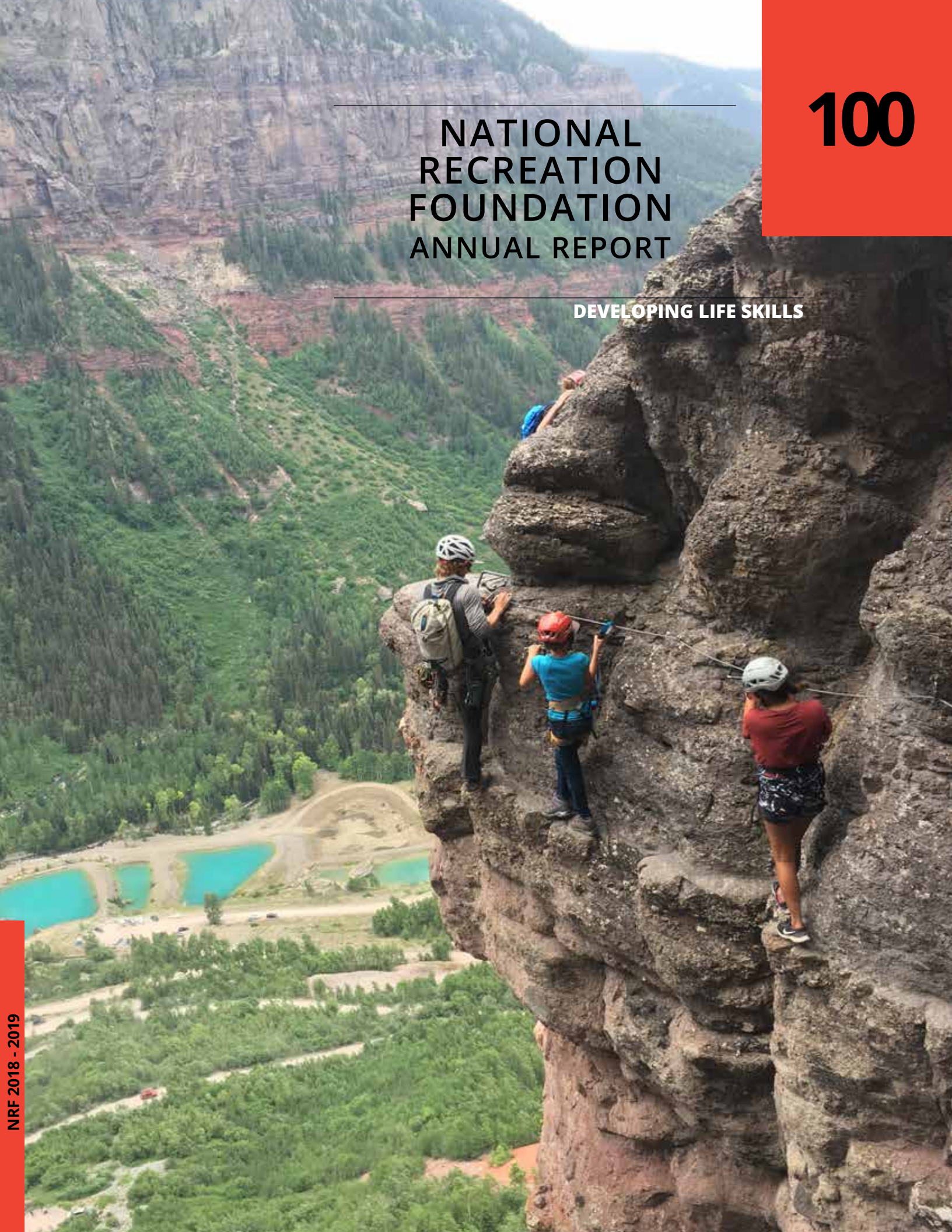


100

NATIONAL
RECREATION
FOUNDATION
ANNUAL REPORT

DEVELOPING LIFE SKILLS





NATIONAL RECREATION
FOUNDATION

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NATIONAL RECREATION
FOUNDATION
THROUGH THE YEARS

MISSION

The National Recreation Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the role of recreation as a positive force in improving the quality of life of youth. We do this by investing in recreation programs serving those who are economically, physically or mentally disadvantaged.

