



HELPING KIDS DISCOVER NATURE'S PLAYGROUND

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The North Face Explore Fund™ Grant Recipients Announced

Program Awards \$52,000 to 21 organizations in California's Bay Area

San Leandro, CA – October 19, 2010 – The North Face today announced that the Explore Fund™ (www.explorefund.org), a grant-giving program supporting nonprofit, community organizations that break down the barriers to getting youth outdoors, is awarding \$52,000 to 21 organizations with projects that will affect over 16,000 young people and families in the Bay Area. The grants are part of the inaugural commitment of \$250,000 from The North Face Explore Fund, administered by The Outdoor Foundation.

In recent years, The North Face along with industry partners including the Outdoor Foundation, has witnessed a decline in outdoor participation and has made strides to work against the trend. Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) studies have found outdoor participation declines with age. Over the past three years the participation rate of youth ages 6 to 12 fell almost 20 percent for girls and 10 percent for boys. The OIA states this potential trend could negatively impact the future of conservation efforts that rely on individuals with a strong connection to and an understanding of natural systems and recreational landscapes.

The North Face originally announced the Explore Fund program in June at the first ever [Outdoor Nation Youth Summit](#) in New York City, asking nonprofit organizations to submit their applications. Hundreds of grant applications requesting more than \$400,000 in support were received.

"Our goal is to get more people outside, having fun and exploring their world in ways that are meaningful to them," said Steve Rendle, President of The North Face and VF Outdoor Americas. "We're thrilled to be able to support these incredible organizations who work so hard to provide outdoor education and experiences. This, along with other initiatives such as [PlanetExplore](#), our online community that helps individuals and families discover local outdoor recreational activities, will help to achieve this very important goal."

Organizations that were awarded funds in the Bay area include Bay Area Wilderness Training (Oakland), Golden Gate Audubon Society (Berkeley), Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy (San Francisco), Student Conservation Association (Oakland), and Youth Enrichment Strategies (Richmond). These programs will provide a variety of opportunities, including environmental education, an outdoor children's planting project, an outdoor youth ambassadors program, and mountain biking.

Funds were granted to organizations throughout the U.S. that work to break down barriers to getting youth outdoors within three focus areas:

\$66,000	Access to front and back country recreation
\$62,000	Education for personal and environmental health
\$117,500	Connection to nature that will empower the future leaders of tomorrow

Grantee programs will range across season and activity. Programs will kick off beginning late October 2010 through August 2011 with a majority of programs focused on spring and summer months. For more details, grantee highlights and ongoing updates, please visit www.planetexplore.com/explorefund.

About The North Face®

The North Face, a division of VF Outdoor, Inc., was founded in 1968. Headquartered in San Leandro, California, the company offers the most technically advanced products in the market to accomplished climbers, mountaineers, snow sport athletes, endurance athletes, and explorers. The company's products are sold in specialty mountaineering, backpacking, running, and snow sport retailers, premium-sporting goods retailers and major outdoor specialty retail chains.

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