

# Call for Volunteer Leadership

NatureBridge, the largest educational nonprofit partner of the National Park Service, seeks passionate, thoughtful, and influential volunteer leaders to join our governing boards to advance our mission in support of young people, conservation, and environmental education.



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# About NatureBridge



## Our History, Work, and Impact

In 1971, high school teacher Don Rees assembled 50 students for a two-week adventure in Yosemite National Park. That trip inspired the founding of Yosemite Institute, now NatureBridge, and over five decades of overnight environmental education in our national parks.

NatureBridge's mission to connect young people to the wonder and science of the natural world comes alive at Yosemite National Park and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in California, Olympic National Park in Washington, and Prince William Forest Park in Virginia. As proud partners of the National Park Service, we work closely with the agency to support

their mission to preserve the natural and cultural resources of our national parks for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

Our innovative programs take students out of the classroom and into national parks where they spend multiple days immersed in nature, living and learning alongside their peers. Led in small groups by experienced educators, students engage in scientific principles firsthand, explore ecological concepts, collaborate with their classmates, and apply their learnings in real time, all while discovering the joy of the outdoors.

[Watch a brief introduction to our work.](#)

### NATUREBRIDGE BY THE NUMBERS

National park campuses: **4**

Staff size: **200+**

Annual budget: **\$22 million**

Annual earned revenue: **70%**

Students served since 1971: **1.6+ million**

### OUR ANNUAL IMPACT

Schools served: **700**

Students served annually: **30,000**

Percentage of students of color: **60%**

Percentage of schools receiving scholarships: **40%**

Dollar amount of scholarships awarded: **\$1.1M**



# Our Governance

For over 50 years, NatureBridge has adapted to address the evolving needs of its students across dynamic educational landscapes, the growing complexity of the modern world, and an environment shaped by climate change.



To remain at the forefront, we continually seek leaders to help us increase our impact and engage in our work. The pandemic and escalating urgent climate challenges confirm the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives and areas of expertise within our leadership. Confronting these crises requires innovative thinking, adaptability, and a deep understanding of the communities and constituents NatureBridge serves. By seeking volunteer leaders, we aim to build a robust leadership pipeline to ensure we draw on a broad range of professional and lived experiences to better meet the opportunities and challenges ahead.

NatureBridge offers many opportunities for individuals to engage, thrive, and make a difference. Volunteer leaders can get involved in our National Board of Directors, regional boards, and national committees.

## Our National Board of Directors

Our national board has a fiduciary responsibility to act in the best interest of NatureBridge. They provide vision, expertise, and resources to scale our impact and ensure we remain at the forefront of sustainable environmental education. Their strategic oversight strengthens the organization's resilience by offering guidance to navigate changing circumstances.

## Our Regional Boards

We offer programs at multiple national park locations nationwide, including campuses at Yosemite National Park (CA), the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (CA), Olympic National Park (WA), and Prince William Forest Park (VA). Each campus benefits from a talented and engaged regional board that provides a range of support to the campus, campus staff, our National Board of Directors, and the organization, generally. These boards maintain a close relationship with their local park and community and regularly engage in problem-solving, community engagement, fundraising, and more.

Regional board members serve as advocates and community ambassadors for a particular campus and often live in, work in or have deep ties to the campus regions. Bringing forth their knowledge and passion for their local national park and campus program, regional board members frequently participate in NatureBridge national board committees.

### **Yosemite Regional Board**

—Yosemite National Park, California

### **Golden Gate Regional Board**

—Golden Gate National Recreation Area, California

### **Olympic Regional Board**

—Olympic National Park, Washington

### **Mid-Atlantic Regional Board**

—Prince William Forest Park, Virginia



## Our National Committees

Our committees ensure effective governance and management by providing expert guidance and focusing on specific aspects of NatureBridge's operations. Composed primarily of our national and regional board members, they are further strengthened by the involvement of external leaders who contribute their expertise and actively participate in committee initiatives.

### Audit Committee

Oversees integrity of financial statements, independent auditors' qualifications and internal finance and accounting controls system.