1919 \$1.5 million placed in investment portfolio after WWI

The National Recreation School is created in **1926**

NRF established in **1965** with \$5.4M in assets

Launch of Robert W. Crawford Prize **2002**

\$500,000 grant investment in the youth left homeless after Katrina in **2006**

In **2014** a full time Executive Director is installed

Launch of Grantee Workshops in **2015**

Impact Grants launched in **2018** amidst Puerto Rico devastation

2019 100 years of empowering Americans through recreation

NATIONAL RECREATION FOUNDATION

MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT

John W. McCarter, Jr.



Friends and Colleagues:

It is a great privilege to serve as the president of the National Recreation Foundation as we celebrate 100 years since the designation of the funds that became the Foundation's corpus. This is a significant milestone, and I believe in celebrating milestones.

As we set the course for the future, we must focus on and understand our special history.

Our History

Our roots trace back to 1918. All eyes were fixed on Europe, as the U.S. was enmeshed in World War I. Prior to the war, the regular U.S. Army numbered 133,000. By Armistice Day, the U.S. had mobilized an army of over four million men and women. Supporting and entertaining these troops became a national concern, as this was the best way to ensure their mental and physical health and preparedness.

Our predecessor organization, the War Camp Community Service (WCCS), focused on recreation for communities adjacent to military bases within the continental U.S. President Woodrow Wilson announced a national fundraising campaign to support the troops which took place for one week in 1918. An extraordinary \$190M was raised from everyday Americans across the country. WCCS' piece of the pie was \$16M. The war soon ended, and a \$1.48M surplus of funds was identified and placed in an investment portfolio in 1919, establishing what would ultimately become the National Recreation Foundation.

In light of the need for highly qualified administrators for the growing number of recreation agencies across the U.S., the National Recreation School was created in 1926 to provide graduate training for recreation leaders. After graduating over 295 students, the school closed its doors after universities started adopting recreation curricula.

The focus shifted to supporting the national recreation movement, especially through grants in support of leadership training courses and public education. As it was really operating as a grant-making foundation, this transition was formally accomplished in 1965 through the incorporation of the National Recreation Foundation, with assets that had grown to \$5.4M.

Since its founding, the Foundation has made over 900 grants with a combined value of \$40M to over 300 organizations across the U.S. We have invested over \$18M in youth development through recreation over just the past 10 years, and the programs we support reach between 30,000-50,000 youth each year. This is important work.

Looking Forward

The Foundation is proud of its history. These grants created thousands of positive experiences for youth and transformed the lives of many. But, is that enough? We say no. There's more work to be done.

The problems plaguing our youth persist: income inequality, incarceration, obesity, gun violence, sedentary lifestyles, lack of connection with the natural world, and a societal obsession with screens. These challenges make the Foundation's work more pressing today than ever. We must double-down on our mission, as we know recreation can improve and transform lives and communities.

Our Path

This 100 year milestone affords us the opportunity for reflection. We know we must honor the contributions made by everyday Americans a century ago who donated the funds that became the Foundation's corpus. As we seek effective and meaningful ways to address the needs of today's youth, we are committed to:

***Physical Activity & Outdoor Education** — Based on today's challenges and our decades of experience as a grant-maker, we have prioritized our grant-making around getting kids active and engaged with nature. This enables us to make more coordinated and impactful grants, better measure our collective impact, engage donor partners and ultimately enhance the role of recreation as a positive force in improving the quality of life of youth.*

***Impact Grants** — Addressing critical needs with bold and innovative recreation programs, Impact Grants represent the Foundation's deepest investment in high performing nonprofit organizations. With strategies and outcomes that align with the Foundation's strategic priorities, the programs supported by Impact Grants are transformative to the youth and communities served.*

