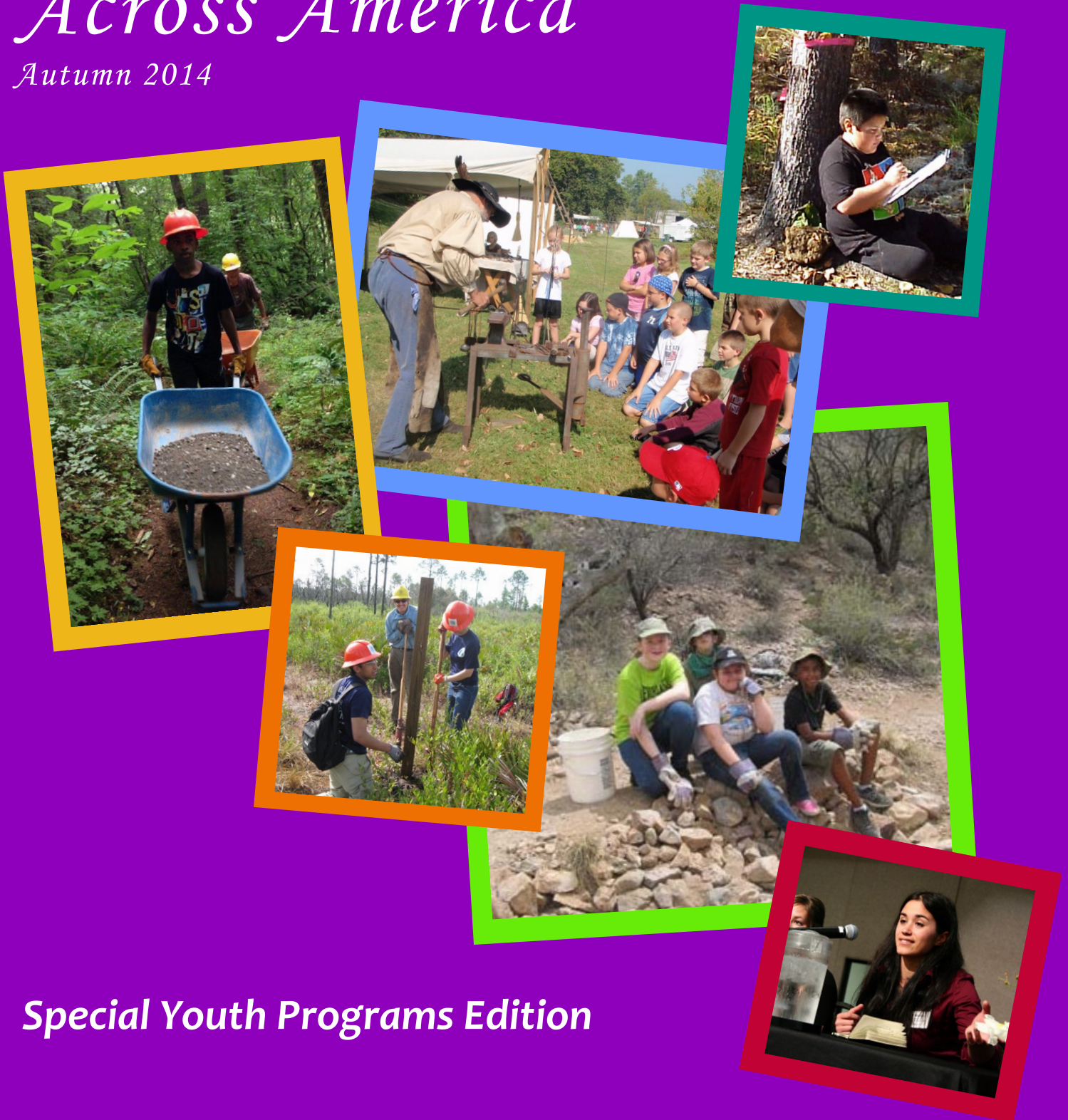


A Publication of the Partnership for the
National Trails System



Pathways *Across America*

Autumn 2014



Special Youth Programs Edition

Youth Programs on the National Trails System

Goals ~ Approaches ~ Outcomes



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Note: This *Pathways* presents a
sample of programs along the NTS
and does not attempt to profile all
youth programming along National
Trails.

Programs Featured in this issue:

- PNTS Trails Apprentice Program (NTS-Wide)
- Service-Knowledge-Youth (SKY) & Experience the Wild (Pacific Northwest NST)
- Urban Youth and Environmental Charter School Programs (Pacific Crest NST)
- Alternative Breaks (Florida NST)
- Seeds of Stewardship (Arizona NST)
- Saunters (Ice Age NST)
- March to Kings Mountain Youth Programming (Overmountain Victory NHT)
- Traveling El Camino Real de Los Tejas Interactive Videoconference (El Camino Real de Los Tejas NHT)
- Trail to Every Classroom (Appalachian NST, New England NST, & Iditarod NHT)
- Lewis and Clark Patch Program
- Connect Choctaw and Chickasaw with the Natchez Trace Parkway to Produce Educational Resources (Natchez Trace NST)

About This Pathways Issue...

Youth programs on the national trails system warrant regular and intensive attention in the publications of the Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) because they inherently relate to all three of the goals (Outreach, Protection, and Capacity) of the Decade for the National Trails. As the programs in this report demonstrate, youth programs are not just “extra” services offered by an organization; they can serve as the foundation or rallying focal point for organizations to build their capacity and protect their trails.

Ultimately, the engagement of youth is at the core of each trail’s future vibrancy. No matter how much time and effort is placed into the preservation of land or sites, or the leverage of strong capacity towards the construction of trails, without successful buy-in from the next generation, the sites acquired today will go unappreciated and the carefully maintained trails will be overgrown.

Due to the intensive time, effort, and strategic planning required to develop robust youth programming, trails may struggle in deciding how to best allocate their capacity in light of their other organizational goals. The PNTS continues to encourage its partners to prioritize youth engagement for the long-term health and sustainability of the National Trails System (NTS).

In the past, the PNTS has published overview reports on youth programs on the NTS (available online at www.pnts.org/outreach-and-pr). These reports were intended for “at-a-glance” overviews of as many programs as possible. This report aims to provide trails leaders with a more detailed view of a sampling of programs, with the hope that background information such as funding, costs, and partnership approaches will enable other organizations and offices to build and grow their own programs.

We hope that the information presented in this report will help give trails leaders ideas and reference points for developing and expanding youth programming along each trail. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions!

