

KEEN Announces Final KEEN Effect Grantees for 2015

KEEN, manufacturer of original hybrid footwear, is committed to helping build stronger communities and a healthier planet. Through the 2015 KEEN Effect fan-activated grants program, KEEN will fulfill this promise by supporting organizations that are getting people outside to responsibly enjoy the outdoors. Today, KEEN unveils the final seven fall 2015 grant recipients, who will each receive \$10,000 to inspire people to get outside. From more than 250 applications from around the globe, the new grantees are: Alaska Geographic, Boone Area Cyclists, Bush Heritage Australia, Sociedad para la Proteccion de Ecosistemas Costeros, Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County, The Mountaineers, and Project Canoe.

"Our entire KEEN Community plays a part of the KEEN Effect," said Kirsten Blackburn, KEEN Brand and Community Specialist. "From our KEEN Effect Committee members actively engaged in the decision making process, to our fans who refer applicants, to our wonderful grantees around the globe, we're all on paralleled paths. We're all dedicated to preserving places to play outside, and to tread lightly on those special places. Most importantly, we're proud to welcome these seven worthy organizations into the KEEN Effect family, and look forward to seeing the great positive impact continue to have in their communities."

Positioned under the brands KEEN Effect giving program – which has donated more than \$8M in cash and resources to non-profits around the world since 2004 – the KEEN Effect encourages KEEN fans and the general public to nominate non-profit organizations that align with the company's outdoor-focused, core values.

Since January, the KEEN Effect grant program received more than 1,600 applications from around the world, including all 50 states and 32 countries. Since its inception in 2013, the KEEN Effect has granted more than \$222,000 to organizations who inspire responsible outdoor participation and work to preserve those special places we play. The grantee selection process for fall 2015 was conducted by an internal grant review committee representing all departments at KEEN and its subsidiaries in Canada, Japan, and Europe, who collectively selected winners based on a variety of criteria.

The fall 2015 KEEN Effect grantees are:

Alaska Geographic: Connecting young Alaskans to their wild backyard and providing opportunities for careers in public lands.

Boone Area Cyclists: Aims to develop new trails, specifically for beginner-level terrain, in order to introduce a love for mountain biking and the outdoors to the Boone Area community in North Carolina.

Bush Heritage Australia: A non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting Australia's unique animals, plants, and their habitats.

Sociedad para la Proteccion de Ecosistemas Costeros: Provides low-income Peruvian students an opportunity to learn and develop a love for nature and wildlife.

Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County: Ensures the perpetual preservation and stewardship of open space, natural resources, historic sites, and working agricultural lands throughout Southern Chester County in Pennsylvania.

The Mountaineers: Enriches lives and communities by helping people explore, conserve, learn about, and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

Project Canoe: Uses the outdoors, including wilderness canoeing, to create a transformative environment in which youth develop life skills, social competencies, and resiliency, thereby fostering their own personal success.

These seven new winners are welcomed by the current 2015 grantee class which were announced in April: First Descents, Muddy Sneakers, GirlVentures, Open Meadows, Green Thumbs/Growing Kids, and Sustainable Coastlines.

“We are thrilled to embark on this project that has been made possible through the generous support of KEEN,” said Katrina Blake, Access and Visitation Coordinator at Bush Heritage. “By establishing the interpretive guide training program, we will build on our volunteering opportunities with an aim to increase our capacity to showcase the work of Bush Heritage and expose more people to these unique and special natural landscapes.”

For more about KEEN Effect, please check keeneffect.com, or email keeneffect@keenfootwear.com. Applications will be accepted after the first of the year for 2016 funding.

About KEEN

Inspired by a love of the outdoors, KEEN Inc., manufacturer of hybrid outdoor and casual products, including footwear, clothing, and accessories, is dedicated to creating quality products that support the lifestyles and outdoor adventures of active people around the world. KEEN products can be found online and through more than 5,000 retail locations in more than 60 countries, as well as in KEEN Garage retail stores in the U.S., Europe, and Asia. The company operations and culture reflect a stand-out commitment to building a strong community and a healthier planet so that all can create, play, and care. Learn more at www.keenfootwear.com.

For more information, please contact:
Keith Cozzens Director of Client Services
Phone: (970) 259-3555 ext. 122

For more from this organization:
KEEN Inc.