***Grantee Workshops** — Engaging leading experts to facilitate multi-day professional development opportunities for our grantees. Grants end but an investment in people pays dividends into the future.*

***Enhanced Board** — We have had to bid adieu to a number of long-serving trustees. Our Governance and Nominating Committees have drilled down on the skills needed to expand The Foundation's impact. As we rebuild the Board with accomplished and effective leaders like Lila Leff, the Foundation is poised for even greater things.*

***Partnerships** — Long-time Georgia trustee, Tim Richardson, transitioned roles to focus on building partnerships in order to amplify the Foundation's work in the future. With the audacious goal of doubling the number of youth the Foundation serves, increasing our grants, and growing the corpus over the next few years, we have hit the ground running as this new century unfolds.*

Thank you for working with us to get America's youth outdoors, active and on the road to a healthful future.

Cheers,



JOHN W. MCCARTER, JR.
President

NRF GRANTS OVERVIEW

Organizations Receiving Grants

In 2019, the National Recreation Foundation awarded over \$1,940,000 in grants to organizations providing opportunities for youth from disadvantaged circumstances to get active and get outdoors.

TRUSTEE GRANTS

Boys and Girls Clubs of America
Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington
Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston
Breakthrough Urban Ministries
Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center
Camping and Education Foundation
Catamount Institute
Chicago Parks Golf Alliance
City of Jonesboro
Classical Theatre of Harlem
Detroit Police Athletic League, Inc.
Elevate New York
Forza Sport Academies
Friends of Carroll Park
Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles
Harlem Grown
Heart of Los Angeles
Heart of the City

Junior Achievement of Southern California
Liberty's Kitchen, Inc.
Life's Kitchen, Inc.
Miami Valley Christian Academy
The Nature Conservancy of Illinois
Philadelphia Youth Orchestra
PlayGrand Adventures
Pride ROC
Sloane Stephens Foundation
Street2Feet
Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center
Youth Outside

SPECIAL GRANTS

Audubon Texas
Camp Joy
Chesapeake Arts Center
Colorado UpLIFT
Georgia FIRST Robotics
Jackie Joyner-Kersey Foundation
Jubilee Consortium
Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities
Mercy Neighborhood Ministries of Philadelphia, Inc.
Rippleffect
River LA
SOS Outreach

