



TETON STEWARDS

NEWSLETTER of the GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

FALL & WINTER 2014 / 2015



Photo: Ryan Sheets/Sheets Studios

Strength in Diversity

How *an* Internship Program is Changing *the* Face of *the* NPS

Millie Jiminez was midway through an AmeriCorps internship in a Massachusetts state forest when the National Park Service (NPS) called to offer her a term position in Grand Teton National Park (GTNP). It was spring 2014, and she had just begun trail crew leader training—wearing chaps, wielding chainsaws, and felling trees. “I loved it,” she says, “but I knew the NPS was an opportunity I couldn’t pass up. When my dad drove out with me to move to Wyoming, we came over Togwotee Pass just as the fog was lifting off the Tetons. I knew I’d made the right decision.”

Continued on next page



Alfredo Saenz—Photo: Laura Yungmeyer



Millie Jiminez and Pura Vida students—Photo: NPS

She had hoped for this chance since college—a surprising dream for a University at Albany economics major who spent her childhood in the Bronx. The daughter of two Mexican immigrants with neither time nor means for outdoor recreation, Millie had little exposure to national parks growing up. She was motivated, though, and when a friend told her about national park internships offering a unique experience, she welcomed the challenge and applied to National Park Service Academy (NPSA). One week

life is going in one direction, maybe not a great one, and suddenly you're out in a national park, exploring wilderness, and you've got your foot in the door to a great career."

Piloted in 2011 in GTNP with Foundation funding, NPSA was created to spark those exact realizations among diverse college students like Millie and Alfredo. With an orientation spring break trip and subsequent 12-week summer internship in a national

he was hired as an administrative and facilities management assistant—the first NPSA alum to be hired to a permanent NPS position. "Grand Teton is where I got my start and I hope I'll be here for a while," he says, though, he also has a newfound appreciation for the national park near his hometown in Texas; he grew up just 15 minutes from Padre Island National Seashore but says his family didn't visit the park. "It'd be neat to go back at some point and work for a park that I could share with friends and family."

“A diverse, inclusive workforce will make us stronger, more resilient, more creative, and more relevant to communities who may not see themselves in what we do.”

Jon Jarvis, NPS Director

into orientation at Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Millie set her sights on a career—she wanted to be a park ranger.

Several years prior and a few thousand miles to the west, Alfredo Saenz, another current Grand Teton employee, had a similarly eye-opening experience as an NPSA participant in 2011. Originally from Corpus Christi, Texas, Alfredo spent a spring break in Grand Teton. "It was my first time in the mountains," he recalls; it was also the first he'd heard about NPS job opportunities. "Your

park, the program introduces students to a range of NPS careers and provides long-term mentorship. Since its inception, the program has expanded to Great Smoky Mountains, Kenai Fjords, and New York Harbor national parks and is recognized as a model for diversity outreach across the NPS.

Following his spring break session, Alfredo returned to Texas to complete his master's in public administration at St. Mary's University. That summer, he came back to Grand Teton for his internship and in 2012,

Millie's position as diversity outreach and volunteer coordinator has proved especially rewarding during the summer months, when NPSA interns assigned to Grand Teton arrive for their 12-week stays. "When I work with those students, I think it makes a big difference that I maybe come from a similar background as them or share their cultural traditions," she notes. "They come away from the program with the same impressions as I did; they want to be in this field with people who are protecting these landscapes and love what they're doing."

GTNPF 2014 Highlights



- Raised \$6,058,667
- 1,244 donors supported our work

NPS Academy

Born and Bred in the Tetons

On the ground, NPSA is putting NPS Director Jon Jarvis' vision into practice by introducing the agency to young, diverse students who will become the visitors and employees of tomorrow—a priority across the entire national park system.

"NPSA enables us to embrace the richness and diversity of each participant's background and perspectives, build the next generation of conservation stewards, promote a pathway to permanent employment in the NPS and conservation community, and make Grand Teton relevant to youth and all communities of color in the process."

