



# NatureBridge® THEORY OF CHANGE

*NatureBridge connects young people to the wonder and science of the natural world, igniting self-discovery and inspiring stewardship of the planet.*



NatureBridge provides multiday residential learning experiences for K-12 students facilitated by trained educators in awe-inspiring national park settings.



## PROGRAMS ARE STRUCTURED SO THAT STUDENTS:



**DEVELOP A SENSE OF PLACE**

**UNDERSTAND AND EXPERIENCE INTERCONNECTIONS**

**VALUE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

## WHILE ENGAGING IN INTENTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE:

- Teamwork
- Challenging physical activity
- Science
- Individual reflection
- Responsible environmental behavior
- Exploration

## THESE EXPERIENCES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO DEVELOP:

### CONNECTION TO SELF + OTHERS

- Empowerment
- Personal and social responsibility
- Relationship skills

### CONNECTION TO NATURE

- Comfort in the natural world
- Care for the natural world
- Appreciation for the benefits of nature

### CONNECTION TO SCIENCE

- Curiosity
- Critical thinking
- Content-specific knowledge
- Capacity to apply scientific practices
- Appreciation for and interest in science

## STUDENTS DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND SKILLS TO ACT AS ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS.



NatureBridge is a proud partner of the National Park Service.





# NatureBridge® THEORY OF CHANGE

*NatureBridge connects young people to the wonder and science of the natural world, igniting self-discovery and inspiring stewardship of the planet.*

We provide multiday residential learning experiences for diverse groups of K-12 students. These experiences are facilitated by trained educators in awe-inspiring national parks.

Our commitment to **SCIENCE; SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING;** and **DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION** is central to our organizational culture and educational programming. We support student growth in environmental literacy through consistent integration of these commitments throughout the organization. We provide inclusive, authentic scientific learning experiences in a safe and supportive environment. We strive to develop a generation of environmental stewards who have the knowledge, attitudes and skills to collaborate to protect and advocate for the natural world.

## PROGRAMS ARE STRUCTURED SO THAT STUDENTS:

**DEVELOP A SENSE OF PLACE.** Students connect with the place where their NatureBridge experience occurs and the people with whom they are sharing the experience. This creates a safe and comfortable environment that is conducive to learning and makes the experience relevant to students.

**UNDERSTAND AND EXPERIENCE INTERCONNECTIONS.** Students understand that all things within the place are connected and that change in any one part of a system has effects on other parts of the system—that their actions have impacts on each other and on the environment, at NatureBridge and beyond.

**VALUE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP.** Students learn to care for the place where their NatureBridge experience occurs, the environment and each other. Students practice actions they can take to continue forward as stewards of the environment.

## STUDENTS ENGAGE IN INTENTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE:

**TEAMWORK** (e.g., shared decision-making, group challenges), in which students work together toward common goals.

**CHALLENGING PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES** in natural places, encouraging students to go beyond their comfort levels, as appropriate.

**SCIENCE** (e.g., making observations, arguing from evidence, studying local ecology), in which students engage in the process of science through collaborative science investigations of the natural world.

**INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION** (e.g., spaced walks, journaling), in which students process their experience, their emotions and their surroundings.

**RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR** (e.g., food waste reduction, leave no trace ethics, park stewardship projects), in which students work together to take actions that improve and protect the immediate environment and/or contribute to the sustainability of the planet.

**EXPLORATION**, in which students play in and interact with the park environment in a self-driven and hands-on way.

## THESE EXPERIENCES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO DEVELOP:

**CONNECTION TO SELF AND OTHERS.** Students develop a sense of empowerment (self-confidence, perseverance), personal and social responsibility (perspective-taking; empathy; responsible decision-making; appreciation for diversity of thought, background and culture) and relationship skills (effective communication in a variety of settings and among others with different viewpoints, active listening and respect for others).

**CONNECTION TO NATURE.** Students develop comfort in the natural world, care for the natural world and an appreciation for the benefits of nature.

**CONNECTION TO SCIENCE.** Students develop curiosity, critical thinking skills and an appreciation for and interest in science; increase their capacity to apply scientific practices to investigate the natural world; and learn content-specific knowledge.



**STUDENTS DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND SKILLS TO ACT AS ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS.**

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