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News and Notes from Sierra Nevada Journeys

November 2009

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Sierra Nevada Journeys is the leading provider of experiential and science education in the greater Reno/Tahoe area. A registered Nevada non-profit corporation, its vision is to empower youth through positive risk taking and experiential leadership, science, and outdoor education. The organization offers educational opportunities for students and teachers in grades K-12 through in-class, after-school, weekend, summer camps, and residential outdoor school programs. More information on this - and other - programs can be found on our website (see Quick Links below).

Quick Links

[Our Website](#)
[Journeys Window \(a weblog\)](#)
[Project Learning Tree](#)

Message From the Director

Dear Friends,

I'm pleased to report that students in Nevada and California are getting opportunities to practice hands-on science, to explore the outdoors and to develop into leaders on a scale that they haven't received before. Sierra Nevada Journeys empowered over 6,000 students - more than double the number of students we served in 2008 - providing them 104,000 educational hours. As it is important to us and to our community that students from all socioeconomic backgrounds have access to these transformative programs, we did not turn away a single student or school that requested our programming. I'm also proud to announce the opening of our Sacramento office in August 2010; that California presence will enable us to significantly expand our outreach to students in the greater Sacramento-area. If you would like to help us continue to transform the lives of students, please consider making a gift to Sierra Nevada Journeys by visiting our [website](#). Thank you for supporting Sierra Nevada Journeys and for helping us to change lives one student at a time.

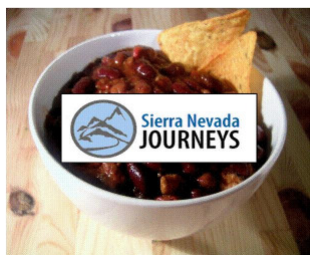


Have a wonderful holiday season,

Jonathan

Upcoming Events

Battle of the Bowls Chili Cook-off



Ladies and gentlemen, start your crockpots! Dig out your spoons and join us for our first annual Battle of the Bowls in San Francisco, December 12, 2009. Sierra Nevada Journeys is thrilled to empower youth in California with opportunities to become stewards of the natural world, develop leadership skills, and engage in hands-on science. The 'Battle of the Bowls' is a celebration of our expansion into California communities in offering the same life-changing programs we've been providing in western Nevada for the past three years. Come join us for this fun and exciting event, and help provide inspiration and empowerment for youth in Northern California!

Contest Registration & Attendance: Anyone is welcome to participate in the contest or attend the event to judge the chili entries. Donations are encouraged for contest registration and event attendance. The funds raised at this flavorful event will support Sierra Nevada Journeys' educational programs.

To find out more information, or to RSVP, please visit <http://bit.ly/1ie9tH> and use the Reply Box to RSVP by Dec. 4. To register for the contest, use the drop down menu and select Chili - Register for Chili Cook Off.

Program Update

Communities Unleashed

Community members learned about science as they practiced environmental stewardship at the Communities Unleashed service learning day Nov. 14. The event took place at Galena Creek Regional Park, and was hosted by Sierra Nevada Journeys. "The Communities Unleashed event was an excellent opportunity to explore the outdoors while learning about the environment and Nevada's natural resources," said Gretchen Sawyer, Reno resident who attended the event with her family. "It was a good educational experience for my seven-year-old daughter." Approximately 30 people attended the event and participated in guided forest hikes, created art using nature, learned about water cycles and helped with park clean up. Sierra Nevada Journeys Vice President of Education, Nick Pretasky, said it can be challenging for community members to care for the environment if they've never experienced it. He said that is why the Communities Unleashed program provides outdoor experiences for participants. "The program was established to encourage community members to spend more time outdoors, get excited about science education, and become environmental stewards," Pretasky said.



The November event was the first of a series of Communities Unleashed programs. Sierra Nevada Journeys plans to offer four events each year. The next is a snowshoeing trip that will take place this winter.

The Ripple Effect



Fourth-graders at Coral Academy of Science enjoyed a tall glass of watershed knowledge November 16th at the Sparks Marina. Sierra Nevada Journeys took them on a field trip to the popular summer destination, educating the students about what exactly they swim in during their vacation months. They conducted Ph testing to determine what the marina is composed of. Prior to this lesson, one student speculated that "watershed" was a place in their backyard where their parents stored water.

