

BRAGGING RIGHTS

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary the definition of bragging rights is “a good reason to talk with pride about something you have done.” In our opinion, giving away \$475,435 in grant money to thirty-two causes in thirteen years is a reason to brag. This past year, the Foundation awarded \$75,435 to nineteen programs. Our four newest recipients are Paddle Without Pollution in Pittsburgh, PA., Camp Thunderbird in South Dakota, I-Lead Charter School in Reading, PA and Russell Byers Charter School in Philadelphia, PA.

We continue to fund programs at University of Vermont, Robbins Park Environmental Education Center in Upper Dublin, Community Academy of Philadelphia, Riverbend Environmental Education Center in Gladwyne, Venture Outdoors, Green Valleys, Sauvie Island, College Settlement Camp, Camp Attaway, New Heights Academy, Bikeworks, Center for Aquatic Sciences (previously New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences) and No Barriers. Please read the

exciting reports from these organizations that fill the pages of our newsletter.

Our main fundraiser for 2014 was our second annual Non Event Clam Bake and Ad Book. This event raised \$55,526 to be used for our grants and scholarships. Thanks to all who generously participated by purchasing an ad in our ad book or buying a virtual lobster or clam dinner.

Although our past two Non-Events have been financially successful, we miss seeing you, our wonderful supporters, and having the opportunity to party and thank you in person. So, please take out your pens and mark your calendars now. We will be back at Here to Stay Farm in Ambler on June 27, 2015 to celebrate at another Under the Tent Event. Our band will be THE B STREET BAND, “The original Springsteen tribute band.” For 35 years they have been playing the music of Bruce Springsteen and many other stars for your listening and dancing pleasure.



THE B STREET BAND A TRIBUTE TO THE BOSS
THE ORIGINAL SPRINGSTEEN TRIBUTE BAND THE JERSEY BAND ROCK'N BRUCE FANS SINCE 1980

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!
JUNE 27, 2015

Message

from Ellen and Frank

Dear Friends

I was recently asked why the Foundation continues to fundraise. The person said, "You've already raised a lot of money and surpassed your original goal and you've already helped over a thousand children, why not sit back and enjoy your life now?"

I want to explain to that person and to everyone who reads this column why we continue to keep involved with the good work of the Foundation.

I can't speak for Frank or Michael or my Dad but I know this Foundation keeps Kate's spirit alive for me. I will never have the opportunity to dance at Kate's wedding, but I can party with our supporters at our fundraising events. I will never have the opportunity to walk in the woods and see the wonder in the eyes of one of Kate's children, but I can feel proud of all the children whose lives we have touched and made better because of their outdoor experiences. I can read their thank you letters and feel the wonder through their words.

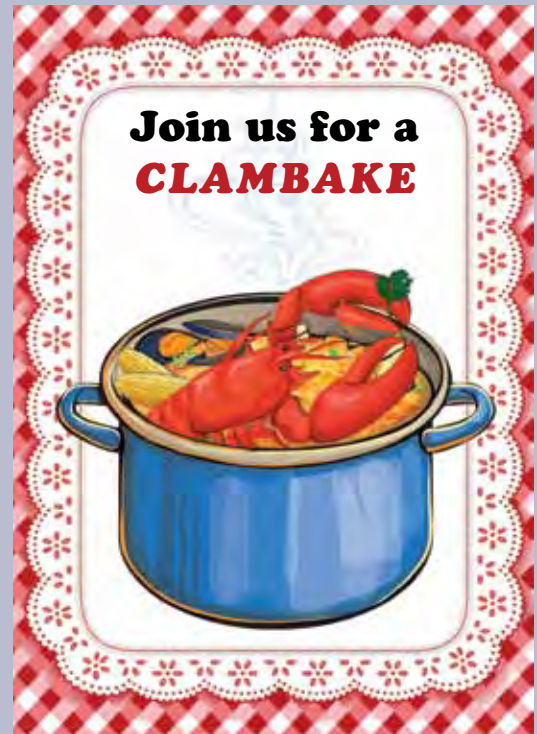
Losing a child is the most unimaginable pain a parent can bear. There is a hole in your heart that heals a little each day but will never go away.

This magnificent Foundation, with all the money you have helped us raise and all the children whose lives we've changed has helped me heal a little bit every day and that, my friends, is why we continue to fundraise.

Ellen

Non-Event Event Is A Financial Success!

