2011 ANNUAL REPORT

I’M READY
FORTY YEARS AGO, a high school teacher’s vision came to life as he immersed his students in the deep valleys, grand meadows, and giant sequoias of Yosemite National Park. He knew he could only provide a small glimpse into the world of science within the walls of his classroom, and that the best way to teach science—and to bring it to life—was to allow his students to see, touch, and truly experience science firsthand. From his vision came the birth of NatureBridge, and 40 years later we are proud to celebrate 1 million lives changed.

THIS YEAR, we connected 30,000 young people to the wonder and science of nature in the world’s best classrooms—our national parks. We know our programs are powerful, and I am continually inspired by stories from the field—from students who learned to believe in themselves after hiking Mount Storm King to those so motivated by our composting curriculum that they took the idea back to their school and formed an official SWAT team: Students Wild About Trash. NatureBridge students have meaningful experiences that stay with them long after they’ve left the national park. Our mission and our students are at the heart of what we do every single day. Together, we are making a difference.

I BELIEVE environmental science education should be part of every child’s life, and I hope you’ll join me in making this vision a reality for our next 40 years. Together we can educate a new generation to be stewards of our fragile planet.

Susan Smartt
NatureBridge President & CEO
WHAT WE’VE DONE

DIVERSITY
We developed a benchmark toward our goal of our program participants matching the demographics of the communities we serve. To meet that goal, we invested more than $1 million to bring 10,000 young people from underserved communities to our programs, and we created a program to diversify and build the cultural competency of our field science educators.

INFLUENCE
NatureBridge partners with the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation and the Pisces Foundation to convene a unique collaborative effort that brings together strategic nonprofit program partners, academic leaders, funders, and government agencies to create a unified voice, develop a set of common standards, and share best practices that will drive an agenda so that environmental education is incorporated in every child’s education.

QUALITY
With support from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, we partner with researchers from Stanford University and the Evaluation and Training Institute to conduct in-depth assessments of our field science programs. This project helps us better understand the short-term and long-term outcomes of our programs and identify ways to strengthen our efforts to educate and inspire the next generation of environmental leaders.

REACH
This year, we served 40,000 students and adults in five national parks and explored innovative ways to access students across the country. With professional development for classroom teachers and online tools, we reach more young people in more ways. This past year, we expanded our Southern California program to include Channel Islands National Park. In April 2012, our demonstration program in Prince William Forest Park will offer a NatureBridge experience to students in Virginia—our first in the East.

“I will never forget my first time sleeping on a boat, going to the different islands, learning new facts, and the challenging hikes we went on—it was all worth it.”

AMBER
NatureBridge student, Channel Islands National Park
DOING MORE TODAY, PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

SCIENCE & STEWARDSHIP NatureBridge helps science come alive through programs where participants collect and share real-world data. In two national parks, students study nature’s response to the changing climate by tracking plant phenology, the science of the seasons. Observing the bloom of the sticky monkey flower in our Golden Gate campus or the seed production of the Eastern Mojave buckwheat in the Santa Monica Mountains, our students make direct connections between the living world and its climate. This project is made possible by our partnerships with the USA National Phenology Network, the University of California at Santa Barbara, and the National Park Service.

CLIMATE CHANGE NatureBridge addresses environmental education outside the reach of our national park boundaries by providing classroom teachers with professional development that has an exponential impact. Last summer, we engaged 24 teachers at our Golden Gate campus in lessons about climate science and how to teach it in their schools. Those teachers will reach 1,903 students this year alone. For every teacher we train, we can spread the science of climate change to hundreds of young people.

HISTORY COMES TO LIFE NatureBridge’s field science program in Olympic National Park is providing students with the opportunity to learn from the most significant river restoration project in U.S. history. The Elwha River dam removal began in September 2011, and students now monitor the river’s restoration as sediment is redistributed and waterways are restored. Five salmon species are expected to return to their natural migration route, which has been dormant since the dams were erected beginning 100 years ago. NatureBridge is perfectly positioned to provide a unique opportunity for students, teachers, and the public to learn the science of this historic river restoration.

“The three-year Elwha dam removal process is a powerful testimony to conservation values triumphing in the modern world.”

ED ZUCKERMAN
NatureBridge Olympic Board member
SUPPORT ACROSS THE NATION The value of national parks as tremendously effective learning laboratories is in the spotlight in Washington, D.C. The National Park Service recently released a Call to Action to harness the collective power of our parks to connect people to these majestic places that tell the story of our nation. The Call to Action strongly supports the mission of NatureBridge with an emphasis on education in the parks and calls for a dramatic increase in school children’s participation in national park programs, from 5% today to 25% by 2016, the centennial of the National Park Service. Recognized as a leader in the field, NatureBridge was invited to testify before Senate subcommittees twice in the last year on the educational value of national parks as classrooms.