KEY FINDINGS --- YOUTH PROGRAMS ON THE NTS

- **GROWTH** Trail programs along the NTS are growing overall, with most having a strong capacity to be significantly leveraged in reach.
- **PROGRAM EXPENSE & PARTICIPATION COSTS** Most trail programs are provided either completely free of charge to youth participants, or at an extremely discounted rate compared with the cost of youth programming available elsewhere, even in cases where the program demand far outstrips the number of spots. This finding encourages discussion about balancing outreach and sustainability goals and suggests a potential for leveraging program reach through cost and scholarship models more reflective of trends in youth programming.
- **PARTNERING** Partnering with youth organizations and schools has proven to be the most effective means to engage large numbers of diverse youth. Such partnerships allow other organizations to spread the word about the trail and trail youth programming through their own channels of communication or programming efforts. These partnerships also allow for the youth organization or schools to identify challenges for their participants and help trail organizations address any considerations.
- **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES** Because the majority of programs engaging youth are through youth organizations and schools, there are not currently many programs that engage youth with their families. Since family habits are critical in establishing long-term commitments to the outdoors, and parental buy-in often dictates the continued involvement of a youth, programs engaging families may be a promising next step for organizations building their programming.
- **LONG-TERM IMPACT** The long-term impact of these programs is still unclear. Most programs have been around fewer than 5-10 years, too short a time to see if the participants in them become adult supporters of trails. Most programs cite long-term trail sustainability as a important motivator behind development, yet very few programs follow-up with youth after they participate. Information about how many youth come back to hike, learn more about, or volunteer with their trail is anecdotal at best.



Photos from left to right: Trails Apprentices at the 2009 NSHT Conference in Missoula, Montana; doing a trails service project at the 2010 NHT Workshop in San Antonio, Texas; and on a mobile workshop in Salt Lake City, Utah at the 2014 NHT Workshop. Photos below: presenting during a apprentice-led panel (left) and the entire cohort of Trails Apprentices (bottom) at the 2011 NSHT Conference in Abingdon, Virginia.

PNTS Trails Apprentice Program

Organizational Host: Partnership for the National Trails System

Year Initiated: 2009

Number of Youth who participate per year: 10-30

Youth Age Range: 18-25

Program Features: Trails Career Development, Networking, Internship Enhancement

Youth Outreach Strategy Development, Presentations to Trails Leaders



OVERVIEW

Starting in 2009, with the 12th National Scenic and Historic Trails Conference in Missoula, Montana, young adult trails enthusiasts, known as “Trails Apprentices”, have participated in all of the PNTS conferences and workshops. Generally ranging in age from 18-25, trail apprentices come to share their experiences with trails, provide insight into engaging other youth in the trails community, build their knowledge about trails careers, and network and find internships with trails organizations and agency leaders.



Any young adult with a demonstrated interest or involvement in working in the outdoors or in historic interpretation/preservation is invited to apply. Trails Apprentices interned with land management agencies on topics ranging from cultural resources inventory to mapping and web development, been Student Conservation Association interns, or are students involved with stewardship organizations. They often bring substantial experience in trail building, social media, and an wealth of other capacity building and volunteer engagement strategies. As part of their participation in the national scenic and historic trails workshops and conferences, many of the Trails Apprentices also give individual presentations about their intern work and/or trail experiences as part of the program content. Past presentations have ranged from studies on approaches for counting trail users, new GIS mapping technologies, to effective social media strategies.

Depending on the event, the PNTS Trails Apprentice Program may involve special sessions for just trail apprentices to learn more about the National Trails System overall or to discuss careers. Some workshops or conferences have included apprentice-led panels with several young adults presenting on a topic selected by the youth. Youth have also led focused group discussions, and some trails apprentices have been pivotal in helping to plan parts of future events or assist with workshop/conference logistics.

GOALS & OUTCOMES

The Trails Apprentice Program aims to foster long-term involvement of young adults with the National Trails System. By targeting young adults who already have a preliminary exposure to volunteering or working with the national trails, the program hopes to expand their knowledge of ways to be involved and/or employed with trails and facilitate their efforts to secure internships and build their careers. Indeed, many of the young adults who have participated have gone on to employment with the Federal agencies or stewardship organizations, with several of the apprentices attributing those additional opportunities directly to contacts made at the conference and workshops during the program. The program has also been successful in bringing the perspectives of young adults to the table at conferences and workshops.



FUNDING & PARTNERSHIPS

The Trails Apprentice Program is possible thanks to the generous support of the Bureau of Land Management, the USFS, the NPS, the USFWS, and the FHWA. The costs covered by the program include transportation, accommodations, and programming for the young adult participants of the PNTS conferences and workshops.

SKY (Service - Knowledge - Youth) Programs

Organizational Host: Pacific Northwest Trail Association

Youth Ages: 13-15 (Sky Ranger Corps)

16-20 (SKY Job Corps, Educational Program, and SKY Performance Crews)

Youth Participants in 2014: 62 (total across SKY Programs)

Year Initiated: 2001

Students reached since inception: ~1,600

Program Features: Trail Construction and Maintenance,

Bridge Building,
Masonry,
Crew Leadership
For-Credit Service



FUNDING

Several of the SKY programs are employment-based, and therefore costs associated include not only support services but youth compensation.

Primary funding sources for SKY programs include: USFS, Resource Advisory Committee (RAC)-Title II, State of Washington Recreational Trails Program, and private grants from foundations and corporations.

On average, the cost for a 8-week full-time SKY crew is between \$55,000 - \$75,000, which translates to roughly

The amount that can be raised through grants and contracts determines how many youth can work each year. In any given year, the PNTA sends between 4-8 crews out each summer, but the demand for youth jobs on the trail, as well as the need for trail building and maintenance, is much higher. The PNTA's youth programs are central to the organization's funding strategy as the PNTA does not receive agency monies to build or maintain trail.

Most of the PNTA's youth program funding comes from contracts with the USFS or from Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grants through the State of Washington. PNTA has done some projects with National Forest Foundation (NFF) Grants along with corporation dollars providing 50% match. To date, corporate grants have included REI, Ford Motors, Weyerhaeuser, and Puget Sound Energy. The PNTA was also just accepted to the USFS 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Program, and organization leaders are hopeful that will serve as an additional funding source.

OVERVIEW

Through participation in several day-long outdoor education experiences and extended overnight camping and trail building/maintenance excursions, SKY participants achieve personal growth, learn teamwork and goal setting, and reap the rewards of personal and group accomplishment. SKY Programs are a blend of employment and volunteer experiences.

The SKY Educational Program works with youth ages 14-18 from local alternative schools that specialize in reaching students who are struggling socially, financially, or academically. It provides youth with an opportunity to spend time outdoors, learn about the environment and trail stewardship, and get an experiential education. Students can earn up to two school credits upon program completion, which helps them graduate, and all participants are required to make a presentation to the community about the significance of their experience working on the Pacific Northwest NST.

