



Follow Kate's Dreams!

The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation (KSMF) was founded in May 2002, several months after Kate Svitek perished in a tragic snowboarding accident, which occurred in February 2002.

To say that Kate loved the great outdoors is quite an understatement. In fact, her appreciation and commitment to the environment was so strong, it became the foundation's mission and purpose. It's noteworthy to read Kate's own words — what she penned to include with her application to the University of Vermont. At the tender age of 17, Kate wrote:

"I want to spend my life helping people to better understand our natural world and appreciate it in the same way I have done by becoming part of nature. Our natural world is a powerful force, and I want to try to provide people with the opportunity to grow through their interaction with the environment."

Her words became the inspiration and motivation for the Founders of the KSMF. The mission and purpose was clear: Follow Kate's Dreams!

Each year, grant recipients are asked for comments from those who participated in the fantastic programs the Foundation sponsors. Their accounts are significant, often including unique introspections gained along the way. The impact is regularly transformative.

It's almost unfathomable for those reading this to imagine that there are massive amounts of young people who have never experienced being in nature – spending any amount of time in the natural world. If they live in the inner city and cannot afford a trip to a state park, these programs fill a tremendous void. A whole new world is opened up to them, one they will never forget.

With your support, the KSMF has helped thousands of youngsters across the country to appreciate nature. The Foundation also focuses on helping children with emotional issues understand the psychological gifts that nature has to offer. When Kate died, she was employed as a Naturalist at a school in Bend, Oregon that was designed to help kids with emotional problems. Along with fellow teachers and counselors, Kate accompanied many youngsters into the Great Outdoors.

This newsletter includes stories and accompanying quotes and input from students and staff in the sponsored programs. Please take a little bit of your time to read the articles and testimonials so that you will be able to better grasp that Kate's vision has truly become a reality.

In addition, always remember that all of this is possible only through your generosity and support of the KSMF. We — and the youngsters served — owe you our sincere gratitude. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.





In October 2025, the Sustainability Adventure Program (SAP) used Kate Svitek Foundation grant funds to take a group of youth on a three-day, two-night camping trip to Florida Caverns State Park. This experience directly supported SAP's mission of connecting Orlando's most vulnerable youth with Florida's natural landscapes while strengthening their understanding of sustainability, environmental stewardship, and essential outdoor skills.

Students participated in structured, hands-on activities designed to build environmental awareness, confidence, and curiosity. A major highlight was the guided tour of the park's historic limestone caverns. During the tour, youth observed dramatic geological formations and learned about Florida's aquifer system, groundwater flow, and the importance of protecting natural resources. For many, this was their first time in a cave or seeing stalactites and stalagmites up close, making the experience both educational and memorable.

Beyond the caverns, staff led outdoor learning sessions that introduced students to foundational camping and survival skills. These lessons included tent setup, fire building, outdoor cooking, and practicing Leave No Trace principles. Guided hikes allowed students to explore native plants and wildlife, observe ecosystem changes, and deepen their understanding of Florida's biodiversity and the challenges its natural habitats face. Canoeing was another key component of the trip. With staff supervision, students learned proper paddling techniques, water safety, and how healthy water systems support both people and wildlife. For many participants, it was their first time in a canoe, providing an empowering opportunity to build teamwork, self-confidence, and an appreciation for Florida's interconnected water ecosystems.

The camping experience also supported leadership development and relationship building. Preparing meals together, hiking as a team, and participating in evening campfire discussions encouraged youth to practice communication, collaborate with peers, and reflect on how nature can influence their goals and personal growth. Traditional activities like making s'mores added fun while fostering a sense of community.

For most students, this trip was a rare introduction to Florida's state parks and the broader world of outdoor adventure. Support from the Kate Svitek Foundation made it possible for SAP to provide a safe, engaging, and transformative experience that broadened worldviews, increased environmental literacy, and inspired new academic and career interests connected to sustainability.



Message

Dear Friends,

When you lose a child you just don't lose the person, you lose all of the experiences you had expected to share with them in their future.

The stories from the children in the newsletter can be for me the phone calls from Kate telling me about a child she led into the wilderness and their reaction. (That's a secret to what keeps me going all of these years).

Once more because of you, our loyal supporters, we raised \$96,147.

Our Annual Appeal raised \$80,385., Cards & Contributions raised \$4,271., Giving Tuesday raised \$1,004., Sip & Shop raised \$10,511! WOW!!

Because of your generosity we are able to award 65 grants totaling \$253,780! There were 108 applications received this year. We have made quite an impact on the lives of students because of you.

Love, Ellen

Frank, Ellen and Michael

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Instagram:

[@svitekfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/svitekfoundation)

and to visit our website:

www.katesvitekmemorial.org





The annual Klamath-Siskiyou Outdoor School (KSOS) in June 2025 brought 24 youth campers and 8 adult counselors together from across the rural Mid Klamath region of Northern California for a week of activities, exploration, and connection.

The week kicked off in Forks of Salmon, where campers explored the Salmon River, participated in outdoor skill building activities, prepared for a multi-day backpacking trip, and started to build connections with one another. The next day participants backpacked to an alpine lake just outside the Russian Wilderness and stayed for three nights. Time in the backcountry is the heart of KSOS. Participants built deeper connections with their home watershed, relationships of trust and support with other campers and counselors, and challenged themselves to try new things. Our group grounded ourselves in place, exploring the different high alpine lake, meadow, and forest habitats and discussing our connections to these places within our watershed. Young and older campers alike rose into leadership roles, whether it was taking the lead on meal preparation, teaching other campers how to fish, or setting good examples for stewardship of wild places. Each night, participants slept side by side under the stars and woke up to the rising sun. KSOS ended in celebration with a raft trip on the Klamath River near Happy Camp.

To ensure KSOS is accessible to local youth from all backgrounds, it is completely free to participants with all food and gear provided. Funds from the Kate Svitek Memorial Fund helped us purchase food and camping supplies that were essential to the success of KSOS this year! We are grateful for the support that allowed us to provide this impactful program to local youth.



The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation generously awarded the New Jersey School of Conservation (NJSOC) a grant of \$4,000 in April 2025 to support educational field experiences at our 240-acre residential environmental center within Stokes State Forest in northwestern New Jersey. NJSOC is proud to report that the grant provided an overnight experience for the Manville High School Environmental Club this fall.

Thirty-one students from the Manville High Environmental Club grades 9 - 12 visited the NJSOC on October 28 and 29. It was an especially beautiful time of year for these diverse teens from Somerset County to visit our site. NJSOC master educators facilitated a wide range of memorable outdoor activities with the Club which included both first-time and returning students. The group selected wilderness survival, canoeing, and archery for their field experiences and spent the evening at the campfire circle at Piney Point along the western shore of Lake Wapalanne.

Highlights of the trip, as reported by the participants, were: completing a six-mile hike to Sunrise Mountain, paddling a canoe for the first time, learning self-reliance by building a campfire, successfully using a bow and arrow, connecting to nature and seeing NJSOC's forests and rivers, and toasting marshmallows and eating s'mores with friends.

Manville High School is a Title 1 school, indicating a high percentage of the students are from low-income families. The two-day visit provided an immersive outdoor experience for students who are actively interested in the environment and conservation. We are proud to host the Club and foster the students' interest in nature and science.



Sip & Shop 2025

*A stylish success for the
Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation*

For nearly a decade, the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation has proudly partnered with Evelyn & Arthur in Palm Beach Gardens for its annual *Sip and Shop* fundraiser—pausing only during the Covid pandemic. This year’s event, held on Sunday, March 23rd, brought together our wonderful Ibis community, raising \$10,536 in a single day.

With Evelyn & Arthur’s generous donation of 20% of all purchases, and additional contributions from those unable to attend, the total raised from the past eight events now stands at an incredible \$76,834.71.

We are deeply grateful to owner Adrienne Weissman, store manager Lauren Emert, the entire sales team, and this year’s dedicated Sip and Shop 8 co-chairs, Bernice Glaser and Marcia Markoff. Thank you all for helping us honor Kate’s legacy in such a meaningful way.



L to R, Lauren Emert, store manager, Bernice Glaser, co chair of event, Marcia Markoff, co chair of event, Ellen Svitek, Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation Chair & Adrienne Weissman, owner of Evelyn and Arthur



Ladies of Florida, Save the Date

March 15th, 2026

11am-4pm Super Shopping Day

3 Exciting Shopping Venues

9th Annual  EVELYN & ARTHUR

SIP & SHOP

Evelyn & Arthur Fashion Boutique
10937 N Military Trail, Palm Beach Gardens
20% of your purchase donated to KSMF

2 New Stores- Shop More- Help More

Learning Express Toys Gifts

10941 N Military Trail
Palm Beach Gardens

20% of your purchase
donated to KSMF

The SHOE SPA luxury comfort footwear

10953 N Military Trail
Palm Beach Gardens

10% of your purchase
donated to KSMF



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 \$9.22 per card!

Let's support the Foundation instead of your local card shop!



**SEVERSON DELLS
NATURE CENTER**

Your generous contribution to our nature education after-school programming with Boys and Girls Clubs in Rockford, IL was extremely impactful.

Funds from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation supported 17 weeks of programming offered by Severson Dells Nature Center at Boys & Girls Clubs of Rockford. For 15 weeks, we brought

programming to the clubs for 61 2nd-6th grade students. For the other 2 weeks, we took students on a field trip to a local natural area. We covered many topics such as Animal Homes & Habitats, Knots & Navigation, Predators & Prey, Nocturnal Animals Adaptations, Nature Mindfulness, Clouds, and Spring Bird Migration. We also included nature crafts and games to help students connect with nature in new ways to impact their understanding of nature.

We are incredibly grateful the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation chose to support us in our efforts to deepen community connections with the natural world. Foundations like yours truly make an impact by supporting organizational efforts across the country to help us better connect our communities to the natural world.



Thank you for your generous donation to our program, it's with help like yours that we are able to reach students across California and immerse them in the world of forestry.

Over our fall 2025 event season, we hosted 5 Forestry Challenge events across the state, Shasta, Santa Cruz, El Dorado, and two events in San Bernardino. We had 592 students attend from 74 schools across the state. Students were engaged with local forest activities at each event, collecting real world data and working with industry professionals to interpret and make informed recommendations about the future of the landscape.

In Shasta, students worked with Sierra Pacific Industries to determine the next steps needed for a growing plantation.

In Santa Cruz, we worked with California State Parks to assess the post-fire health of a stand of mixed conifers at Butano State Park.

In El Dorado, students received first-hand experience with the Forest Service assessing seedling survival rates in restoration efforts within the Caldor Fire footprint.

In San Bernardino, students assessed the long-term fire recovery of a unit within Hubert Eaton Scout Reservation, working with CalFire, who are trying to bring back pre-fire mixed conifer stands to the San Bernardino mountains.