IMPACT GRANTS

Boys & Girls Clubs of Puerto Rico
Para La Naturaleza

OTHER GRANTS

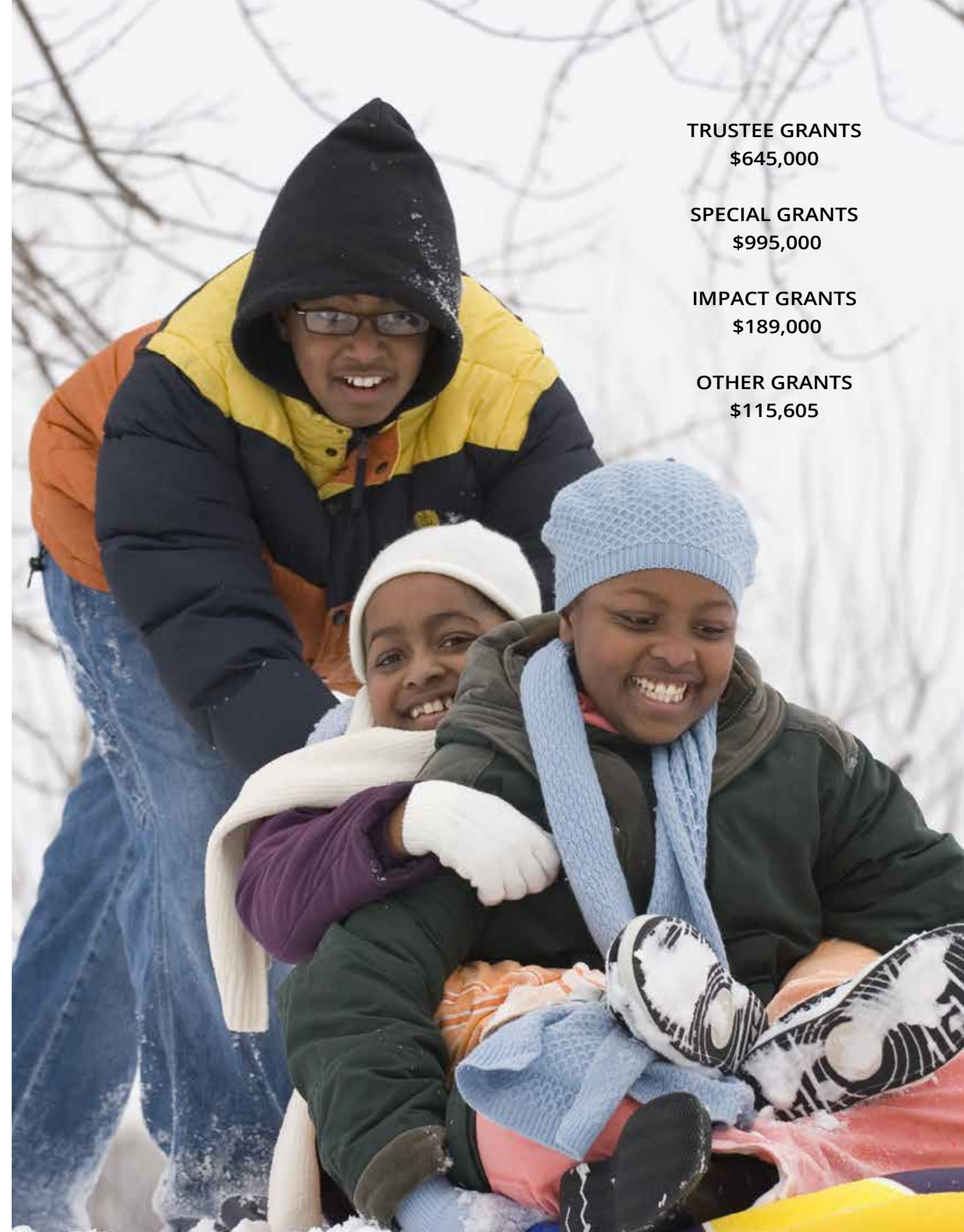
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula
Cobscook Community Learning Center
FareStart
Forefront
Greater Newark Conservancy
Newark Riverfront Revival
Philadelphia Youth Orchestra

TRUSTEE GRANTS
\$645,000

SPECIAL GRANTS
\$995,000

IMPACT GRANTS
\$189,000

OTHER GRANTS
\$115,605



LEADERSHIP OFFICERS

Background



JOHN W. McCARTER, JR.

President

John is President of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art and a Regent (and former chair) of the Smithsonian Institution. He is President Emeritus of the Field Museum of Natural History and serves on the boards of: Chicago Humanities Festival, Marine Biological Laboratory and Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation (USA). He was a Senior VP of Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Inc.



EDITH R. PEREZ (1954-2019)

Vice President

Edith was a Partner with Wirthlin-Dentons. Formerly, she was Senior Vice President and General Counsel of Maya Cinemas North America, Inc. and a retired partner in the law firm of Latham & Watkins. She served as President of the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners and Vice President of the Los Angeles Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners.



ALFRED A. VALENZUELA

Secretary

A Major General (Ret.) of the U.S. Army, Freddie's decorations and medals include: Defense and Army Distinguished Service Medals, Bronze Star for Valor and Soldiers Medal for Heroism. He is a member of the Boys & Girls Clubs Hall of Fame, and he served on Eagle Scout Association board. He is a member of the WWI Centennial Commission.