SKY Performance Crews arose out of demand from students who had previously participated in the SKY Educational Program. Students with the Performance Crews learn more advanced masonry, construction, carpentry, and culinary management. Funding is provided exclusively by private grants, which currently limits the growth of this very high-demand youth employment opportunity.

SKY Job Corps youth work on either the Pacific Northwest NST or on an as-needed project basis for the USFS. The USFS provides funding for individual projects on USFS land, though there are many projects on the PNT that also await their skills.

SKY Ranger Corps provides high school youth ages 13-15 with part-time summer employment. Each Corps works two days a week and focuses on developing trail building and maintenance skills, with a special emphasis on skill refinement and teamwork. The program was originally administered by the USFS but is now run by the Pacific Northwest Trail Association.

PNTA "Experience the Wild" Educational Program

Year of Program Inception: 2013

Total number of youth participants in 2014: 72

Youth participant age range: 8-12

Total Program Cost: \$14,000 (~\$195/week/student)

The PNTA *Experience the Wild* Educational Program (previously called "Rockin' the Wild") is a week-long day-camp style experience for kids ages 8-12. New in 2013, the program takes students on a series of day-trips along the Pacific Northwest NST to learn basic hiking skills, stewardship, ecology, and geology, while experiencing the trail firsthand. The program is led by both paid and volunteer USFS staff,





PROGRAM GOALS

The SKY programs aim to provide young adults with leadership, learning, and employment opportunities while accomplishing the necessary trail building and maintenance of the Pacific Northwest NST.

DEMOGRAPHICS & DIVERSITY

The PNTA connects with youth by reaching out to schools along the corridor of the Trail. There is an application process, including an interview, to hire the best fit candidates. Some SKY participants already enjoy the outdoors and are looking for a job that fits with that interest, and others are completely new to trail experiences. The PNTA also finds interested youth through a variety of partnerships (see details at right). With such varied approaches to reaching youth, the PNTA has enjoyed a tremendous diversity of participants in the SKY Programs, including a significant numbers of minority and international students. The SKY Program has also become a recognized opportunity for youth from several native american tribes.

RETENTION & MEMBERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

Many participating youth return year after year to work on the Trail, but very few come back as volunteers. Some youth volunteers do senior projects on the trail, and the PNTA works with the county juvenile program to provide the opportunity for community service to those needing to perform that task. The PNTA also teams up with Eagle Scouts, providing projects along the Trail. So far, very few youth are joining the PNTA as members though they are awarded a one year complimentary membership following their participation in the SKY programs.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The PNTA currently use Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram as part of its efforts to engage volunteers and share trail developments. The PNTA is actively working to expand connectivity with SKY participants through social media.

PARTNERSHIPS

The PNTA partners with a number of different groups and organizations for its variety of SKY programs. The Backcountry Horsemen provide substantial assistance in packing youth crews into the backcountry. The PNTA also collaborates with Washington State University 4-H, particularly with the Ranger Corps (ages 13-15). Community Juvenile Program, Boy Scouts of America, and local educators are also involved with the PNTA to provide a range of services and contacts. The SKY Job Corps is also assisted through a partnership with the partnership with the Department of Labor and Cascades Job Corps Center in Sedro-Woolley, WA.

The USFS also provides training and educational experiences, particularly for the “Experience the Wild Educational Program” (below).

and young adult trail crew leaders who share their time and knowledge with participants. The *Experience the Wild* Program visits the only natural ice caves in the lower 48 states and teaches students about fish conservation and fisheries management through a visit to a local salmon farm.

Program Funding and Partnerships

The *Experience the Wild* program is primarily funded through a Challenge Cost Share agreement with the USFS with additional assistance from private donors. The bulk of funding goes towards compensation of the adult trip leaders as well as transportation costs. The cost per program will decrease in upcoming years as some of the transportation funds from the first year permitted investment in a vehicle for use with future programs.

Photos courtesy of the PNTA.



Urban Youth Program and Environmental Charter School Programs

Youth Age Range: 14-18, 11-18 (respectively)

Youth Participants in 2013/2014 academic year: 100

Program Features: Trail Building and Maintenance, Outdoor Recreation, Education



OVERVIEWS

The Urban Youth Program and the Environmental Charter School Program, two of the more successful youth programs through the Pacific Crest Trail Association, share a common format of weekend-long trail work camp-outs with about 20 young adult participants per project. The Urban Youth Program does one project per year, and the Environmental Charter School Program does four projects each year. Participants do trail work for two of the three days until the afternoon and then do recreational and educational activities in the evening. Activities might include hiking, fishing, games, storytelling, and learning about native species and nearby ecosystems, Native American history, land management, trail careers, and what it is like to through-hike the PCT.

OUTREACH, DEMOGRAPHICS & RETENTION

Generally speaking, the youth typically attracted to camping and hiking on the Pacific Crest NST are from a privileged demographic. In order to attract participants for whom volunteering in the outdoors is decidedly outside their comfort zone, both physically and economically, the Urban Youth Program offers a \$25/day stipend. As is true with many programs working with youth experiencing wilderness for the first time, the absence of bathroom facilities and insect encounters are major concerns for many participants. Discussions with the youth help prepare them for those circumstances. The program aims to "plant a seed" of interest in the outdoors, and while most participants do not immediately continue involvement with the trail, each year a few participants return as young adult leaders.

In the case of the Environmental Charter School program, the partner schools' focus area means that most students have had at least some outdoor experience. The PCT weekend projects are among many options students are provided with year after year to fulfill volunteerism requirements. Consequently, that program sees many of the same students return, and some students have even participated after graduating from the Environmental Charter School. Program leadership feels that a strong sense of camaraderie and consistent program leadership have fostered student loyalty to that program.

SUCCESS FACTORS

Program leadership identifies several critical success factors for these programs, including: partnerships with existing youth organizations to recruit and select youth; a balance between trail work time and recreational and educational programming; project leaders with enthusiasm for working with the participating age groups; and incentives for participation (i.e. financial stipends or school credit).

FUNDING

The Urban Youth Program cost per weekend work project is \$5,000 (~20 students), which includes: stipends of \$75-\$150/participant, transportation, and staff time. Funding comes from the USFS annual PCT budget and from private individual donors.

The Environmental Charter School Programs cost \$1,500 per weekend project, which covers transportation, food, some staff time, and equipment. Funding comes predominantly from the USFS grants and private donors. There is sufficient demand for both these programs to expand should additional funding become available.

