



# the greenway

## BLAZING NEW TRAILS FOR A NEW AGE IN CONSERVATION

PAGE 4

P.3

SNEAK PEEK:  
SCA'S 60TH  
ANNIVERSARY

P.6

A CROWNING  
ACHIEVEMENT

P.7

SUPPORTER  
SPOTLIGHT:  
JOHN GLASER



# Overcoming Obstacles to the Outdoors



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JAIME BERMAN MATYAS  
President and CEO

As *The Green Way* goes to press, one of the most closely-watched presidential elections in U.S. history is just days away. Regardless of the outcome, SCA will work with the new administration to expand conservation service opportunities for teens and young adults just as we have with every president since Dwight Eisenhower.

While our world confronts the effects of climate change, security threats and racial strife, young people also face the additional challenge of limited access to natural settings and public lands.

Earlier this year, I traveled to Alaska—home to over 325 million acres of governmentally-protected parks, forests and refuges. Yet even amid this abundance of wilderness, the distance, cost and practical difficulties involved in travel to many parts of the state mean that Alaska Native teenagers often do not leave their villages or spend extended time away from home. This magnifies the importance of SCA field experiences for their personal growth and development of job skills.

From Anchorage to Washington, DC and hundreds of points in between, SCA engages teens and young adults in crew and intern positions that have the ability to transform lives. Decades of anecdotal evidence coupled with more recent independent research show that SCA experiences uniquely position participants for lifelong success. Yet as government funding declines and the National Park Service maintenance backlog grows

beyond \$12 billion, we are sadly discovering that many of the long-time entry points to service are closing.

Not every barrier is geographic or economic, however. Other factors including the increased presence of technology and social media in our lives, the expansion of structured activities, and growing demands of school and part time jobs have significantly reduced the amount of time teens and young adults spend in nature. SCA is testing new ways to overcome many of these issues, including a pilot program with the Girl Scouts designed to increase outdoor experiences for girls and their leaders nationwide.

In 1957, SCA was the catalyst for what we describe today as the youth conservation movement, a broad wave that has swept hundreds of thousands of teenagers and young adults into the national service arena. As you'll see outlined on these pages, on the eve of our 60th anniversary, SCA is still applying visionary solutions to youth engagement and stewardship with an increasing diversity of partners.

I invite you to visit our website—[thesca.org](http://thesca.org)—for announcements regarding 60th anniversary events all across the country and, in the meantime, I wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season. And thank you for keeping SCA in your year-end giving plans. We work to earn your vote of confidence every day of the year.

*Jaime B. Matyas*







# Sneak Peek: SCA's 60<sup>th</sup>

After marking the National Park Service's centennial in August, the next milestone on the conservation calendar is SCA's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year in 2017. Special events are planned nationwide. Look for details in the months ahead.

Also coming: a vividly-illustrated and richly-rendered narrative of SCA's first 60 years. This attractive commemorative book will chart Founder Liz Putnam's unique American journey from the Vassar College thesis in which Liz first championed a "student conservation corps" to her more recent acceptance of the Presidential Citizens Medal. It will also contain remembrances from SCA alumni and others over the years

## SCA IN THE NEWS

August 2016

CONSERVATION BEGINS HERE

Est • 1957

SCA continues to generate headlines around the country.

- Seventeen-year old Ebenezer Owusu and his SCA crew members were recently featured in a *New York Times* article on the importance of urban parks. "I realize now my world is not just about being inside, new apps and new games," Ebenezer said, adding that he'd like to do his homework in the Bronx park where he built a hiking trail "because it's peaceful and quiet."
- SCA intern Logan Boldon was profiled in *USA Today* for his efforts to make people from all walks of life, including the LGBTQ communities, feel welcomed at Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- CEO Jaime Matyas shared how SCA is forging greater inclusivity in our national parks in *The Huffington Post*. "We must ensure students from diverse backgrounds and experiences feel invested in their environment and envision career paths in conservation," she wrote. "They need mentors and our planet needs *them!*"



REVIEW THESE AND MORE SCA STORIES AT  
[THESCA.ORG/NEWSROOM](http://THESCA.ORG/NEWSROOM)



## Days of Service

More than 700 volunteers joined SCA and American Express to commemorate the September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance at Find Your Park service events in New York City and Washington, DC.

In New York, participants planted gardens, built oyster cages and restored historic structures at Governors Island National Monument, directly across New York Harbor from the World Trade Center. In the nation's capital, volunteers removed 300 cubic yards of vegetation from Kenilworth Park & Aquatic Gardens.

SCA will conduct Veterans Day service projects in New York and the San Francisco Bay Area.



# BLAZING NEW TRAILS

## FOR A NEW AGE IN CONSERVATION

After six decades of building trails, restoring habitats and repairing parks damaged by fires and floods, SCA has literally reshaped the American landscape. Yet more and more, our conservation efforts are taking place in realms far removed from wilderness.

