

March Forth: Selecting the Right Path to the Future

NC Association of Environmental Education Centers

Spring 2016 Meeting of the Membership

Friday, March 4, 2016, 9:00am – 4:00pm

Haw River State Park

Browns Summit, North Carolina



8:45 **Check-in, coffee, networking**

9:15 **Morning General Session** – The Grove Auditorium

Welcome to Haw River State Park (Superintendent Kelley King)

Welcome to NCAEEC (Sarah Kendrick, NCAEEC President)

Office of Environmental Education and Public Affairs Updates (Marty Wiggins)

Announcements

9:45 **Morning Speaker: Molly Paul**, Youth Environmental Leader and Founder of Raleigh Aquatic Turtle Adoption - Grove Auditorium

Molly Paul has worked for over a decade to raise awareness about global invasive species, issues surrounding water conservation, and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. Molly has re-homed hundreds of unwanted pet turtles, both in and outside of North Carolina. Many of these turtles are red-eared sliders, one of the world's worst invasive species and the most prolific turtle in the pet trade. (**See the rest of Molly's bio on the reverse of this page*)

10:15 **Morning Concurrent Sessions**

NC State Trails Program – Lounge

Smith Raynor, Piedmont Region Trails Specialist, NC Trails Program, NC Division of Parks and Recreation

Smith will share techniques to design, evaluate and maintain the trails at your facility. She is also a certified environmental educator and former state parks Interpretation and Education Specialist and can address how trails can be an integral part of your education program.

Best Management Practices - Grove Auditorium

Mir Younquist-Thurow, Environmental Education Director, Agape' Center for Environmental Education

Is your EE Center on the path to excellence? Managing an environmental education center is a complicated business. Typically there is too much to do and too little time. Generally you have to be a Jack or Jill of all trades. Athletes and actors use coaches and trainers to gather tips and techniques to hone their skills. Now you can learn from a leader in the field to brush up on your skills. Join Mir Youngquist-Thurow as she shares her organizational methods and solutions and find out how she doesn't let her work get in the way of doing her job. She'll show you some of her "Mir Management Practices".

Natural Resource Leadership Institute – Spruce

Christina Hester, Manager, Harris Lake County Park and the American Tobacco Trail and Natural Resources Leadership Institute Fellow

Many environmental education center directors and education program managers credit the Natural Resources Leadership Institute with improving their career paths by giving them skills in problem-solving, environmental management and general leadership. Christina will share more on this program, how it has helped her and will also provide a sample NRLI activity.

11:15 **Break and Silent Auction**

11:30 **Mid-Morning Speaker**

"The Path to the Summit" - **Kelley King**, Haw River State Park Superintendent - Grove Auditorium

12:00 **Lunch and Silent Auction** – Perkins Room

12:45 Afternoon Speaker

“The Path to Partnership” – Jonathan Frederick, NC Science Festival Director - Grove Auditorium

Jonathan will share ways your facility can partner with the Science Festival and build connections between outdoor education and STEM. (Jonathan co-founded the original environmental education program at the Summit Center and later served as the educational program and executive director!)

1:15 After Lunch Concurrent Sessions

Continuing Education – Panel Discussion - Grove Auditorium

Charles Yelton, Regional Network Chief, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

Renee Strnad, NCSU Extension Forestry Env. Educator, NC Project Learning Tree Coordinator

Tom Randolph, Lead Interpretive and Education Ranger, Mt. Jefferson State Natural Area

Thinking of a master’s degree program to enhance your career path? Charles, Renee and Tom will share how their respective innovative master degree programs have enhanced their work at environmental education centers and in the environmental education field. It is possible, even for environmental education center staff with busy schedules!

Incorporating Self-Guided Trails for Fun, Learning and Fitness – Lounge

Jason Urroz, Director of the Kids in Parks program with the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation

The Kids in Parks program has installed self-guided materials on more than 130 trails across the country. During this session, participants will learn how they can incorporate self-guided materials into their site's hiking, biking, paddling, geocaching, citizen science and disc golf trails, including the Nature Trail Disc Golf Course at Haw River State Park.

Finding the Right Employee – Spruce

Mark Johns, Site Manager at Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve

Laura White, recently retired Supervisor of Hemlock Bluffs

Discuss hiring practices for EE Centers. Your HR Department guides you down a narrow path when you are hiring staff. There is not a lot of room for meandering. It’s an interesting journey of recruiting, interviewing and selecting candidates for staffing your EE Center. Pick up some tips to find your way.

2:15 Break and Silent Auction Final Bidding

2:30 Outdoor Sessions

Springtime Stroll with Mark Johns

Can Disc Golf be EE? See how! - Jason Urroz

3:30 NCAEEC Board Election and Closing – The Grove Auditorium

4:00 Meeting Conclusion - Grove Auditorium

** In 2011, Molly founded STEM Leadership Camp. She partnered with the FREEDM Systems Center of North Carolina State University and Raleigh-based STEM leaders and nature centers to offer a camp to middle schoolers that blended all four STEM subjects, teaching these through the lens of leadership. Camp has successfully operated for the least three summers. Additionally, Molly runs a bath and body care business called Molly’s Turtle Soap which has raised tens of thousands of dollars for North Carolina based conservation education centers. She holds two volunteer positions at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, one within the Fish and Invertebrate Department, and the other as a Junior Curator with the Program Animal Collection. Molly is a frequent guest speaker about conservation, leadership, and encouraging girls to consider careers in the sciences. She is a member of numerous organizations and boards, including: the Jane Goodall Institute Roots and Shoots National Youth Leadership Council, where she helps plan, support, and execute local, national and global Jane Goodall Institute youth activities; and, the Women and Girls Initiative Advisory Board of the North Carolina Council for Women, which oversees statewide and regional initiatives to empower girls. In 2015, she served as a Jane Goodall Institute delegate to the United Nations High Level Event celebrating the World Programme of Action for Youth. In 2014, she was on the first ever youth panel at the Annual Conference of the Association of Science-Technology Centers, which brought together 1,750 delegates from 42 countries. Molly has been recognized as the youth conservationist of the year for the City of Raleigh and State of North Carolina.*