At our events, students receive tools and skills training from professionals from both private industry and the public sector, including tree identification, diameter and height measurement, map reading, and canopy density measurements. With the help of field foresters, teams of students collected relevant information from plots around the studied landscape in the same way a Forester would. Students were then tested on these skills, and had a half day of recreational time in the forest, with everything zip-lining to logging sports demonstrations with teams from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, UC Berkeley, and Cal Poly Humboldt. Lastly, students presented their findings, along with what they had learned to panels of judges.

Student Quote: "Having the opportunity to work in the field with licensed foresters and learn in depth about forestry has been truly incredible. It is a wonderful learning experience I believe more students should check it out!"





The Summer Intern program is a cornerstone of Grassy Waters Summer Programs. In some cases the interns originally discovered Grassy Waters in elementary school. We have been fortunate to have had several Interns return to Grassy Waters after graduation and continue to work for us.

This past summer we serviced 6 different summer camps that required 20 pre and post visits and 6 field trips to Grassy Waters, involving 157 children. Additionally, our two interns became certified in "Project Learning Tree" & "Aquatic WILD". All this in ten short weeks. These two resources enable the interns to develop their own lessons and adapt those lessons to the grade level of the campers.

Additionally, each intern completed a specific project to further enhance programs at Grassy Waters.

Marco designed a field trip worksheet based on a scavenger hunt. Campers were instructed to watch videos from our

website, answer questions about the Everglades, and know what items to bring with them on their trip to Grassy Waters. All questions were correlated to school grade standards.

Miranda developed a new post-visit lesson for grades k-5. The lesson was based on the new book "Sam The Snail Kite And The Secret of the Everglades". A velcro poster board was created to show what an animal needs to survive in the Everglades.

Student Comments:

"I learned that whirligig beetles have two sets of eyes." Joleisa, 8th grade

Our interns' comments:

"My favorite part of the internship was using the knowledge learned in the classroom and apply it to real world career experiences." Marco, Environmental I

"My favorite part of this internship was being able to teach students who had never been to the Everglades and gaining skills to do so in a fun and creative way."

Miranda, Environmental Intern.

Thank you for your continued support of this important program at Grassy Waters Preserve.



With gratitude to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Girls Inc. Tennessee Valley introduced 250 girls from under-resourced households to transformative outdoor experiences that honor Kate Svitek's beautiful vision of inspiring young people to respect and cherish our wilderness. Through your support, we've helped keep Kate's spirit alive while creating profound first-time experiences for girls who face significant barriers to accessing nature.

For the vast majority of our participants, this program provided their very first outdoor adventures. Many girls had never hiked a nature trail, identified wildflowers native to our Tennessee Valley region, or learned how to properly dress and pack for outdoor excursions. These weren't just activities-they were doorways to a world previously beyond reach.

Girls learned essential wilderness safety principles-from understanding trail markers to recognizing when to seek shelter. In our therapeutic garden and Monarch Waystation, girls tenderly cared for monarch caterpillars through their entire life cycle, witnessing the miraculous transformation from caterpillar to butterfly. This hands-on stewardship taught patience, responsibility, and the interconnectedness of all living things. Watching initially hesitant participants gain confidence-whether navigating natural spaces or gently handling milkweed to feed their caterpillars-embodied everything Kate dreamed of achieving.

Every moment spent outdoors with these girls honors Kate's dream. We witnessed transformation as timid participants became enthusiastic advocates for nature, just as Kate hoped children would. Her passion for helping young people connect with nature lives on through every identified flower, every conquered trail, every butterfly released, and every girl who now sees herself as someone who belongs in the wilderness.

Beyond skills learned, we've cultivated environmental stewards who carry Kate's legacy forward. Girls who began hesitantly are now advocating for pollinator conservation and dreaming of outdoor careers. Your Foundation didn't just fund a program-you've planted seeds of environmental passion in 250 hearts.

Thank you for allowing us to share Kate's memory and keep her remarkable spirit alive through these life-changing experiences.





Thanks to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation’s generous support, Neighborhood Bike Works (NBW) provided hundreds of Philadelphia youth with transformative outdoor experiences that built confidence, connection, and a lifelong love of being active outside. Your investment ensured that youth—many from neighborhoods with limited access to safe outdoor recreation—could ride, explore, and discover their strengths.

Youth Outdoor Programming & Impact

In 2025, NBW engaged 178 youth in hands-on bike repair, group rides, trail exploration, and leadership-building activities through our Youth Bicycle Education & Empowerment Program (YBEEP). Across all programs, youth collectively rode 4,054 miles and earned 202 bikes, actively demonstrating the extraordinary impact of regular outdoor activity on physical health, emotional well-being, and independence.

Our outdoor riding curriculum emphasized exploration, environmental awareness, and comfort navigating real-world urban and trail environments. Youth participated in 119 outdoor rides, including neighborhood rides, longer-distance trail excursions, and nature-based skills practice such as safe trail riding, route planning, and bike handling on mixed surfaces.

The year’s highlight was our Freedom Riders outdoor adventure program, which introduced 26 youth to new

outdoor destinations across Philadelphia’s park and trail systems. Youth gained familiarity with the Schuylkill River Trail, Cobbs Creek, the Circuit Trails network, and other green spaces many had never visited.

In August, 23 youth completed a transformative three-day, 100-mile bikepacking and camping trip, carrying their gear, preparing meals, and sleeping outdoors along the Circuit Trails. For most, it was their first time camping. The trip strengthened resilience, teamwork, and comfort in natural settings—core values of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation.

Outcomes

Pre/post evaluations show:

- 95% of youth planned to ride more often after completing their program.
- 89% reported feeling more confident achieving goals outdoors.
- 93% learned persistence (“not giving up”), especially during long rides and challenging terrain.

Your support directly expanded youths’ access to nature, adventure, and safe outdoor experiences. Thank you for helping Philadelphia youth discover freedom, joy, and confidence in the outdoors.



**CENTER FOR
AQUATIC
SCIENCES**

In August 2025, nine students from the Center for Aquatic Sciences CAUSE (Community And Urban Science Enrichment) program travelled to West Virginia from Camden, New Jersey for their annual out of state excursion. The out-of-state excursion is a treasured annual event that is often filled with unique first-time experiences in the outdoors. CAUSE students, in grades 11 and 12, participate in academic enrichment, hands-on science, and community service throughout the year.

This year, CAUSE students participated in water sampling, a biological census, and college visits during their trip to the Delmarva Peninsula. CAUSE students and their mentors traveled to historic Harpers Ferry, West Virginia to enjoy nature, expand their outdoor experiences, and build stronger relationships as a team.

First, CAUSE students went ziplining in the trees near the Shenandoah River. Students experienced beautiful views, including a spot from a landing tower where they could see three states at once (WV, VA, and MD). These were new states for the students to add to their life-lists. Despite some initial nervousness, the group grew more confident in their ziplining skills after a few rounds of ground-based practice and coaching from the zipline guides. One CAUSE student said, “I thought I was too scared to do it, but I had to since we were all doing it together. I had the best time after a few tries.”

Next, the group went whitewater rafting in the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. Sharing six-person rafts, CAUSE students and their mentors saw beautiful scenery, learned about the history of Harpers Ferry, and rode exciting rapids. Although the group has flatwater kayaked in the past, everyone agreed that the excitement of whitewater rafting was a whole different experience. In between stretches of rapids, the teams in each raft raced one another and had a splash fight or two. This trip was a highlight of the year for the CAUSE students, especially our graduating seniors. We are very thankful to the Kate Svitek Foundation for making this memorable trip possible.





Riverbend's Summer Habitat Management 2025 Internship was once again a fulfilling and exciting program!

Through hands-on experience working outside in our 30-acre preserve, our four Habitat Management interns worked on habitat restoration projects, but they learned so much more.

Intern #1: This is my first job in conservation, and I feel empowered and supported by my team to grow into a better land steward and naturalist. I'm learning new skills, how to work collaboratively as a part of a whole, and diagnose problem areas and take care of them independently. I am picking up some useful information from my co-workers and supervisors as well, from tree identification to resources for career development to advice. This internship represents my hope for the future: to be a competent conservationist.

Intern #2: One thing this internship taught me was patience. I learned to appreciate the progress I made each day, and to save the rest for another time. Additionally, learning about various invasive, aggressive, and native species expanded my knowledge and gave me valuable insight. One of the most important lessons the job taught me was to move with caution. The number of times I was pricked or poked was immense, simply because I would pull plants without paying close attention. I even got stung by a bee for the first time because I didn't realize I was standing directly on a nest. These moments showed me the importance of being more aware. Lastly, I learned how to be a better leader and the value of patience, communication, and encouragement.

Intern #3: This internship provided opportunities to contribute to the preserve in many different ways from planting native plant species to installing new projects for the campers of Riverbend to utilize in their new environment. With a smaller crew of only 3-4 of us, it made me appreciate the hours spent simply maintaining the property's trails, alongside the different sites such as the frog ponds, bird observation area, the pollination garden, musical forest, and all other unique spots that distinguish Riverbend from other environmental centers. The internship gave me experience to expand my ecological knowledge and showed me a community is committed to preserving nature.



Intern #4: I was able to accomplish and learn a lot in this short period of time. Some of the things I was able to accomplish included building water bars and terracing for erosion control on both trails and areas where plantings were occurring, removing invasive species, and planting native trees and shrubs. I also learned how to use string trimmers to help keep trails maintained, prune trees and plants to help keep them healthy and Riverbend safe for everyone to come and enjoy, as well as remove many invasive vines and trees in order to provide more room for native species to grow and thrive. I was able to improve my knowledge in the conservation world and make a difference by improving the ecosystem function at Riverbend.

We, along with each of the interns, appreciate the grant funding through the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation that provides this opportunity.



RIVERSPORT is grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation

for providing 20 Thrive Outside summer camp scholarships. Your contribution of \$2700 helped provide 18,553 hours of watersports and outdoor recreation for 228 youths who would not normally have the opportunity to participate.

On behalf of our entire youth program, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you for once again welcoming our young people to RIVERSPORT this summer. Your continued support and generosity mean more than words can express.



Each year, our youth look forward to this experience, not only for the fun and adventure but for the opportunity to step outside their everyday environments and be exposed to new, exciting possibilities. Whether it's conquering the surfing, paddling on the river, or simply spending time in a space that encourages confidence and connection, RIVERSPORT consistently provides memories that last a lifetime.

Thank you for believing in the potential of our youth and for playing a meaningful role in their growth and joy. We are grateful for this ongoing partnership and look forward to many more summers together!

In late June 2025, 10 students from diverse communities throughout Alaska’s Copper River Watershed took a ten-day journey exploring the past, present, and future of the watershed.

