



Interior Secretary Sally Jewell announces 21st Century Conservation Service Corps at FDR Memorial.

SCA Helps Launch National Youth Service Initiative

When Liz Putnam started the Student Conservation Association, she launched a movement. Fifty-seven years later, SCA is primed once again to make history.

On an icy January morning in Washington, DC, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell declared the long-proposed 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) was at last underway, propelled by a landmark \$1 million gift from SCA-partner American Eagle Outfitters. The announcement took place at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, with its ties to the Civilian Conservation Corps. Flanked by scores of SCA volunteers and alumni, Jewell outlined her plan to provide 100,000 young people and veterans with work and training opportunities in national parks, forests and refuges.

"I can't tell you how exciting it is to know that students like these all over the country are making a difference on our public lands," Jewell stated, pointing to the SCA team. "The Student Conservation Association was a pioneer 57 years ago, and it has inspired many, many other youth conservation corps around the country. The work of SCA as a partner with us in our national parks and other public lands has been critical."

American Eagle representatives also pointed to SCA's leadership. Helga Ying, AE Vice President of External Engagement and Social Responsibility, credited SCA with sparking the firm's "love affair with conservation corps" in 2006 when American Eagle first sponsored SCA crews in Pittsburgh, site of the company's headquarters. "We saw such an incredible transformation in our local parks and the city kids who worked in them..."

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CONSERVATION BEGINS HERE
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Conservation is Collaboration

If there's one thing I have learned over my career, and particularly here at SCA, it's that partnerships are uniquely powerful enterprises. They can enrich and elevate on a scale without rival.

SCA has been built on partnerships with government entities, nonprofits, corporations, foundations, universities, alumni, staff and generous friends such as you. This spirit of collaboration and teamwork has been the foundation of Liz Putnam's "simple idea."

In this same spirit, I want to share with you my decision to retire later this year after 16 years with SCA and more than 40 in the field of youth development. The SCA board has formed a search committee and I will continue in my current role until August or a successor is chosen and the transition is complete.

SCA has undergone historic change over the past 16 years—doubling the number of youth we engage in service to 4,200 per year, increasing the percentage of young people of color in our programs to more than a third of our membership, and linking our programs in a progressive continuum from early high school crews through graduate level internships and on into conservation careers.

The youth conservation movement is also at an historic pivot point with more individuals and corporations supporting such bold initiatives as the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps, recently announced by Secretary Jewell with the support of a \$1M gift from American Eagle Outfitters. I am pleased that American Eagle points to their experience with SCA for sparking their "love affair" with corps. The outlook for all youth service programs on public lands has never been brighter.

I look forward to working with SCA in a different capacity after my retirement and hope you will continue to join us. Conservation and collaboration, you see, go hand in hand.

Thank you.

Dale M. Penny

National Youth Service Initiative *continued from page 1*

We are honored to help expand the student conservation movement in which we believe so strongly."

Following the ceremony, Secretary Jewell led the SCA crew on a tour of the FDR Memorial before hosting several youth for lunch in her office. Tai Schroeder, a three-time SCA alumna now majoring in zoology, called it a "once-in-a-lifetime" moment. "We talked about our experiences with the outdoors and what sparked our interest in environmentalism," Tai says. "I learned that no matter what age you are, you can make an impact." As DOI's national youth service partner for nearly six decades, SCA has pledged to do all it can to ensure 21CSC's success.

"With American Eagle's commitment and Interior's innovation," says SCA President Dale Penny, "the passionate spirit and boundless energy of America's young people are poised once again to advance our nation's unrivaled natural legacy. SCA is determined to further this vital mission."

See video coverage of this event and hear more from Sec. Jewell at thesca.org/21CSC.



DOI Secretary Jewell: "SCA has been so critical as a partner with us...students like these are making a difference in our national parks."

RENEW, REFRESH... REPEAT.

Each year SCA provides thousands of young people with meaningful conservation service opportunities, while engaging and inspiring them. Their gift of rebuilding trails or outreach to park visitors is a refreshing vision that SCA delivers every year; year after year.

