

Nearby Nature

Celebrating
25 Years in 2017!

Discover · Learn · Grow



Dear Friend:

Like ducklings, the fourth graders follow me into Alton Bark Park. The shape of their flock constantly shifts. They racewalk toward the bridge ahead, then fall back curious, watching a spider catch a bug. Sunny yellow maple leaves illuminate the path as we begin our nature walk. An autumn breeze greets us cool-crisp and the ground shines dew-damp. Several kids rush in front of me, challenging my follow the leader rule, but really, they're just excited to be outside.

On this day, I feel just like those children — grateful for this place, for the wind, the water, and the woods — and simply glad to be outdoors. *Have you ever had a similar experience connecting with nature nearby?*

Here at Nearby Nature, for 25 years now, we have worked to share this bond, this feeling of connection and joy that awaits us all just down the path, across the bridge, or over in the garden. Through our programs, community kids and volunteers spend 35,000+ hours a year outside, discovering their own special connections with nature. We build forts in the forest and habitat for herons. We harvest goodies in the garden and catch fish in the canal.

After 25 years of connecting, we've woven quite a web! Thousands of former students and volunteers from coast to coast and beyond happily explore and care for nature wherever they live. We're so glad that despite being focused on nature *nearby*, our impact is far-reaching. *Will you help us keep up this important work?*

With your support, Nearby Nature can continue to weave its web of connections, and inspire community kids and volunteers to bond with the natural world for the next 25 years. **Here's how you can help:**

- **Make a special 25th Birthday Donation.** You're welcome to support a specific aspect of our work — Youth Programs, Park Restoration, the Learnscape Garden, our Network Charter School classes — or simply our mission as a whole.
- **Contribute to our Youth Scholarship Fund.** Help financially-stressed families and schools participate in camps and field trips. In 2017, we gave \$6,500+ in youth scholarships, but we would love to do more.
- **Become a member.** Enjoy free events (the Haunted Hike, Nature Quests, and Green Start Play Days) as well as youth program discounts while supporting our education, restoration, and outreach efforts.

My morning with the ducklings ended on a happy note, as they often do, with someone saying, "This was the best field trip ever!" I could totally relate. But it wasn't the first time nature made my day. Whenever I spend time outdoors, I feel grounded again, held fast to the earth by my connection with the wild outside.

Won't you join me in getting more kids and volunteers out into nature nearby?

To make your donation, simply go to nearbynature.org/contribute. Thanks and best wishes for a nature-full 2018!

Beth Stein

Executive Director, Nearby Nature

P.S. Be part of our 25 for 25 Campaign! If you make your donation soon, you'll help us jump-start programs for the next 25 years by supporting our goal of raising \$25,000 by February 2018.