Last August, in Washington, D.C., just days before the National Park Service (NPS) centennial, SCA assembled a high-ranking Park Service delegation to explore new ways of positioning national parks—recreationally and professionally—with our country’s youth. The three-day summit also included dozens of SCA interns and employed a process known as “Innovative Engineering” to provoke fresh dialogue and stimulate new ideas.

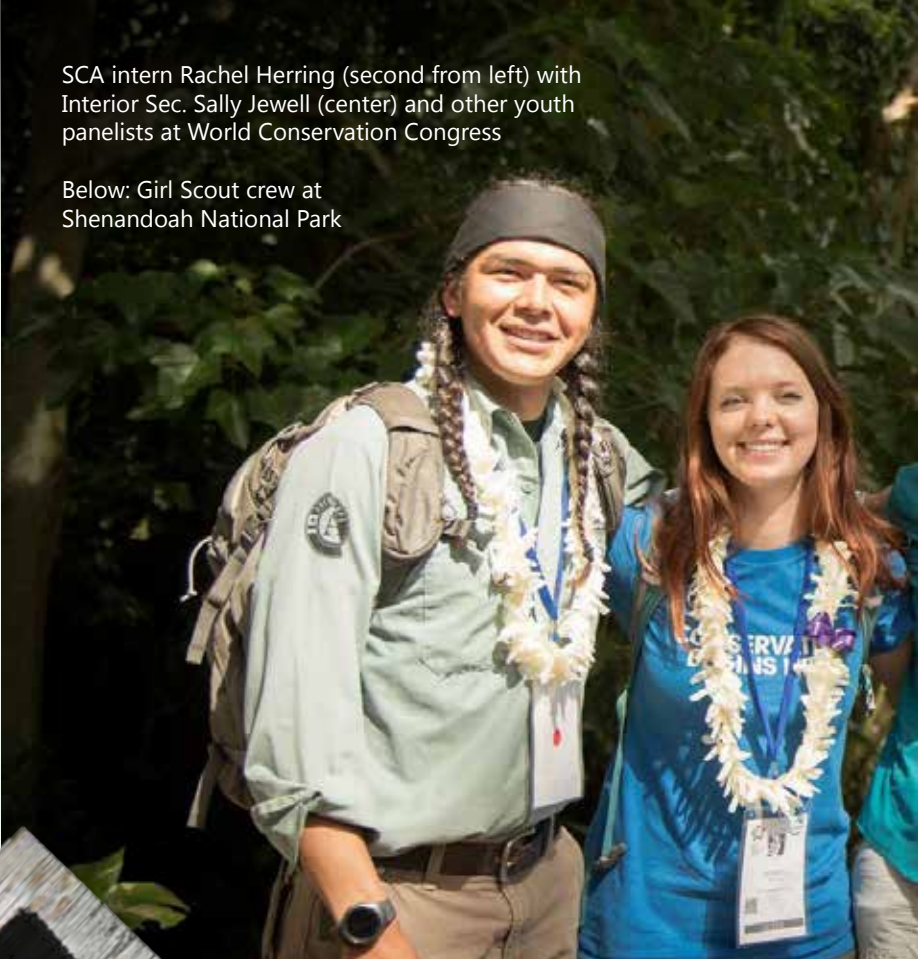
“Getting more Millennials into our parks and our workforce is the key to the future of the National Park Service,” states NPS Youth Programs Manager George McDonald, who is also heading up a new national recruiting office. “It makes sense for NPS and SCA to strategically look at how we can place the talented young men and women participating in SCA programs on an intentional career track with NPS.”

As a result of the summit, several concepts including expanding the Park Service’s direct hiring authority to youth-diversity programs, are now moving forward according to NPS Deputy Director Mike Reynolds. “We appreciate SCA’s creative thinking,” Reynolds says, “and are currently using this information in our budget and work planning for the year or two ahead.”

SCA and NPS collaborate on numerous workforce development initiatives, most notably our signature NPS Academy, but the summer summit was focused less on new programs and more on advancing NPS’ strategic priorities. In taking this approach, SCA added new value to our federal partnerships and it would not be long before agency officials put their regard for SCA on display.

SCA intern Rachel Herring (second from left) with Interior Sec. Sally Jewell (center) and other youth panelists at World Conservation Congress

Below: Girl Scout crew at Shenandoah National Park



...  
Rachel Herring is an SCA natural resources specialist at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) where she’s writing conservation plans for every naval base in Hawai’i while conducting long hours of research and outreach.

“In a typical week,” she says, “I might monitor waterfowl, develop educational materials, plan future research projects, and join volunteers in removing invasive species from areas utilized by migratory seabirds.”