The theme of this year’s program was Into the Future: Copper River Watershed 2125. The students explored together while looking at how humans impact the environment, and what the future might hold. Adventures included flying in a small bush plane, rafting, canoeing, hiking, and kayaking. We explored the two distinct and very different ecosystems that make up the Copper River Watershed: the northern Boreal Forest, which is a study in resilience and survival, and the lush Temperate Rainforest on the coast. As well as learning about the landscape, the stewards met with community members, toured projects such as the Cordova hydroelectric plant, and read oral histories of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. They used these experiences as springboards for writing and art projects exploring what it means to be a steward, and how the individual and cumulative acts of humans affect the landscape. Here are some quotes from the students: “Learning about the problems people have been through and are going through can help prevent them in the future. Knowing more about the past can make sure we’re educated enough to not make the same mistakes twice.” “I had to think about more than what was happening right now and right here. I had to think about the greater picture, including the whole Copper River Watershed.” “I became starkly less reliant on my phone which improved my mood and attitude. (JOMO-Joy of Missing Out) I realize how much I love the watershed and I want to take care of it.” “I learned how much difference a few helping hands can make when it comes to cabin cleanup, meal prep, and even larger problems like the oil spill. The support we received from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation was essential in providing this life-changing experience for these teenagers.



With support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, 23 at-risk youth logged 1,956 hours of outdoor learning this summer at Stonewall Farm, a 120-acre working farm, conservation center, and environmental education hub offering hands-on outdoor experiences grounded in agriculture, sustainability, ecology, and exploration.



Keene Housing Kids Collaborative (KHKC) provides equitable access to out-of-school learning opportunities for at-risk children living in subsidized housing in Cheshire County, NH. With a median household income of \$25,509 and 80% of households led by single mothers, most of our youth would not have access to nature-based programs like Stonewall Farm due to affordability.

Testimonials

“When Zeke first joined our program two years ago through the Kids Collaborative, he was quiet, shy, and took time to build friendships, often preferring to play on his own. At times, he would mimic his peers’ choices, sometimes straying from counselor directions, as he navigated social connections. Since then, we’ve had the privilege of watching Zeke build confidence and grow into a fantastic role model for his fellow campers. He follows directions attentively, actively participates in discussions, and has gained the confidence to share his thoughts and knowledge. His growth has been truly inspiring, and his kindness, curiosity, and positivity make him an absolute joy to have in our program!”—Sam Bator, Stonewall Farm

“My son first came to Stonewall Farm for summer camp in July 2023...He was so happy to come here and be apart of the farm! He loved being outdoors, going on hikes. His favorite animal to learn about was the chickens. He just started kindergarten and brought home a drawing of a farm with cows saying he wants to have a farm he had a blast and will definitely be back for another summer camp!”—KHKC Mom

We are deeply grateful for your help to ensure that every child—regardless of family income—can access the transformational power of the outdoors!



As we wrap up another successful year of summer camp at the Youth Garden Project, we are grateful for generous supporters like the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation who make this important youth program possible.

In 2025, we offered nine weeks of summer camp for youth entering 1st through 6th grade, alongside two additional week-long Expedition Day Camps for 4th-6th graders in partnership with Canyonlands Field Institute. YGP served 18-36 campers each week and welcomed 74 unduplicated campers throughout the summer.

YGP day camps provide a much-needed childcare option for working parents. This past season, YGP awarded \$11,120 in tuition assistance for our day camps - equivalent to over 42 weeks of camp at cost (\$260/week). Sixteen families were able to send their children to camp thanks to this program, and every qualifying family received support. Our tuition assistance program ensured that parents not only had access to affordable childcare during the school break, but also an option for their kids that prioritized outdoor play, exploration, and experiential learning.

Themes for YGP summer camps this year included Science in Bloom, Garden Artists, Journey Through the Jurassic, Water Week, YGP on Broadway, Magical Mystical Creatures, Desert Dwellers, Cooking Week, and YGP Carnival. During cooking week alone, campers learned six new nutritious recipes. During theater week, they had the opportunity to audition, rehearse, and perform a play at the historic Star Hall for their families and the greater community.

At the end of the summer, we saw campers enter a new school year with healthy friendships, increased confidence, a sense of joy around cooking and gardening, and positive developments in social skills, emotional regulation, and conflict resolution.



YGP camps offer kids opportunities each and every day for leadership, skills-building, and growth. We are deeply thankful for the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for making these opportunities available for all families, regardless of income.



The Headwaters to Ocean summer camps were a fantastic success this year.

Again, your generous support made this possible; we cannot thank you enough! There is nothing quite like summer camp, where kids can play, explore, be curious, and grow.

Our campers all experienced something new, exciting, and engaging this summer. Thirty-one of our campers had never been to summer camp before, and sixteen of our overnight campers had never spent the night away from family. These moments are life-changing, and these kids are forming lifelong memories that will shape their future.

We were able to host seven summer camps with hands-on, feet-wet education about the place we call home. Our 2025 programs included options for young explorers, week-long camps for our returning explorers, and overnight camps for middle and high schoolers focusing on stewardship. Our camp themes focused on camouflage, engineering, Women in Science, salmon, healthy habitats, and, of course, having fun outside. Campers in all camps met with scientists, explored the rainforest, visited glaciers, waded through wetlands, investigated ocean ecosystems, and learned that from Headwaters to Ocean, it's all connected.

The photos provided show campers' fun experiences 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 community members. 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.



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.



Thanks to the generous support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, Lacawac Sanctuary welcomed more than 150 children ages 5–12 for a summer of outdoor education. Over several weeks, campers explored wildlife, ecosystems, and wilderness skills while enjoying boating, fishing, hiking, and nature-inspired arts and crafts. Each program combined hands-on learning with fun, creativity, and teamwork to foster a deeper connection to the natural world.

Creature Feature (Ages 5–6): Our youngest campers discovered local animals and their habitats through games, crafts, and daily “wildlife searches.” Together they spotted 25 red efts, 15 frogs, and three snakes. “I never knew salamanders lived right near us!” said six-year-old Lily. Parents noticed the change too. “My son came home every day full of stories and eager to go back outside,” one mom shared.

Exploring Nature (Ages 7–8): These campers built food webs, designed animals with unique adaptations, and created brochures about ecosystems. Frog-finding, playground time, and tie-dyed camp T-shirts rounded out the fun. “This was the first time my daughter really understood how everything in nature connects,” wrote a parent.

Eco Investigators (Ages 9–10): Science-minded children conducted experiments like “elephant toothpaste,” modeled fish bladders, and simulated erosion. They also created posters on conservation topics and reflected during “Magic Spots” with poems and sketches. “I learned how science can actually help animals,” said one camper.

Wilderness Adventure (Ages 11–12): Older campers practiced first aid, navigation, shelter building, and teamwork. They used compasses to plot canoe routes across the lake and competed in “First Aid Jeopardy” to show off their skills. “My son now insists on packing a ‘just-in-case’ kit for every hike,” laughed a parent.

Nature & Art Camps: In Interpreting Nature and Earth Expressions, children merged art and the outdoors—making clay imprints of leaves, creating natural watercolors, and painting week-long landscape projects inspired by favorite Lacawac spots. “I painted Lake Lacawac because it’s so calm,” said nine-year-old Emma.

Impact: Across all camps, children gained knowledge, confidence, and a lasting respect for the environment. Parents report more outdoor play at home, stronger teamwork skills, and a deeper curiosity about science and nature. Lacawac is deeply grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for making these transformative experiences possible.



We want to take a moment to reflect on the success of our Summer Bridge and Leader-in-Training (LIT) Programs and to thank YOU for making it possible!

More than 250 students and chaperones had the opportunity to travel from Trenton, Newark, and Hightstown, NJ to spend a week in Blairstown exploring the outdoors and stepping outside of their comfort zones. They went ziplining, canoeing, rock climbing, and hiking. They spent time each day reading Gram and Gran Save the Summer and enjoying STEM lessons like stream study and building solar-powered cars. And the end of each week included a free book fair for all students to choose a book to take home and the Great PBC HelloFresh cook-off!





Funding from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation Grant directly supported the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area's fall

field trip program for 3rd-5th grade students from September through November. Thanks to this support, over 800 local students were able to participate in immersive learning experiences at both the Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park and the Yuma East Wetlands.

The grant funds ensured that the field trips were completely free for participating students. This support made it possible for schools to access the field trip experience, which includes a history-focused visit to the Yuma Territorial Prison and an ecology and conservation program in the Yuma East Wetlands. By removing financial barriers, the grant ensured that every classroom was able to participate in the field trip without limitations.

The grant also supported program delivery in the Yuma East Wetlands, where students participated in guided nature walks, wildlife observation, and activities highlighting the importance of riparian restoration and environmental stewardship. These experiences complemented the history portion of the field trip, providing students with a well-rounded understanding of Yuma's cultural and natural heritage.

By funding access to the Yuma Territorial Prison & Yuma East Wetlands field trip and supporting the overall program structure, the grant made it possible for more schools to participate and ensured that no classroom had to opt out due to financial constraints.

The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area is deeply grateful for the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation's commitment to outdoor education and youth enrichment.



FRIENDS OF THE INYO SINCE 1986



Friends of the Inyo is deeply grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for helping make this Trail Ambassador season possible. Your support enabled us to provide meaningful outdoor education, career development, and lasting inspiration for young people dedicated to the future of public lands.

Five Trail Ambassadors were trained and stationed across five Forest Service Ranger Districts in the 2025 season. Between May and October, they maintained more than 480 miles of trail, deconstructed 90 illegal fire rings, removed 700 pounds of trash from trails, and educated 4,500 trail users across some of the Eastern Sierra's most heavily visited wilderness areas. Their work directly improved access, safety, and ecosystem health on lands managed by the Inyo National Forest and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. They collectively led more than 30 free interpretive programs, including naturalist walks about art, the unseen connections of the landscape, wildlife, and forest ecology. Through these programs and daily trail encounters, the TAs reached thousands of visitors, fostering stewardship, responsible recreation, and appreciation for public lands in the backcountry and beyond.

The program also created an invaluable professional pathway for its participants. Several of this year's TAs expressed interest in pursuing future careers with the Forest Service or in outdoor education. These positive experiences demonstrate the program's success in nurturing the next generation of conservation leaders. Here is a powerful reflection from one of the TAs on the last day of the season, when asked how the TA program impacted his life:

"Genuinely, it has changed my life in a crazy way. I never thought that I would be able to have as direct of an impact on public lands as I did as a Trail Ambassador. It totally changed my perspective about land management agencies and how individuals can make a big impact - actively through doing trailwork and taking care of the land but also through educating others to learn how to respect the land and recreate responsibly. It definitely changed my career. After doing the Trail Ambassador program, I realized I wanted to do everything I could to work in this field."

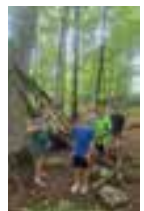


The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation funded our Summer Camp program for 10 weeks, June through August. Campers aged 4-12 learned about the environment at our watershed property.

Each week the campers learn about a different natural theme. This year we added new themes including Art in Nature, The Wild Hunt: A Predator & Prey Adventure, and Fantastic Feathered Friends.



