



the GreenWay

SCA's Conservation Quarterly

Spring 2014



Eli Livezey was front and center for this photo, just as he was for his crew in South Dakota.

My Boots By Eli Livezey, SCA Crew Member

I had two job offers the summer before my junior year of high school. I chose the job that came with new boots.

The job was with SCA, working on a trail crew in Washington, DC. Since then, I have been part of three additional SCA crews in DC, Maryland and South Dakota. During all four crews, I wore the same pair of boots. They've changed since I got them, and I've changed too.

When I first got my Timberland boots, they had smooth brown leather, crisp laces and a new shoe smell. The tread was sharp, the sole was stiff. The fit was snug and supportive.

I wore my boots building boardwalks in DC's Rock Creek Park, installing log steps in Wheaton Regional Park in Maryland, and clearing invasive species at Dumbarton Oaks in Georgetown.

At Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota, I installed sign posts to mark trails in bison-filled prairies. We worked in pairs installing just one or two posts a day, but on our last day my partner and I got into a rhythm and finished four posts. I kicked the final post to make sure it was sturdy and fell back on the ground. It was like kicking a brick wall.

At school, I never felt like my hard work translated into anything tangible. Because I have learning disabilities, school work has always been difficult for me and my grades have not always reflected how hard I worked or what I know. At SCA, it was

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**CONSERVATION
BEGINS HERE**
Student Conservation Association
thesca.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our National Parks Are Relying On Us

SCA's 58th annual Summer of Service is about to begin...and none too soon for America's national parks.

As National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis states on the opposite page, our parks face a number of urgent challenges, from climate change to workforce diversity and disconnected youth. More and more, national parks are relying on SCA to safeguard precious resources and reach new audiences. In Director Jarvis' words: "we couldn't do it without SCA."

We are grateful to play such an important role in our parks and for your generous support of our mission but, frankly, there is much more to do.

Last month, I joined Interior Secretary Sally Jewell at a luncheon in New York hosted by SCA's corporate partner, American Eagle Outfitters. The guest list included the heads of Corporate Social Responsibility or Corporate Philanthropy of nine leading corporations that share the secretary's vision for a 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC). American Eagle has already pledged \$1M toward a \$20M goal.

At the luncheon, Sec. Jewell recognized SCA as the national leader in youth conservation and as such we look forward to fulfilling a key portion of 21CSC, which would annually engage 100,000 young people on public lands that symbolize America and unify Americans.

As they prepare to enter their second century, our national parks can count on SCA. And we hope we may continue to count on you.

Thank you.

My Boots *continued from page 1*

different. Hard work created something. Hard work made a difference. I've since applied that lesson to my classwork and now my best grades are in my toughest classes.

I figure I have hiked more than 300 miles in my boots. Now they're stretched and worn. The laces have frayed. The soles have lost their traction.



I've changed too. I've grown taller. My mind has stretched and developed. My SCA experiences have made me a more confident, resilient, imaginative individual with a strong drive for quality and discovery. I've gained a strong work ethic and a passion for the environment.

I just started work on the Old Faithful crew in DC for SCA veterans and crew leaders, and they tell me I'll be getting a new pair of boots.

I think this time I'll get one size up.

Your support of SCA's Million Dollar Challenge will ensure more young people like Eli get the chance to enjoy transformational service experiences in America's national parks. Please give now at thesca.org/tgw

SCA Q&A:

National Park Service
Director JON JARVIS



SCA recently spoke with NPS Director Jon Jarvis about the future of national parks and youth in conservation:

Two years from the NPS centennial, what are the toughest issues facing the National Park Service?

I'll mention a couple. From a conservation standpoint, climate change is the greatest threat we have to the integrity of our national resources, whether it's receding glaciers or more intense fires, the arrival of exotics that we've never seen before—all those kinds of things are happening as we speak.

The second is more of a social issue, and that is how do we connect this next generation to our national parks and our public lands and really get them connected to the values of conservation, of historic preservation and make it a life's work? That's really critical.

How is SCA helping to address those issues?

SCA is one of our oldest and most successful partners in bringing young people to national parks. I've been with the [National Park] Service for almost 37 years and brought on my first SCA [member] in 1978. I see the lights go on with these young folks when they're out in these environments, working

hard and experiencing these places. SCA and some of the other corps do an extraordinary job of building the next generation of stewards.

Why have you also prioritized workforce diversity?

We need to reflect the diversity of America within our own workforce so that individuals, young people who are coming up through school and who have an encounter with a park ranger or biologist, can see themselves in that career and think "I could grow up to do that, too." I think that's incredibly important.

