



WOODCOOKIE

a newsletter from Friends of Outdoor School



Friends All Around Us, in a World Filled With Love

A Note from Kim Silva, Executive Director

To say that 2020 has been difficult is an understatement. As you know, students and families are reeling from school closures and missing out on Outdoor School while providers and sites have had their programming and work as they know it evaporate. The record fire season added a whole new level of challenge and loss.

We mourn the loss of George Atiyeh and the cherished Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center.



Photo of George Atiyeh taken by Andy Adkins in the Statesman Journal

We mourn the homes, businesses, forests, and lives of friends and neighbors around the state. While we wait to hear more about Camp Cascade, we feel a tentative sense of relief that many Outdoor School camps suffered minimal damage and no further loss of life. If you are able, please consider including your favorite camp in your year-end giving or booking a stay for your vacation. They need you right now.

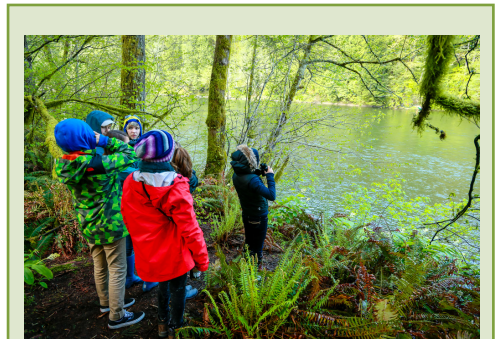


Photo from Camp Cascade's Facebook page

As we stand together in the Outdoor School community of students, teachers, programs, sites, volunteers, and donors reflecting on the losses of 2020, I realize what a responsibility we each have to make significant and important changes for each other, and especially for Oregon's kids. This knowledge makes 2021 feel daunting yet welcome. Each of us at Outdoor School is ready for a safer, healthier, more just world where students and their families can thrive not just in places like Outdoor School, but in all places.



If I must live through this difficult time, I'm glad to live through it with each of you in the Outdoor School community, a place where students are a priority, people are celebrated for their authentic selves, and people grow together in a safe and healthy environment. There is no better community than the Outdoor School community. Please stay safe and healthy, friends. Together, we can make Outdoor School possible for students and the world a better place to live.



I listened as my group's student leader, Hemlock, explained turbidity and how turbid the Salmon River was. At the same time I also drifted off and thought deeply about the nature and life around me. At that moment I felt golden rays of sunlight warm my face. I took a deep breath of fresh, crisp, cool mountain air and closed my eyes. Then for several seconds I felt truly content and satisfied. Right then and there I knew I had just made a special and wonderful connection with nature. - 6th grade student



On Zoom with Dan Prince

Well, it's been a busy year at Outdoor School. It is true that most students did not experience what we had come to know as "Outdoor School" last spring. And, because of the persistent presence of coronavirus in our communities, in-person Outdoor School did not happen this fall either. We remain hopeful that in some communities the metrics of the virus will allow for a safe, in-person Outdoor School experience for students.

In spite of this reality, the Outdoor School community has stepped up in creative and collaborative ways. Programs and sites have been planning for multiple contingencies in an ever-changing unpredictable environment. They have been supporting school districts with learning experiences they can provide to students during comprehensive distance learning. And many programs are taking this moment of nation-wide reckoning on racial injustice to examine their programming in a deep dive into equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) analysis.

The OSU Extension Service Outdoor School program has finalized their COVID Response Strategies for funding for this year's 5th and

6th grade students, AND this year's 7th grade students who missed Outdoor School last year due to COVID. In addition, they intend to introduce a grant program directed to ODS providers and sites to make EDI focused improvements to their programming or to make physical site improvements targeting accessibility for and inclusion of the students attending Outdoor School. They have introduced new professional development opportunities about online instructional strategies, Indigenous studies and outdoor education, and cultural responsiveness.

We at Friends of Outdoor School have been supporting the Outdoor School network in all of these efforts. We are grateful for the chance to provide assistance to sites and programs as they plan for an uncertain future and work to make Outdoor School more equitable, inclusive and welcoming for the diverse students in Oregon. We continue to work with the Governor's office, Oregon Department of Education, and Oregon Health Authority to provide necessary guidance for reopening Outdoor School safely.

We also recognize the significant

impact of COVID-19 closures and this season's wildfires on many of the camps that host students for Outdoor School. For that reason we've launched a collaborative fundraising effort that we hope will support our beloved sites until their forests, meadows and streams can once again echo the laughter of children. Please see the "Support" section for more!