One highlight from this summer: the campers loved working in the meadow for Bug Week. Campers had fun using sweep nets to collect bugs. They put the bugs on a bed sheet to do species identification in a meadow environment. Counselors helped with an identification book. One major surprise occurred during this project: the campers found a flying squirrel inside a bird nesting box. A frequent visitor this summer was given the name Pudge the Toad. Campers met the first Pudge sighting with screams, but soon became so comfortable with our visitor they took to building a house for Pudge outside using a birdhouse kit.



These stories give a good sense of how, during camp at our property, lessons happen rapidly, the planned intersecting the unplanned.



The College Settlement of Philadelphia
600 WITMER ROAD • HOESHAM, PENNSYLVANIA 19044
To prepare young people to make a positive impact on the world.

What an incredible year we have had! Thanks to supporters like you, College Settlement continued to make the outdoors a place of growth, joy, and confidence-building for children who might otherwise never have access to these experiences.

This past summer, we welcomed 596 children and youth, with 82% receiving campership support. Campers received subsidies ranging from \$550 to \$938 per session, making it possible for families—most living at or below the poverty level—to afford a transformative camp experience. While the actual cost to run two weeks of Overnight Camp is \$2,100, families receiving campership support paid as little as \$340, ensuring that financial barriers never stand in the way of outdoor learning and adventure. In the summer of 2025, we awarded \$340,460 in scholarship dollars! Throughout the summer, over 50 overnight campers a day enjoyed Kate's Climbing Wall, a definite camper favorite activity.

Your belief in our mission opens the door to access to outdoor adventure and education. As demand for 2026 continues to grow, your generosity continues to open the door for more children to climb, explore, discover, and belong at camp.

Thank you again for supporting our campers through Kate's Climbing Wall and camperships. Your commitment to outdoor learning and adventure honors Kate's legacy in a deeply meaningful way.





Wissahickon CHARTER SCHOOL



Thank you!! We are deeply grateful for the financial support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation in 2025. Helping

our students “Reveal the Possibilities Within,” is our primary mission - and is at the core of every program at 100 Elk Outdoor Center. Another focus and integral part of our mission is for all of our participants to feel “loved and valued” while attending our programs. In 2025, 100 Elk hosted 30 schools and community programs - 1,811 students and 221 chaperones - at our Buena Vista, CO facility. In total, the funding we received from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation enabled 178 students to experience our programming: high- and low-ropes challenge courses, team and character building, canoeing, an exploration of horsemanship, archery, climbing, hiking, and an introduction to wilderness ecology. Most importantly, students overcame limitations and “revealed the possibilities within” themselves.

The following activities were part of the 100 Elk Outdoor Education programming in 2025:

- 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, orienteering, and engaging in group games that simulate how ecosystems and the food web work.

On the final evening of a 100 Elk Outdoor Center program, students and chaperones are invited to share how they experienced or witnessed “Revealing the Possibilities Within”, how they saw “feeling loved and valued” - in themselves or their peers, and gratitude. This is what our participants had to say this year (below):

Here are some quotes about what students learned:

“You can tell an animal by their poop.”

“I learned how to control a horse”

“Kaivion came down after climbing halfway up to the zipline and then decided he wanted to try again and actually did it! ”



I am pleased to share with you the lasting impact of this year’s Kate Svitek Memorial Expedition, which our Eighth-Grade students completed this fall. A total of 48 students from our Awbury Campus and 40 from our Fernhill Campus participated in the expedition this past September. Once again, the experience proved to be deeply transformative. The Kate Svitek Memorial Expedition is a five-day, four-night Peer Leadership Backpacking trip in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, located about 100 miles north of Philadelphia. Students hike portions of the Appalachian Trail and move to a new campsite each day, taking on challenges that strengthen leadership, communication, and collaboration. They practice initiative, sound judgment, and group decision-making while building confidence in their ability to problem-solve. Throughout the expedition, students develop essential outdoor and technical skills like map-based navigation, backpacking techniques, teamwork strategies, and backcountry cooking. Living and working together in an unfamiliar environment, they also develop empathy, deepen peer connections, and help students appreciate the importance of supporting one another. Through their time outdoors, students also honor Kate’s love of nature and her commitment to inspiring young people to care for the environment. Each year, this expedition continues to advance her vision by cultivating resilience, curiosity, and a deep respect for the natural world. We are truly grateful for your continued support, which makes such meaningful and transformative experiences possible for our students each year.

Comments from Students on the Trip:

“At first, I didn’t think I could do it. The hike was hard and I was tired, but I kept going. Now I know I can push myself.” — Julian



“We had to work together to find the trail. I learned that Communication is more important than being the loudest.” — Amirah



“During solo time I thought about how far I’ve come and what kind of person I want to be.” — Fatima

“I learned that nature gives you space to think and breathe.” — Maya

“I’ve never been that deep in the woods before. It felt peaceful and real.” — Jordan



“I’m more patient now — with people and with myself.” — Zion

“Without this trip, I wouldn’t know how strong I really am.” — Talia



We held our spring ECOS Nature Club sessions from March 29 - May 17th. Six sessions were held at the Discovery Center run by the Missouri Department of Conservation and two sessions took place at the Lakeside Nature Center and the Lakeside Lodge, both in Swope Park.

The spring program featured lessons and activities on pollinators, tree roots, moss, clean water, native and invasive plants, nature art and sun prints. We played recycling games, practiced mindfulness including short yoga sessions, and enjoyed spring bird watching during the migration. Students also utilized nature journals and small group discussion to explore social and emotional learning (SEL) concepts. Each session ended with 20 minutes of free play. Seven local neighborhood leaders and environmental professionals joined us this semester, exposing students to adults who model their love of nature, and what it looks like to protect our local, natural habitats.



Fifty urban youth registered for the spring session and our average attendance was 28.

We created a short video of our students talking about what the ECOS Nature Club means to them. It is available on our YouTube channel and is the first video entitled "Kids talk about ECOS Nature Club":

<https://www.youtube.com/@GreenWorksinKansasCity>

We are grateful to the Kate Svitek Foundation for supporting our work!



STRAYER MIDDLE SCHOOL

A select group of Strayer Middle School eighth graders took part in a unique educational experience at the Chincoteague Bay Field Station in Wallops Island, VA. Students spent four days learning both in the lab and immersed in the field, gaining a great appreciation for the outdoors, the marine environment, and their role in it. The students actively participated in an array of classroom lectures, field trips, and hands-on activities. Before each field trip students were prepared by the station's instructors with a 30-minute lesson about the natural resources they would be seeing up close and then taken by bus which dropped us off right into that environment. Specimen captured on the oceanographic boat trip and from the intertidal zone were studied either in the field including a mantis shrimp, a toad fish and a blue crab or if they were hardy enough to withstand the trip such as aquatic plant life, in the lab that evening before being released back to their habitat. A walk around the Wallops Island sand dunes allowed

students to see firsthand how a barrier island helps protect the inland. On a second visit to the beach, students collected several bags of trash as their contribution to a cleaner and safer environment. The students explored the salt marsh to learn how life is determined by the inches it lives above sea level before diving into the marsh mud themselves. On our final excursion we walked to the Assateague Lighthouse to view forest succession. What they learned by living these experiences could not be matched in a classroom. We heard time and again that the thing students loved most was the chance to apply what they learn in class to a real-world experience. Thank you for financially supporting our students who participated in this hands-on, wet-feet educational experience.



"I felt like a grown up. I got to do things and learn things on my own and it really made ME think about a career in science someday" - Student attending trip



In April 2025, Dodge Nature Center was awarded a \$1,600 grant from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation in support of Girls Explore Science, an outdoor education program designed for youth in grades 5–8. Girls, female-identifying, and

non-binary students are welcomed to participate. Students participated in a range of wilderness- and science-based activities, including: building and tending fires safely, bird identification and observation, studying Minnesota reptiles and amphibians, hiking to discover natural elements that glow under UV light, constructing shelters in the woods, and learning to use an Atlatl (an ancient spear-throwing tool).

Because the program meets across multiple weeks, participants have the opportunity to form meaningful bonds with one another and with our staff. Program creator and educator Mary notes that group sizes of 15–20 allow for nimble, learner-centered exploration. When a teachable moment appears — an unexpected animal sighting or a natural phenomenon on the trail — the group can shift quickly and make the most of it. This flexibility is a hallmark of how we cultivate outdoor confidence and curiosity. Post-program surveys also reveal the social and emotional importance of this space. For many students, Girls Explore Science is not only a place to learn but also a place to belong. One participant wrote:

“I don’t care what we do next. I will come back —because I don’t have friends at school, but I do at Dodge.”

The long-term impact of this work is already visible. One former participant, Alaina, aged out of the program in the spring but chose to stay engaged with Dodge as a high school volunteer. While assisting Mary during a summer camp this year, she reflected: “I think before that [attending Girls Explore Science] I never would have wanted to study science, but now I do.” Today, AP Biology (genetics in particular) is her favorite class, and she hopes to pursue it in college. Her story exemplifies how early exposure to outdoor science can shape a young person’s academic interests and sense of possibility. We are deeply grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for helping bring this program to life for dozens of young people.



Students and teachers from Apple Valley High School attended Laketrails Base Camp in the northernmost area of Minnesota this past July with the aid of a grant from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation. Many of the students had never been camping before,

and the wilderness of Lake of the Woods provided quite a challenge for their first time in a canoe and tent. Students learned to start a fire, set up a tent, cook over a campfire, and paddle a canoe in wind and waves. While learning basic, simple backcountry skills, students gained confidence and discovered that they’re capable of much more than they knew.

Apple Valley High School is located in the Twin Cities Metro area of MN, far from the northern reaches of the state. The Northwest Angle region—where Laketrails is located—actually lies north of the Canadian border and is an extremely remote area. While at camp students experienced 9 days away from the confines of the city with many of them seeing the stars and Northern Lights for the first time. Canoe trips lasted 5 days and provided opportunities for journaling, finding personal strengths, and having fun living in the outdoors. Comments from Apple Valley students included the following:

“I think I mentally grew so much throughout this trip. It made me stronger, more self aware, and braver. It also taught me a ton of gratitude towards the things I already have.”

“It’s an incredible way to connect with the purest form of life that is nature. It helps you see there’s more to life than the seemingly “big” things we worry about so often.”

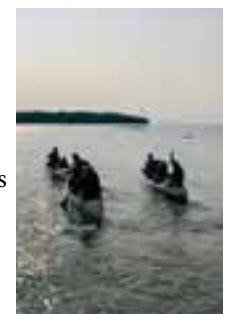
“It completely switched my vision of the wilderness. I felt like I not only found more appreciation for the earth, but I learned so much about nature and why it’s so important.”

Parents also noted the difference in their kids after the wilderness experience. Parents commented:

“My daughter learned she can do hard stuff and lift heavy things, she pushed herself and not only survived, but had fun doing it.”

“Disconnection from technology was maybe the best part! I dunno if I can put into words the positive impact this had on my son. He came home and talked for hours about his experience and didn’t need to get on his computer right away.”

