

Outdoor Youth Connections 2016 Annual Report

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2016 Annual Report

Outdoor Youth Connections spent 2016 providing grants to support programs at Sound Salmon Solutions of Lake Stevens and Friends of North Creek Forest of Bothell. Both organizations continue to provide opportunities for youth to get outside and connect with nature.

We excitedly began work with a new partner, Culture Seed, in White Salmon. Culture Seed provides opportunities for youth in the Columbia Gorge to experience the outdoors and connect with nature, by completely getting away from town.

We also took steps toward our revived goals to provide direct program to youth by providing a navigation course for youth in partnership with the YMCA Casino Road Community Center in Everett.

The Auburn Youth Center contacted us and shared they wanted to provide an

opportunity for their youth to experience wilderness hikes and backpack trips. Having experience with homelessness, youth at AYC were eager to hike in the mountains with the knowledge and comfort that they would return to town having safe shelter. We eagerly collected a few backpacks appropriate for days of wilderness hiking.





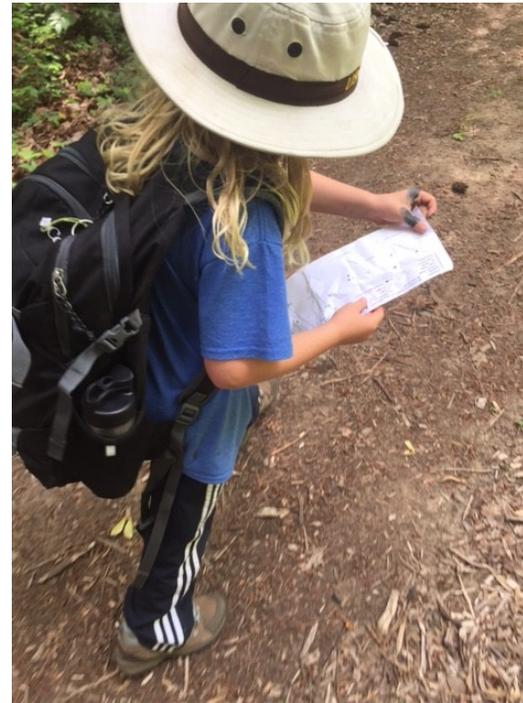
Youth from Granit Falls and Mukilteo participated in our navigation course where they learned skills to negotiate routes, identify landmarks, avoid hazards, and become aware of cardinal directions.

Making a Difference

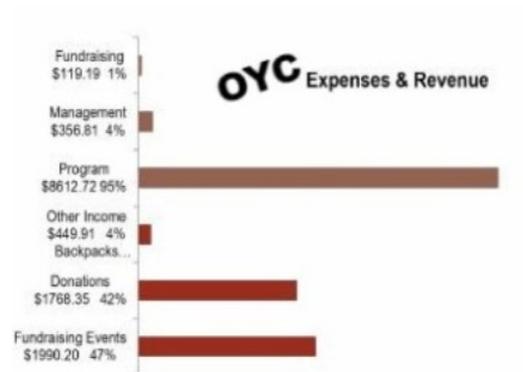
In 2017 our focus will be to expand our reach among people who value opportunities for kids and youth to explore the outdoors. Members of our local community have reached out to us to help them explore program ideas and opportunities to get the youth they work with outside. We are excited to add partnerships with both the juvenile division of the Snohomish County Superior Court and the Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program. The Y Casino Road Community Center has requested new program this coming year and we are committed to revive our work reaching out to schools.

We are encouraged that our work has made an impact, and we are honored to be the outdoor connection that is making the difference for many youth.





Culture Seed provides opportunities for youth in White Salmon and throughout the Columbia Gorge to experience team building, seed planting, nature awareness, map reading skills, and to simply to connect with nature.



Letter from the Treasurer

2016 was a busy year for us as we bravely decided to direct our energy to youth program and different income strategies. Our goal is always to get more kids and youth outside, experiencing nature. In reviewing our work over previous years we discovered what we already believed; we were spending most of our energy planning a couple of fundraisers, aimed at adults, keeping us away from the youth we intend to serve. A determined decision was made to explore new income strategies and connect ourselves directly to our mission.

Total contributions to Outdoor Youth Connections [OYC] in 2015 was \$10,960 and in 2016 we increased in-cash donations and decreased our onetime event income, bringing in only \$5,643, having a profound impact on support to youth in 2017.

We received several grant requests from organizations across the country working to get youth outside and connected with nature. The urgency to fund outdoor youth is huge!

On behalf of the OYC Board of Directors, I thank our volunteers for their willingness to share time and resources in support of our mission. We ask consideration from you who choose to give to OYC. Supporting OYC will allow us to continue our work with children at risk now and in the future.

Outdoor Youth Connections is confident that we are moving in the right direction. The youth we serve and support have expressed gratitude for the opportunities to explore our natural world, by doing something new and exciting!

Marina Ball



A youth investigates a leaf eating bug at Friends of North Creek Forest.

Our mission is connecting youth with outdoor adventures. We provide opportunities and means to experience recreational, educational and stewardship activities in the natural outdoors.



OYC Board of Directors

Sandra Ingalls

Dennis Miller

Sherri Engvall

Marla Olson

Marina Ball

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