The second Non-Event Clambake and Ad Book raised \$55,526 this year. We thank all of our loyal supporters for helping us raise money that we use to fund our grant program. This year, we got more RSVP's who told us they couldn't wait to enjoy lobster, clams and fixin's at the Event... They then read the fine print!!



You Can Help!

Each year the Foundation raises between \$1,200 - \$1,500 in contribution cards. For only \$10, you can purchase a beautiful card that can be used for recognizing births, special birthdays, get well, appreciation and sympathy cards. If you are interested, please email Ellen Svitek (ellensvitek@gmail.com) and she will send you a coupon book and return envelopes.

This summer, we lost a wonderful supporter, our cousin, Dr. Graham E. Martin. His family chose to honor his memory with donations to Kate's Foundation. Over \$1,900 was raised in his memory.

Neighborhood Bike Works

Neighborhood Bike Works sincerely thanks the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for its \$2,500 grant award in 2014. These funds were critical to the success of NBW's Youth Bike Education and Empowerment Program (YBEEP).

Serving youth ages 8-18, YBEEP provides underserved Philadelphians the opportunity to use bikes as a vehicle for empowerment, healthy activity, and skill-building. YBEEP, a youth development framework that we implemented over a year ago, is organized into four tiers, from basic bike repair and riding classes to job and leadership opportunities.

Most of our youth live in and near the neighborhoods of West and North Philadelphia where we operate community bike shops and educational spaces. These neighborhoods face stark disparities in measures of poverty, unemployment, and negative health outcomes like obesity.

We can share exciting evidence about our impact on youth:

- This past year, youth rode a cumulative 4,856 miles with NBW.
- 93% of youth who enrolled in a class went on to complete it.
- 47% of new students came back for at least one additional class or event.
- 79% of youth in all our programs reported increased confidence in their ability to ride their bikes in the city.
- 81% of youth said they planned to ride their bikes more often.
- 35% of youth reported an increased use of biking to stay fit after YBEEP participation.

YBEEP's aims are to inspire adventure, instill confidence, and build skills for future success.

"I want to thank you for running an excellent program. Grace has loved it and is so confident and proud of her developing skills. She fixed her mom's flat this weekend in fact. I also really appreciate the fact that you incorporate other learning into this program, like the trip to Mill Creek Farm. She was gabbing away this morning about sustainable, green roofs, solar power!"

- Parent of Ride Club participant

"I first got involved with Neighborhood Bike Works by doing the summer camp in West Philly. I had a great experience and earned my first adult-sized bike. The trips to Mill Creek Farm and UNI made me start thinking about healthy eating. I learned about nutrition, shared the information with my family, and we stopped eating as much junk food."

- Samuel, who returned last year as a summer camp Assistant Instructor

"My neighborhood is pretty bad, and my mother doesn't like me hanging out outside. Without NBW I'd just be playing my Xbox more. What I've learned also helps my goal of becoming an automotive engineer."

- Older youth who started in Earn-A-Bike and moved up through YBEEP





Grateful CAP Students Write About Their Outward Bound Experiences

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

First and foremost, from the bottom of my heart I could not thank you enough for opportunity of the lifetime that you guys gave me. You guys are the jumpstart I needed to have the best 22 days of my life. Not only did you sponsor the trip, you opened up my eyes to numerous things. I have honestly learned more on my 22-day course than in a year of school. I have gained so many life lessons, skills and knowledge while in an outdoor environment.

I can still remember how I felt stepping foot into that airport. Instantly, I was relieved I actually made it considering I missed my first flight that morning, but the feeling that soon followed is what excited me. I walked into a room of complete strangers, and within minutes it felt like we knew each other for years. It is fascinating how easily you could connect with people who come from such different backgrounds. I honestly do not think my experience would have been so memorable without my crew, the Yellow Ducks. Furthermore, my instructors taught me so much in such a little time.

Within the first week, I already knew how to cook meals, tie multiple knots, how to navigate, as well as use a compass. The variety of food that was supplied was definitely out of my comfort zone. My taste bud went from Vietnamese food to couscous, quinoa and veggie chili. Although I did not know what most of the foods were, I still approached everything with an open mind. On the very first day, my instructors taught us how to tie a taut line hitch to help us put up the tarps. A week later, my crew and I were able to put up the tarps without the help of our instructors. In addition, we learned how to read a map using the valleys and ridges presented. Every member of my crew was given a compass to help us along the way. Despite the fact that North Carolina Outward Bound was the best experience of my life, I still was face with a handful of hardships.