“She came home with a handful of new friends and school connections. We immediately turned around and went on a hiking trip over the next weekend and she was eager and willing to do all of the outdoor things prior to this trip, I would have expected some push back of being outside/ active for the length of time we were out.”



Apple Valley students and staff, as well as Laketrails Base Camp, are extremely grateful for the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation - You are helping change lives.



Thanks to the generous support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for Something Good in the World's outdoor educational programs, young children in New York and Hawai'i were able to get out into nature for months of whole body learning experiences throughout this summer and fall!

In New York, the Ossining Children's Center kindergartners were thrilled to go into nature's playground every week, to discover the magic and science of the water cycle. Instead of being a flat lesson on paper, this was an experience using all of the senses. Children listened to the rain falling and saw the watershed lead to the running streams, hiked and climbed on wooded pathways and immersed themselves in the fresh water that would become drinking water once it reached the Croton Reservoir system. They were delighted by the powerful Croton Dam and its awe-inspiring waterfall - seeing, smelling, and feeling the source of their tap water. Programs included the living systems of the planet, and how humans, animals and plants are interconnected and interdependent. This led us to a local family farm to discover the origins of our foods and materials, tasting fresh herbs and veggies, planting mini greenhouses to take home, and feeding free-ranging animals. The culmination of the learning trips led the students to the Hudson River, where they studied the underwater life of the estuary, observing the evidence of litter and pollution, and recognizing our responsibility as stewards of this environment to keep it clean.



In Hawai'i, at the Volcano School of Arts & Sciences, Grades K – 2 also had the opportunity to learn with Something Good in the World about their watershed, in a very different way! They added to their outdoor classroom, the Children's Peaceful Garden (Ka Mala Maluhia in Hawaiian) with native plants to hold in the soil, prevent erosion, absorb nitrogen to protect our coral reefs, and attract native insects and birds. These weekly lessons in nature were able to take place in their classroom gardens, with weeding, planting, fertilizing, watering, harvesting, and tasting. In the mala (garden), all of the senses are engaged, which is what makes this learning experience so impactful. 'Āina-based (earth-based) learning is a part of Hawaiian cultural traditions, and thanks to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, this practice can be upheld throughout the school year.



As a result of our 2025 grant award from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, we were able to take 17 students from Newark on exciting outdoor expedition programs to several different locations this year.

The grant award allowed us to bring a new group of students on an expedition to hike and summit Mount Washington in New Hampshire, take students on an overnight paddling trip at the Delaware Water Gap, and allow a group of students to visit and explore Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park.

In July, we coordinated with several partners, including the Hamilton Partnership for Paterson and the National Park Service, to organize a visit for students to visit and explore Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park.

In August, we had students travel to take part in a week-long expedition program to New Hampshire, where our program group successfully climbed to the summit of Mount Washington. The expedition this year included new students and allowed students with previous experience to take on leadership roles around navigation, preparing campsites, and packing gear to make sure the trip was a success. Students enjoyed the beautiful weather, amazing views, and the memories they were able to create bonding with each other and our staff instructors. We also ran a second overnight trip for students to have the experience of paddling at the Delaware Water Gap, learning about the local ecosystem, and learning basic paddling and water safety skills.

We couldn't be more thankful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for continuing to support our mission to connect as many youth participants as possible to the power of experiential education, connecting with nature, and learning about environmental awareness and conservation.





Thanks to the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Fund, Peak 7 was able to provide stand-up paddleboarding scholarships to youth who otherwise would not

have access to water-based recreation. This summer, the scholarship funding made it possible for small groups of young people—many traveling long distances or facing financial and cultural barriers—to get out on the Spokane River for their very first paddleboarding experience. Some of our most memorable groups included:

Nez Perce Tribal Youth: These teens drove several hours to join us, arriving eager but nervous. Once on the water, their energy shifted to pure joy. The simple combination of a hot summer afternoon and cold river water sparked instant laughter—especially during splash contests and balance challenges.

World Relief Refugee Youth: For many of these participants, it was their first time on a paddleboard and in some cases their first time interacting with a river in a recreational way. The group quickly bonded over games like building a floating “raft” out of several SUPs and seeing how many team members could climb aboard before the whole thing tipped. Their leaders shared that the outing helped the teens feel more at home in their new community.

Rural Youth from a Remote County: These students rarely have access to water recreation or adventure programming without scholarship support. The opportunity to be on the Spokane River—with structured team challenges and opportunities for personal growth—was a highlight of their summer. Many shared that they had never done anything like this before.

Across all groups, we saw the same outcomes: increased confidence, stronger peer connections, and genuine delight in simply being outside and active. Stand up paddleboarding is uniquely suited for high-impact, small-group experiences—it allows participants to take safe risks, try new skills, support one another, and engage with the natural world right in the heart of the city. Your investment made these moments possible. The Kate Svitek Memorial Fund helped open the river to youth who often stand farthest from outdoor opportunities, and in doing so created experiences of adventure, resilience, and joy that will stay with them long after summer ends. Thank you for supporting our mission and for believing in the power of outdoor recreation to transform young lives.



This year, the funding from the Kate Svitek Memorial Scholarship was split between two students: Zane and Thomas. Zane, 14, went on a Wyoming Backpacking Adventure for Teens, and Thomas, 19, completed a Year in Patagonia.

Both of these courses have a curriculum that focuses on Leadership, Expedition Behavior, Risk Management & Judgement, Outdoor Living Skills, and Travel Skills. Thanks to the hard work of the instructors and students, Zane and Thomas returned home with a wealth of knowledge and connections to help set a course for their futures.

“I would like to say how grateful I am for the generosity of people. It made it possible for me to fulfill a dream. It was such an incredible experience it’s hard to put into words. I aspire to become an instructor and I am going down this amazing path. Thank you for making it possible. I am forever grateful.”

It is with great joy that I send you this update on the impact of your scholarship. I sincerely thank you for your investment into the lives of our students and your dedication to our mission— I am energized knowing that our community is filled with people like you: committed, generous, and deeply connected to the values we teach in the field. Thank you again for being such an important part of NOLS.





On behalf of the entire team at GOALS Youth River Expeditions, thank you for your generous \$3,600 donation in support of our Financial Assistance Fund for female participants during our 2025 season. Your gift directly impacted three incredible young women – Jordyn, Carliannys, and River – who each experienced the transformative power of a GOALS expedition this summer.

Jordyn (age 15) joined our Main Salmon Expedition in Idaho, where she bravely pushed herself physically and emotionally on an 8-day journey – building confidence, skills and lifelong friendships along the way. Jordyn wrote: “Thank you so much for the opportunity to join the main salmon trip and for the generous financial aid! I am really excited to join the team, and I can’t wait to experience the river. I’m super grateful.”

Carliannys (age 17) explored Cataract Canyon in Utah & Colorado. As an XXXXX refugee, she traveled across two continents and walking through the jungle to make her way to America. She was a natural leader on the river, always the first one to organize a game of Kubb during the quiet moments on the riverbank.

River (age 10), the youngest of our female participants this year, joined her very first expedition through Ruby Horsethief Canyon. As her name suggests, she took immediately to the Colorado River. With wide eyes and endless energy, she experienced the magic of sleeping under the stars and the joy of splashing through rapids with her peers – planting the seeds of a lifelong love for wild places.

At GOALS, we believe in the life changing power of multi-day wilderness expeditions. Our program blends the restorative power of nature with a social and emotional learning curriculum that strengthens adolescent mental health, fosters authentic peer-to-peer connections, and ignites a lifelong love for the outdoors – all while experiencing a truly epic adventure on the river.

We are very proud to carry the vision of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation forward by introducing more girls to the transformative power of nature. With your support, Kate’s legacy lives on in every smile around a campfire, every paddle stroke through a rapid, and every courageous step these young women take toward their future.



NESS’s New London Community Boating (NLCB) program offers free open enrollment programs for disadvantaged youth aged 9-14, including a four-week Learn to Sail Program designed to provide a safe and supportive environment where students can get their first sailing experiences.

Thanks to the generous support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, New England Science & Sailing (NESS) was able to provide 69 New London students with the opportunity to participate in the Learn to Sail Program during the Summer 2025 sailing season. This included 24 open registration students who attended for one week; 5 additional students from an affordable housing complex; 20 young campers from the New London Salvation Army Summer Camp; and another 20 students from the Drop in Learning Center.

NESS’s Learn to Sail program is designed to teach and emphasize water safety by always requiring the use of PFDs and utilizing a low student-to-instructor ratio of 4:1 or less. Through this experience, students with no previous sailing exposure were able to complete a mile-long distance sail around White Rock on the Thames River. The nature of this on-the-water experiential learning program also provided the students with an opportunity to develop skills such as teamwork, communication, confidence, perseverance, and self-control.



Watershed Outreach & Education Program 2025: C2C Cleanup Challenge

Since its November 2020 inception, our innovative Creeks to Coast (C2C) Cleanup has engaged 3,500+ participants in cleaning up more than 7 tons of waste and reporting pollution data on more than 152,000 pieces of litter. Since submitting our grant in March 2025, we've held 14 cleanup events at high-need sites across LA County, including 4 beach and 1 LA River location. We've engaged 700+ volunteers in removing 1,370+ lbs of waste and collecting 9,100+ litter data points via the Litterati app.



River Assessment Fieldwork Team

Since relaunching the RAFT program, LAW has successfully engaged 713 volunteers (52% from disadvantaged communities) at 9 sites throughout the LA River. Our aim is to deepen community knowledge of and connection to the LA River and community science. In 2025, 117 volunteers took part in 5 volunteer events along the LA River where community members participated in an educational 'walk and talk' that helped them understand the issues facing the LA River and received training on water sampling and testing to monitor water and habitat quality and evaluate biological indicators including testing for PFAS ("forever chemicals") and coliform bacteria.



DKYL
Experiential education

Thanks to the support of the Kate Svitek Foundation, donations and other sources, we were able to bring 30 Lawrence High School students to the White Mountains of New Hampshire to close out the academic portion of the summer program with outdoor education!

Lawrence, MA, a predominantly Dominican, low-income community, where access to outdoor recreation is limited. Most of our participants are first-generation, English as a Second Language learners who do not have their own outdoor equipment and few chances to leave the city.

We work most intensively with Upward Bound at Lawrence High school, a federally funded TRIO program in



For most of our students, this trip was their first time hiking in actual mountains or spending multiple nights outdoors. Over several days, students participated in team-building activities on land and explored local state parks on foot such as Diana's Baths, Echo Lake, and Mount Washington. They worked together to overcome physical and mental challenges, developing leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills along the way. Nights were spent eating together and making new friends, bridging gaps across traditionally socially stratified high schoolers before they headed back for another school year.



While our summer programs operated on a smaller scale this year, the impact was powerful. We are often the only organization that brings Lawrence students into nature for immersive outdoor learning. The Kate Svitek Foundation's grant made it possible to disconnect from stress and technology, connect with one another, and gain a deeper sense of independence and belonging. Students cite being more calm and learning how to "not crash out" while hiking long distances were some of the more meaningful lessons learned. This summer proved that with community support, transformative experiences in nature remain within reach.



