

NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE
YOUTH LEADERSHIP ADVENTURES



PURPOSE To build the next generation of conservation leaders by providing a suite of transformational learning experiences for youth who lack access to similar opportunities.



Connection
to nature, wilderness
and public lands



**Youth Leadership
Adventures**

creates a gateway for youth to jumpstart their lifelong engagement with nature, stewardship and community and offers an opportunity for personal, academic, and professional growth

Empowerment
through civic action, stewardship,
sustainable behaviors and
workforce opportunities

Knowledge
about ecology, field science
and climate change through
firsthand experiences



Leadership
through effective
communication and
public speaking skills and
outdoor fundamentals



FORMAT Youth Leadership Adventures backcountry courses take place in North Cascades National Park and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Transportation to the program site, gear and food is provided. **Key program components in 2014 included:**

8-day
OUTDOOR
LEADERSHIP
COURSES FOR
14-16
YR OLDS

16-day
SCIENCE AND
SUSTAINABILITY
COURSES FOR
16-18
YR OLDS

Year Round
MENTORSHIP
& STEWARDSHIP
for all
ALUMNI

3-day
YOUTH
LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE
for all
ALUMNI

1-day
REUNION
IN SEATTLE
for all
ALUMNI

2014 AT A GLANCE

\$985-\$1,845 Tuition

137
applications
received

96
students
participated
in courses

100
youth and
families
attended
the reunion

60
students
attended
the Youth
Leadership
Conference

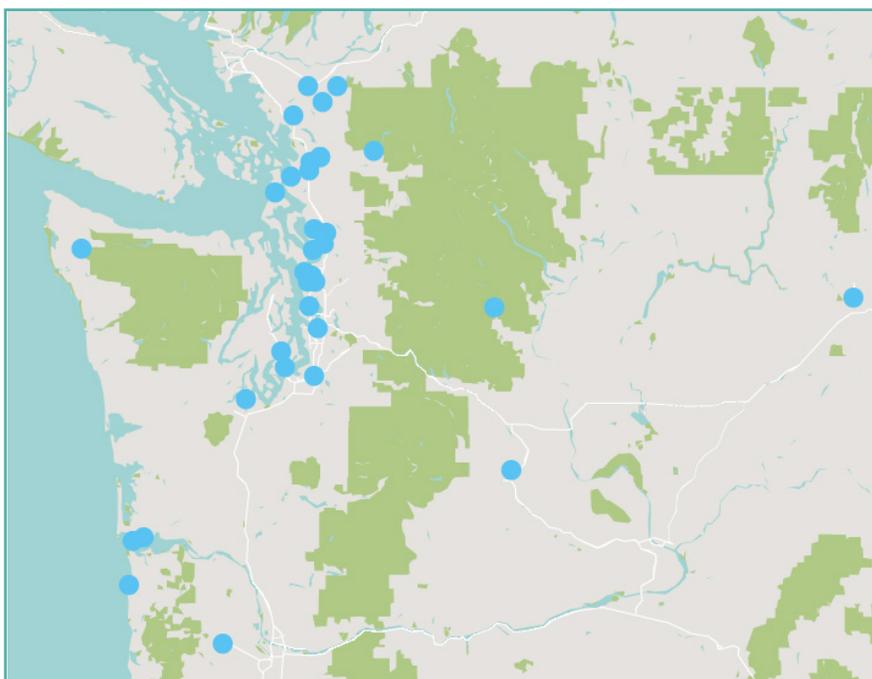
90%
of students
received
financial
assistance

76%
of students
qualified as
underserved

14-19
age range of
participants



PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES



- Bainbridge Island
- Bellingham
- Burlington
- Concrete
- Deming
- Edmonds
- Everett
- Everson
- Forks
- Gig Harbor
- La Conner
- Lake Forest Park
- Leavenworth
- Lynnwood
- Maple Falls
- Marysville
- Mount Vernon
- Mountlake Terrace
- Mukilteo
- Oak Harbor
- Olympia
- Puyallup
- Seattle
- Sedro-Woolley
- Shoreline
- Snohomish
- Spokane
- Tukwila
- Tulalip
- University Place
- Yakima
- Astoria, OR
- Cannon Beach, OR
- Forest Grove, OR
- Warrenton, OR



NEW & NOTABLE

Value Added Bellingham students can earn 0.25 elective credits after completing all requirements of the 16-day Science & Sustainability course.

Ripple Effect Science & Sustainability students will lead their own service projects — reaching an additional 600 people with environmental education — before the summer of 2015.



2,016 hours of hands-on stewardship completed in courses included:

- 700 sedges planted
- 10 miles of trails brushed and maintained
- 1 toilet constructed and 1 decommissioned
- 2,500 feet of social trails decommissioned
- 800 sq feet of illegal camp space decommissioned
- 20 lbs of trash removed from the backcountry
- 8 fire rings installed and 2 decommissioned
- 18 hours of citizen science data collected
- 1,500 feet of new trail constructed
- 20 lbs of exotic species removed
- 6 tent pads constructed
- 3 drainage ditches built

PATH FOR YOUTH

We believe that hands-on learning about the environment should begin in childhood and continue throughout life. Young people engaged with the Institute are introduced to the beauty and wonder of the Northwest through our challenging educational activities, mentored throughout their experience and always have next-step opportunities available.

30 Alumni were offered next-step opportunities through the Institute or our partners, including: work for SCA Community Crews in Seattle, employment at Ross Lake Resort, an AmeriCorps VISTA position and more!