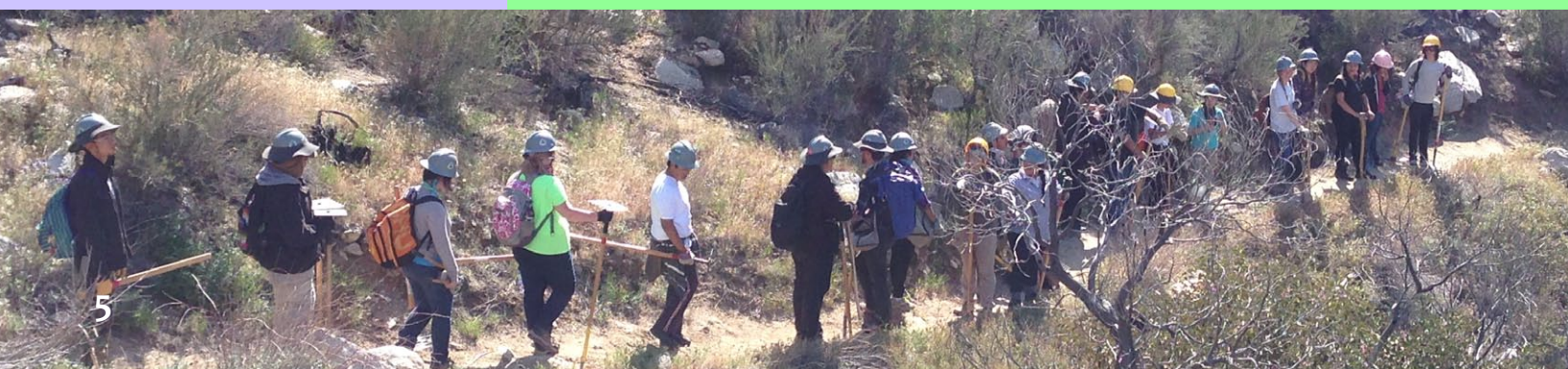
Photos courtesy of the PCTA.

PARTNERSHIPS

Program leadership from both programs identify the partnerships with youth organizations as critical for the success of their programs thanks to their partners' role in identifying, selecting, and equipping youth for the trail work projects.

The Urban Youth Program operates in partnership with three organizations: the Urban Youth Program of the city of Vancouver, Washington; the NAACP Youth Program of Vancouver, Washington; and New Currents Outdoors. These existing youth programs establish which students would be a good fit for the program and provide adult chaperones and transportation.

As its name implies, the Environmental Charter School Program partners with the Environmental Charter Schools (ECS) which runs a middle school and high school. ECS selects the students who will attend and provide transportation and camping equipment. The program also partners with the BLM, the USFS, California State Parks and The Wildlands Conservancy-Whitewater Preserve for camping arrangements.



Alternative Breaks/ University Crews on the Florida NST

Program Inception Year: 2005

Youth Age Range: 18-22

Youth Participants in 2013/2014 academic year: 62

Program Features: Trail Building and Maintenance, Recreation



OVERVIEW

The Alternative Breaks Program is hosted by the Florida Trail Association (FTA) and is a week-long, elective program for university students during school term breaks. Each program typically includes a few days of general trail maintenance paired with a few days for the group to explore the surrounding area. The exact program varies by the interest areas of the group and the trail project. When not working on the trail, participants canoe, kayak, hike, scout out local springs, explore a national wildlife refuge or state park, or visit a local beach. The program teaches trail maintenance skills and instructs participants in basic tool use. For each Alternative Breaks program, an average of 9 participants are part of each crew, and they contribute on average 270 hours per project.



GOALS

The primary goals of the program are to provide opportunities for youth to get onto the Florida NST and have an opportunity to become stewards of their public places. Program organizers work to develop skills that will be applicable in the participants' professional careers, including communication, teamwork, and leadership. Facilitators try to expose them to new tasks and encourage them to be resourceful and make decisions as a group.

In addition, one of FTA's primary goals is to increase the number of volunteers who are actively engaged in stewardship of the Florida Trail. The Alternative Breaks program engages an entirely new group of volunteers each time and completes a needed trail maintenance or building project. However, the program does not expect continued involvement from the students in the short term, but hopes to plant a long-term interest in the Florida NST.

OUTREACH & DEMOGRAPHICS

The Florida Trail Association outreaches through its monthly e-mail newsletter, the E-Blaze, and posts on the FTA's social media and via the various university service newsletters. Program organizers have found that posting photo albums from the projects on Facebook, along with real time posts and photos from the Alternative Breaks projects in progress, has been quite successful in garnering enthusiasm and building future participation. To date, the majority of students participating have found out about the program either through social media or through direct communication between FTA and university groups. Currently, demand for this program far exceeds FTA's capacity to accommodate all the students, and the organization is looking to add regional staff to accommodate a greater number of crews in a season.

Participating college students typically have an interest in the outdoors and/or are a part of an environmental class or club, but the majority have never worked in the outdoors. Program coordinators estimate around 70% of participants are female and about 25% are minorities.

RETENTION & MEMBERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

While program participants have not typically chosen to become members, a few students from local universities have shown interest in volunteering nearby and have obtained some of the certifications offered by the FTA. Partnerships with particular university groups have resulted in a steady stream of participants as the same organizations promote the program on their schedules and social media.



Photos courtesy of the FTA.

FUNDING

COST/STUDENT: ~ \$12/day per student, which covers food, PPE (personal protective equipment), and trail building/maintenance equipment.

The Alternative Break Programs are currently funded through the Challenge Cost Share Agreement the Florida Trail Association has with the USFS. The FTA hopes to expand and diversify funding sources.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Florida Trail Association maintains a set of partnerships with several colleges and Universities, including Eckerd College, the University of Louisiana (Engineers without Borders Group), and the University of Florida. The University of Florida has several different groups that have been active in sending students to work on the Florida NST, including students participating in an Eco Tourism Course, members of the Tropical Conservation and Development Club, and the University of Florida Travel and Recreation Program.

The Alternative Breaks Program also partners with the St Marks Wildlife Refuge, where it does some of its trail work projects. The refuge provides a bunk house for participants.



Seeds of Stewardship

Program Inception: 2012

Number of participating youth in 2013-2014 school year: 283

Program Features: STEM, Common Core, Hiking, Camping, Trail Maintenance



OVERVIEW

The Seeds of Stewardship program, hosted by the Arizona Trail Association (ATA) encourages youth participation with the Arizona NST through a three-tiered approach: experience, education, and stewardship. As part of the program, student participants experience various forests, canyons, and mountains through several visits including hiking, biking, overnight camping adventures, and trail maintenance service projects. The ATA's youth outreach and education coordinators work with teachers to integrate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and Common Core elements with the program.