With the generous support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, The Watershed Research & Training Center’s Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crews had a successful and meaningful season in summer 2025. Ten Trinity County high school-aged students were employed for 7-weeks during which they gained hands-on work experience, bolstered their resumes and developed transferable job skills. Local tribes, agencies, and advocacy organizations partnered with the YCC Program to implement a variety of priority natural resource stewardship projects on public lands, including meadow restoration, trail maintenance, snorkel survey data collection and invasive weed eradication among others.

These funds supported equipment and tools for the youth to use in this work experience program. Essential tools students learned to use included: handsaws, loppers, pulaskis, mcleods, axes, rock bars, pole saws, shovels. Putting trained skills into practice in the wilderness, these youth crews maintained 36 miles of trail, managed 80 downed trees and maintained 23 drainages. With the guidance of crew leads and environmental professionals from various fields, these youth learned to work as a team in diverse landscapes to accomplish a variety of goals.



Youth completed training surrounding safety, CPR/1st Aid Certification and tools use. Over ten community partners worked with the YCC crew in the field for place-based learning. Partners included the US Forest Service and the Yurok Tribe among others. Students also explored career pathways and participated in a resume building workshop with career and college readiness community partners.

The YCC program would not be possible without support like yours. We are grateful for this opportunity to foster young environmental stewards and value the partnership of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation in bringing this impactful program to fruition.



In 2025, 97 students were selected from throughout Pennsylvania (and beyond) to attend the Academy and become certified Conservation Ambassadors through the residential summer field schools focused on wildlife species, including white-tailed deer, bass, brook trout, turkey, and bear. The mission of the Wildlife

Leadership Academy is to engage and empower high school-age youth to become Conservation Ambassadors to ensure a sustained wildlife, fisheries, and natural resource legacy for future generations.

A year-round program, the Academy training begins with residential programming focused on wildlife and fisheries conservation, as well as leadership skills development. Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation funds supported summer program costs, helping us keep tuition affordable. The Academy is a project-based experiential learning program offering students a comprehensive study of conservation. Activities include classroom lectures and field-based, hands-on education led by experts, including biologists and educators from across the state. The program also engages participants in teamwork and leadership development through friendly competition focused on awareness of their natural world. Students leave the program as certified Conservation Ambassadors and continue with community outreach through education, service, media engagement, creative arts, and outdoor mentorship projects.

Madison W., a 2025 Bucktails alum, shared her experience with the program, “The hands-on experiences and connections with wildlife professionals were everything I had hoped for. I gained skills like confidence, communication, and a deeper understanding of wildlife. This experience truly changed my life and confirmed my passion for this field.”

Celebrating its 19th class of students in 2025, the Academy enrolls youth from across Pennsylvania and out of state. These 1,100 Conservation Ambassadors have conducted 11,523 outreach projects, engaging in over 45,700 hours in these projects and with the public, reaching an audience of over 200,000 people across the state and beyond. We are excited for the Class of 2025 to report back in March of 2026 with all of their outreach accomplishment!





Thanks to your support, our team empowered individuals with disabilities to experience the joy and freedom of skiing and snowboarding during Winter 2024/2025.

The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation's award of \$3,000 created 10 no-cost adaptive Snowsports Program. All indirect costs were met by other unrestricted funding sources.

On October 6, 2025, we also released an article celebrating the life of Jeff Pearlstein, for whom the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation award was given in memorial. The article includes a conversation with his mother, Dale, and is available on our website. Many thanks to the Svitek Foundation for helping us keep Jeff's memory alive by making adaptive snowsports accessible in the North Tahoe region.

Sustaining last year's momentum, we delivered 2,556 lessons to 649 unique participants with disabilities from November 2024 through April 2025, our strongest season yet. Participants' unique needs and interests were met through half-day adaptive Snowsports lessons in alpine skiing, snowboarding, three-track skiing, four-track skiing, mono-skiing, bi-skiing, and sit-skiing.

Achieve Tahoe remains the region's only adaptive outdoor recreation provider equipped to accommodate a wide range of ages and disability types. Our team of professionally trained staff, interns, seasonal instructors, and 285+ dedicated volunteers served 80+ physical, mental, and cognitive disabilities, such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), down syndrome, cerebral palsy, blindness, deafness, and spinal cord injuries. Upwards of 44% of participants reported ASD as their primary disability, reflecting a great need for services that accommodate this population and their families. An average of 4 lessons were delivered to each participant, with returning participants taking slightly more lessons on average. The opportunity to return for lessons during the season and year after year strengthened participants' physical and mental health while fostering community, confidence, and independence. Youth made up 62% of participants (under 18). For many, these lessons offer more than sport. Serving participants from a young age through adulthood sets the foundation for life-long engagement, healthy habit formation, and identity building as an athlete and adventurer. Participants also relished reuniting with their instructors, family, and friends on the slopes—which offered a social and physical outlet during the winter months when many individuals with disabilities experience heightened isolation and access barriers due to short days, snow, and cold temperatures.

Participant Spotlight: Remy's Story

Remy, who has hemi-paresis and uses a power wheelchair, has been a skier with Achieve Tahoe for 20 years. She started skiing at 5 years old and is one of our most dedicated winter athletes. She recently joined our team as communications intern and shared her personal experience with us this spring:

“Adaptive skiing has had a very positive impact on my life. It has shown me that what I did not think was possible is possible. Skiing with Achieve Tahoe has also allowed me to meet other people in wheelchairs and do something that I would not have been able to do otherwise. ...it showed me that disabled people can do sports and I could join my family when they ski. I didn't have to wait in the lodge for [them] to come back.”

Breaking Barriers Together

In 24/25, 43% of participants self-identified as low-income, receiving financial assistance from programs such as Medicaid, Unemployment, Social Security Disability Benefits and others. For these participants, financial barriers might have made Snowsports impossible. Every dollar the Svitek Foundation invested in our 2024/2025 Winter program enabled a participant to take an adaptive Snowsports lesson at no-cost. Together, we made Snowsports in the Reno-Tahoe region more accessible by alleviating financial, social, and structural barriers for people with disabilities—building an inclusive community where everyone can explore public lands, gain independence, and proudly embrace life as skiers and snowboarders.

Thank you for believing in what's possible. With your continued partnership, we'll keep expanding access to adaptive Snowsports in the Reno-Tahoe region—ensuring that everyone can say “If I can do this, I can do anything!”





The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation helped 76 diverse high school students experience the benefits of wilderness recreation in the North Cascades this year!

Youth Leadership Adventures (YLA) is an entry-level backcountry program for high school students from diverse backgrounds to learn first-hand about the benefits of spending time in nature. Participants gain skills in outdoor recreation and leadership, develop their sense of identity, and learn about climate change and solutions.

We offered nine YLA trips in 2025, including three 5-day and six 8-day trips. The season started with canoe-focused itineraries in North Cascades National Park before moving over to Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest for backpacking and hybrid itineraries (backpacking as well as canoeing). Immersed in the beauty of the North Cascades, participants learned how to safely and confidently recreate in the wilderness while taking part in interactive lessons and activities focused on equitable access to outdoor engagement, our interdependence with the natural world, leadership, climate change/solutions, and more.

“I was hoping to try new things, be challenged, and meet new people. I definitely met those goals! I enjoyed disconnecting with technology and really spending time with the people I’m with. Learning to canoe and operate in the backcountry was new and exciting. I definitely felt challenged physically and emotionally.” – 2025 Participant

Students also engaged in stewardship work during their trip, contributing 470 volunteer hours to give back to our public lands through trail maintenance, trash collection, campsite cleanup, and digging a new pit toilet. While service work is a longstanding component of YLA, the funding and staffing shortages faced by the National Park and Forest this year made this work even more meaningful. Funding from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation helps remove financial barriers to deeply immersive outdoor recreation through funding scholarships, tuition subsidies, gear and more – supporting teens who likely wouldn’t otherwise experience the joy and benefits of spending time in the backcountry.



After participating in YLA, these teens have developed the knowledge and skills to continue recreating outdoors for years to come. Thank you for helping make YLA possible this summer!



This year 222 Green Woods Charter School students participated in transformative field studies made possible through the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation. These experiences pushed learning beyond classroom walls and deepened students’ understanding of their role within the natural world.

Throughout the year, 4th graders investigated the Delaware River Watershed, raising trout from eggs to release into the Wissahickon Creek. On Earth Day, standing at the edge of Wissahickon Creek, they released the trout into their new habitat, and felt the connection to the world around them as they watched the fish swim downstream. Their learning culminated in Cape May, where they worked with marsh and marine experts, studying wildlife, dune systems, and coastal habitats. Students left with a concrete understanding that their choices upstream affect life downstream!

At Blue Mountain, our 6th graders stepped into a real-world physics lab. Applying math and science concepts, they analyzed friction, speed, angles, and motion while tackling challenges on the snow. The experience built confidence as much as academic mastery. “The 6th grade field trip was amazing. We learned about force and motion in a real way, and then we got to spend the whole day snow tubing. It made science actually come alive.”

The 8th grade overnight at College Settlement pushed students to work together, take healthy risks, and reflect on their emerging roles as young adults. Through problem-solving courses, environmental investigations, and shared time around the campfire, students strengthened communication skills and personal responsibility.



These right-of-passage trips expose students to environmental stewardship with meaningful learning. The experiences left our students not only with new knowledge but also with a profound sense of responsibility to their community and the world. We are deeply grateful to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for their generosity, which made these transformative field study experiences a reality for our students. Together we are directly shaping students’ lives and giving them experiences to help them on their journey to become active young stewards of the natural world!



Pace Center for Girls Palm Beach would like to express our gratitude to the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for the generous contribution of \$1,000. With this support, Pace Palm Beach provides an enhanced three pillar learning and counseling environment for girls that is gender responsive, trauma informed, and strength-based.

Pace Center for Girls provides girls and young women an opportunity for a better future through education, counseling, training, and advocacy. All Pace services are guided by Pace’s Values and Guiding Principles and are designed to meet the unique developmental needs of adolescent and teenage girls. The Pace team members work to establish a strong, supportive, and collaborative relationship with girls and their families, and together set goals focused on academic achievement, strengthened family relationships, increased resiliency, and improved coping skills.



The Foundation’s support went directly to Pace’s College and Career Readiness Program, which exposes Pace girls to various industries and experiences they wouldn’t otherwise have. In honor of Kate Svitek’s passion for the outdoors, the Foundation gave Pace the opportunity to expand its offerings and provide girls with field trips that expanded the girls’ love for the outdoors. In March 2025, five Pace girls went to Wakodahatchee Wetlands when they hiked through the wetlands, learned about birdwatching, and observed birds native and non-native to Florida.



In May 2025, seven Pace girls went to the Nova Southeastern University Healing Garden where they walked through the entire space, learned about its purpose and creation, and then did journaling outdoors.