R. THAYER TUTT, JR.

Treasurer

Thayer is Vice Chairman and Chief Investment Officer of the El Pomar Foundation. He serves on the boards of: UMB Bank of Colorado, United States Olympic Endowment, Colorado College and the Colorado Springs Fine Art Center Foundation. He is Chair of the Board of Directors of the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo Endowment Fund.



ROBERT W.
CRAWFORD
PRIZE

Mr. Crawford



For 60 years, Robert W. Crawford served others through his role as Commissioner of Recreation in Philadelphia and as Executive Director of the National Recreation Foundation. As the Commissioner of Recreation, Crawford established a national model for local government's provision of recreational services for all citizens. His creativity and innovative ideas won him international recognition. He also played an important role in the development and growth of the National Recreation Foundation.

The purpose of the prize is to recognize a living person who is dedicated to enhancing recreation opportunities for youth, making it possible for more young Americans to live healthy, participatory lives, thus reinforcing the work of the Foundation. Each year, the prize is awarded to that person, whether professional or volunteer, who has made an extraordinary contribution in advancing recreation programs for youth from disadvantaged circumstances.

Crawford personified those qualities of leadership and commitment that the Foundation seeks to foster, which is why this Achievement Prize is named in his honor.

The prize consists of a \$50,000 cash award to support the recreation-related project of the recipient's choice and is presented at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees.

NATIONAL RECREATION FOUNDATION

**PRIOR
RECIPIENTS**

Crawford Prize

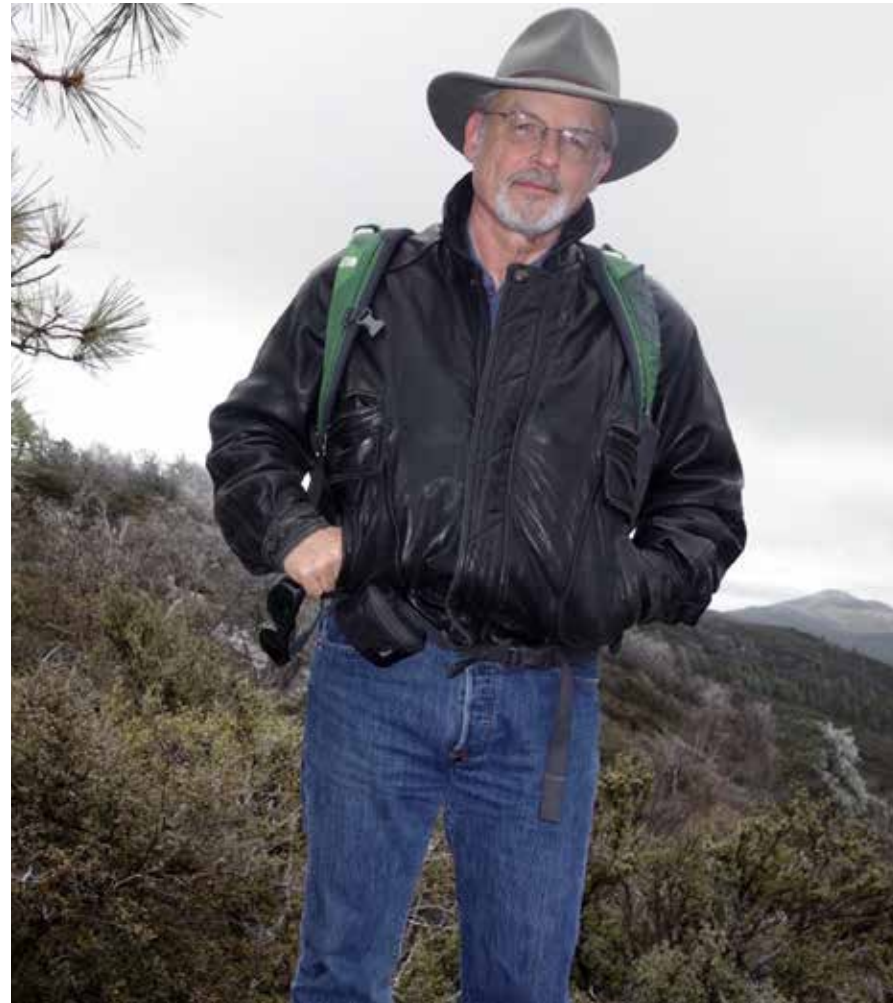
- 2018 Peter Westbrook, *New York, NY*
- 2017 Susan Teegen, *Philadelphia, PA*
- 2016 Michael "Spike" Lobdell, *Stonington, CT*
- 2015 Khary Lazarre-White, *New York, NY*
- 2014 Jacqueline Joyner-Kersee, *St. Louis, MO*
- 2013 Harrison I. Steans, *Chicago, IL*
- 2012 Lt. Gen. John B. Conaway, *Bethany Beach, DE*
- 2011 Eleanor M. Josaitis, *Detroit, MI*
- 2010 Melissa T. Harper, *Boston, MA*
- 2009 Robert Kohel, *Marquette County, WI*
- 2008 Sidney Epstein, *Chicago, IL*
- 2007 J. Kent Hutcheson, Ph.D., *Denver, CO*
- 2006 Margaret C. Daley, *Chicago, IL*
- 2005 Ronnie Lott, *Redwood City, CA*
- 2004 Peter A. Witt, Ph.D., *College Station, TX*
- 2003 Jane G. Pepper, *Philadelphia, PA*
- 2002 Dr. David McLone, *Chicago, IL*