—David Vela, GTNP Superintendent

259 students have participated nationwide.



Photos: Ryan Sheets/Sheets Studios

Interested in providing incredible experiences for youth in Grand Teton? Contact Kim Mills at (307) 732-0629 or kim@gtnpf.org.



This past July marked my ten-year anniversary as president of Grand Teton National Park Foundation.

It is fun to remember a phone call in the spring of 2004 from then Foundation board member Ed Riddell, who approached me about leading this unknown organization. At that point, the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center was just architectural drawings. There was a committed board of directors led by Jerry Halpin, a brand new superintendent, Mary Gibson Scott, and a great partner in the late Senator Craig Thomas, who served on the National Park subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. We had no office space and were working with a dysfunctional database program. At that point, members of the community who loved Grand Teton had no idea that they could financially support projects in the park, but it didn't take us long to tap into the widespread passion for Grand Teton.

Once we began articulating the

Message from President LESLIE MATTSON

potential for private philanthropy to enable extra special projects in the park—like the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center—our friends responded with overwhelming generosity. We have come so far and done so much, but we couldn't have achieved these fantastic results for Grand Teton without the passion and dedication of our supporters. Since 2004, we have received 12,262 gifts and raised 36.8 million dollars. The award winning Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center has welcomed hundreds of thousands of visitors each year since opening in 2007, over 500 young adults have been impacted by our programming, and natural resource preservation and research has been advanced by close to \$2 million in private philanthropy.

It is a privilege to lead this organization and it's both humbling and exhilarating to reflect on the trajectory that brought us to where we are today. I hope you will join us this year in helping to bring remarkable experiences and projects to Grand Teton.

Leslie Mattson

President



- Rustic steps, drainage, and dry-stacked rock walls are transforming trail conditions; \$10.5 million raised to date toward \$14 million goal for Jenny Lake campaign



- Interpretive and interactive exhibit designs are underway at Jenny Lake to greatly enrich visitor experiences

AN INSPIRING STORY: \$10.5 MILLION RAISED TOWARD \$14 MILLION GOAL

Inspiring Journeys campaign makes progress with fundraising and comprehensive restoration

Summer 2014 marked the first of four years of major trail construction as part of Inspiring Journeys—the holistic renewal of the Jenny Lake region that will honor the National Park Service centennial in 2016. Primary work areas included the trail north of Cascade Creek, trail segments south of Jenny Lake, and the Horse Trail—the most direct route into Cascade Canyon. For much of the season, five NPS trail crews worked on the project, augmented by a Student Conservation Association 10-teen crew and Youth Conservation Program's 22-teen crew.

The team completed 1,900 lineal feet of new trail, 172 stone steps, 71 stone checks, 10 stone drains, 470 square feet of dry-stacked stone retaining wall, 600 lineal feet of single-tier stone retaining wall, and 900 lineal feet of reclaimed trail. This work meets a high standard for durability and is designed to have a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)-era rustic aesthetic.

Next year, expect to see crews on the Inspiration Point trail, the spectacular route that has rewarded millions with an expansive view of the lake and the valley beyond. This trail section climbs 400



Photos: Ryan Sheets/Sheets Studios

vertical feet in a half mile and contains a switchback blasted from a cliff by the CCC in the 1930s. Work will include 2 new bridges, 700 square feet of stone masonry dry-stacked walls, and 250 checks, all required to fully reconstruct this main artery from Cascade Creek to Inspiration Point. Approximately 500 tons of stone were transported this fall to the project site by helicopter for upcoming spring crews.

Access to Inspiration Point will be via the Horse Trail next summer to keep the public safe and trail crew members productive during construction season. This reroute will create short-term visitor inconveniences, but the park plans to highlight the excellent



viewpoint over the lake just south of Hidden Falls as a worthy alternative to Inspiration Point that is nicely combined with a hike to Hidden Falls.

To learn more or to participate in the campaign, contact Leslie Mattson at (307)-732-0629 or leslie@gtnpf.org.