Rachel was enjoying one of those typical weeks recently when her phone beeped, signaling an email with a new assignment. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell had hand-selected SCA for a panel discussion Jewell was moderating at the upcoming IUCN World Conservation Congress on O’ahu, and Rachel was to be the SCA representative.

Secretary Jewell invited SCA to the Congress—an event that drew 10,000 guests including President Barack Obama—to shine a spotlight on young conservationists. “I shared how grateful I am that, through SCA, I’ve been able to forge a career out of enacting positive change in the world,” Rachel states. “I also spoke of the invaluable skills, independence and strength I have gained from my experiences.”

“Rachel was great,” declares SCA Sr. Vice President for Program Laura Herrin, who was also in attendance. “When the secretary asked her to use one word to describe everything she’d





benefits Scouts and is a key driver of leadership. However, surveys show that despite the known benefits of enjoying time outdoors, nearly 60 percent of Girl Scouts are not getting frequent contact with the natural environment.

SCA and GSUSA have recently launched a pilot program placing SCA education and outreach interns with five Girl Scouts councils around the country—Girl Scouts of Alaska, Girl Scouts-Arizona Cactus-Pine Council, Girl Scouts of Greater New York, Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan, and Girl Scouts of Western Pennsylvania. With support

## WHEN THE SECRETARY ASKED HER TO USE ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE EVERYTHING SHE'D GAINED THROUGH HER STEWARDSHIP, RACHEL REPLIED 'PURPOSE.'

from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, over the next six months, the interns will develop new outdoor curricula, activities and service projects designed to increase Scouts' familiarity and comfort level with the outdoors.

“Partnering with SCA opens up a new world of important outdoor service and experiences that will last a lifetime for these girls.” says Patricia A. Burkart, CEO of Girl Scouts of Western Penn. “It’s like a staircase,” adds Ariel Barasch, the SCA intern assigned to Burkart’s council. “You build higher-level skills and gain confidence, one step at a time.”

Earlier this year, Scouts from the participating councils converged on Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to learn about national parks and perform trail maintenance. Daniella Keith, a 17-year-old Scout from Michigan, says it was hard work but well worth it. “They took away our phones,” she says. “It was nice, taking a break from social media and the pressures of having to post every day, and talking to people face-to-face instead of on a screen.” Adds Scout Emma Chandonais: “There needs to be more opportunities and chances for girls to get outdoors and do stuff like this.”



gained through her stewardship, Rachel replied ‘Purpose.’ The theme of the event was ‘A Planet at the Crossroads,’ and Rachel’s remarks spurred tremendous faith in young conservation leaders.”

...

In addition to strengthening existing partnerships, SCA is forging important new alliances. Regular readers of *The Green Way* know the Search Institute recently determined that SCA’s outdoor programs uniquely foster continuous growth in young participants. Separate research by Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) reveals that recurring exposure to nature

Overall this year, SCA engaged 9,772 young people in hands-on service to nature. That’s a 14% increase over 2015 and a sure measure of success for an organization dedicated to building the next generation of conservation leaders. For the NPS’ George McDonald, it is just what America’s public lands need the most.

“For me, a highlight of the SCA-NPS summit was interacting with so many SCA volunteers, and hearing about their experiences and ambitions,” he says. “We’re working on some things right now and hopefully some of those fine young people will be moving into NPS employment quite soon.”





# A Crowning Achievement

**“THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR WHAT YOU ARE DOING FOR THIS INCREDIBLE PARK AND OUR BELEAGUERED PLANET.” LIZ PUTNAM**

## ROYALTY. THAT’S WHAT THEY CALLED HER, AND THAT’S HOW THEY TREATED HER. LIKE ROYALTY.

SCA Founding President Liz Putnam recently traveled to Grand Canyon National Park to address a national symposium of college students focused on service and “nature’s role in the human experience.”

SCA Centennial Volunteer Ambassadors Sarah Lechich and Jaime Rosenberg greeted Liz at the Horace Albright Training Center, and the three of them immediately hit it off.

The two interns skipped their morning lecture to escort Liz on a VIP tour of the South Rim, including Hermits Rest, Shoshone Point and other select sites, even an exclusive tour of historic Kolb Studio, a century-old structure that clings to the canyon rim near Bright Angel Trail.

“You are conservation royalty, Liz,” said Sarah. “Without you, we wouldn’t be here. It’s an honor to return the favor.”

By mid-afternoon, they returned to the Albright Center, as National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis addressed the student leaders. When he spotted Liz, Jarvis called her on stage. “Do you know who this woman is?” he asked. “She’s a legend! She started a movement!”

Then Liz was off to an emotional reunion with local SCA alumni. At least 40 members of the Grand Canyon staff

started their careers with SCA. “Thank you so much for what you are doing for this incredible park and our beleaguered planet,” she said.

