in a post-Covid world. Thanks to the generosity of the Kate Svitek Memorial Fund, these students - who have experienced incredible obstacles and repeated disappointment over the past two years - were given an extraordinary opportunity to immerse themselves in the outdoors.

For many of these students, it was their first time spending an extended stay away from their families and their first opportunity to delve deep into the challenging - and quite rewarding - experience of camping and hiking. This year in particular, it was so gratifying to know that we could provide them with a positive and memorable experience to end their time at Wissahickon.

We are also incredibly grateful for the flexibility and understanding that you granted to us this year as we experienced changes to our proposed plans. With your approval, we also funded the Kate Svitek Expedition Prep Day as well as two seventh-grade day trips to Outward Bound courses where students engaged in rigorous outdoor activities designed to mimic and prepare for the Expedition. We think these additions to our Awbury Program will lead to greater participation in the Expedition in following years, especially as Covid restrictions subside.

The impact of these experiences on our students is immeasurable, and we are so grateful to you for providing them with this privilege. When they returned from the Expedition, we asked our Eighth Graders what they learned from this experience. We are so happy to share their responses with you.



"I learned about the big body of water and how it used to be 50 ft high and people would drink out of it."



"I learned that it is important to have patience and good communication skills."



"This leaf we saw smelled like peppermint and when we saw a tree that people had carved into we learned it's not good for the tree because its like your skin and it could get infected"



"I learned to always try things because I was scared and nervous to do the zipline but after I did it I had a fun time and wanted to do it again."



It is my pleasure to provide an update on the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation Environmental Education Grant, to be used for general scholarships at NOLS. The 2022 recipient was John R., 14, of University City, MO. John completed a 3-week Pacific Northwest Backpacking Adventure course in June 2022. Below, please find John's course reflection and photographs. It is clear that

NOLS has transformed John in a way that would not be possible without your support. We are deeply grateful for your loyal contributions to the scholarship program at NOLS.

We are excited to continue expanding the accessibility of a NOLS course, and would not be able to serve all of our students without scholarship funds. Over the 2022 fiscal year, NOLS Headquarters and its campuses around the globe have shown their resilience in the face of adversity. Like our hundreds of thousands of graduates, NOLS continues to grow and inspire leadership. While you help us support students and initiatives, we have been hard at work transforming our workforce to keep up with the growing demand for a NOLS education.

Because of donors like you, comfort zones were expanded, goals were met, communities were forged, capacities were built, and students learned that they are capable of more than they ever imagined. The full impact of your generosity is difficult to quantify, since the lives changed by scholarships have an immeasurable impact on communities around the world. On behalf of all of those affected by your generosity, thank you. We look forward to your support in another successful year!

"Over the course of my 21-day NOLS experience, I learned many skills, had many unique experiences, and met many different people who have become close friends. I was taught hard skills, such as river crossing safety and how to properly pack a bag; soft skills, like forming productive groups and creating healthy group dynamics. Experiences came in many different ways whether they be raw ones like encounters with wildlife and views from passes belonging on postcards, or becoming closely tied to people who came from all different states, countries, and backgrounds. Everything described above had one commonality: they were hard. They presented obstacles that challenged me personally and the group as a whole. Learning how to cross rivers composed of only snow melt safely when you can't feel your legs is hard. Hiking eleven miles uphill to get to a campsite on a pass is difficult. Trusting total strangers who you've only known for 48 hours with your wellbeing is both scary, an hard! But when it comes down to it, the challenges of the course are what made it great. The difficulties made the trip a truly life-changing experience. Without those difficulties, I wouldn't be the person I am today, and I was only able to have these experiences with the financial support and generosity of NOLS. This backpacking course was more than just a trip for me. It has altered my life for the better, and I am so grateful for the experience."



Getting To Know Kate

Those who had the fortune to meet Kate all knew what a vivacious and unique person she was. Not only did her sparkling personality shine through, but her intelligence and understanding of her world were immediately evident. This section of the newsletter is being included to give those who did and didn't get to meet her a better understanding of what she stood for and the mark she had made on her world in the short time she lived.

Letter from Becky Pizzino

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek and Family,

I would like you to know that you are in my thoughts and prayers. I was touched by the words spoken about Kate at yesterday's memorial service as I too have many fond memories of Kate. She was one of those students who never stopped asking questions, and enjoyed every lab activity we took on. I am enclosing a note that Kate sent me prior to going on her senior project to Arizona. I keep special notes that students have written to me in a basket on my desk at school. When I am having a

challenging day I often pull out one of these notes and it helps me to put things in perspective. Kate gave this to me along with a beautiful candle that I have kept in a special place in my home. When I got home yesterday I lit the candle and spoke to my five-year-old daughter about my memories of Kate. I hope that my Josie has that same spirit of independence and love of life that Kate had.

I was blessed to have Kate both as an advisee, as well as a student in marine biology. I remember that she truly loved science and the mysteries it held and experiences it had to offer. Although I did not keep in touch with Kate when she was at UVM I was so pleased to hear that she did go on those adventures that she dreamed about.

I feel blessed to have had Kate touch my life, and find it hard to believe that she is gone. It is students like Kate that keep me at Germantown Academy as they work hard and enjoy learning. Kate's note is so typical of her caring nature -it truly makes me cry each time I read it. I know that caring students come from caring parents. Thank you for giving me Kate, who helped me to become a better person and teacher.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you at this difficult time. Please know that there are many in the G.A. community who have you in their thoughts.

Becky Pizzino
03/04/02



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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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