- Requests totaling more than \$5 million will support future GTNPF work, creating conservation legacies in the park



- 22 teens had a summer to remember, logging 5,842 hours on the Youth Conservation Program trail crew



Message from
Grand Teton National
Park Superintendent
DAVID VELA

After experiencing Grand Teton National Park for the past eight months, I am extremely grateful to be serving as the park's superintendent. I am also continually amazed by the variety and complexity of the projects and planning, incidents and rescues, programs, and events that regularly occur in the park. What a whirlwind summer season this was! A summer punctuated with visits by my dear friend Luci Baines Johnson and her husband Ian, along with other influential leaders from the public and private sectors.

With every special event, and every audience that I addressed either in the park or in the community, I have become keenly aware of the deep passion that individuals have for this amazing landscape. With each new adventure and encounter that Melissa and I were privileged to experience, I am also grateful for the remarkable enthusiasm and energy that exists for this park and its wildlife, as well as the interest in daily park operations and the commitment toward our management issues.

From watching our rangers and paramedics conduct life-saving rescue missions or participating in events such as the 50th



Photo: Ryan Sheets/Sheets Studios

anniversary of the Wilderness Act and the 101st reunion of the White Grass Ranch, to gathering with diverse groups and youth such as the NPS Academy students, Youth Conservation Program teens, and American Latino Expedition bloggers, it has been an inspiring and extraordinary initiation into the park and Jackson Hole community. You can also imagine how inspiring and emotional it was for my parents during their recent visit. It had been over 40 years since they decided to take their three children on a journey through Grand Teton and Yellowstone. This time, they viewed the Grand Teton from their son's office!

I eagerly look forward to the months ahead as together, we continue to build capacity for the park and set our sights on the NPS centennial in 2016. Getting the opportunity to meet and become acquainted with so many people from all walks of

life and backgrounds has been extremely rewarding. I greatly value and appreciate that together, we are building valuable relationships and outcomes that will surely benefit current and future generations of park visitors.

With your continued support, and that of our park staff and partners, we are well positioned to meet the challenges and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead, while providing the best experience possible for visitors. Thanks to the Grand Teton National Park Foundation staff and you—the Foundation's generous friends—for all that you have done to help make 2014 an incredible and successful year. Thanks also for your warm welcome to Melissa and me, and for being a very valued member of the Grand Teton National Park family!

- 10 college students gained park work experiences through NPS Academy, a model career-prep program that began in GTNP and expanded across the country



- Local Latino students gained knowledge and unforgettable experiences through Pura Vida's diversity outreach

PARTNERING FOR FISH CONSERVATION

Lying in the headwaters of the Snake River—one of North America's largest rivers—Grand Teton National Park is home to a variety of native fish. The most well-known of these, the Snake River fine-spotted and Yellowstone cutthroat trout, can be distinguished visually but not genetically.

In the world of fish taxonomy, this indicates a single species with two morphological, or phenotypical (appearance), forms. Prior to arrival of European settlers, these fish were aquatic kingpins in a complex ecological system. Among other animals, they provided food for black and grizzly bears, river otters, a variety of birds, and American Indians.

Today, these and other native fish, including mountain whitefish, Utah and northern leatherside chubs, red-side shiners, Paiute and mottled sculpins, bluehead, mountain and Utah suckers, and speckled and long-nose dace, remain no less ecologically important. They do, however, face a variety of new challenges. The introduction of nonnative fish (lake, brook, brown, and rainbow trout) has compromised native trout habitat, and in some areas nonnative fish have also threatened the genetic integrity of native fish (rainbow trout can hybridize native cutthroat trout). In addition, irrigation structures, installed decades ago by local farmers and ranchers, inadvertently restricted the natural movements of fish in otherwise unimpeded, free flowing waterways.