Photo this page

Journalist and author, Richard Louv is the 2019 Crawford Prize Recipient.

Photo opposite page

As a leading advocate of the importance of time in nature for healthy child development, Louv's books have been translated into 20 languages. He's seen here on a trip to China, a country actively focused on greening its cities.



THE ROBERT W. CRAWFORD PRIZE 2019 RECIPIENT

Richard Louv

Louv is a journalist and author of ten books, including *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*, *The Nature Principle: Reconnecting with Life in a Virtual Age*, and *Vitamin N: The Essential Guide to a Nature-Rich Life: 500 Ways to Enrich Your Family's Health & Happiness*. His new book, *Our Wild Calling: How Connecting With Animals Can Transform Our Lives – And Save Theirs*, was published by Algonquin on November 5, 2019. His books have been translated and published in 24 countries.

Richard helped launch an international movement to connect children, families and communities to nature. He is co-founder and Chair Emeritus of the Children & Nature Network, an organization leading the movement to connect children to nature.

He appears frequently on national radio and television programs, including the *Today Show*, *CBS This Morning*, and NPR's *Fresh Air*.

He speaks internationally on nature-deficit disorder, a concept he first introduced in *Last Child in the Woods*; on the importance of children's and adults' exposure to nature for their health, and on the need for environmental protection and preservation for greater access to nature and the health of the Earth. Among others, he has presented Keynote addresses at the American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference; the USC Institute for Integrative Health Conference; the first White House Summit on Environmental Education; the Congress of the New Urbanism; the International Healthy Parks Conference in Melbourne, Australia; EuroParcs Conference in Scotland and the national Friends of Nature Conference in Beijing, China.

In 2008, he was awarded the national Audubon Medal. Prior recipients include Rachel Carson, E.O. Wilson and President Jimmy Carter.

As a journalist and commentator, Louv has written for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Times of London*, *Orion*, *Outside* and other newspapers and magazines. He was a columnist for *The San Diego Union-Tribune* and *Parents* magazine. Louv has served as a visiting scholar for Clemson University and Brandeis University's Heller School for Social Policy and Management. He is a member of the editorial board of the journal, *Ecopsychology*. With artist Robert Bateman, he serves as honorary co-chair of Canada's Child in Nature Alliance. He is also on the advisory boards of Biophilic Cities and the International Association of Nature Pedagogy.

Married to Kathy Frederick Louv, he is the father of two young men, Jason and Matthew.

He would rather hike than write.