How important is the SCA-NPS Academy to this strategy?

As we approach our centennial in 2016, recruiting and retaining a more diverse National Park Service workforce is a cornerstone of our Call to Action plan for the next 100 years. With its ability to reach into traditionally under-represented communities, SCA is playing a critical role in helping us provide young people with a professional pathway. NPS Academy is already making a difference for us and this important program typifies the innovative, collaborative spirit of the NPS-SCA partnership.

What role do you see SCA playing in the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps?

You play a leadership role, both in terms of the way you manage your students and the way you recruit, your focus on urban as well as rural. I think you're the standard bearer...[you] do an incredible job of taking good, safe care of these young folks, bringing them to our parks to do work, to learn, and have a fantastic experience. We don't have that kind of capacity to get kids into park and we couldn't do it without SCA.

Read the entire interview at thesca.org/Jarvis

Mapping National Park Careers

SCA's National Park Service Academy expanded again this spring with four orientation sessions at Grand Teton, Great Smoky Mountains and Kenai Fjords National Parks, plus the newest member of the Academy line-up: the National Parks of New York Harbor. Nearly 125 under-represented college students learned about career opportunities in national parks in this special workforce diversity initiative.

"This important program typifies the innovative, collaborative spirit of the NPS-SCA partnership," declares National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis.

Students in the photograph are pointing to the national parks where they will serve this summer in SCA internships, a key step in their professional pathways. These and other SCA service opportunities would not be possible without the generous philanthropic support of friends like you. Thank you.



Seattle Milestone

Having started at Olympic National Park (and Grand Teton NP) in 1957, SCA has deep, historic roots in the Northwest. This year, we are commemorating 30 years of working with underserved teens in the greater Seattle area.

SCA annually engages more than 150 youth from the Emerald City and surrounding communities along a carefully crafted continuum of outdoor experiences that convey the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to competitively enter the workforce and practice a healthy, sustainable lifestyle.

SCA Founder Liz Putnam (below) was the special guest at 30th anniversary/Earth Day service project at the Washington Park Arboretum, which was also attended by Mayor Ed Murray.



NOW - Double Your Gift, through SCA's

Million Dollar Challenge

America's national parks need work this summer—and YOU can help!

Give before May 31st, and your gift will be **DOUBLED!**

Your contribution of...

\$50 will become \$100

\$250 becomes \$500

\$500 becomes \$1,000

for conservation service!



Visit thesca.org/tgw

Urban Renewal with American Eagle

Hundreds of SCA volunteers joined with some of the world's top street artists to bring a new look and renewed love to parks in four US cities this spring in Alternative Spring Break projects sponsored by American Eagle Outfitters.

After six straight springs of enlisting students in threatened wilderness areas, SCA and American Eagle shifted our focus to urban greenscapes this year under the theme of "*HeART This City.*"

Contemporary artists such as Chor Boogie and Totem sprayed dynamic outdoor murals while student volunteers planted native gardens, restored playgrounds and cleared debris from national, state and city parks in Chicago, New Orleans, Pittsburgh and San Francisco.

More than 100 American Eagle employees joined the effort in Pittsburgh—AE's headquarters—and to coincide with Earth Day, American Eagle promised to match customers' gifts to SCA up to \$500,000!

Residents and visitors alike approved of the art and conservation combo. In San Francisco, joggers in Golden Gate Park routinely acknowledged volunteers as they rushed by, and participant Jean Bartholomew reports "we even got a few thumbs up from people on tour buses as they yelled 'thank you!' to us."



“RETOOLING” YOUR ESTATE PLANS?

It's always a good idea to review your estate plans from time to time. As you review your plans, please consider leaving a legacy to help SCA equip future generations of young people with the tools they need to protect our treasured lands.

You can **remember SCA in your will or living trust**. Or, you can simply name SCA as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy or an IRA, 401(k) or 403(b) plan by requesting and completing a new beneficiary designation form from your insurance company or plan provider.

To learn more about estate planning tools and techniques under the new tax law, please contact **Wilke Nelson, Gift Planning Officer** at 888.722.9675 ext. 2024 or email giftplanning@thesca.org

Donor Profile: Ellen Tohn

In 1976, Ellen Tohn flew from New York to California as a high school junior to join an SCA trail crew in Yosemite National Park. The airline lost her luggage—but Ellen found her calling.

The following summer, she headed westward once again to participate on a crew at Olympic National Forest. “The first time around,” Ellen states, “you learn how to work with a group, figuring out your role. Then, the second time, you realize, ‘Hey, we can run this!’”