With support from Grand Teton National Park Foundation, Trout Unlimited (TU), Jackson One-Fly Foundation, and Orvis, among others, and in collaboration with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the park has begun to focus more effort on important native fish conservation projects. For example, the traditional stocking of



Snake River Cutthroat Trout Photo: Mark Gocke

nonnative fish in many park waters has been curtailed. And, during the last 5 years, two major stream impediments—irrigation diversion dams on Spread Creek and the Gros Ventre River—have been removed, unlocking over 150 miles of stream for fish migrations. These successes have spawned further conservation efforts, such as TU's engagement of two hundred local Adopt-A-Trout program students in a fish life-history study.

Park biologists hope to continue fish habitat improvement by focusing on mitigating the effects of nonnative fish on native

species. At Kelly Warm Springs, where swordtails, cichlids, goldfish, guppies, bull frogs and other nonnative species have been found, GTNPF support allowed the park to educate hundreds of students about the ecological hazards of dumping commercially available aquarium fish into park waters. Aquarium fish carry nonnative diseases that could impact native species. Visual media are also being created to enlist the public's support for protecting natural thermal features and other aquatic habitats. In other areas, with continued support, removal of nonnative trout from some of the park's most pristine waters and reestablishment of native cutthroat will also take place.

The park is excited about the potential that Foundation and other partner support brings to native fish conservation programs, where the ecological integrity and recreational opportunities associated with park waters both stand to benefit.

Steve Cain, *senior wildlife biologist*,
and Chad Whaley, *fisheries technician*
Grand Teton National Park

Support the park's native fish. Contact Paige Byron at (307) 732-0629 or paige@gtnpf.org



- Funded 43 bear boxes for picnic and camp sites; 650 more are needed



- Donor-funded wildlife research and protection efforts helped preserve Grand Teton's species



Interpretive content at Jenny Lake will include interactive smartphone apps.

What Did the Tetons Look Like During the Last Ice Age?

We'll Show you.



AT&T is our new technology partner, joining the Foundation's efforts to boost interpretive information at Jenny Lake as part of the ongoing *Inspiring Journeys* campaign. The company's \$250,000 contribution will bring digital guides, apps, and more that will enrich and expand educational opportunities. Stay tuned as our plans develop.

What do you give the person who has everything?

Give a bear box to protect one of Grand Teton's most magnificent species!



Photo: Diana Stratton

\$1,500 funds a bear-resistant food storage box in Grand Teton National Park, with a 3 x 5" stainless steel plaque to honor your special person. They'll receive an irresistible teddy bear and information about why bear boxes are so important, wrapped in a festive box and tied with a bow.



The bear box will be located at one of the park's picturesque campsites for you to visit next summer. It's sure to bring a smile to friends and family who care about protecting incredible wildlife and making the park a safer place for visitors and bears alike. The Foundation has funded nearly 300 boxes and hundreds more are needed.

Contact Paige Byron at 307-732-0629 for your bear box today!



- Two volunteer crews and the teen trail crew stabilized and repaired structures on Mormon Row



Check out our new website, e-news, blog, and videos at www.gtnpf.org!



NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PD
PERMIT #81
JACKSON WY

Mailing: PO Box 249
Moose, Wyoming 83012

Physical: 25 South Willow Street, #10
Jackson, Wyoming 83001

Address Service Requested

Printed on recycled paper

Board of Directors

Barbara Carlson
Max C. Chapman, Jr.
Natalie Clark
Nancy S. Donovan
David Easterly
Lisa Claudy Fleischman
Bill Givens
Barry Gold
Bill Gordon

Jeff Hanson
Maura L. Harrower
Christine A. Hartley
Debbie Hechinger
Jane B. Hill
Neal Manne
Adrienne Mars
Hank McKinnell
Richard W. Mithoff

Mark Newcomb
Hugh O'Halloran
Trina Overlock
Tom Saylak
Scott Spangler
David Viehman
Lisa Wan
Gerald T. Halpin
Chair Emeritus