Outward Bound was not always all fun and games for me. Since the moment I left my home at four o'clock in the morning, I missed my brothers. They were the only people on my mind throughout the whole course; the ones that kept me going. My first day on course was straight uphill backpacking with a 60 pound backpack. I was obviously not as fit as I claimed to be. Next thing you know, I was far behind my crew for the first couple of days. Then it was time for the river, and it came with a whole new objective. Trying to canoe in white water for 5 miles in the pouring rain with rapids was not the highlight of my course. Not to mention the part when I was 120 feet in the air trying to find the next spot to put my leg while rock climbing. There were many more hardships, but they do not beat the millions of things I enjoyed and miss.



If I could, I would pack my bags and head out on another Outward Bound course the very next day without any hesitation. I miss waking up at six in the morning and hearing absolutely nothing but the dancing of the leaves. Coming from the city of Philadelphia, I do not get to witness those types of sights too often. Honestly, I would do anything to go back to Victor's Place and watch another breathtaking sunset. I wouldn't even mind simply sleeping under the stars for another night. North Carolina Outward Bound most definitely changed my life for the better. I cannot be more appreciative, thank you.

– Cathy

... Outward bound was physically and emotionally challenging, physically because I was holding a pack that was half my weight, walking miles that seemed to never end and emotionally because it wasn't what I was used to,

imagine being stuck in the forest with twelve other people from around the country that you have never met before and expected to work together as a team. I overcame the difficulties better than I expected but that's what Outward Bound taught me to do, never give up because something seems too hard to do at the moment.



– Tiarra Santiago

... Most importantly, I learned that change is not a bad thing and can be quite rewarding. Stepping out of your comfort zone and pushing yourself can make you feel good about yourself. This course showed me that outer beauty does not really matter, it's what is inside that counts.

– Le'Ann Robles

... Thank you for this experience of expanding my leadership skills and also becoming one with nature and learning how to rock climb, canoeing, and camping. I went past my limit of comfort, and put myself through hard work.



– Aaron Robinson

...I am so glad that I accepted that challenge and used it to make me stronger-mentally, physically, and emotionally. I never thought I would be capable of hiking, filtering my own water, and making new relationships with new faces from all over the country. I still remember wanting to give up on just my second day on course. It was our first hike, which lasted ten hours, and we bush wacked for almost the entire time. I still remember contemplating on whether or not I would ask to be sent home because of how discouraged I was.

– Mariah Matias

... My favorite memory from this course was climbing Pilot Mountain. This mountain was one of the hardest. I climbed during these 14 days. This trip has taught me how to be really team organized and compassionate to others and also how to be self-reliant.



– Siani Martinez

...The 14-day Outward Bound backpacking and canoeing trip has been a life changing experience for me. These past 2 weeks have been a mind-blowing phase that pushed me both mentally and physically. The struggles I had to endure day by day made me appreciate my life much more than before. It also helped me enjoy more of the little things that life had to offer. It helped me realize how much I love cooking, along with learning other amazing skills. I think that I will start cooking more and more with family.



– Miguel Lozada

College Settlement of Philadelphia Teen Adventure Program

The grant funds from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation supported the Teen Adventure Program (TAP). The supplies purchased with the grant funds included life jackets, backpacks, lanterns, sleeping bags, rain jackets, tents, lock and stoves. TAP takes the oldest of our College Settlement campers many of whom live in neighborhoods in Philadelphia, on an educational adventure program which involves many off-site day trips. The trips included both adventurous activities such as hiking at Ricketts Glen and whitewater rafting, and educational trips into various locations in Philadelphia. TAP campers also spend 5 days living and taking part in activities at the Spruce Run Outpost (SRO) College Settlement Camp's wilderness outpost in the Pocono Mountains.

To be honest, it's hard to identify highlights of the program because every single day was brilliant. The educational tours in Philadelphia worked surprisingly well as most of the kids seemed to find them interesting and informative. The campers have a fantastic opportunity to learn things about their city which would usually go unnoticed. All of the activities also provide an excellent opportunity to improve the campers self perceptions and their level of personal development over the two weeks of the program. Campers also get a chance to improve their independence with all of the responsibility they have setting up and preparing their own meals at the Spruce

Run Outpost. The counselors teach the campers as many cool things as possible during the program. Whether that was how to brew tea from wild edibles or how to do a handstand, all of the little tips and tricks add up to make a hugely beneficial program for the campers.