That fall, she arrived at Cornell University and, in addition to her classes, began leading trips for the school’s Outdoor Education program (she now co-chairs its advisory board). Soon Ellen was co-coordinating the entire student-run initiative, and says her SCA experience was a crucial factor in her successful leadership.

Later, she worked in environmental policy and earned her Master in City Planning at MIT before starting Tohn Environmental Strategies, a consultancy where she remains today. She and her husband, John Harper, have three sons and Ellen says it’s no coincidence that each boy has followed her footsteps and served on an SCA crew.



“SCA helps young people appreciate the value of service and conservation for our collective, common good and for them as individuals.” She adds “SCA also meets our family expectation that they offer service, spend time in the outdoors, and challenge themselves to grow.

“I make SCA a giving priority because kids need opportunities like SCA to gain confidence and engage with nature. Whether they share my passion for environmental policy or not, SCA can help young people be attentive to different groups, whether it’s their own families, their peers, or future colleagues, employees, or collaborators.”



Aiding NYC’s Resiliency

SCA will return to the National Parks of New York Harbor in June to restore federal, state and city lands in New York and New Jersey damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The Department of the Interior, which last year appointed SCA to lead a youth-driven summer recovery program involving some 200 local youth, has authorized a second phase of repair work.

In addition to our large summer crews, SCA is partnering with a network of local organizations to conduct monthly “ConSERVE NYC” service projects and help build resiliency across New York City’s public lands. Since last fall, ConSERVE NYC has touched all five boroughs of NYC, engaged more than 650 volunteers, and collaborated with groups including Global Kids, Teens4Oceans and the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park.

Earth Day marked our largest weekend yet, as more than 150 volunteers gathered at Hudson River Park to plant native shrubs.

Learn more and register for upcoming events at thesca.org/conservenyc.

Celebrating Earth Day

More than 2,000 SCA volunteers commemorated Earth Day at over a dozen events across the nation. In addition to those projects referenced elsewhere in this edition of *The Green Way*, SCA joined the Darby Creek Clean-Up at John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge in Philadelphia, cleared invasive plants from Detroit's Belle Isle Forest, and restored threatened habitats in California's San Francisco Bay Area.

We also protected wetlands in Dallas, organized eco-activities at Chicago's Whistler Woods, and repaired trails at Fort Dupont Park in Washington, DC, while supporting other public lands in Houston, Manchester (NH), New York's Hudson Valley and Pittsburgh.

"You might think that SCA is all about pulling out blackberries and tamping gravel," said high school senior Diana Furukawa at one Earth Day event. "But SCA gave me the spark of initiation that I needed on my journey to becoming a leader."

Volunteers performed more than 5,000 hours of combined service at the SCA Earth Day projects. Special thanks to presenting partners American Eagle Outfitters, Domtar, Dr Pepper Snapple Group, Exelon Foundation, Johnson Controls, and Southwest Airlines, and to the many partner employees who took the time to join us in strengthening these communities' natural resources.



At Lake Houston Wilderness Park in Texas, SCA volunteers constructed bat boxes and bird houses in addition to improving lake access for anglers.

Looking Through "A Green Lens"

BreShaun Spikes admits he never thought much about the environment until a friend suggested he look into SCA's Chicago program, which teaches local teens about the outdoors in their own neighborhoods. Along with other students, BreShaun toured the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, built a playground in Grant Park and cleared brush from the Powderhorn Prairie.

Very quickly, he began to see the world differently, as well as his role in it. "We developed a sense of urgency to protect and conserve the environment," says the 18-year old. "SCA showed me that I am important, and that small changes I make in my life can make a colossal difference ecologically."

BreShaun spoke eloquently about his SCA experiences at a screening of "Jens Jenson: The Living Green," a documentary about the renowned landscape architect, and caught the eye of director Carey Lundin, who invited Breshaun to join her on a panel at the One Earth Film Festival in March (left). His remarks earned an ovation.

"Five months ago, I was your typical teenager: hanging with friends, staying up all night, eyes glued to any technology I could get my hands on, thinking 'what does the environment have to do with me?' he stated. "The reality of the situation is that the environment has everything to do with me. Thanks to SCA, I now look at everything through a green lens."





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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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Picture Perfect

Bone-chilling temperatures put our affections to the test, but our "I Heart Snow" Photo Contest, sponsored by Domtar, still pulled thousands of entries. Top prize went to this extraordinary image of Prusik Peak in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area of Washington State, shot by Paul Raymaker of Minnesota. He wins free round-trip airfare to the destination of his choice on Southwest Airlines.

See all the winning entries at contest.thesca.org