### Executive Committee

Facilitates decision-making in between board meetings. Composed of seasoned board members who have demonstrated significant experience and commitment.

### Finance Committee

Assists the board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities relating to fiscal management.

### Governance Committee

Oversees the board's governance and assesses the board's and its committees' performance.

Oversees the orientation, ongoing education, and retirement of members, and board succession and leadership, including cultivation and recruitment.

### Human Capital Committee

Oversees the organization's compensation policies and practices.

Oversees human capital policies related to employee engagement and satisfaction, and supports staff in pursuit of its equity and inclusion goals.

### Revenue Committee

Oversees and supports fundraising, marketing, and earned revenue efforts, including campaigns, events, and related strategies to grow financial resources.

### Risk Management Committee

Provides guidance to the board and staff regarding operations to ensure the safety of all participants.

Our governing boards operate with a positive, supportive culture. Deeply engaged, empathetic, inclusive, and collaborative leadership is necessary for NatureBridge's long-term success. If any of the above opportunities resonate and you feel drawn to engage in our work, we would love to connect with you and learn more about how we can make a meaningful impact together.

***We have a culture of transparency that is refreshing. There are differences of opinion, and people are okay with that. It's what allows us to make things happen.***

– Kevin Newman, Board Member



# Our Values

An ideal NatureBridge volunteer leader is driven by a commitment to our values and culture.

**We learn, teach, and grow.** Our most effective teaching comes from our desire to discover what we have not yet seen and for each of us to develop our own capacity to do what we are here to do.

**We are inclusive.** We create an equitable, welcoming, and empowering learning and working environment for all people.

**We build open and honest relationships.** We communicate care for each other, seek collaborative solutions, and address issues that might otherwise inhibit the atmosphere and effectiveness of our work together.

**We practice environmental stewardship.** We exemplify sustainable behavior by minimizing negative footprint and maximizing positive benefit in what we use, discard, and the activities we do.

**We are accountable.** By making clear agreements and setting attainable goals, we demonstrate to our colleagues that we will honor our commitments and we speak up when an agreement or goal needs to be changed.

At NatureBridge, we connect young people to the wonder and science of the natural world, igniting self-discovery and inspiring stewardship of our planet. In order to fulfill this mission, we must intentionally engage in inclusion efforts in all aspects of our work; this includes our programs, curriculum, organizational practices, and organizational culture. We believe all people who engage with NatureBridge (including students, teachers, chaperones, staff, board members, and volunteers) deserve to feel welcomed, cared for, and connected to each other and nature. We also believe all young people should have access to nature and NatureBridge can help to facilitate that connection.



Specifically we:

- ◆ Facilitate care and connection among participants.
- ◆ Facilitate care and connection to nature.
- ◆ Facilitate care and connection across staff and board.

NatureBridge has an opportunity to build an organization where participants, staff, and board members feel seen, connected, celebrated, and compassionate toward one another. We can do this through equitable organizational policies that foster a culture that prioritizes connecting and caring for one another.

To learn more about how we practice equity, inclusion, and diversity within our work, [please visit our website](#).

Over the past 20 years, the percentage of schools that benefit from financial support for program access has increased from 5% to 40%. Thanks to this effort, our students more closely mirror the demographics of the regions we serve. We are committed to continuously expanding outreach efforts to further close the opportunity gap in our parks.

# What We Are Looking For

We seek leaders who are passionate about the outdoors and are excited to amplify NatureBridge's impact. We aspire to engage volunteer leaders who represent the students and communities we serve across the breadth of NatureBridge's programs. If any or all of the leadership characteristics below resonate with you, we would love to hear from you.

## You...

- **Find joy and fulfillment in being outdoors** and are equally as comfortable in executive boardrooms as you are relaxing by a campfire at a national park.
- **Embrace servant leadership** and are driven by a desire to make a meaningful impact through dedicated service.
- **Infuse fresh and diverse perspectives** into projects, teams, and initiatives, sparking creative discussion, embracing innovation, and driving transformative outcomes.
- **Inspire and engage others through storytelling** by sharing experiences that reflect your personal values and elevating causes you care about.
- **Respectfully work through difficult problems and complex situations** by approaching challenging issues with determination, professionalism, and empathy to ensure thoughtful resolutions.
- **Champion EI&D principles** by actively promoting and integrating inclusion and collaboration into decision-making and practices, and cultivating a culture of belonging and mutual support.
- **Engage with your networks** to connect young people to the natural world.