Back in the classroom, students worked on a model of the Truckee River to see how pollutants travel, where they come from, and where they end up. Kool-aid acted as pollutants so students could easily watch its voyage

and see how much even a small amount of pollution can spread. This lesson demonstrated to students how point source and non-point source pollution works in our community. Students also created a hallway size paper version of the Truckee River where they inherited their own piece of the river and made their own developments along the banks. Students left the lesson excited, and with a new found understanding of watersheds.

Journeys Outdoor School

In October, Sierra Nevada Journeys wrapped up another season of Journeys Outdoor School. This Fall, 394 fifth and sixth grade students, 18 teachers, and parent volunteers from 6 different schools spent a week experiencing hands-on education at Grizzly Creek Ranch! Students engaged in lessons ranging from pond ecology, to leadership and teamwork on the ropes course. After spending a week at Sierra Nevada Journeys, one parent said it best; "The amount of growth that I saw in every one of the kids is invaluable. Four days at SNJ...\$225; sleeping bag and toiletries...\$50; the confidence your child leaves with? Priceless."



Just because the fall season is over, doesn't mean that Journeys style education is! Sierra Nevada Journeys is offering a Winter Adventure Program this year at Camp Galilee on the shores of Lake Tahoe. Students will learn about winter ecology and winter survival, participate in a hike around Spooner Lake, and partake in various other winter activities, all while education standards are being met! Programs will be taking place in February and March. For more information, contact Adam Yarnes at 775-560-1813, or by [email](#).

Donor Developments



Sierra Nevada Journeys is very proud to announce that 100% of our board members have pledged a personal financial investment for our work in 2009. As part of the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Cornerstone Awards Luncheon in November, our board members were one of only 14 Northern Nevada non-profits that were honored for 100% board member giving. Our board has given countless volunteer hours, and garnered other gifts, grants, and in kind support. We are truly grateful not only for their time and financial support, but also for their personal commitment to improving the lives of youth. This year, the board pledged more than \$2,000 of their personal finances to support our work to

empower youth in Northern Nevada and Northern California.

If you would like to join our board in their investment to inspire our students to want to learn again, please consider Sierra Nevada Journeys in your year-end, holiday giving. Below you will find how your gift can make a difference. You can give [online](#) or by sending a check to:

Sierra Nevada Journeys
1301 Cordone Avenue, Suite 200,
Reno, NV 89502

The following gift amounts* represent the difference you can make with your contribution:

\$25 supports an hour of in-class or after- school instruction for two students.

\$50 supports a student who will explore the outdoors as part of a Classrooms Unleashed field study.

\$100 supports one student's 6-hour journey to understanding what a watershed is and why it's important.

\$250 supports a classroom of students engaging in a hands-on watershed, energy or earth science lesson.

\$1,000 supports four students' fees to experience our life-changing, week-long, residential outdoor school.

*These dollar amounts represent an approximate cost of our programs. However, your gift will go toward all of our educational programming and the costs associated with making them happen.

In other Donor Developments, Sierra Nevada Journeys has recently received 2 very important grants. Sierra Nevada Journeys and our sister organization, Nevada Outdoor School, were awarded a grant from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection toward the Walking Our Watershed Program. Through this grant, over 1,500 students will receive hands-on watershed lessons. Nevada Division of Environmental Protection supported this program throughout 2009 and because they were so impressed with our watershed program, they renewed and expanded their support for 2010. Not only will youth learn what a watershed is but also visit local watersheds at nearby rivers, lakes and mountains. Every student will conduct water quality testing and learn what impact they have on watersheds by the actions they make at home.

Project Learning Tree renewed its Model Program Initiative grant to Sierra Nevada Journeys, which will give more capacity building support to its professional development program for educators. This grant ensures our successful growth in 2010 as a PLT state coordinator, including supporting the implementation of our strategic plan, strengthening the base of stakeholders and PLT facilitators state-wide, as well as giving us a new opportunity to reach out to secondary educators through workshops tailored to their specific needs.

Thanks to our friends and partners, we are able to continue to provide life changing programming to students across Nevada and California.

Get Involved

Sierra Nevada Journeys has recently implemented a number of new ways for you to Get Involved! Keep an eye on our blog, "[Journeys Window](#)," become a fan on [facebook](#), and follow us on [flickr](#) and [twitter](#)! Stay tuned to our facebook page to find out about upcoming events, contests, news, and volunteer opportunities. We understand the importance of connecting with members of our community, sharing our vision, and taking advantage of the valuable insights you have to offer. Please help us to fulfill the needs of students and expand our reach by connecting with us online today!

Contact Info

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