To encourage participation in Seeds of Stewardship, Arizona Trail Association staff reach out to schools located along the Arizona Trail to identify an appropriate teacher or teachers that are interested in integrating the Arizona Trail into their programming. In some cases participating youth are from one particular classroom, other times a school selects appropriate participants from multiple classrooms, and one school has made the program a mandatory part of programming for an entire grade level.

GOALS

The ATA prioritizes the “sustain” part of their mission towards the Arizona Trail, and ATA leadership determined that engaging youth as trail stewards would be a critical approach to fulfilling that part of their mission. Furthermore, ATA leadership sees the program as a way to reenergize donors and partners, including Federal partners, expand their funding base and overall organizational capacity, and build a sense of excitement among their long term members.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Seeds of Stewardship is targeted towards elementary school youth who live in communities along the Arizona NST. Most participating youth are from rural or suburban areas, though the program has engaged some youth in the Tucson area as well. ATA staff have found that most participating youth have had minimal or no experience in outdoor wilderness areas in general, and estimate only 5% had been on or knew about the Arizona NST prior to their participation.

FUNDING

Total Program Cost: ~\$75,000

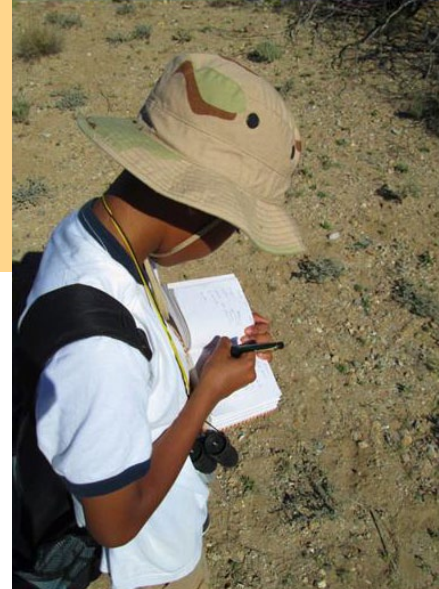
Funding for Seeds of Stewardship is currently approximately 40% from corporate donors and grants, 40% from the Bureau of Land Management, and 20% directly from the ATA's general program operations budget. ATA leadership noted that the Seeds of Stewardship Program significantly re-energized donors who had expressed a “now what” sentiment following the recent completion of trail construction. The program also fostered grants and donations from individuals and entities that had not previously been interested in the Arizona NST, resulting in a major increase in fundraising capacity. While each donor has a different focus, overall ATA leadership found the themes of leadership, experiential education, compatibility with Common Core and integration of STEM to be particularly compelling in their fundraising efforts.

PARTNERSHIPS

Educators are significant partners for this program, as individual teachers are involved with bringing their classes or groups of students from their school to the program and help to integrate STEM and Common Core features during students' time on the trail. The Bureau of Land Management also provides support not only in funding but in staff time as stewardship educators during the program.

OUTCOMES

ATA offers a youth membership option and is exploring ways to encourage participants and their families to consider membership following the program. While the impact on youth membership is not yet clear, ATA staff have noted that long-term members and volunteers have expressed renewed enthusiasm for their work and efforts upon learning about the Seeds of Stewardship program. Furthermore, overall organizational capacity (through additional staff and programming) has increased thanks to the appeal of the Seeds of Stewardship Program to funding sources.



Photos above courtesy of the ATA: Through the ATA's Seeds of Stewardship project, junior high school students helped maintain and rebuild portions of the Arizona National Scenic Trail near their communities.



Saunters

Organization Host: Ice Age Trail Alliance

Program Inception Year: 2008

Youth Age Range: 9-18

Youth Participants in the 2013-2014 School Year: 447

Program Features: Fitness, Youth Mentorship, Common Core



The Saunters program, administered by the Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA), was designed by teachers to help students develop healthy lifestyles to combat child obesity and supplement elementary school curriculum with topics such as glaciers, pioneers, and environmental science.



During the week-long daytime programs, students hike different sections of the trail. Their teachers and/or IATA volunteers and staff guide the hikes and integrate hands-on learning. Students also keep “trail journal” directly connected to National Common Core Standards and State Academic Standards.

Mentorship is a key component of the program, as the youngest participants are referred to as “future mentors”, the middle-age students as “mentors in training,” and older students who have previously participated are “lead mentors”.

GOALS

The core goals of the Saunters program — combating childhood obesity, preventing summer learning loss, and mitigating nature-deficit disorder — are centered on the idea of demonstrating the mental and physical benefits the Ice Age NST can provide tomorrow’s leaders.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Saunters includes students from urban and rural areas from diverse ethnicities, with African American, Caucasian, Hispanic, and Asian backgrounds. The program also encourages participation of youth with unique abilities. The program’s largest “population in need” revolves around youth qualifying for free and reduced lunch; some programs, in both urban and rural areas, have over 50% of participants that qualify for this funding at school. The Saunters program leadership is working to develop ways to retain the participation of lower income youth and engage their families, as many parents are juggling multiple jobs or irregular hours.

OUTCOMES

While Saunters is helping to increase memberships, getting these members to participate in IATA program outside of Saunters has been difficult. The IATA has seen an increased demand for Saunters programs, and is working on ways to keep up with the demand. The IATA is in the process of creating a step-by-step design that groups can use to implement Saunters programs with ease. Groups will have the option of including IATA staff or going without, while maintaining a high level of consistency.

FUNDING

Program Administration/Student Expense: \$5,000 - \$10,000 per week-long program, which covers administrative expenses and transportation for youth.

Each Saunters program is generally funded at the local level. IATA and district staff collaborate to locate, apply for and secure funding. In addition, IATA staff helps tailor the educational platform to meet the local and statewide academic needs. Thus, each program is individualized to meet the needs of students. IATA staff also search for opportunities to help spread the Saunters program to areas where it does not currently exist. Statewide funding has been generated in 2014.

Saunters relies on local support and collaboration when seeking program-based funding. The IATA also highlights its work in recruiting, retaining, and advancing youth within the Alliance when working with donors. This has served the IATA well with organizational funding overall, not just youth programs. Some of the funding sources specifically request the engagement of urban youth.

IATA leadership notes that dedicating a portion of grant writing efforts to youth engagement has been key. The IATA has found ample funding opportunities centered on engaging youth, especially as it relates to physical and mental health.

PARTNERSHIPS

Each Saunters program is a partnership between the Ice Age Trail Alliance, a participating school or a community group, local volunteers, and community members. Statewide partnerships include the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The National Park Service has also worked as a partner every year. However, the participating school district plays the largest role in shaping the program through scheduling and staff involvement.