Thanks so much for the grant and the opportunity it provided our teen campers.



Venture Outdoors Improves Volunteer Training

Since its beginnings in 2001, Venture Outdoors has prided itself on having the highest safety and quality standards in the industry. To date, incidents involving participants on outings have been few and none serious or life threatening. This excellent track record can only be accomplished by keeping staff and volunteer leaders trained and up to date on the latest in leadership, first aid, and CPR. Though providing this ongoing training can often be expensive, Venture Outdoors is committed as an organization to continuing this effort whether or not funding exists. The support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation has been extremely helpful in defraying some of those annual costs and helping the organization maintain its high standards and excellent customer service record.





The summer of 2014 marked the 7th anniversary of Camp Attaway's nature program. The continued support provided by the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation allowed us to try out some new activities this year and explore different parts of the community around camp.

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

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

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



A Generous and Thoughtful Donation

Deb Harris, one of Kate's closest friends and a Founder of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, married Michael Friedman on September 7, 2014. In lieu of giving favors at their wedding, they presented the Foundation with a gift of \$500. Kate is definitely smiling!



Paddle Without Pollution's Watershed Paddling Education Program (WPEP) for urban youth launched on the Allegheny River in northwest Pennsylvania in July, 2014. Eleven young people were given the opportunity to spend three days and two nights in the outdoors, enjoying paddling, stewardships, camping and taking care of oneself in the wilderness.

After the WPEP program was completed, a mother of an autistic child called the office. She said her son had not been the same since he returned from the trip. She said he never talked about school or life experiences; he normally is very quiet. He would not stop talking about all the activities he did during his trip: paddling, camping, cooking hot dogs, seeing the wildlife, watching and learning first aid. The mom said she felt like she was on the trip with her son, as his storytelling was so detailed. We were very happy that we were able to give this young man a lasting experience that may help him with everyday life.



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

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

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



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Thank you for your continued support!

UVM Interns Share Their Experiences

(excerpts from thank you letters)

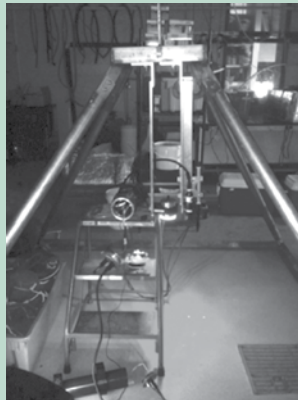
...My internship with Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center enabled me to take a leadership role in both the planning and teaching aspects of environmental programming. Over the course of seven weeks I worked with a variety of age groups and interest levels. I was able to take responsibility in lead teaching my own week of camp. I planned, organized and executed a week called Emerging Naturalists for children ages 6-8 years old. The week focused on engaging the senses and exploring different natural areas. Additionally, each day was based around a different subject. The days were as follows: mammals, plants, birds and insects, tracking and aquatics. This experience allowed me to get a feel for teaching and work through some of the challenges that I was facing in my teaching skills, specifically in finding my own voice. I was amazed by how much I enjoyed the experience and pleased with the amount of joy and learning that was shared that week

– Julienna Brooks

Hello, my name is Rachel Zevin, and this spring you awarded me with the Kate Svitek Memorial Award. It was thanks to your award I was able to move forward testing methodology and create a good proposal for my undergraduate thesis.

The reason I asked for the award was to test, in the Forest Service lab, a new methodology for studying ground beetle dispersal. This would contribute to my study on ground beetle dispersal in sites impacted by wind damage and salvage logging. I looked into this research because I want to know if these ecological disturbances reduce the distance traveled by ground beetles, a bioindicator species, in order to better understand how wind damage and salvage logging effect northern forest ecosystems...

– Rachel Zevin



...This past summer I undertook my own research project to study Mysis, a type of opossum shrimp in Lake Champlain. Mysis are an integral part of the food web of many lakes, including Lake Champlain. Many fish species feed on Mysis and Mysis have the potential to greatly affect both lower and upper food web dynamics. Mysis have been shown to engage in a diel vertical migration (DVM) to avoid predators at depth during the day and feed at the surface at night.