Lastly, in October 2025, nine Pace girls went to the Boynton High Ridge Scrub where they went hiking, participated in a forest bathing (the practice of slowing down), practiced beathing techniques and enjoyed the sights, sounds and scents of nature. The impact of these experiences was tremendous, particularly for Pace girls who are learning coping skills while facing their traumatic pasts.



We are grateful for the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation who believes in Pace’s mission to provide girls and young women an opportunity for a better future. We cannot do this work alone, but together, we can help find the great in every girl.



On behalf of SheJumps and the girls we serve, thank you to Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation for your \$3,000 grant in 2025. Your support equipped Wild Skills programs across multiple states, teaching girls ages 8-17 the survival and technical skills they need for outdoor adventuring. With your partnership, we eliminated barriers to outdoor education through scholarships for low-income youth, ensuring all girls can experience the joy, growth, and empowerment that comes from outdoor adventure. Over the past year, we hosted a total of 35 youth events. These included the following:



- 13 Junior Ski Patrol day camps, where girls learned mountain safety and first aid skills from strong women patrollers. Participants were taught outdoor skills utilized by ski patrollers to keep the mountain safe, including avalanche control, snow science, weather stations, toboggans, and avalanche rescue techniques.
- Family Adventures— community events where parents participate alongside girls in hikes, outdoor education, and other activities that spark interest in the outdoors.
- Wild Skills Day Camps where girls were split into age-based teams and rotated through different classes. These camps taught first aid, navigation, Leave No Trace, the 10 essentials, shelter building, and more.
- Learn-to-ski days in UT and AK
- Wild Skills Mountain Biking camp where girls learned introductory mountain biking skills and gained confidence to ride the trails.
- Rock climbing and bouldering events where girls had opportunities to step outside of their comfort zones to challenge themselves and learn new skills



Our events encourage girls to learn new skills, take on challenges, and think creatively, which develops perseverance and fosters confidence. One participant shared: "I needed a safe space to set lofty goals and develop the skills and confidence to reach them. I needed a community that would provide unconditional support. I needed belonging, and I found it in SheJumps."

Thank you for honoring Kate's legacy and helping us spark a lifetime of passion for the outdoors in the next generation of girls.



In 2025, Lucky Bikes (formerly Lucky to Ride) continues to strengthen youth access to cycling, STEM learning, and outdoor recreation through our renamed Earn a Bike program.

Thanks to the ongoing support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation and other generous partners, nearly 100 kids this past year gained hands-on bike maintenance, safety, and STEM skills that support independence, confidence, and long-term well-being. Through partnerships with local schools and kid-serving organizations, including Sheridan and Denver Public Schools, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and several charter schools, Earn a Bike delivered small-group instruction to classes of approximately 10-15 students. Each cohort participated in more than 15 hours of learning across several sessions, building both technical knowledge and personal confidence.

Students learned essential bike maintenance skills such as changing tires, adjusting brakes, and performing the ABC Quick Check. They also explored STEM concepts through the lens of the bicycle, including systems thinking, simple machines, energy transfer, force, and friction. At the end of the program, each participant earned a quality geared bike, helmet, lock, and basic tools, equipment that provides meaningful, low-cost mobility in communities where reliable bikes are often out of reach.

Expansion to Rural Colorado

In addition to our work in the Denver metro area, Lucky Bikes expanded program delivery to rural southeastern Colorado. Our team spent nearly two weeks at Cuchara Mountain working with a large group of 55 kids. This was one of the largest Earn a Bike cohorts we have ever served. Kids received the full curriculum, built strong maintenance and safety skills, and developed new confidence in their ability to ride. Every participant earned a new bike at the end of the program, which was especially meaningful in a community where access to bikes is limited.

Program Impact

Program goals remain focused on cultivating a love of outdoor activity, increasing technical skill-building, creating positive peer experiences, and encouraging kids to incorporate cycling into their everyday lives. Evaluation results show that more than 95 percent of participants successfully demonstrated bike maintenance and safety skills by the final session. Vocabulary assessments showed strong gains in STEM understanding, and students reported increased confidence in science-related topics as well as enthusiasm about riding in their neighborhoods.

Lucky to Ride to Lucky Bikes, reflects our refined mission to expand equitable access to bicycles, bike education, and outdoor experiences while reducing both the visible and invisible barriers that prevent young people from participating.

Communities Served

Earn a Bike primarily serves kids from communities in Denver, and surrounding counties and rural southeastern Colorado. Of the kids served this year, approximately 60 percent identified as Latinx or Hispanic, 10 percent as Black, and 60 percent of families live below the federal poverty line. For many participants, earning a reliable bike provides not only a mode of transportation but also a sense of independence, exploration, and personal agency.



STRIDE (Strengthening Transformative Relationships in Diverse Environments) is a program within Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) that works to break down barriers that youth of color experience by attending BYM Camps that build communities of genuine diversity.

The 2025 camping season was a true success and we enjoyed meeting new and returning families, partnering with volunteers and collaborating with organizations that support the program in its goals.

In 2025 the program was able to support 18 young people and their families to attend at least one session. Of those 18, 12 were returning campers from the previous camp season. Six have been with the program for three seasons. Two staff members this summer were previously campers supported by the program. Both staff members received gear and regular check-ins with the Coordinator.

The following are camper’s testimonials:

“This summer was the best ever! I am so glad that I was able to come back another year and also graduate from Opeqon. I found a place where I can just have fun and also inspire other younger kids to be their best.”

“It was so awesome to see my best friend from last year again. Making new friends at school has been hard so seeing her and being in the same unit has made my year.”

“I just love to swim here. It’s so fun to be able to make my own choices about where I want to be and challenge myself. I am even better than when I was at home!”





With support from the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, the Watersmith Guild brought a season of discovery and connection to hundreds of young people across Western Pennsylvania in 2025.

Through its First Waves and Aqua Lab Adventure programs, students from the region’s least resourced and most at-risk communities were introduced to the power of nature, science, and creativity on the water.

The First Waves program reached youth from the shores of Lake Erie to the whitewater streams of Laurel Highlands, delivering 30 workshops and 94 environmental education modules. Each program invited students to paddleboard or surf river waves for the first time, learn vital science and conservation skills, and to employ digital media to create documentary films about their experiences. The students overcame fears, built confidence, and began to see their home environments with new eyes. One student shared, “This program is amazing. Going out in the forest, experiencing a whole bunch of new things that I never did—I’m not that much of an outside person, but now I might be.”



Meanwhile, Aqua Lab Adventures continued to grow in its second year, engaging every seventh grader from Propel East and Braddock Hills Middle Schools in Pittsburgh. Students designed their own experiments and learned to paddleboard on their local waterways to collect and study microplastics. As Dr. Sheri Mason from the Center for Lake Erie Education and Research described, “Some students really lit up when they got in the water. Others were glued to the microscopes, searching for microplastics. They were so focused, so fascinated—it’s moments like that which show how this kind of learning opens new worlds for them.”

Both programs gave youth the chance to connect with nature in ways that built confidence, curiosity, and a sense of belonging outdoors. As one student reflected after a day on the water, “Experiencing nature in its purest form is really fun- seeing the trees, the mountains, everything Pittsburgh has to offer that I don’t see when I’m in the city. I want to thank everyone who gave us this amazing experience, for helping us try new things and get outside.”



On behalf of Lasting Adventures' organization, staff, mission, and scholarship participants, we extend our deepest gratitude to the Katie Svitek Memorial Foundation for your generous

donation in 2025. Contributions like this are critical to our mission and enable us to get more youth outdoors for life-changing wilderness experiences. From rugged coastlines to towering granite peaks, 370 youth adventurers joined us in 2025 to explore wild spaces, gain confidence, and build lifelong memories.

We're proud to say that your donation has benefited our general scholarship fund, with a focus on a few young women participating in our 6 and 13 Day Young Women's Backpacking Programs in both Yosemite and Olympic National Parks. 100% of your donation has helped three less fortunate youth participate in our programs. We appreciate your contribution, and so do our participants! Some testimonials include:

“My daughter just returned from an incredible 5-night youth camp with Lasting Adventures in Yosemite. What an incredible trip! The guides were amazing and led these teen backpackers on a truly special adventure, complete with a bear sighting, river swims, and the summiting of North Dome. And they returned all of the girls safely. So grateful and highly recommend!”

“Sending your kid off for their first ever sleep away camp, with a challenging 32 mile hike, 6 day, outdoor only back packing trip in the mountains was a little nerving. But when I heard her voice on the phone the minute they got back into the pick up spot and she said "She Loved It"; that was the best thing ever. The camp counselors kept them safe and most importantly helped each kid prove to themselves they could do it and that built more confidence in my daughter for sure and being more reliant on herself and trusting herself. Such an incredible experience and she's already talking about signing up next year!”





The Greenwell Foundation has a rich history of

providing Nature-based summer camps to children from Southern Maryland. The 2025 camp weeks were themed around: Nature Exploration, Fishing, and Horse Connection, an introductory equine session. Funds from the Kate Svitek Foundation were used to bring our camp opportunities to young people who may not have otherwise had the opportunity to attend.

We recruited partners to help us identify children with potential obstacles to participation, such as disabilities, economically disadvantaged and trauma related behavioral challenges. We were able to collaborate fully with our partners to cross-train staff and intentionally introduce the healing power of time spent in nature in fun and interactive ways. Our partners included:

- Hospice of St. Mary’s – this camp served 18 children, ages 7 – 13, from homes where a parent was lost to cancer in 2024. We collaborated over three-days to provide the equestrian and nature activities from Greenwell Summer Camps with meaningful grief therapy led by the therapists from Hospice of St. Mary’s. The camp culminated with a butterfly release for children and family members.
- Lucky & Blessed Fishing – this collaboration allowed us to serve 24 campers. We worked with the Lucky & Blessed team to provide fishing, nature activities and Chesapeake Bay Watershed learning to neuro-divergent, differently abled and underserved children ages 10-16 over a two-day camp period.
- Cornerstone – this was our most intensive camp partnership for 2025. Cornerstone provides essential therapy for children who have experienced acute trauma within their home, often associated with addiction and violence. We served 12 children, ages 8 - 14 over 3 days with equine assisted therapeutic activities and nature exploration, trust building and nature connection experiences. Participants hiked our trails, participated in a nature scavenger hunt, kayaked and took turns as leaders in our blind-folded nature discovery challenge.



We sincerely thank all at the Kate Svitek Foundation for supporting this inclusive initiative for our Summer Camp program and giving these children the opportunity to experience the healing power of nature.



The funds were used to help 13 high school students from 6 different counties across

Maine to participate in the Outdoor Leadership program. Many of the students, who came from a variety of backgrounds across rural Maine, would not have been able to afford the program without the financial support the scholarship funds from this grant provided. During the 12-day overnight program, the students participated in two Early College classes earning four credits through the University of Maine System. While participating in these classes, the students learned various outdoor skills including Wilderness First Aid, backcountry camping, canoeing, rock climbing, hiking, trip preparedness and planning and earned their Wilderness First Aid and CPR certifications. They also took two trips which included a hiking trip along the rocky Maine Coast and a three-day backcountry canoeing trip.

