



experience LEARNING

Dear Friend,

There's a bubble at the Spruce Knob Mountain Center. That top floor in the biggest yurt — above the library in Ulan Bator — is our bubble. It has been the setting for innumerable conversations, and moments of intense community- and self-realization, breakouts, breakdowns, break dancing, chess games, books read, and stars watched. It is one of the most cherished spots on our beloved property.



But we would also take a moment to acknowledge that the SKMC in general is a bubble. For many, this larger bubble is why we love to visit or work here. We are a step away from the rest of the world — remote and quiet, dark, and open to whatever the skies throw at us. **We shun discrimination in all its forms but at the same time must admit that there is a privilege inherent in spending time at this place.**

We all know that it is difficult to get here, even with all the modern gadgets for staying un-lost. One must have a car or a friend with a car, and a significant amount of time available to shirk other duties. One must be able to travel on twisty, rural backroads, through unfamiliar communities, and pass over uneven ground. Our programs have a significant cost, and self-guiding requires familiarity with backcountry navigation, camping, and self-sufficiency that is not easy to come by for many.

How can we make our campus and our programming more accessible to a broader swath of humanity? This isn't the first time we've asked this question, but it is one worth asking again and again. It is one worth holding ourselves accountable to answer.

What you take away with you from time spent in the woods is dear. You treasure the time you spend in these amazing forests and you make connections at Spruce Knob Mountain Center that have the potential to change your life in many powerful ways.

Experience Learning and Spruce Knob Mountain Center were built from the ground up on democratic principles. Of the people, by the people, for the people. **We, the people of this organization, can do more to make these life-changing events available to all the people.**

Sincerely,

Jennifer Taylor-Ide

J. King Seeger
King Seeger

King Seegar

Eric Chest

Erin Chrest

Brian Kain
Brian Kain

Brian Kain


Daniel Taylor

Daniel Taylor

the Experience Learning Board of Trustees



your **Small Change** ◆ **inspires Small Changes** ◆ **that make a Big Difference** ◆

#NoKidLeftBehind

Thanks to your donations we awarded

over **\$17,000**

in summer camp scholarships.

May no child have to stay home
because they can't afford to spend a
week in the woods.

You are building a better future by
enabling people to realize their
potential through meaningful
outdoor experiences.

#SummerCampForAll

We welcomed **103** kids

and over **40** adult campers

to the Spruce Knob Mountain Center in
2019. We hope you consider joining us in
2021, whatever age you may be!



#GetThemOutside Over the 365 days of 2019, kids in our programs spent **2036 days**
on the National Forest land alone! That's not counting outside days on school grounds,
Spruce Knob Mountain Center, or other non-national forest stream and wild land locations!

#CommunityService

Grant funding and fundraising helps us provide free or low-cost programming to WV public schools.

In 2019 we spent **91 days** -- or **432 staff days** -- with WV public school students.



Kids and Schools Connect in the Great Outdoors

Because of your support, we were able to conduct ongoing programming, during and after hours with local schools -- including our closest neighbors here in Pendleton County. Kids who joined this Explorer's Club met with our instructors, established their own goals, rules, and programs. Over time they created their own community in each small group. At the end of the school year we brought groups from three schools up to our Spruce Knob campus to spend a day exploring with each other.

Several of these Explorers went on to attend our summer camps for the first time on scholarships that you provided.

Maple in the Classroom Gets Kids Fired Up

Getting outside and exploring is hard to do in the cold winter months but it still helps us feel, work, and learn better. When we set a school up with Maple in the Classroom we spend a day tapping maple trees around their school and for the next month or more, the kids are responsible for going outside every day to gather sap. Inside, the sap cozily bubbles away. Each class cooks their own batch of maple syrup as they conduct their regular studies. Maple in the Classroom inspires pancake parties, sugar making experiments, scientific observations, community engagement, business development, and more.

Each participating school keeps all their equipment and may engage our assistance in following years. The trees keep on giving -- and Maple in the Classroom does too.