With your generosity, I was able to fill a void of knowledge in the scientific community. I was able to build a large steel frame (pictured below) to mount a camera, battery, lasers and light system because of your financial assistance. Your kindness also allowed me to pay for boat time so that I could deploy my camera system in the bottom of Lake Champlain for 24 hours at a time.

– Rebecca Dillon

...I've gained valuable experience in marketing and outreach development after spending the entire semester promoting the Metta Earth Institute Leadership Training Programs in Lincoln, Vermont. In a typical week, I would reach out to a variety of professors and administrative people to schedule informational sessions, presentations, and tabling opportunities around the state. I was also a co project manager for a service learning class that worked with Metta Earth this past semester doing outreach, creating videos, and increasing the social marketing.

Over the course of the internship, I was an integral part of the outreach development for Metta Earth Institute. The three leadership trainings that are offered throughout the summer are a main highlight of Metta's educational retreat sector of their 501(c)(3) non-profit. My intention was not only to bring in participants, but also to build connections with partners and to develop the methods for outreach. Everyone had a different story and wisdom to offer. These experiences made my internship more fulfilling. Currently, there are about 10 participants in the summer leadership trainings. I hope to continue doing outreach for Metta Earth in order to increase our participant numbers and really make an impact on potential young environmental leaders for this region. I see a huge potential for the young people of this region to play an integral role in the environmental and social justice movement that is currently spreading like wildfire throughout the globe. Thank you again for your kindness, you have really made an impact on my future endeavors with outreach for non-profits that are providing opportunities for environmental leadership.

– Mandy St. Hilaire





Camp Thunderbird South Dakota (CTSD) serves children on the Rosebud and the Pine Ridge Reservations. Since 2008, our summer program aims to build skills in campers that will help

them overcome the many obstacles they face growing up in the most impoverished place in America. Campers learn how to set goals and push themselves, while maintaining their cultural identity and pride. We accomplish this through activities that instill a love of nature and provide opportunities to explore the natural world.

But this year was also full of many new and exciting changes! For the first time, CTSD expanded to include campers from Pine Ridge Reservation in addition to the Rosebud Reservation. Instead of offering just one week of camp for 3rd through 5th graders, we expanded to two weeks and had two full camp sessions: one for campers in 3rd and 4th grades, and another for campers in 5th through 7th grades.

During week one, the forty-four 5th through 7th graders camped at Ghost Hawk Lake on the Rosebud Reservation for three nights. There we played team-building games, learned wilderness skills, swam, built campfires, and shared stories from elders in the community. We also took day trips to the Badlands National Park where we learned about geology and paleontology as well as Niobrara National Wilderness Area where we learned about the water cycle from Park Rangers. Then, we drove to the School of Mines in Rapid City, where we stayed in dorms

for two nights. We toured the campus and had a question-and-answer session with college students. On the last day of camp we climbed Harney Peak, the tallest point in South Dakota. This was a difficult seven-mile roundtrip hike, and campers used the skills they had learned of setting goals, supporting each other, and challenging themselves to persevere. In the end, all the campers made it to the top!



During week two, the 3rd and 4th graders spent two days camping at Ghost Hawk Lake, and enjoying the same activities as the older group. Then, we drove to Custer State Park where we stayed at the Stockade Lake Group campsite. The campers loved exploring beautiful Custer State Park, where we hiked, boated, and fished. On our final day at the park, we climbed three miles up to Lover's Leap and enjoyed the view. We were even caught in a thunderstorm on the way back, but the campers all finished the hike and were eager to challenge themselves even more next year!

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



Thank you for your support of our Animal Homes Project, which will attract and support birds, bats, butterflies and insects at Riverbend. These animals provide us with opportunities for teaching children and the wider public about nature, as well as improve the health and diversity of our ecosystem.

In the meadow, open areas, and in our bird observation areas, we installed four bluebird houses, four wren houses, four woodpecker, and four butterfly houses. Our teen volunteers and habitat interns really enjoyed

assembling and installing the houses. Along the main path in the area where we do our decomposer lesson, we built and installed an Insect Hotel. The Insect Hotel has been a source of great interest for visitors to the property, and our environmental educators have incorporated it into their lesson about the importance of insects in the ecosystem. Our kindergartners will be making small versions of the Insect Hotel to take home for their yards. We landscaped the area surrounding the Insect Hotel with native ferns and shrubs which will attract birds, butterflies and insects. We also purchased a bat house which will be installed later this fall.