Many return to serve again, renewing their passion for our nation's treasured places, while others carry their commitment to a higher level in their communities—or in conservation careers kindled by their SCA experience.

Regardless of how much you give, you will be **helping to paint a brighter future for America's green spaces**—while laying the groundwork for the next generation of conservation leaders. Help us by renewing your support with a gift today.

Use the enclosed envelope or give securely online at thesca.org/renewtgw





Matt, Serah, Jordan and Squeaky Washington keep the “environmental fire” burning in Milwaukee.

Siblings Make Conservation a Family Tradition

SCA’s mission is to “build the next generation of conservation leaders.” Well, meet a whole family of them.

All have served multiple times, in multiple capacities, with SCA’s community crew in their native Milwaukee. “It’s a family tradition!” says Jordan Washington, the oldest of the siblings at 23.

He recalls joining SCA as a high school student and immediately making a series of outdoor discoveries. “I first came to appreciate my crew’s impact on the park,” Jordan says, “but then I became conscious of my own [ecological] footprint and began to focus on the educational aspect of SCA.”

Jordan came back the following summer as an apprentice crew leader, and again as the ranking leader. As he considers careers, he’s looking strongly at Johnson Controls, Inc., the sponsor of SCA’s Milwaukee program and host of an annual professional development day for program participants. “Their sustainable building was incredible,” Jordan recalls, “and the Johnson Controls people were smart, passionate and friendly.”

Wherever he winds up, Jordan hopes to continue serving as a role model. “Impacting the environment is great,” he says, “but if you impact the people *in* the environment, you affect the future.”

Jordan’s influence already extends beyond his crews. His brother, Matt, got a summer job with an SCA crew and enjoyed it so much he continued to work through the fall for free. He’s since joined the Army and is stationed at Fort Bragg in North Carolina.

Sister Serah was the next to join a crew and she, too, fast-tracked her way into an apprentice leadership position. “Before SCA, I didn’t have a lot of knowledge about the environment other than ‘recycling is good.’ But SCA helped me learn about the outdoors as well as myself,” notes Serah, now 19. “It’s important to me to inspire others and light that environmental fire.”

Among the crew members she helped lead was her younger brother Squeaky. That’s not his given name but it’s the only one he goes by. Working in city parks, Squeaky says, opened his eyes to the consequences of neglecting nature. “There are a lot of things that go unseen, like social trails,” he says. “When people walk off trail, they trample native plants and that impacts habitats. It’s like a domino effect.”

But not all chain reactions are undesirable. Thirteen-year-old Rachel Washington is already counting the days till she turns 15, the minimum age for an SCA crew member.



Diversity Commitment Yields Results

SCA's ongoing commitment to a more inclusive conservation community has generated the most ethnically diverse group of young stewards in the organization's history.

Member surveys from 2013 showed that nearly 40% of SCA's 4,300 volunteers were young people of color. "Diversity is a core value at SCA," states Recruiting Director Patty Holland. "Youth from every community must see themselves and their futures in America's great outdoors, and our federal partners rely on SCA to help place under-represented constituents on an effective career track. Together, we are changing the face of conservation."

Holland notes SCA will soon kick-off its fourth annual NPS Academy, a workforce development program conducted in partnership with the National Park Service. As it has in every previous year, the Academy will add a new location, with The National Parks of New York Harbor joining original site Grand Teton National Park, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and Kenai Fjords National Park as orientation bases. In all, more than 125 diverse college students will spend Spring Break exploring their assigned park and learning about the many career opportunities within the Park Service. In the summer, they will serve as SCA interns in national parks from coast to coast.

SCA has also renewed its award-winning Career Development Intern Program, a similar workforce development initiative with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, for the seventh consecutive year.



Interns at SCA's NPS Academy, Grand Teton National Park

SCA, AmeriCorps Mark Milestone

In 1993, SCA was among the first organizations to join forces with AmeriCorps, the then-new national service initiative. Now, as we celebrate 20 years of collaboration, it's clear that SCA and AmeriCorps are "getting things done."

Over the past two decades, more than 17,000 SCA-AmeriCorps members have rendered over 10 million hours of service. On an annual basis, AmeriCorps provides SCA members with \$3.2 million in education awards to help pay for future schooling or apply toward student loans.