REDISCOVER THE POWER OF PLACE In April 2012, NatureBridge expands to the East with a demonstration program in Prince William Forest Park in Virginia. Local seventh-grade students will be the first to experience overnight field science education in this magnificent national park, just 35 miles outside our nation’s capital. Created during the Depression to provide camp experiences for young people, the park has not had a residential education partner in three decades. With the support of a grant from Google, we are excited to bring the first NatureBridge experience east of the Mississippi to this national park and the greater Washington, D.C. community.

CONNECT TO CONSERVATION NatureBridge is committed to finding new ways to support classroom teachers, students, and families. We are proud to announce the launch of our first interactive online learning tool, MyGarbology. With talking trash cans and burping bananas, MyGarbology engages youth with a combination of animation, interactive technology, and education, building an online, environmentally focused learning destination on the web. Join us at mygarbology.org and take the challenge!

How do children spend their days?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical day for American school-aged child, 6–17</th>
<th>Typical day for NatureBridge program participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 MINUTES OUTSIDE</td>
<td>8 HOURS OUTSIDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 DAY</td>
<td>1 DAY</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

THE POWER OF PLACE
Jeremiah Hockett attended NatureBridge’s Yosemite field science education program in March 1996 as a junior at Foothill High School in Palo Cedro, California. He had never encountered nature’s grandeur on the scale he witnessed upon his arrival in Yosemite National Park.

“Little did I know that when I climbed on a bus full of other students bound for Yosemite, my life and my relationship with nature would forever change.”

When he hit the trail the first day with his field science educator, Steve, they made the acquaintance of a variety of wildlife, trees, rocks, and streams. And when Steve pulled a book from his backpack and began to read, Jeremiah heard the words of John Muir for the first time.

“As I listened, I could not only see the beauty Muir was describing—I could feel it. I felt something for the first time—a sense of place. Each day my awareness of the beauty surrounding me intensified, as did my connection to the friends with whom I shared this experience. At the end of the week, I had tears in my eyes as I said goodbye. But I was also eager to share all that I had learned with friends and family.”

Years later, after serving in the Marines, Jeremiah returned home to Palo Cedro to decide what would come next for him. And he discovered his NatureBridge experience was still with him and that it would help shape the rest of his life.

“I wondered what I could do with my life that would bring me joy, and bring joy to others. As I pondered this question, the memories of my time with NatureBridge in Yosemite began to pour into my mind. I remembered that week as perhaps the most amazing and important time in my life. It was when I felt most alive. I wanted to help others to experience what I had, and I set out to do just that.”

This realization led Jeremiah back to college, where he graduated from Chico State University with a degree in Recreation and Parks Management. Today, he is a park ranger at the Whiskeytown National Recreation Area.

“My experience with NatureBridge in Yosemite was the event that set me on the path to a meaningful life and brought about the realization that I am a part of nature—and that without it, I am lost.”
“What other classroom lets you LIVE AND BREATHE YOUR LEARNING?”

Sindhu Gnanasambandan first experienced NatureBridge on her eighth grade class trip to Yosemite. Her field science educator recommended that she apply for the Armstrong Scholars Program, and two years later, Sindhu spent 12 days backpacking in the Yosemite wilderness with 11 other girls. The following summer, she participated in NatureBridge’s two-week Yosemite Summer Field Research Course.

“What struck me most is the strong sense of community. Dynamic, talented, fun, and supportive leaders model selflessness, consideration for others, and teamwork. All this is set in the gorgeous backdrop of Yosemite, which inspires an understanding of the world beyond oneself. I learned to embrace my surroundings so that I could grow, and learn. Being in the natural world calmed, centered, and focused me in a way I wish others could experience.”

The Armstrong Scholars Program was founded in memory of Joie Armstrong, whose motto was “gulp life.” Since participating in the program, Sindhu has adopted Joie’s motto. She is less self-conscious and more confident, qualities that will serve her well as she heads off to college in a few short months.

She started recycling at home when she returned from her first field trip to Yosemite, and never hesitates to share her views and ask thought-provoking questions in her economics class when the subject turns to supply and demand: “I ask, ‘Do you know where those resources are coming from?’ and ‘What impact is this resource having on the community, on our planet?’”

In her last year of high school, Sindhu has been trying to sort out her life’s work and her career path. She has narrowed it down to three choices: environmental science, journalism, or psychology. And she says that one day she hopes to return to NatureBridge as a field science educator. “NatureBridge field science educators are some of the brightest, most charismatic, and accomplished people I have ever met.”

“My supportive, guided experiences changed everything. I learned to let down my guard, be curious, and have more fun!”
NatureBridge financials for 2011 were significantly impacted by the receipt of a $4 million nonrecurring grant from Google. This three-year grant will continue to create material operating impacts into FY14.

