

OYC awarded the North Cascades Institute \$2500.00 for their Cascades Climate Challenge program.



Established in 2006, this program offers canoe camping, backpacking and conservation for underserved youth. The program's purpose is to fuel a lifelong engagement with nature, environmental stewardship and responsible citizenship. Many alumni report transformative experiences, giving them more purpose and direction after they returned home.

The curriculum centers around the controversial topic of climate change. Students are challenged to evaluate relationships between human activities and the health of our planet. They learn about the cultural and natural history of the region and how personal choices can have a far-reaching affect.

The backcountry experience is complimented with day trips for community service day trips and sharing their experiences at public presentations.

“I truly enjoyed this trip, it made me believe in myself. During those 12 days, we were doing service projects everyday, like picking up trash, Leave No Trace, teaching elementary kids about natural resources and building tent pads. This kind of work affected me deeply when I got home. I realized that I'm no longer me, but a better person. I understand now how important the wilderness and nature is. I know now that ‘One branch may not a tree, but together we are a big tree.’“

-Son Huynh, 11th grade, Lake Forest Park, WA