In addition, SCA-AmeriCorps programs annually engage scores of young adults in long-term leadership programs in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New York's Hudson Valley. In cooperation with state resource management agencies and local school districts, members alternate between protecting and interpreting state parklands and teaching environmental education in local classrooms.

"There is no doubt that my kids learn from the SCA lessons," says Carolyn Tartsa, a teacher at Webster Elementary School in Manchester, NH, "but more importantly, the SCA members are role models in the truest sense—young persons the children can respect, admire, and aspire to be."

SCA is proud to be a 20-year partner of AmeriCorps and looks forward to many more productive years ahead.



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Donate a residential or commercial property or vacant land to a charitable remainder unitrust for SCA.* Your tax-exempt trust can sell the property without paying immediate capital gains tax or the new 3.8% net investment income tax. With capital gains taxes higher now for many taxpayers, this can create substantial tax savings. You would also get an income tax deduction for part of the value of your gift.

You would receive income for life from the sales proceeds at a percentage payout you choose when you create your trust. After your lifetime, remaining principal would come to SCA or be divided between SCA and other charities.

Your gift would provide growing numbers of young people with the opportunity to stand tall as stewards of our treasured lands for years to come.

For further information, contact Wilke Nelson, Gift Planning Officer at 888.722.9675 ext. 2024 or email giftplanning@thesca.org

*Mortgaged properties cannot be donated. Suggested minimum \$100,000.

“Spacing Out” in National Parks

by Jane Wong, SCA Intern

Growing up in San Francisco, where space is tight, I've always felt the compactness of urban life. Open space was something to gaze at across the Bay—not something to experience first-hand.

It wasn't until I volunteered with SCA that I learned to truly appreciate the personal advantages of space. I spent the first of my three SCA summers at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore along Lake Superior: 42 miles long, including rock archways, waterfalls, and sand dunes that are just breathtaking.

The work involved in maintaining that gorgeous setting was breathtaking, too. We had to haul lumber uphill to our campsite, for example, and I carried up 20 large pieces of lumber by myself. I'm not big or strong, and it was exhausting.

Another year, I maintained trails in the expansive Chattahoochee National Recreational Area in Georgia and last summer, I was an SCA intern at the Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex in Shirley, NY, consisting of 6,500 acres of wildlife oases for migratory birds and wildlife.

During all my summer experiences, I came to appreciate the importance of space as a crucial element not only in land management and environmental preservation but in personal matters as well—reflecting on one's accomplishments, stepping back from the day's annoyances, gaining the drive to tackle whatever's ahead.

That sense of space was further enhanced when our crew leaders secured our cell phones. I wondered at first how I'd survive without my smartphone, but it was refreshing to unplug. It enabled me to be that much more present with my surroundings and colleagues. Solitude, I discovered, can happen even when you're among others.

Now that I'm back at college, I take advantage of the outdoors regularly. I'm living off-campus, and instead of driving or taking a bus to class, I walk to school every day. It takes about 20 minutes each way, which isn't a lot of time, but it gives me all the space I need.



Jane Wong is a sophomore at Humboldt State University in Arcata, California. The original version of this excerpted article was published by NationalParksTraveler.com.



Donor Profile: Louise Shelley

As backyards go, Louise Shelley's is pretty unique. The Washington, DC resident lives a stone's throw from the Battery Kemble unit of Rock Creek Park.

Like much of the capital's green space, Rock Creek is owned and managed by the National Park Service, and Battery Kemble, once part of the Union Army's defenses in the Civil War, is now a popular recreational site for community residents and visitors alike.

Concerned about heavy user impact as well as the onslaught of exotic plant species, Louise (in hard hat, above) enlisted her neighbors and initiated a fundraising effort to sponsor an SCA high school crew to help restore the park. The SCA Rock Creek Park/Battery Kemble Restoration Fund is more than halfway to its goal of \$25,000 thanks to many local supporters.

"SCA combines two things I deeply believe in: nature conservation and young people," Louise says. "I feel very strongly about the transformative effect of nature."