### You are excited about...

- **Being a vocal ally and advocate for NatureBridge** by forging strong alliances, growing partnerships, and cultivating influence within your networks.
- **Increasing organizational financial health** by actively participating in campaigning, fundraising, giving, and relationship-building.
- **Lending your time and capacity to commit to something truly special** by fully engaging during and between meetings and events, and by showing up for the organization and the cause at in-person meetings and functions.

### You don't need to have...

- **Prior nonprofit board experience.** We welcome applicants who can bring unique skills and fresh perspectives to our board, including those who have been on boards and those who have served their communities in other ways.
- **Prior outdoor education experience.** While we value our volunteer leaders' meaningful connections with nature, extensive outdoor experience is not required. We welcome applicants who are enthusiastic about our mission and can help us expand our vision for those we serve and how we serve them.

**We crave difference.** If you did not find yourself expressly represented here but believe your voice could add new perspectives, depth, and resonance to NatureBridge, we encourage you to apply.

*I joined the board because NatureBridge aligned with my mission to be a climate advocate in any way I could add value to the cause.*

- Ghessycka Lucien Bennett, Board Member

# What We Will Ask of You

Our volunteer leaders are not only dedicated professionals but enthusiasts who come together in a spirit of collaboration and shared joy to drive impact and change. Join our team in approaching each endeavor with a dash of adventure and fun.

All our board members inform and advance our mission and strategy, and are highly collaborative. They are also expected to...

## Fully engage and devote time and effort to duties and responsibilities.

- Willingly serve on one or multiple committees or task forces to provide oversight and insight, engage in key strategic discussions, and attend and actively participate in all meetings, including in-person meetings.
- Carefully review supporting materials before board and committee meetings.
- Actively participate in programmatic activities and functions such as special events.

## Engage in giving and development efforts.

- Play an active role in fundraising and relationship-building to ensure the financial integrity of the organization and regional campuses.
- Make NatureBridge one of the top three nonprofits you support and be involved in recruiting and nurturing prospects who can help the organization grow.



## Build community connections.

- Keep current on the organization's activities and news, and actively engage and represent the organization in the ecosystem of our participants, partners, funders, and other important relationships.
- Act as an ambassador at NatureBridge events and campuses with various constituents, including business and community leaders, educators, and donors.
- Cultivate new board members, supporters, and donors.

**National board members** have a fiduciary responsibility to the organization, and are accountable for upholding and supporting board governance and practices. In addition to the above, they are also expected to...

- Assume responsibility for and oversee fiscal policy.
- Review and approve the annual budget.
- Help select and regularly evaluate the CEO.
- Elect board members and officers.

*I came for the mission. I stayed for the people.*

- Sophia Danenberg, Board Member



## To Apply

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More information on NatureBridge can be found at [naturebridge.org](http://naturebridge.org).

For additional information regarding this opportunity, please contact  
[naturebridge.board@potrerogroup.com](mailto:naturebridge.board@potrerogroup.com).

### To Apply

We welcome your perspective, no matter your prior connection to NatureBridge. As a national organization with regional focuses, we welcome both national candidates and candidates who reside, work in, or have deep ties to our campuses. Please consider learning, discovering, and growing with us.

Please visit  
[potrerogroup.com/naturebridge](http://potrerogroup.com/naturebridge) and  
select **“Apply Here”**



Potrero Group is honored to coordinate this search on behalf of NatureBridge. Supporting a world-class park partner organization perfectly aligns with Potrero Group's commitment to providing rigorous strategy and business planning, organizational effectiveness and nuanced search services to mission-driven organizations. Potrero Group supports innovative leaders and organizations making a difference in the world. We are committed to equitable and inclusive practices in all our work.

To join our mailing list and be notified of future opportunities, please visit

[PotreroGroup.com](http://PotreroGroup.com)