Russell Byers Charter School

Thanks to the generosity of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, the Russell Byers Charter School 5th grade ventured to the Pine Barrens of New Jersey for an overnight camping trip at Camp Ockanickon from October 9th to 10th. At Camp Ockanickon, the 81 5th graders had a blast canoeing, climbing a rock wall, and trying archery. With 88% of our students living in urban poverty, camping and wilderness excursions are nearly foreign to most of our students. For many students, this was the first time they had spent the night away from home in Philadelphia – much less in the woods without electricity! Students played field games, hiked, canoed and performed songs and skits in front of the camp fire. Teacher and chaperone Diana Reading reflected, “I had to teach the students how to sleep in their sleeping bags. We stayed up all night just having the best time sharing stories and giggling.” Critical to building community for our new students, Ms. Reading noted, “Kayla, a new student in 5th grade who was in my group, now stops by my room every morning to say hi. She really came out of her shell on the trip.”

Exploring about the natural world, students embarked on nature hikes where they learned about setting controlled fires to clean out forest debris, collected pinecones, and observed wildlife. 5th grader Gregory was amazed at their findings – “We saw a wild turkey and four deer!” From learning the principles of Leave No Trace to being “cruisers” in the dining hall, students embodied Expeditionary Learning practices of learning by doing and building community.

On behalf of every 5th grade student and the entire RBCS community, thank you, thank you, thank you!!!



Thank you Faulkner Family Foundation

In October, 2014 the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation received a check for the amount of \$5,000 from the Faulkner Family Foundation, a fund of the Pennsylvania Automotive Association Foundation. The mission of the PAAF is to support the charitable activities and good works of Pennsylvania’s new car and truck dealers.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

With generous funding from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation and other supporters, the Center for Aquatic Sciences sent twenty two youth in the Community and Urban Science Enrichment (CAUSE) Program on an exploration of the Virginia coast in June. CAUSE is a program designed to provide a nurturing environment for youth with life skills training, mentoring, and strong aquatic science education. For many of the youth, the annual excursion is the first experience exploring the world outside of Camden. The youth, in grades 9-12, spent several days at the Back Bay Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park in Virginia. The youth spent time exploring the local habitats and learning about the lifecycles of the animals that call them home. They participated in a kayaking trip through Back Bay. During nature walks, the students spent time learning about the coastal plants of the area, including how the Native Americans used them for food, medicine, and other uses. The youth were even able to gather edible plants and incorporate them into a meal, including a cake and a smoothie. These experiences, unlike any that the students could have in Camden, will help shape and expand the youth's views of the world around them and what impact they can make.



Below are three short stories from the youth participants. Staff always includes time for the students to reflect on their experiences and encourage them to write and share what they have learned and felt. Three of the students were happy to share these thoughts:

1. Crystelle, 9th grader at PennTech, Sicklerville

Excursion was the best experience I have had in this program so far. We went to False Cape State Park in Virginia where we did most of our activities. We had the best park naturalist, Vickie. Vickie took us out on nature hikes and we explored the area where we were staying. One of the best memories that I have with Vickie was when

we made icing. We had just gotten back to the cabin from taking a hike. We had picked blueberries from nature! I had no idea that blueberries grew out in nature like that.

2. Destiny, 9th Grader at Camden Charter School, Camden

We went kayaking and that was a lot of fun too. We got to see the insects that live in the salt marsh and the difference in soil under the water in different areas. On our way back from kayaking we had a little race. I lost, but it was worth the try. After we got out of the kayaks, we were separated into two groups; one group went seining and the other went to test the pH of the water in the salt marsh. Then we switched. While seining, we caught a little fish and a little crab. I was so excited when we got it, that I ran out into the water to put it in our bucket. We did let it go back into the ocean when we were leaving the beach! Overall, excursion was one of the best experiences I have ever had, especially since I do not get to do many things similar to that.



3. Sujeily, 9th Grader at LEAP Academy Charter School, Camden

Excursion was the most awesome trip I have ever been on. It was wonderful from the nice view to the amazing food. Excursion wasn't just for fun, it was about what you learned and what we young adults can take from it. I learned a lot of stuff and tried many new things. For example, I learned the difference between blueberries and poisonous wild berries. The trip took a lot of energy because we were up early and had late nights, but that was okay because of this one lady...she really made me happy to see her every day. She took the time to make our day amazing and challenging every time we came to see her and her adventure bus. This lady was our park naturalist, Vickie. She made every day different and fun.

