



The Mountaineers Receives The North Face 2016 Explore Fund Grant

The Mountaineers is increasing access to the outdoors for underserved youth in Seattle, Washington

Seattle, WA – June 29th, 2016 – The Mountaineers is proud to announce The North Face awarded a 2016 Explore Fund grant for Mountain Workshops to provide outdoor experiences in national parks. The Explore Fund supported Mountain Workshops program launches in July 2016 and will provide a series of outdoor experiences in North Cascades National Park and other outdoor locations for members of the Young Women Empowered (Y-WE) organization. Y-WE provides mentorship and empowerment programs for teen women, ages 13-18, in the greater Seattle area. Over 70% of participating Y-WE youth are immigrants to the United States and 80% are women of color.

“We are thrilled to receive an Explore Fund grant!” said Tom Vogl, CEO of The Mountaineers. *“The impact of our Mountain Workshops model has proven to be transformational for underserved youth and we are excited to be recognized for being part of the national movement to inspire and engage the next generation in outdoor exploration.”*

To celebrate the National Park Service Centennial, Mountain Workshops is activating its program in North Cascades National Park with the goal of bringing underserved youth to play, learn and serve in these spaces. Participants will engage in a series of outdoor activities that will introduce new skills and abilities including hiking, snowshoeing, climbing and more while integrating Leave No Trace principles. In addition, in partnership with Mountaineers Books and the Burke Museum in Seattle, Y-WE youth will visit [Wild Nearby](#), an immersive exhibit that allows visitors to experience the rich history of North Cascades National Park. Each participant will also receive a copy of Mountaineers Books’ *Day Hiking in North Cascades* by Craig Romano and *The Adventure Gap* by James E. Mills.

The North Face selected a total of 45 nonprofits that engage their participants in opportunities that inspire a lifelong love of the outdoors. Selected programs use outdoor exploration as a catalyst for positive personal or societal change, to encourage participants to try new outdoor activities, and promote environmental stewardship values.

“Encouraging people to experience and enjoy the outdoors has been our mission at The North Face since we were founded 50 years ago,” said Ann Krcik, senior director of Outdoor Exploration at The North Face. *“We are proud to support these outstanding programs that expose participants to the beauty and joy of the outdoors. Through these Explore Fund grants, we are building a community of outdoor explorers and inspiring people to love and protect the places where we play.”*

Established in 2011 by The Mountaineers in Seattle, the goal of Mountain Workshops is to increase access to the outdoors for underserved groups that typically do not, including national parks. Since its founding, Mountain Workshops has served nearly 5,000 underserved youth and provided over 8,400 youth program days. More than 1,200 of these youth have spent 2 or more days with The Mountaineers, and more than 550 have spent more than 5 days, making reoccurring experiences in the outdoors for underserved youth paramount to the success and lasting impact of the Mountain Workshops program.

As part of its mission to start a global movement of outdoor exploration, The North Face introduced Explore Fund (www.explorefund.org) in 2010 and the program has since provided more than \$2.2 million in grants to organizations committed to inspiring people to explore the outdoors and care for the environment.

To learn more about The Mountaineers and Mountain Workshops and other ways to support our youth programs, including our 2016 summer fundraiser *Our Parks | Your Adventure*, please visit www.mountaineers.org.

About The North Face®

The North Face, a division of VF Outdoor, Inc., was founded in 1966. Headquartered in Alameda, California, the company offers the most technically advanced products in the market to accomplished climbers, mountaineers, snowsport athletes, endurance athletes, and explorers. The company's products are sold in specialty mountaineering, backpacking, running, and snowsport retailers, premium-sporting goods retailers and major outdoor specialty retail chains.

About The Mountaineers

The Mountaineers is an established 501c3. For 110 years, The Mountaineers has set the standard for climbing education, outdoor instruction and wilderness conservation in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Today, the 11,000-member organization offers thousands of volunteer-led classes, field trips, and events to connect young and old, novice and veteran, to the power and wonder of the natural world. Its publishing division Mountaineers Books further expands the mission internationally through award-winning publications including instructional guides, biographies, adventure narratives, and conservation photography books.

Media contact:

Leone Kraus
The Mountaineers
206-223-6303 ext 132
leonek@mountaineers.org

Caren Bell
On behalf of The North Face
510.748.2742
Caren_Bell@vfc.com