Photos above of Saunters students, courtesy of the IATA.



March to Kings Mountain Youth Programming

Participant Age Range: 4th & 8th Graders

Youth Participants in 2014: ~10,000

Year of Program Inception: 2008

Program Features: Living History & Storytelling, Hiking,
Hands-On Interactive Period Activities



During its annual March to Kings Mountain, the Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) puts on a series of interactive history programs for 4th and 8th grade students at several locations along the trail. The program names vary from region to region (i.e. *Call to Arms*, *Re-Live Your Revolution*, *Revolutionary War Weekend*) but the programs all follow a rotating station format and teach about different aspects of the trail story and life in 18th century America over several days at each location. OVTA living history educators tell the story of the trail from the perspectives of both men and women, and stations include mapmaking methods of the era, blacksmithing, lace-making, cooking and washing techniques, depictions of daily life, the experience of diverse ethnicities in 18th century Virginia, and stories of the Overmountain Men and their march to victory at Kings Mountain, South Carolina. The program also encourages fitness, having participants walk at least a mile along part of the trail as part of a "march". The program has grown in recent years from one location reaching 2,000 youth to four separate sites along the march reaching over 10,000 students in total.

FUNDING

Expense/Student: \$5
Approximately two-thirds of the OVTA's youth programming budget is supported through the National Park Service, the National Parks Foundation, and some private grants. The program has been increasingly supported by private donations. OVTA membership dues and the Town of Abingdon have provided the remainder. With its recent hiring of an executive director, the OVTA plans to pursue additional grant funding with the hope of making youth programming available throughout the year. Although the event is primarily oriented towards historical education, OVTA leaders have found that funding sources they approached are equally, if not more, interested in the program's role in encouraging walking for fitness.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

SITE PROTECTION AND PERMANENT INTERPRETIVE IMPACT

The annual use of the Abingdon, Virginia Muster Grounds as an educational center for the OVTA *Call to Arms* program led to increasing community support for protection of the property, inspiring the Town of Abingdon to purchase the land and establish an interpretive center and museum dedicated to the trail. Thanks to close partnerships between the Town of Abingdon, the OVTA, and the support of the Abingdon community, the Keller Interpretive Center was dedicated in 2010 and now features exhibits and educational materials for visitors seasonally.

IMPACT ON MEMBERSHIP & CAPACITY

In 2013, OVTA began to promote membership at its educational events, with one of the stations set up to explain about the OVTA's activities and membership. Combined with a lowering of the membership fee and an addition of a junior level, the event led to an amazing 210% increase in membership in one year, from 152 to 472 members. Family memberships soared to over half of total memberships, and youth now make up over 10%.

Photos above show students participating in the Call to Arms program in Abingdon, Virginia.

PARTNERSHIPS

Currently OVTA is working with North Carolina State University on a GIS mapping system that can be adapted for an App for smart phones. OVTA leadership hopes to develop an App incorporating the GIS to help families and youth who have participated in the programming to explore additional areas of the Trail on their own.

The National Park Service provides significant funding assistance for the *Call to Arms* program, and the Town of Abingdon supports staff for the Muster Grounds, who also assist with the program.

Traveling El Camino Real de Los Tejas NHT Interactive Videoconference

Participant Age Range: 9-12

Year of Program Inception: 2010

Student Participants in 2013-2014 school year: ~1,300

Program Features: Interactive Technology,
In-School Curriculum,
Local Trail Visits



The Traveling El Camino Real de Los Tejas NHT Interactive Videoconference Program teaches students about the trail both in the school setting through preparation activities within the classroom, interactive videoconferencing events connecting many schools, and outside the classroom through stewardship service projects. Classroom curriculum is structured around one week of daily class activities related to Texas history pertaining to the trail. For each videoconference event, classrooms who choose to develop a presentation to share with other schools use plays, skits, and PowerPoint during the live presentations to explain the history of the segment of the Trail nearest them. Other classrooms can watch the presentations as they are presented via the online videoconference platform, BlueJeans. Some classrooms, particularly those at sites near the trail, take their engagement to the next step through service projects along the trail or visits to historic trail sites. The National Park Service provides participating schools with the *On the Road to Partnership* DVD to give students background on the trail prior to the program.

GOALS

The Association identifies the main goal of their program as the long-term stewardship of the trail, as well as general community awareness and familiarity with the trail. The organization's mission to promote understanding of pre-Alamo Texas history is at times an uphill battle due to the significant trend of presenting events around the Alamo as effectively the birth of the State.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Program serves a mix of rural, urban, and suburban students from a wide range of ethnicities and backgrounds. The majority of the children participating are entirely unfamiliar with El Camino Real de Los Tejas NHT or Texas history prior to the Alamo before participating.

FUNDING

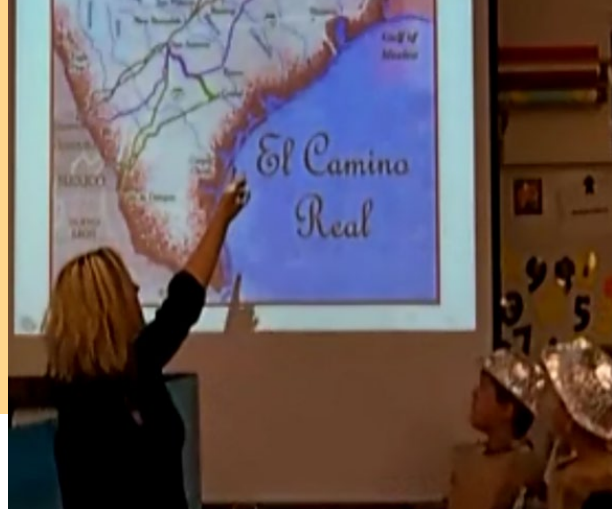
Expense/Student: <\$5 per student
Thanks to the low cost of the videoconference technology and the massive scalability of the program, the bulk of the expense for this program is for upfront curriculum development that can be used year after year rather than ongoing program expense. Last year, El Camino Real de Los Tejas NHT Association received a grant of \$15,000 towards the development of resources for the 4th grade curriculum. The funds were used primarily to compensate some of the teachers involved in helping develop reusable curriculum materials as well as to support an Association intern involved with the program. For the upcoming 2014-2015 academic year, the Association received a \$7,500 grant to be used to support teachers for similar curriculum development for 7th grade students. The Association's general budget covers the time expense for the executive director in promoting and coordinating the program.