NATIONAL RECREATION FOUNDATION

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sophia B. Twichell



I grew up taking nature walks on Sunday afternoons with my Father. A practicing Episcopalian, my Mother owned Sunday mornings. Our family, minus Dad, attended Sunday morning services. My Father, on the other hand, was a self-proclaimed "Blue Domer," the blue sky his temple. I loved hitting the trail with Dad on Sunday afternoons to exercise the dogs by walking in a part of Illinois that felt rural but was rapidly suburbanizing.

On these outings, I learned about crayfish, kingfishers and wood ducks along pond edges, prairie dock, monarchs and meadowlarks in prairies, and trillium, jack-in-the-pulpit and red-headed woodpeckers in woodlands.

An environmental ethic took root. It's not a good day unless I've taken a walk; great days include birds. Yet, when my Father passed away and grief consumed me, my need to get outside was visceral. I think I always knew it, but this brought into sharp relief for me the centering power of time outdoors.

I feel fortunate to work for an organization that understands the profound importance of connecting youth with the outdoors. Throughout its history, NRF has supported summer camps and outdoor adventure programs, and in 2016, the Board of Trustees adopted outdoor education as a strategic priority.

Our research revealed that in the outdoor education and recreation sector, a need exists to fund programs and opportunities for youth from disadvantaged communities, often communities of color. NRF chose to focus its resources in this area in direct response to that need.

This led NRF to join the Blue Sky Funders Forum, a national collaborative of funders unified in the belief that **when people have meaningful experiences outdoors their quality of life, health and social well-being improve, and in turn, their communities become stronger and more sustainable.**

My own experience tells me this is true. Our society is increasingly urbanized, distracted, sedentary, and anxious. Today, fewer than 21% of American children get outside even just once a week and fewer than 50% of American adults engage in outdoor recreation once a year. Our health, our children's health, and the health of our communities are at stake.



It's time for us to **rethink outside**. It's time to bring the well-documented benefits of connections to the outdoors to all kids, regardless of geographic location, race or economic status. Thinking creatively with our grantees and partners, we aspire to create a future where everyone has positive experiences outdoors and shares the joy, health, growth and sense of community that come with it.

Photo top

"Girls on the Run" with Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston.

Photo lower

Kids at play during Farring Baybrook Fall Tournament in Baltimore.



CORE VALUES

ACTION

Our Impact

One indicator is dollars and cents. The National Recreation Foundation has provided over 900 grants with a combined value of \$40 million dollars to over 300 organizations across the United States since 1965. \$18 million was invested in the last decade and over 47,000 youth were impacted in 2018.

COMPASSION

Digging the Dirt

NRF has been at the forefront of the battle against childhood obesity and the myriad of other health concerns. With a focus on getting America's youth active and outdoors, NRF has supported many garden-based initiatives that cultivate life skills and positive futures through nutrition education, exercise and job skills.

INTEGRITY

Leadership

We do not only support the programs we think are doing important work, but we also invest in the people doing that important work. NRF hosts two grantee workshops each year focused on building the skills and capacity of nonprofit leaders, in order to enhance the sustainability of the organization into the future.

GROWTH

Protecting the Future

Stewardship. There is no job NRF takes more seriously than safeguarding and growing those resources entrusted to us. Our team shares deep commitment, experience and dedication to the task, which translates into meaningful opportunities for youth to get active and outdoors, both today and tomorrow.



NRF PERFECT TIMING

A Centennial Is Also A Beginning

The year is 1919.

Still reeling from a global conflict unlike any before, Americans give overwhelmingly to new causes, including \$16 million (nearly \$237 million in today's dollars) for a "War Camp Community Service" charged with setting up recreational opportunities for the troops. Only a few years after the closing of the Western frontier, the nation was already starting to grasp the value of recreation to its soaring population and collective strength.

That the organization we know today as the National Recreation Foundation originated in the cauldron of a "great" war, is testament to the human instinct for creating something good and lasting from mass destruction, that insists on bending history toward a more noble purpose.