Small School Wins Big Award

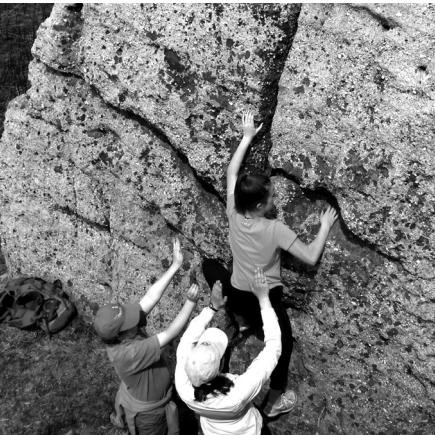
Junior Elementary School is a Title I school embedded in a tiny community in Barbour County, WV. We began working with their 3rd and 4th graders in the 2018-19 school year. Through the winter and spring we conducted schoolyard explorations, helped them acquire a classroom set of mountain bikes, and took a trip to their local river on those bikes (pictured).

In the summer of 2019, Junior Elementary became the only school in West Virginia to win the 2019 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools award, in part because of the programming they did with Experience Learning.

We were able to provide this programming to Junior Elementary at no cost thanks to the generous support of our donors and grantors.



The Experience Learning Board of Trustees invites you to join them in supporting our programming and ongoing community-building work.



Strong and resilient communities start with competent individuals.
We believe in the power of wild places to inspire and empower those individuals.

By supporting our programs, you help our participants find their own agency to be leaders, followers, and **change makers**. We challenge individuals to find new strengths and develop new skills. We encourage dialogue and develop respect for all members of a community.

We help participants realize their own potential to become confident and competent members of their communities through meaningful outdoor experiences.

2019 - Expenditures

Personnel	\$420,804
Programming	\$122,386
Facilities	\$74,067
Communications	\$20,297
Professional Fees	\$1,750
Total	\$639,286

2019 - Revenue

Grants	\$164,427
Donations	\$92,156
Tuition & fees	\$426,815
Other	\$6,683
Total	\$690,080

At the beginning of the year, I was excited as I reflected on the accomplishments and the impact we made in 2019. It was a formative year for our young organization and we were looking forward to continuing to serve more and better in 2020. But as we all know, our world, and our work as we knew it, came to a screeching halt.

WE NEED YOU

We pivoted and tried to do what we could to meet the new needs of our community but to date, we have cancelled all of our programs. We've lost the large majority of our revenue. We are taking every measure we can to keep your organization alive until we can run programming again.

As we look to an uncertain future, we just don't know if it will be enough. We want to be here to serve you and the rest of our community once it is again safe to do so.

We know that these times have hit our friends and partners in different ways and now may not be the time for you to give. But if you have the means, we need it now more than ever.

Vicki Fenwick-Judy
Vicki Fenwick-Judy

HOW ELSE CAN I HELP?

1. As always, **individual donations of any size** are crucial to the continuation of our programs.
2. **Tell us your story.** Grants and other funding is dependent on an understanding of the impact of our programs. If we have made a difference in your life, please take a moment to let us know. Use the form below or go to <http://experience-learning.org/mystory>
3. **Suggestions. How can we do better?** What are we missing? Please help us understand how to be better community members, how to better serve, how to make our programming more accessible. Fill out the form below, or send us an email at info@experience-learning.org



Suggestions? Stories?
How can we do better?

Please help us understand how to be better community members, how to better serve, how to make our programming more accessible. Fill out the form below, or send us an email at info@experience-learning.org.

Experiencce Learning
cut out and mail to: 18 Woodlands Way
Circleville, WV 26804



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Circleville, WV 26804



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18 Woodlands Way
Circleville, WV 26804

Contact us any time via the following options:

304.606.3233

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info@experience-learning.org

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You can also make your gift online at experience-learning.org/donate. All donations are fully tax-deductible.

- Spruce Level (\$5000 and up)
- Beech Level (\$3000 - \$4999)
- Maple Level (\$1000 - \$2999)
- Supporter (\$1 - \$999)

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