SOCIAL MEDIA

El Camino Real de Los Tejas NHT Association actively maintains several social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest as part of its general organizational promotion and connectivity. Executive Director Steve Gonzales notes that the organization's Pinterest board has proven to be particularly effective at related information and posts easily visible over longer stretches of time. At this time the Association uses social media primarily to connect with adult participants, and due to the younger ages of youth participants, does not have any immediate plans to attempt to connect with students directly in through social media.

PARTNERSHIPS

El Camino Real de Los Tejas NHT Association has developed a partnership with the Texas Education Service Centers, which are state-funded institutions that support the public school system and provide additional resources and programs. The Service Centers help identify which schools would be good candidates for participation in the program, provide contacts, and encourage schools to participate. To this point, the Association has worked primarily with one regional service center, but several other regional service centers, including those related to areas not geographically proximate to the trail, have indicated an interest in being involved with promoting the program and the curriculum materials to their respective schools.



Top photo: a teacher presenting along with her students during a live videoconference presentation. Bottom photo: Students visiting the Apache Pass River Crossing. Photos courtesy of the El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT Association.

A Trail to Every Classroom

Program Features: Teacher Engagement,
Environmental Awareness,
Civic Engagement Healthy Lifestyles,
Common Core Curricula

Begun in 2005 along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the Trail to Every Classroom (TTEC) program is a professional development program for teachers from kindergarten through high school. The program, consisting of a series of workshops, offers training and tools for teachers of all disciplines to integrate outdoor, place-based approaches into classroom curricula. This program, developed in partnership with the National Park Service, aims to encourage a love of learning, promote healthy lifestyles, and engage youth as stewards of their natural environment through conservation knowledge and service. TTEC encourages educators along the trail corridor to develop their own experiential learning curriculum based on state educational standards, Common Core, and STEM principles through hands-on activities along the trail and community engagement.

Workshops for the instructors cover topics such as hike leadership, Leave No Trace practices, introduction to trail management, curriculum development GIS and GPS technology, fundamentals of community service and volunteer engagement, partnership development, and program evaluation. The TTEC program offers a database of previously developed materials and provides ongoing support and networking for teachers who have completed the program.

By empowering educators to use trails as outdoor classrooms, TTEC programs bring the trails to a tremendous number of students, and since each instructor can apply the concepts in year after year of teaching, the impact grows every year. TTEC educators are not limited to traditional classroom teachers but may also include after-school program coordinators, environmental educators, and special education instructors.

To date, TTEC has spread from along the Appalachian NST to the the New England NST and the Iditarod NHT (see adjacent page). Together, the Trail to Every Classroom programs have engaged hundreds of teachers, indirectly reaching more than 20,000 students around the country.

Trail to Every Classroom - Appalachian NST

Program Inception Year: 2005

New Educators Engaged per Year: ~50

As the founding program, the Appalachian NST TTEC program has had the time to develop a wide range of partnerships, host workshops reaching up to 50 teachers at a time, establish an Advisory Council and, develop a detailed website and curricula database (see details at right).



Photo courtesy of Rita Hennessy, NPS.

The Trail to Every Classroom (TTEC) Advisory Council

was formed in 2011 to support the continued growth, viability, and relevance of the TTEC program. Its members include educators, agency leaders, and ATC staff, and maintaining club members who serve as liaisons and ambassadors to TTEC educators and 31 AT clubs as well as advise the AT Park Office and ATC staff on emerging questions, issues, and opportunities. The Advisory Council encourages clubs to reach out to TTEC teachers to assist them with curriculum and develop partnerships.

TTEC Blog

<http://trailtoeveryclassroom.blogspot.com/>

The TTEC Blog offers a place for educators and trail club members alike to share stories of the TTEC program in action, explore best practices, download the TTEC Manual (a set of materials used often as part of the TTEC training), and access the searchable database of materials developed by teachers who have participated in the TTEC workshops. A video about the program is also available at the site, as well as an archives for TTEC program newsletters.

PARTNERSHIPS

The National Park Service was a founding partner with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in the development of the TTEC program. To expand reach and community engagement with the program, the TTEC program has also partnered with individual schools, such as a school-wide immersion program. Partnerships have also been established with regional environmental protection departments and the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club, among many others.

FUNDING

The TTEC program along the Appalachian NST is supported through a combination of National Park Service funds and private grants. Over the years, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy has experimented with different workshop formats and partnerships, with significantly different cost structures.



iTREC! (Iditarod Trail to Every Classroom)

Program Inception Year: 2010

New Educators Engaged in 2013: 56

Launched as part of the Centennial celebration of the historic Iditarod Trail, the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, Chugach National Forest, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Geographic, and the National Park Service modeled iTREC! after the highly successful Trail to Every Classroom program on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Like TTEC, iTREC! is comprised of a series of three teacher training workshops aimed at providing the inspiration, knowledge, and skills to transform classroom teaching into effective and exciting place-based education and service learning.

The teachers integrate such subject areas as ecology, journalism, civics, art, and physical education. Curriculum examples include: researching and writing books, visitor guides, interpretive signs and brochures on the INHT; assisting trail managers in trail maintenance and management issues associated with the trail; monitoring water quality; and raising awareness of the trail in their communities through public service announcements and community surveys. This past year, the iTREC! program engaged 56 teachers from 8 different communities along the trail, indirectly impacting the educational experiences of about 5,000 youth.



Photo courtesy of the USFS.

PARTNERSHIPS

The iTREC! program is hosted by the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance and the Chugach National Forest. It also partners with or receives funding from the Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Geographic, Alaska Airlines, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Anchorage School District, Mat-Su Borough School District, State of Alaska - Department of Natural Resources, and the Iditarod Trail Committee.

NET Trail to Every Classroom - New England NST

Program Inception Year: 2011

New Educators Engaged per Year: 12-15

Beginning in 2011, the Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA) launched its own version of the TTEC program along the New England NST (NET), which also incorporates Project Learning Tree, the environmental educational program developed by the American Forest Foundation. CFPA has hosted one group of 12-15 educators annually for the one-day workshop. The program, which includes indoors and outdoor learning, introduces educators to the NET and discusses ways to integrate classroom content, including Common Core curricula, into an interactive outdoor learning environment.



Photo courtesy of CFPA.

PARTNERSHIPS

The CFPA partners with the National Park Service. To spread the word about the program, the CFPA contributes to the listserves and presents at the annual conferences for the Connecticut Outdoor and Environmental Educational Association and the Connecticut Science Teachers Association.

FUNDING

Expense per program (12-15 teachers) ~\$2,500, which includes Project Learning Tree Curriculum and staff time. Teachers paid \$40 to participate in the program, with the balance of the funding coming from the CFPA's overall Project Learning Tree-focused grant and the general CFPA programming budget.