Wissahickon Charter Experiences Outward Bound

Wissahickon Charter School greatly values its ongoing relationship with the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation and deeply appreciates the foundation's faithful support of the school and its environmental mission. In June 2014, The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation awarded Wissahickon Charter School \$7,500 to fund its Outward Bound trip. These funds allowed WCS students to participate in this unforgettable trip – a trip that contributes to the unique mission of the school.

The weeklong Outward Bound backpacking trip for eighth graders, which kicked off the first full week of October, is a significant milestone in students' personal and academic lives. The students are placed in an unfamiliar setting and given challenges to overcome while working alongside their peers. WCS values this trip due to its coherence with WCS' emphasis on environmental stewardship, social emotional skills and leadership inside and outside the classroom.

The following comments from students highlight the

success of this year's Outward Bound trip. We are grateful for your generous contribution that made this trip possible and we look forward to continuing to partner with you.

...I grew as a person by pushing myself to do new things. I learned how to work better with others.

... Thank you so much for giving me and my classmates a chance to do an amazing camping trip. It was so fun and it helped me to face a big fear. At times I said I wanted to go home, but I know I didn't mean it.

... When I was there, it was very hard. While we were at Outward Bound we had to walk a lot of miles.

...Here is a couple of things I enjoyed about the trip. One, getting to know some of my classmates better. Two, we all had to walk and work together to get places. And last, but not least, when we had chow circle and at the end we did a song.



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.

From 7/5/94-8/15/94 Kate went on a six week trip through the Four Corners region of Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah with America's Adventure. Here is what Kate's trip leaders Susan and Stuart had to say about her.

"Kate is an exceptional leader and personality! She was willing to do extra work for the benefit of others. She communicated well and worked very hard at group unity. She participated fully in every aspect of every new activity. She challenged all other campers to do the same. Kate accomplished everything with a great sense of humor! Kate would be a strong asset to any adventure or group. We appreciate what she offered us, as far as insight and support. She is our only camper to receive such a high rating. Her camping skills are excellent." (Kate received 25 out of 25 points)

New Heights Academy Charter School

Thank you for supporting our 8th and 11th grade camping trips this year! With your help, we took a total of 88 students (60 8th graders and 28 high school students) on two separate camping trips at Harriman State Park in upstate New York. The trips were incredibly successful, and a wonderful and eye-opening way for us to cap the 2013-2014 school year.



I had such an amazing experience on the camping trip. My expectation was different than what it actually was. I thought we were going to be with an adult and be doing organized things, but no, we got to explore the woods with our own group. This experience taught me how to be on my own and not

rely on electronics and be one with nature.

– Adonys Temple, 11th grade



I was very much afraid to go on that camping trip. I was afraid of not being able to sleep and I was afraid of being forced to use the bathroom behind a bush, and thankfully I couldn't have been more wrong. I am so happy to have been given the opportunity to go on that camping trip because I was able to explore

without getting lost. I walked around with friends and although we felt as though we were in the middle of nowhere, we always found our way back. I felt isolated but never alone.

– Franchesca De La Cruz, 11th grade



It was an exhilarating experience for me and my friends. It was a trip that I will never in my life forget. I personally have never gone camping before in my life which is why it was such an important highlight in my high school life. I really enjoyed the terrain in the area. It was very

natural. It was strange at first waking up in the camp since I usually wake up seeing another apartment building across from my window.

– Anthony Cano, 10th grade

I-LEAD Charter School

I-LEAD Charter School's Outdoors Club wants to thank you so much for the help you have offered them to get outdoors! As you know we are an inner-city charter school with a vision to help those who have dropped out of the public school system. So, we are helping students who live in an at-risk area that are even more at risk. Part of our vision is to show them that there is a very large, wide world out there waiting for them, and with a little effort, they can do great things.



Your help allowed us to take two trips so far that have connected our learners to the outdoors. First, we took a trip to the Reading Rocks Climbing Gym to get them ready for outdoor climbing in the spring. They learned a lot about safety and teamwork, as

they held each others 'lives' on the end of a rope. Many of them seemed amazed that they could do what they thought was impossible for them before.