Finally, the main event: the keynote speech at the Shrine of Ages. At center stage sat a wingback chair, the Canyon’s equivalent of a throne for its regal guest. Following an introduction by park volunteer coordinator and SCA alumnus Todd Nelson, Liz spoke about launching SCA, overcoming challenges, and the transformative powers of nature. She closed by urging the students to follow their dreams.

The audience, however, opted to follow Liz’s voice as they suddenly swarmed the stage. “Can I get a photo?” one student pleaded. “Can I have your autograph?” queried another. One said simply “Can I have a hug?”

The following morning, touched and humbled by the previous 24 hours, Liz checked out of the Horace Albright Center, a facility honoring the former National Park Service director and one of Liz’s most influential early mentors. Before leaving the park, she took in one last glance from Mather Point, named after Stephen Mather, the Park Service’s inaugural director and the father of another close advisor.

For Liz, people like Albright and Mather are conservation royalty. Places like the Grand Canyon are nature’s palaces. And the students she’d met the day before are heirs to conservation’s crown.

# JOHN GLASER



- Senior VP for population health and global strategy at Cerner Corporation, a health information technology company
- Two-time SCA alumnus (North Cascades National Park, 1971; Olympic National Park, 1974)
- Recently-seated member of SCA's President's Council, an advisory body

# SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

## Q: HOW ARE YOU LENDING YOUR EXPERTISE IN MEDICAL INFORMATICS TO SCA?

I'm working to link SCA with other firms to develop new solutions for individuals managing health challenges. Technology can play an important role that's transferable to SCA.

## Q: HOW SO?

Social media, for example, connects people and facilitates information-sharing. A patient with a particular disease can reach out to others with the same condition for advice on managing the illness or specific situations. Technology also helps caregivers deliver care. It's a very powerful tool.

## Q: WHY DOES SCA REMAIN SO IMPORTANT TO YOU?

I'll start with the secondary reasons: being a young man out there, cutting down trees and blazing trails. It was very physical and satisfying. And I'd never been with such a diverse group—young people from all backgrounds and parts of the country.

## Q: AND THE PRIMARY REASON?

I'll never forget hiking through the North Cascades, rounding a bend and seeing this huge snowcapped mountain in front of me. It made me realize just how magnificent this world is. It was the first time I ever felt genuine awe.

## Q: DID YOU REALLY MAKE YOUR FIRST GIFT TO SCA AS A TEEN?

My SCA experiences came at a very important time for me. I was shaped by them. If I can help other kids enjoy the same sort of thing—it's just a classic case of giving back.

## 2016 YEAR-END MATCHING GIFT OPPORTUNITY

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The Student Conservation Association (SCA) is America's largest and most effective youth conservation service organization. SCA conserves lands and transforms lives by empowering young people of all backgrounds to plan, act, and lead, while they protect and restore our natural and cultural resources. Founded in 1957, SCA's mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders.

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD: Steve Seward  
PRESIDENT/CEO: Jaime Matyas  
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GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Julia Eva Bacon



## ALUMNA PROFILE: Millie Jimenez

“NATIONAL PARKS TELL YOUR STORY AND MY STORY. THERE'S A PARK FOR EVERYONE.”

IN 2012, MILLIE JOINED SCA'S NPS ACADEMY—an immersive introduction to National Park Service careers—and admittedly didn't know what she was in for. But one week in the Great Smoky Mountains was all it took to convince this New York City native that her future was in national parks.

Today, Millie, 25, is the outreach and volunteer coordinator at Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming, where her efforts to engage Latino youth are drawing increasing attention. Most recently, NBC News tagged along as Millie led students from nearby Jackson Hole on a camping and rafting adventure along the Snake River as part of the Park Service's ongoing campaign to reach a younger and more diverse audience.

“National parks need to open our arms and embrace everyone,” Millie told NBC. “National parks tell your story and my story. They tell the American story. There's a park for everyone.”

Millie tells *Latina* magazine that most of the teenagers she works with “have never been in the park, even though it's their backyard.” Yet as their initial explorations conclude, “I hear them talk about how they want to come back and bring their families to the park. It's the most rewarding thing ever.”

As a child, Millie would join her parents, both of whom immigrated from Mexico, on day trips to the Statue of Liberty. She tells SCA she recalls few people in uniform and even fewer who looked like her. “As the diversity of rangers increases,” she contends, “it will be easier to attract and retain visitors that reflect America.”

In the meantime, Millie remains grateful to SCA for launching her Park Service career. “I tell people all the time,” she states, “my closet has two sections: ‘NPS Green and Gray, and SCA Blue!’”



SEE THE NBC NEWS VIDEO AT [THESCA.ORG/MILLIE](https://thesca.org/millie)