PROGRAM EXPANSION

As part of their efforts to expand trail-based education in the spirit of Trail to Every Classroom, the CFPA staff collaborated with an education contractor to develop two original educational programs—one aimed at families, called "Family Rambles" and another targeted at life-long learners, called "Walks and Talks". Each program included four themed sessions and were provided free to the public thanks to grant funding from the NPS.

Lewis and Clark Scout Patch Program

Youth Age Range: 12-18

Program Features: Self-Guided Learning, Individual Site Visits,
Service, Outreach



OVERVIEW

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (LCTHF) has developed a series of patch programs through an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Boy Scouts of America. Each chapter of the LCTHF has the option of developing their own patch and corresponding requirements. Boy Scouts from around the country can earn any or all of the individual patches, and patch requirements may differ for local Scouts and Scouts earning the patch from afar. Local Scouts may need to traverse a part of the trail or visit particular sites, while Scouts from other areas may be required to read about that section of the trail and do a project or write an essay instead. Badge requirements typically include at least one service project or outreach effort to other youth. Badge materials also offer trail history and references to useful resources for Scouts to learn more about the trail and assist with planning visits to trail segments.

While there is no official MOU in place with Girl Scouts, most chapters welcome the participation of Girl Scouts who may want to earn their chapter's patch. American Heritage Girls, a scout-like Christian organization for girls, also has an MOU with the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation for a variation on the Boy Scout Patch Program.

DEVELOPMENT & FUNDING

The program was developed entirely through the volunteer efforts of chapter members, in many cases with the assistance of local Scout leaders. Consequently, expenses are extremely minimal, limited to the expense of the actual cloth patches.

GOALS

This program was developed primarily as a form of outreach and engagement to encourage young adults to deepen their knowledge of the history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and have fun exploring places along the trail.

"Partnerships with youth organizations such as Boy Scouts of America and American Heritage Girls are a hip way to introduce badge and patch seekers to our National Historic Trails, endless possibilities of outdoor recreation, and the exciting stories and events that took place many years ago at areas where they bike, paddle, or hike to secure their badges and patches. We are thereby introducing concepts of conservation, stewardship, and recreation to the generation that will soon be the ones preserving and upkeeping our beautiful national trails." - Lindy Hatcher, Executive Director, LCTHF



Boy Scout National Jamboree

Members of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation as well as the Lewis and Clark Trust have presented at the National Boy Scout Jamboree several times over the years. Members of these organizations have developed a large booth with exhibits and conduct educational presentations to engage Boy Scouts with the story and encourage them to explore the trail. The Boy Scout Jamboree is held in Mount Hope, WV, drawing around 40,000 Boy Scouts each event.

While the National Boy Scout Jamboree is held only every four years, both Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts regularly hold large gatherings and regional events as well as large national meetings and conferences drawing thousands of Scouts and leaders.





Connect Choctaw and Chickasaw with the Natchez Trace Parkway to Produce Educational Resources



Youth Age Range: 16-24

Youth Participants in 2014: 27

Year Initiated: 2013

Program Features: Site Visits, Heritage Exploration, Cultural Research, Multi-Media Projects, By-Youth-For-Youth Curricula Development



Photos of university students from the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations as they visit historic sites, meet with historians, hike along a portion of the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, take photographs, and conduct research. Photos courtesy of the NPS.

PARTNERSHIPS

This program, which is coordinated by the NPS, partners with the Choctaw Nation, the Chickasaw Nation, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, and East Central University in Oklahoma. to bring univeristy students to the Natchez Trace. The program also partners with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to bring local high school students to the trail and do projects as well.



OVERVIEW

The Natchez Trace is strongly linked to the history and heritage of several Native American groups, particularly the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations. Since their nations' forced removal westward to reservations in the 1800s, most Chickasaw and Choctaw youth have few opportunities to explore their ancestral lands. This program brings Chickasaw and Choctaw university students to the trail for a week to explore their history and help them develop projects to share that heritage with other youth. During the week along the trail, the students visit historic sites, meet with genealogists, historians, and geographers, and explore local archives and museums.

Each student is tasked with developing a research project and lesson plan around a certain topic, such as mapping and land use, early removal policies, sacred sites and the application of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, family history and genealogy, or literary exploration of the removal experience. Depending on their unique approach, students may interview local authorities on their topics, conduct film interviews, construct documentaries, and/or develop interactive learning resources based on their experiences. The resources they develop are then made available on the Natchez Trace Parkway NPS website and the websites of the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations, enabling any student around the country to engage with the Natchez Trace and learn from the research and experiences of the students.

University students are selected based on the relevance of their diverse areas of study to the Natchez Trace and their involvement with their respective Nations.

This program also engages local high school students from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to do projects available to other schools through digital media.

GOALS

Initially, the main goal of the program was to engage young Choctaw and Chickasaw youth with their heritage. As the program progressed, building partnerships with the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations, strengthening cultural dialogue, and developing interpretation resources for other youth became equally critical goals.



FUNDING

Program Cost per Student: ~\$1,000

This program is funded through the NPS, partially through internal Interpretation and Education and Youth Partnership Program grant funding. The grants cover the cost of transportation, accommodations, and food for the students during their week-long travel along the trail.





Pathways Across America
Partnership for the National Trails System
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Trails Events Calendar Winter-Spring 2014-2015

December 9-11, 2014	Sustainable Trails Workshops	Professional Trail Builders Association	Stonewall, WV	www.trailbuilders.org
February 7-12, 2015	Hike the Hill	American Hiking Society, PNTS	Washington, DC	www.americanhiking.org
February 7, 2015	ATA Annual Meeting	Arizona Trail Association	Phoenix, AZ	www.aztrail.org
April 23-26, 2015	IATA Annual Conference	Ice Age Trail Alliance	Wisconsin Dells, WI	www.iceagetrail.org
May 17-20, 2015	International Trails Symposium	American Trails	Portland, OR	www.americantrails.org
Late June, 2015	National Scenic and Historic Trails Conference	Partnership for the National Trails System	Franklin, TN	www.pnts.org

Front cover photos from top left to bottom right: A participant of the Pacific Crest Trail Association's Urban Youth Program (courtesy PCTA); learning about 18th century life during the Overmountain Victory Trail Association's Call to Arms program (PNTS photo); a student learning on the trail thanks to his teacher's participation in the iTREC! program on the Iditarod NHT (courtesy USFS); university students doing trail work on the Florida NST as part of the Alternative Breaks Program (courtesy FTA); participants in the Arizona Trail Association's Seeds of Stewardship Program (courtesy ATA); Maxine Paul, PNTS Trail Apprentice, presenting at the 13th NSHT Conference (PNTS photo).