We also were able to take a trip to a nearby natural wonder. The learners thoroughly enjoyed our trip to Crystal Cave. The cave is one of the most popular natural wonders in Pennsylvania and is just a half hour's trip from the school. But, in spite of being so close, our students have never been there. They couldn't believe the beauty and size of the underground views. It is clear that these trips are opening up their minds and hearts to the many possibilities available to them that they have never thought of before.



We are now gearing up for ski season. Last year we were able to take three trips to Camelback Mountain and get lessons for many who only ever saw skiing or snowboarding on television. We have arranged to take three trips in January and February.



Approximately 220 campers aged 4-11 years old enjoyed the following special programs thanks to a grant from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation:

- Storyteller Bill Wood, with puppets and simple musical instruments that engaged the children in entertaining and educational stories.
- John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove, with a live screech owl and taxidermy mounts to study raptor and bird adaptations and environmental issues affecting them.
- Naturalist and school teacher Nick Zurga, to teach campers outdoor survival techniques via equipment and a nature walk with hands-on wildlife study.
- Bob Furer from Bob's Critters, with snakes, turtles, spiders, and insects, to help campers learn about adaptations and the food chain.
- Dan Borkoski, beekeeper with Sun Bear Apiary, with visuals, live bees, and props to teach campers about beekeeping, including bee biology.
- A performer from Sciencetelling, with stories interwoven with science experiments using water.
- Elmwood Park Zoo, with live native animals to discuss their habitats, adaptations, and the effects of environmental hazards on our local wildlife.
- Great Valley Nature Center, with native and exotic animals, to demonstrate various adaptations and behaviors of these nocturnal creatures.



No Barriers Grand Canyon Expedition Success

Lonnie Bedwell and Erik Weihenmayer, two blind men, trained for six years. Their goal was to kayak 277 miles through the Grand Canyon as a commitment to live a No Barriers life. Erik said they knew kayaking 277 miles through some massive whitewater wouldn't be easy. "It sets us up for struggle and even bleeding from time to time. However, I also believe this choice offers a depth of richness of adventure, friendship, love, beauty, joy and purpose that cannot be experienced in any other way."

Erik went on to say, "Moving forward in this uncertain way is hard, but in the case of Lonnie and me, we came to the expedition equipped. Although we both have obvious challenges, we came with a toolkit built through preparation on many rivers and life experiences. We were also equipped with an outstanding team of friends and guides who shared our vision and to whom we entrusted our fates. In my case, a

vital part of the toolkit was an innovative high-tech communication system developed after two years of searching and experimentation. But I believe the most important tool is something very hard to describe; let's call it an internal light. For some of those who have experienced major adversity in their lives and have been shoved into a dark place, that light only flickers and is in jeopardy of burning out. However, fueled through our hard choices, that light ignites and becomes the energy to propel us forward, through the barriers that try to knock us flat, towards purpose and fulfillment in our lives."



Twenty-six children attended the week of scholarship camp. They participated in five days of fun, learning and eating on the farm. They learned about plant parts by walking through the farm, and finding and tasting examples of each part. They learned about wildlife and the food web by exploring a forested area of the park. At the Pollination Station, children see pollination happening right in front of them, while learning about the role pollinators play on the farm and in our food supply. Our camps also include activities in the Grow Lunch Garden, where children plant, tend, harvest and eat fresh vegetables from their own field. Each day of camp involved harvesting vegetables from the Grow Lunch Garden to supplement their own lunches. Most days we made big salads with a dressing that included blackberries picked on the site.



Wednesday included a special treat, as we were joined by chefs from New Seasons Market, who cooked with the kids. This week of camp, the project was veggie pizzas using a mix of vegetables they had harvested and more brought by the chefs. Chefs also did a lesson in salad dressing and kids were fascinated to learn about emulsifying salad dressing. They loved the whisking. It is always fun to see how much kids can eat when the meal is fun, fresh and hands-on.

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

This year we tried a new survey/activity for kids over the course of the week. Kids received a Veggie Passport at the beginning of the week, and got a stamp for each vegetable they tried. It was a fun way to encourage tasting, and we measured change over the week through a survey. At the beginning of the week, four kids said they “loved vegetables, all kinds”. By Friday, that number had climbed to 11 kids, an increase of 175%. Also, 4 kids started the week saying they “don’t like vegetables” and that number dropped to 2 by the end of the week. The rest of the kids were in the middle, answering that they “like some vegetables”.





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