A long-time, generous friend of SCA, Louise also advances the cause of conservation in her professional life. She is a professor at George Mason University's School of Public Policy, where she founded and directs the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC)



and is currently involved in applying her groundbreaking work to the illicit international wildlife trade.

Louise is a great model for SCA members who want to become the conservation leaders of tomorrow—and for those who want to help them fulfill their potential by giving to SCA.

For more on the Rock Creek/Kemble Restoration Fund or to make your own contribution, please visit: thesca.org/batterykemble.

Awards and Honors

- One year after SCA Founder Liz Putnam accepted The Corps Network's Legacy Achievement Award, Senior Vice President for Government Relations and Agency Affairs Scott Weaver will accept the 2014 award at a Washington, DC ceremony in February. Weaver, who joined SCA as a crew leader more than 30 years ago, was previously a ranger at Yosemite National Park and is being honored for his contributions to the Corps movement.
- Allison Whipple Rockefeller, the only SCA alumna to also chair the SCA board of directors (1995-1997), was recently presented one of the National Audubon Society's highest awards, the Thomas W. Keesee, Jr. Conservation Award, for her ongoing leadership and commitment to conservation.
- Six-time SCA alumna and Theodore Roosevelt National Park Superintendent Valerie Naylor has been named recipient of the Stephen T. Mather Conservation Award by the National Parks Conservation Association for her steadfast protection of park resources.
- Melissa Lesh, who served two terms as an SCA intern, has won the Department of the Interior's Environmental Achievement Award for her work at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge on a rain water recycling campaign. She is currently producing a documentary on jungle water in India.
- Finally, SCA's Pittsburgh office has taken the bronze as a Bicycle Friendly Business (BFB). The award from the League of American Bicyclists is given for leading America toward a more sustainable future.



Direct Your IRA to SCA

Traditional IRAs and workplace retirement plans such as your 401(k) or 403(b) are often considered assets of choice to leave to charity from a tax standpoint. They are taxed more heavily than most other assets when left to individual heirs, but pass **completely tax-free** to charities like SCA.

You can name SCA as a beneficiary of a retirement plan by simply requesting that your plan administrator send you a beneficiary designation form. Using this form, you can name SCA as the beneficiary of an entire plan or a percentage of plan assets. You will need SCA's tax ID number (91-0880684) to complete your form. Beneficiary designation forms take just a few minutes to complete and can be changed at any time.

Your gift will guide new generations of conservation leaders to the conservation trail. Please let us know if you name SCA as a beneficiary so we can welcome you into the Liz Putnam Legacy Society. For further information, or to notify us of your plans, please contact Wilke Nelson, Gift Planning Officer at 888.722.9675 ext. 2024 or send an email to: giftplanning@thesca.org



The American Institute of Philanthropy and Charity Navigator rank SCA among America's top conservation charities for fund-raising efficiency.

SCA is a nationwide conservation force of college and high school volunteers who protect and restore America's parks, forests, and other public lands. SCA's active, hands-on approach to conservation has helped to develop a new generation of conservation leaders, inspire lifelong stewardship, and save our planet.

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Advancing the Legacy

National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis joined more than 100 SCA volunteers, including three-time SCA alumna Lauren Newman (left), on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day at Fort DuPont Park in Washington, DC. Participants spent hours carefully removing invasive English ivy from the park in one of 12 SCA events to honor the memory of the slain civil rights leader. "The message Dr. King carried was of service to others," said Jarvis. "He asked each of us: 'What are you doing for others, what are you doing for your community?' And he lived that life, and he stands as a symbol for all of us."

Elsewhere, SCA members removed litter from Philadelphia's West Mill Creek Recreation Center and Houston's Sterling High School, and eradicated exotic plants at Half Moon Bay State Beach in the SF Bay area, Seattle's Cheasty Greenspace, Schenley Park in Pittsburgh, and along the Richmond (VA) Greenway. SCA-AmeriCorps members also collected donations for the New Hampshire Food Bank and conducted restoration projects in the Adirondacks and at Mills Norrie State Park in New York's Hudson Valley.

Read more, see photos and comment at thesca.org/MLK.