Considering all the organizations created after that war and how few still exist, the National Recreation Foundation's century of impact is a milestone we are not only fortunate to celebrate, but honored and humbled to be part of.

The era from which the NRF emerged has vanished. What has not changed is the need of every individual, especially the young, to be actively and frequently connected to recreational opportunities. In our own still-new century, as natural spaces shrink and technological distractions compete for attention, the mission of the NRF grows in proportional urgency.

Over 10 decades, the NRF has endured, adapting to the enormous changes in society and influencing those changes as well. But this didn't happen by accident or luck. Surviving and thriving over 100 years required the committed talents, bold ideas, creative teamwork and visionary participation of thousands of Americans stretching back to 1919 – people who believed in the Foundation's mission and its potential to physically and mentally strengthen individuals and communities.

Unlike fields of battle or fields of competition, there is no endgame, no final score at which point we can declare "mission completed." The NRF's purpose for existence continues to fulfill a pressing and ongoing need, even as we celebrate its centennial.

Each generation of leadership that followed the organization's "pioneers" took their roles seriously, handing off the Foundation's mission from generation to generation, until it arrived in 2019 – a time for us to stop for a moment and marvel at how far we have come – and how much we still need to accomplish before handing it off to the children of this century.



“

Heading into its second century, the National Recreation Foundation will continue its proven track record for acclimating to new eras and the needs of new generations of Americans. And who better to help equip young people with the adaptability and perseverance that will help them thrive in a rapidly changing world than an organization that exemplifies those traits?

*Photo this page inset above
Rock climbing with the
Voyager Youth Program.*

*Photo right page
On the river with Brecken-
ridge Outdoor Education
Center participants.*



NATIONAL RECREATION FOUNDATION

SUPPORT BEYOND GRANTS

Grantee Workshops

NRF is in the business of supporting nonprofit organizations. Our focus is organizations engaged in youth development through recreation. Our goal is to support and enhance the organizations we believe are making a real difference in changing lives and building life skills in our youth. We invest deeply in understanding our grantees' work and challenges in order to be a better partner. We know our success can only be measured in terms of their success.

We recognize that an organization's most valuable asset is its staff. With lean budgets, organizations rarely are able to invest in professional development opportunities for staff. To address this need, NRF engages leading experts to facilitate multi-day, state-of-the-art professional development and organizational sustainability training for its grantees. Presented twice annually, these workshops move around the country to be accessible to the greatest number of grantees.

The training events are offered at no cost to participant organizations, however, they underwrite their own transportation and lodging expenses.

In 2019, NRF offered:

Nonprofit Executive Leadership Program

April 2019, Atlanta, GA

Executive directors and CEOs enhanced their leadership skills and established a peer-learning network.

Embedding Equity

September 2019, Chicago, IL

Nonprofit leaders deepened their knowledge and developed skills enabling them to create more equitable, inclusive organizations.



NATIONAL RECREATION FOUNDATION

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Vice President - *Edith R. Perez, *California*
Secretary - Alfred A. Valenzuela, *Texas*
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Alfred A. Valenzuela, *Texas*

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Jackie Joyner-Kersee
Edwin C. Moses

Executive Director

Sophia B. Twichell

Partnerships

Timothy L. Richardson

Charles E. Hartsoe Fellow

Kevin Naaman

* deceased

NATIONAL RECREATION FOUNDATION

EDITH R. PEREZ
1954-2019

NRF Vice President



Edith was born on August 30, 1954, in Acambay, Mexico and passed away July 20, 2019 in Los Angeles, California.

Edith joined the Board of Trustees of the Foundation in 1999 and played a key role in advancing NRF's mission. She had a unique perspective on the need for opportunities for youth shaped by her experience as a probation officer before attending law school. As a trustee, she advocated for programs that provided opportunities for youth in theater, dance, health and wellness, sports, gardening, culinary arts and leadership development. She will be missed.

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**NATIONAL RECREATION
FOUNDATION**

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