Crystal wanted to become the first person in her Puerto Rican-American family to attend college, but didn't know where to start. Motivated by her involvement with our Kulshan Creek Neighborhood program in Skagit Valley, she took the 16-day YLA course where she met peers and mentors that inspired her to pursue her dreams and share the value of public lands with others. With continued support after her trip, Crystal led an amazing service project to benefit other kids from Kulshan Creek and told her story in front of 100+ people at an Institute event. Now she is finishing up high school and beginning to apply to colleges. Crystal's time with us in the North Cascades will influence her for the rest of her life—no matter where her path leads. We can't wait to see what opportunities open up next!

“ I haven't had the easiest life growing up....After this summer I felt like I could do anything! The leadership skills and confidence I gained is something I will never forget.”

— Crystal Sierra





2014 EVALUATION

NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE YOUTH LEADERSHIP ADVENTURES

objective
1

LEADERSHIP

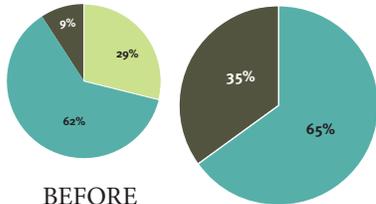
effective communication, public speaking skills and outdoor fundamentals

Student perceptions tell an important story about the Institute's impact. Survey data is collected around YLA's four program objectives: leadership, empowerment, connection, and knowledge. Please ask for more information.

INCREASED CONFIDENCE LEVELS ACROSS ALL AREAS INCLUDING:

GROUP LEADERSHIP SKILLS:

60% ↑

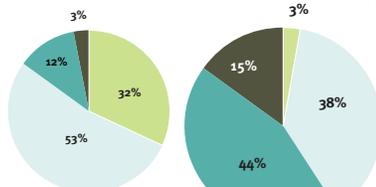


BEFORE

AFTER

PUBLIC SPEAKING

44% ↑

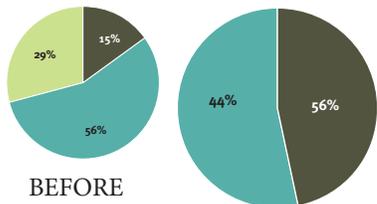


BEFORE

AFTER

CANOEING SKILLS:

44% ↑

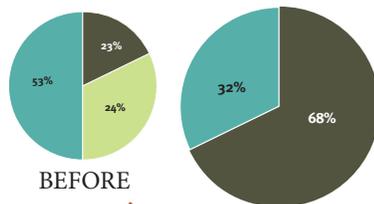


BEFORE

AFTER

HIKING SKILLS:

44% ↑



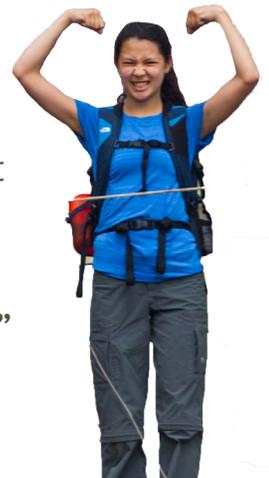
BEFORE

AFTER

neutral not confident somewhat confident/confident very confident

“From YLA, I learned that I can actually speak publicly! I could not do that in school at all. For me to get up in front of the sponsors at North Cascades took all my courage, but with the help of all my group I managed to do it. After it was over, I felt stronger as a person and more confident in myself. Overall, the experience at the North Cascades was so amazing and it taught me more about who I am and what I am capable of accomplishing.”

— YLA student



objective
2

CONNECTION

to nature, wilderness and public lands and an emotional relationship to their local ecosystem and community

INCREASED CONNECTION:

94% reported plans to visit National Parks, Forests or other public lands with their friends and family

38% ↑

94% reported feeling connected to the North Cascades

59% ↑

88% reported interest in learning about plants, animals, geology and other aspects of the natural world

35% ↑



objective

3

EMPOWERMENT

instill a sense of responsibility and ownership so that students feel empowered to make a difference through stewardship, civic action, sustainable behaviors and workforce opportunities

INCREASED EMPOWERMENT:



94% reported seeing opportunities to be involved in creating a better future for their community and the environment

35% 

94% reported feeling motivated to help create a better future for their community and the environment

26% 

100% reported that they understand how their actions can positively or negatively affect their community and the environment

23% 

objective

4

KNOWLEDGE

about ecology, field science and climate change through firsthand experiences



INCREASED KNOWLEDGE:

88% reported enjoying science after the program

23% 

91% reported that they understand the impacts of climate change

18% 

67% indicated interest in learning more about the impacts of climate change

17% 

“ As a result of YLA, I definitely

feel the need to better the environment around my community. The course has taught me just how powerful nature can be, and by preserving the wilderness, we are preserving earth's most powerful force.”

— YLA student



FROM THE PARTICIPANTS



“Since YLA, coming home from the North Cascades Park has been an overall eye opening experience! When I had gotten home I couldn’t help but to notice all the litter and polluted air around me. I was moved to post educational Leave No Trace flyers. I am planning to start a garbage pick-up soon!”



“Since YLA, I feel very motivated to improve the community and the environment because I feel there is a gap in the community and my school’s population with their knowledge and caring about the environment. I would like to strengthen this connection.”



“You run an amazing program and it gets better every year and it shows in the kids. It was neat seeing them get off the bus the first day and then seeing how they change over the course of their trip. They get back on the bus a different person.”

– Seth Greenfield, Permit Administrator, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

2014 PARTNERS

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