At Outdoor School, the child who is neglected is loved, the child who struggles gains confidence, the child that doesn't fit in finds a place... the child with money has the opportunity to live like it doesn't matter, and the child who didn't want to come doesn't want to leave. At Outdoor School we see evidence that there is a place where people have discovered what it means to support each other. Where the foundation of community is built on acceptance and compassion. Above all, we find hope that the world we long for is not out of reach. - Zizu, former 6th grader, former high school student leader



Grow the Good

We are excited to be a part of Willamette Week's Give!Guide again this year! Give!Guide is Portland's largest annual grassroots fundraising effort that showcases 174 local nonprofits with the goals of raising as much money as possible for the participating nonprofits and creating a culture of giving in Portland. Keep an eye out for Big Give Days for a chance to win some great prizes. The first 125 donors age 35 & under will receive an awesome embroidered Friends of Outdoor School patch! Find more information about give guide here: <http://bit.ly/GGFODS>

We are partnering with 9 ODS sites from around the state to Grow the Good this Giving Tuesday. **Join us for a Virtual Campfire Tuesday December 1st at 6:30 PM PST for songs, stories, friends, and fun.** Donate to Friends of ODS through Give!Guide and one of our partner ODS sites on Giving Tuesday to be entered to win a basket full of awesome ODS goodies! Find more information about our joint Giving Tuesday campaign and register for the Virtual Campfire here: <https://bit.ly/FODSGT2020>



Keeping ODS Front of Mind

In partnership with Oregon State University Extension Service Outdoor School and Gray Family Foundation, we spent the fall meeting with dozens of legislators. Oregon legislators continue to be enthusiastic about Outdoor School and its benefits to students. Encouraged, we met with the Governor's office asking for full funding for Outdoor School in the 2021-2023 budget. While all state programs will have to accept some cuts, we believe that there will be continued excitement about getting students to Outdoor School as soon as it is safe. To prepare for the 2021-2023 legislative budget session beginning in January, please attend our new Advocacy 101 training in February. Together, we can ensure that funds are available to support Outdoor School next year and for generations to come.

You can support Outdoor School with payroll donations and matching gifts! Contact your HR department for more information.

You can designate a gift to Friends of Outdoor School from your donor-advised fund. Contact your donor-advised fund administrator or make your donor-advised fund donation here: <https://bit.ly/FODSDAF>



Thank You Partners!

Big thanks to the following organizations for supporting Friends of Outdoor School. We encourage you to support these generous businesses. To get your company involved, contact

kim@friendsofoutdoorschool.org.

- Artisan Auctions
- Caelestis Cellars
- Cambia Health Foundation
- Daimler
- EarthShare
- East Multnomah SWCD
- Emily's Fund
- Gray Family Foundation
- Heritage Bank
- International Paper
- Kroger
- Little Bay Root
- Lizard Lounge
- New Seasons Market
- Nike Employee Matching Gift Program
- OnPoint Community Credit Union
- Opsis Architecture
- Portland General Electric
- Portland Water Bureau
- Randall Charitable Trust
- The Standard
- Vernier Software

U.S. Postage
Nonprofit Org.
PAID
Portland, OR
Permit No. 528



Donate While You Shop

Shopping at Fred Meyer, New Seasons, or on Amazon? They will donate to Friends of ODS while you shop!

All you have to do is select Friends of ODS as your nonprofit partner and shop away!

- Go to www.fredmeyer.com/topic/community-rewards-4 and click “link your rewards card now” then choose Friends of ODS!
- Bring your reusable bag to the following New Seasons location and they’ll donate to Friends of ODS: Raleigh Hills, Sellwood, Seven Corners, Happy Valley, Williams, Nyberg Rivers, and University Park.
- Go to smile.amazon.com and sign in to choose Friends of ODS!

FRIENDS OF OUTDOOR SCHOOL LEADERS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dave Eshbaugh
Secretary

Jen Grube

Andy Lindberg
Treasurer

Paige Richardson

Jennifer Satalino
Chair

Mary Thomas

Gary Myers

BOARD EMERITUS

Rex Burkholder
Liz Fouts

Katie Newcomb

Jen Newlin

Amy Thomas

Kelly Wilson

STAFF

Kim Silva
Executive Director

Dan Prince
Associate Director

Sophia Anguilla
Network Coordinator

CONNECT • SUPPORT • ADVOCATE