Resource Council

Don Alsted
Debbie Barker
Andrea Bent
Dennis Butcher
Meriam Calabria
Colby Cox
John Gerber
Ron Harrison
Sandy Hessler
Jean Hocker
Renny Jackson
Clay James

Molly Kelly
Chuck Koob
Charlotte Krugh
Alison Lee
Phil Leeds
Glenn Ray
Ed Riddell
Lee Riddell
Catherine Marcus Rose
John Rutter
Ann Ryan
James E. Ryan

Robert B. Smith
Susan Thomas
John Townsend
John Turner
Kelly Walker
Celia Wallace
Rob Wallace
Kevin Warsh
Shawn Whitman
Jeff Willemain
Scott Williams
Terry Winchell

Inspiring Journeys Campaign CoChairs

Barbara Carlson John V. Faraci Kate Mead

GTNPF Staff

Leslie A. Mattson, *President*
Mark Berry, *Vice President*
Paige Byron, *Manager, Foundations & Special Gifts*
Elise Delmolino, *Manager, Annual Giving*
Maddy Jacobson, *Development & Administrative Assistant*
Kim Mills, *Director, Communications, Corporate Relations & Estate Planning*
Mary Patno, *Accounts Manager*
Kelley Web, *Administration Manager & Assistant to the President*
Emily Greiff, *Intern*

Grand Teton National Park Foundation
Post Office Box 249 Moose, Wyoming 83012
t (307) 732-0629 f (307) 732-0639
www.gtnpf.org

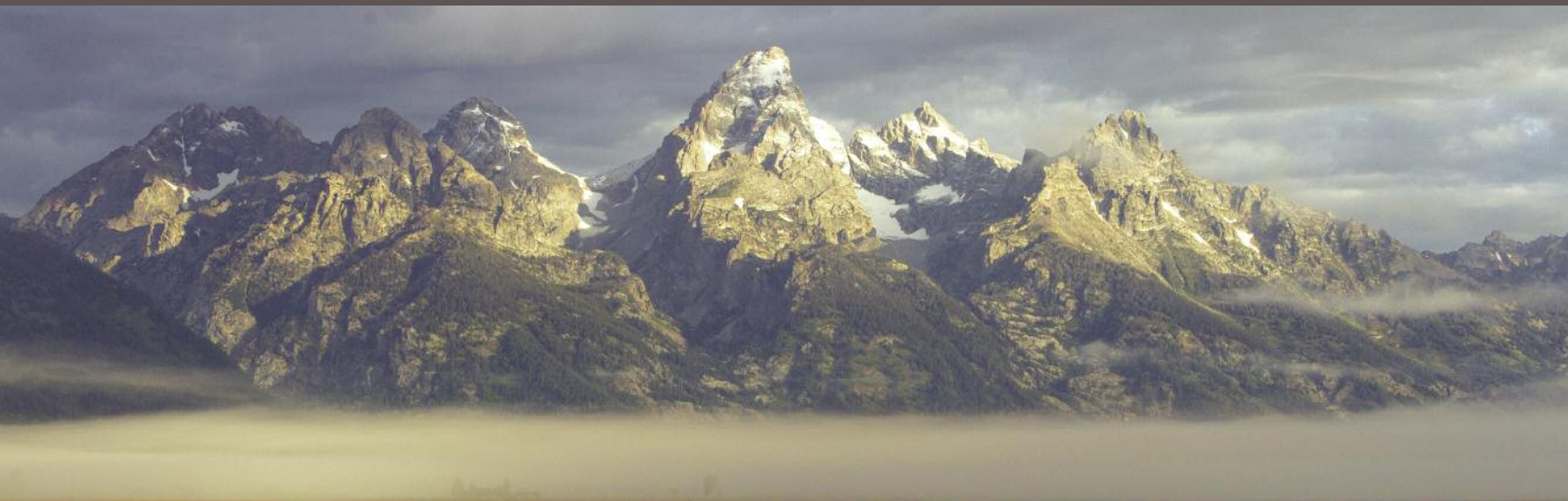


Photo: Diana Stratton