Students discussed various outdoor careers, including summer camps, forestry, backcountry trip leading and becoming a Registered Maine Guide where they could apply the skills they were learning. In addition to the career exploration, students also worked on their lesson planning and facilitation skills by teaching five-minute mini lessons to their peers.

Some students had prior experience and attended because they are passionate about the outdoors and backcountry tripping while others came with very little experience and found a new passion for the outdoors. One student was very shy and unsure about participating. Shortly after arrival, this student had a question but was not comfortable asking so they wrote the question in a notebook to get the answer. By the end of the program, this same student was very outgoing, got along well with all the other students and was very interested in working at camp next summer teaching the same skills they learned during this program.

The program focused on personal growth, self-esteem, and helping students to reach out of their comfort zones. Overall, the experiences focused on building life skills that can be applied to further higher education, workforce preparedness, and eventual career exploration and growth.





**Living
Tree
Alliance**

Living Tree Alliance is an experiential outdoor education center where schools, family groups,

and agrotourists visit for farm field trips, community programs, and meaningful experiences. Its mission is to bring knowledge, wisdom, joy, and connection to each other through regenerative agriculture education. Our Village Building Fellowship houses and mentors 4-6 fellows between the ages of 19 and 26 for 2-4 weeks of the year.

Our Fellowship supported 4 fellows and one young adult leader to live in Living Tree's cohousing village and participate in supporting Living Tree's community festivals and regenerative agriculture education center. This immersive program built young adults' connection to nature through organic farming skills, leading field trips, co-producing our local Harvest Festival, and bike/hike recreational trips to local swimming holes and mountain peaks. The program occurred from September 30 - October 15, 2025 in Moretown, VT.

The Fellows were trained in Living Tree Alliance's unique pedagogy that focuses on community building, connection to the land and gratitude. During the fellowship, they helped to provide programming for 175 youth, aged 4-12 during the harvest festival and for three separate field trips. Each of the fellows trained to hold one of the eight main volunteer positions at LTA's 12th annual community festival. They learned valuable organizational and collaborative management skills that aided team vision and camaraderie. During their preparations, they created and facilitated collaborative art, brought in and preserved our community harvest and led songs for the larger community; along with many other hard and soft skills.



Recreational Activities:


Fellows hiked extensively on the network of trails connected to Living Tree Alliance's 93 acre property and participated in regional hikes, apple picking, and river swimming in the nationally recognized scenic Mad River Valley. Fellows spent time outdoors, on Living Tree Alliance's 93 acre property connecting to the natural world, the harvest, and the woods. They participated in group and solo experiences along the trail system connected to the property, which built their appreciation for nature. In addition, fellows were encouraged to use the community bikes to explore the area and were offered numerous opportunities to climb the local high peaks with community members while participating in the fellowship. They also attended two local concerts and toured the capital city of Montpelier, Vermont.



Summary:

The fellows offer essential feedback through their participation in our collective farm, festival and educational programs. Their youthful perspective and 'new eyes' help us to continue building programs that bring both respite, inspiration and outdoor service opportunities to the leaders of tomorrow. In exchange, the fellowship offers young adults who are in between commitments in their life; the clarity and connection to inform the next steps on their journey.

Thank you for your continued support of this program. The grant money from Kate Svitek helps cover the costs for housing, food, and workshop leaders during the young adult fellowship program.



We are incredibly grateful for Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation's generous support this past year that has helped us to expand our programs and serve more youth than any point in our history. Major highlights and accomplishments from the past year include:



STUDENT DAYS IN NATURE: Last year, we facilitated 1,200 student days in nature through 154 outdoor trips for 350 youths. For FY25, we lead 230 outdoor trips for 500+ youth.

OUTDOOR CLUBS AND PARTNERSHIPS: We facilitate outdoor clubs in 9 King County schools and partner with 12 organizations to organize outdoor recreation trips. We are seeing increased participation in some of the highest needs schools we serve, such as Pacific and Sylvester Middle Schools, which now have more than 50 students participating monthly at each school. We integrate hands-on environmental education into trips through partners like the Environmental Science Center and Duwamish Cleanup Coalition.

IMPROVED HEALTH AND CONNECTIONS: 90% of our youth report improved mental and emotional health, improved social connections, and improved time spent outside.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP: Students from our club at Cascade Elementary School as 5th graders launched a new club as 6th graders at Showalter Middle School in Tukwila. This shows how Y.E.T.I. is successfully nurturing an outdoor culture that youth are spreading from school to school.

Your support is helping us achieve our mission of making outdoor recreation truly accessible to all King County youth, and we would be thrilled for the opportunity to partner again with Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation in the year ahead.



On behalf of the Camp Rainbow campers and staff, we wanted to thank you for supporting our 2025 Stream Study and Nature Exploration program at camp. We served close to 300 campers during the summer of 2025 and as it was in the past, this program was the camp favorite.

Our camp is attended by children who, due to financial hardship, would not otherwise have the opportunity to go to a week long sleep away camp. What makes the Stream Study so special to so many campers is that it is an opportunity to play and learn outside in an environment that is very different than their home communities. Campers learned about the wildlife in and around Perkiomen Creek this summer but they also learned about how to be good stewards of our natural environment. They got to experience the sheer joy of being in a safe, outdoor space; splashing in the water with friends and getting the opportunity to be curious about the world outside of their neighborhoods.

As you can see from the pictures, our campers love this program. They enjoyed learning about the wildlife and being able to show off to their families their new knowledge. They also learned about the power they have to protect the creek and all its plants and critters that they grew to love in one short week. We had a few campers who expressed interest in pursuing careers doing this kind of environmental work.



Grateful CAP Students Write About Their Outward Bound Experiences

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,

I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for the generous scholarship you provided, allowing me to attend the North Carolina Outward Bound program. This incredible experience would not have been possible without the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, and I am truly thankful for the opportunity.

During this program I really got to push myself to the next level. My first night I really struggled. The rain made me really overwhelmed and the stench immediately hit me, but I persevered through it, and it didn't get any easier. The others felt like I did: regretful and hopeless. By night two I had begun to form friendships and really began to bond. The activities that day were really fun, and the hike was great. Also, as a great bonus, the food was way better than expected. By night 3, me and everyone else began to adjust, and even during lightning drill late at night we bonded by playing fun games in our tarp. By the time we had gotten to canoeing we had been enjoying ourselves, and began to grow as people.

I immediately felt the impact on my personal growth. I became stronger and more resilient in the face of "hardship". The lessons I learned during this program have since stayed with me, and will continue to forever. I feel more confident in my ability to face challenges and even social skills as I created great bonds and friendships with the people I met there.

I am extremely grateful for the generous scholarship. It forever changed me for the better. I apply these lessons and skills learned to my everyday life from creating new friends to when I am faced with a challenging situation. I forever will remain grateful for the role the foundation had, and again want to thank you for everything.

Sincerely,
Albert Rodriguez
12th Grade





Grateful CAP Students Write About Their Outward Bound Experiences

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,
I want to express my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to attend the North Carolina Outward Bound program for a second year. I can speak for both experiences when I say that this trip brought me closer to nature and taught me what it truly means to grow as a young leader. None of this would have been possible without your generosity and the scholarship that allowed students like me to attend.

Throughout the program, I learned meaningful life lessons, discovered more about the environment around us, and developed confidence, resilience, and leadership skills. Building new friendships and learning to approach every situation with determination were unforgettable parts of the experience.

Thank you for giving me the chance to be part of such a unique and impactful adventure. The skills I gained will stay with me, and I hope to use them to make a positive difference in the world. I will always be grateful for this opportunity and for your kindness toward students like me.

Sincerely,
Alyana M. Nevarez

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,
Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to be part of NCOBS through the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation Scholarship. Being selected for the North Carolina Outward Bound experience was an honor, and it taught me so much about teamwork, responsibility, and pushing myself beyond what I thought I could do. Whether it was hiking long distances, working together to set up camp, or supporting each other during the tougher moments, I learned the importance of staying positive, trusting my group, and not giving up. I'm also truly grateful for all the support, encouragement, and resources that was provided to make this opportunity possible. Your dedication to giving students like me a chance to challenge ourselves and grow means more than I can put into words. Because of your generosity, I was able to discover new strengths, build confidence, and create memories that will stay with me for the rest of my life. This experience shaped me in ways I didn't expect, and I'm thankful for everything you did to make it happen.

Sincerely,
Miguel Merced

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Svitek,
I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for the generous scholarship that allowed me to attend the North Carolina Outward Bound program. Without the support of the Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation, I would not have had the opportunity to participate in such a meaningful and transformative experience, and I am truly truly.

Throughout the program, I gained many important and helpful outdoor skills and learned a lot about myself. I developed stronger confidence in myself, perseverance, and leadership qualities that I know will benefit me throughout my life. The challenges I faced helped me grow both mentally and emotionally, and I returned home feeling more prepared to take on obstacles in school, in my relationships and in my future. The memories I made and the connections I formed are ones I will carry with me for years to come.

Thank you again for your kindness, your generosity, and your belief in our potential. I'm able to use the lessons I've learned from the experience to better my community and continue to push myself to be the best version of who I can be. I will always appreciate the opportunity you guys made possible.

With gratitude,
Francisco Ramirez
12th grade





P.O. Box 104 Ambler, PA 19002-0104

NONPROFIT
US POSTAGE PAID
FORT WASHINGTON, PA
19034
PERMIT NO. 63

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.

Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation Founders

- Jay and Joan Beste
- Jessica Weisbein Brooks
- Ron and Joyce Burd
- Nancy Clair
- Mark Comerota
- Tod and Andi Drucker
- Kathy Elias
- Michael and Barbara Fishbein
- Mark and Bernice Glaser
- Rick and Lori Goldstein
- Drew and Kathy Guinan
- Deb Harris
- John and Melanie Harris
- Corey Heller
- Peter and Charlotte Kolson
- Bruce and Marcia Markoff
- Greg and Laurie Marx
- Steve and Marsha Milakofsky
- Sam Milakofsky
- Gates Rhodes
- Gail Jurikson-Rhodes
- Cricket Snearing
- Frank and Ellen Svitek
- Michael Svitek
- Tom and Monica Teesdale
- Mimi Weisbein and John Rush

expEDITION Staff

EditorEllen Svitek
Graphic ArtistDamon Kardon
All comments, corrections or news can be sent
to damonkardon@gmail.com

Minimum contribution is \$10.
Please notify us if the address given is a change of address.

Enclosed is a contribution: In Memory of In Honor of

Name: _____

Please acknowledge to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Donor Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make checks payable and mail to the *Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation*, P.O. Box 104, Ambler, PA 19002-0104. Your contribution will be acknowledged to the recipient.

Contributions are considered a 100% charitable donation. KSMF is a registered §501(c)(3) organization. The official registrations and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free within PA 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.