The financial results depicted below are derived from the NatureBridge audited June 30, 2011 consolidated financial statements, which contain the unqualified audit opinion of PMB Helin Donovan. The NatureBridge complete audited financial statements may be obtained online at naturebridge.org/financials.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

<table>
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<td>Field Science Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations &amp; Grants</td>
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<td>Adult &amp; Conference Programs</td>
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<td>Investments &amp; Other</td>
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<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising &amp; Development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$15,925,512</strong></td>
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In 2011, NatureBridge served more than 40,000 young people and adults through our wide range of programs, of which 30,000 people participated in our award-winning field science education programs.

NatureBridge is deeply committed to engaging youth from all backgrounds and will continue to work to ensure that our program population accurately reflects the regions we serve. To ensure access for all, it is essential that NatureBridge help under-resourced communities bring students to our transformative programs by providing financial assistance. This year, NatureBridge served 641 schools and provided over $1 million in support to 251 schools throughout California and Washington state.
“Through exposure to the natural world, students from underserved communities understand that science represents a possibility for them.”

ANNA ESCOBEDO CABRAL, NatureBridge Board member
Unit Chief for Strategic Communications, External Relations Department of the Inter-American Development Bank and former Treasurer of the United States

“I was born into a poor family and by the good grace of a kind high school teacher got a scholarship to attend college. I learned to really respect and place a high value on education and became interested in science, and especially math.”

“Teaching children about the natural world and how to protect it is incredibly important. Experiences in nature can significantly broaden horizons for youth from underserved communities. I love the mission of NatureBridge.”
Raised in San Francisco’s Chinatown in the 1950s, Charlene Low had few opportunities to leave her neighborhood, much less experience the vastness of nature. It was during a day camp provided by the nonprofit Cameron House that Charlene learned to start a campfire, roast marshmallows, use a compass while hiking, and experience the endless possibilities of nature. She participated in this program from elementary school through her graduation at Lowell High School in San Francisco.

It was not until she attended an elementary school reunion that Charlene fully understood what a difference her relationship with the outdoors had made to her ability to face challenges, an experience she shares with today’s youth by serving on NatureBridge’s Board of Directors.

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NatureBridge is a proud partner of the National Park Service. We work closely with many government agencies, nonprofit organizations, corporations, academic institutions, and associations committed to connecting youth to nature and advancing science education. These organizations provide resources, support, and collaboration that are critical to meeting our mission.

**Government Agencies**
- National Park Service
  - Channel Islands National Park
  - Golden Gate National Recreation Area
  - Olympic National Park
  - Prince William Forest Park
  - Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
  - Yosemite National Park
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Science Foundation
- State of Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
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- Recreational Equipment Incorporated (REI)
- Wells Fargo

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- American Whitewater
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- California Institute for Biodiversity
- Education Foundation for Prince William County Schools
- Feiro Marine Life Center
- Great Smoky Mountains Institute
- Headlands Center for the Arts
- IslandWood
- The Marine Mammal Center
- National Geographic Education Foundation
- National Parks Conservation Association
- National Wildlife Federation

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- Fresno State University
- Peninsula College
- Princeton University
- San Francisco State University
- Stanford University
- Western Carolina University

**Associations & Coalitions**
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- National Military Family Association
- No Child Left Inside
- North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)
- Outdoors Alliance for Kids (OAK)
- Sequoia Natural History Association
- Student Conservation Association

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DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

JOHN MUIR SAID, “In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.” I believe this is indeed true: our students leave our national parks with a newfound appreciation for environmental science and a love for the natural world around them.

As chairman of the Board, I feel fortunate to be part of a vision for the next 40 years that brings together an amazing group of passionate, committed, and generous individuals. We are all NatureBridge—from the field science educator who inspires our students every day to the parent chaperone, program partner, foundation, and Board member that make environmental science education possible.

WE MUST CONNECT CHILDREN TO NATURE, build critical-thinking skills, and support experiential science learning outside the traditional classroom that can put our young people on a path to environmental literacy. Bringing students into national parks is transformational, and we understand the true impact when we hear their personal stories.

Take the story of Abrianna, who measured 110 trees this summer as she studied the impact of elevation on tree growth. She recalls, “I can honestly say that this was the best experience of my life, and as a full-scholarship recipient I couldn’t have gone without your support. If there is any program to support, it’s this one. Thank you!”

I BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF NATUREBRIDGE, and I’m ready to sustain its mission for the next 40 years and beyond. Join me and help change the world, one student at a time.

Stephen H. Lockhart, M.D., Ph.D.
Chair, NatureBridge Board of Directors

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naturebridge.org/share-your-story

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