

Making An Impact In Your Community

February is Black History Month and Gray Family Foundation would like to recognize a few of our grantees making a significant impact in our communities. These grantees are changing the environmental landscape for the better and are bringing nature to students in meaningful ways.

Here are some highlights of their work:

[ELSO Inc.](#) brings a multicultural approach to STEAM education rooted in environmental justice and cultural history by developing curricula that is both culturally responsive and frames science and environmental

education in a way that brings in non-western perspectives. They are also aligning curricula with NGSS and expanding training opportunities for Camp Guides that imbues environmental justice into traditional science learning. In 2021 ELSO Inc. distributed take-home science kits to camp students and expanded their Wayfinders program, offering smaller in person camps and take-home kits while also offering virtual experiences for students.

[The Blueprint Foundation](#) leads a school year/summer program focused on mentoring/workforce development programming for Black youth. This program prepares students to learn about careers in environmental science while taking an active role in environmental stewardship. Professional and college student mentors of color join students on field trips to fish hatcheries, green infrastructure sites, and wildlife areas throughout the school year, as well as participate in projects benefiting the neighborhoods surrounding their schools and communities.

[Soul River Inc.'s](#) deployment program connects youth and Veterans in a mentoring relationship and deploys them to outdoor spaces around Oregon and beyond, including the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. These enriching and challenging experiences support SRI youth and Veterans to fully apply themselves and as a result, experience significant emotional, mental, and physical growth. In Soul River's Arctic Wildlife Refuge deployment SRI youth and veterans collaborate with the Gwich'in community, gaining knowledge on the importance of protecting wild landscapes through stories and indigenous culture, and growing leadership skills navigating through the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Arctic Village with tribal leaders. The connection between tribal community leaders and



Soul River is an ongoing relationship that has created a lasting supportive partnership.

[Tappin Roots'](#) internship program is a culturally specific community investment and restorative justice project that uses storytelling, mentorship, career exploration, place-based learning, and healing practices to bring young Black Oregonians closer to nature, and closer to their history. This program is a collaborative effort amongst ELSO Inc., BEAM Village, Friends of Tryon Creek, and the Blueprint Foundation. Tappin Roots internships inspire and prepare youth of color to become STEM professionals and champions for environmental justice, empowered to advocate for environmental improvements and protections most relevant to their community. The internships offer paid work experience and pathways into conservation and STEM-related careers for Black high school youth each year. Inspired and continually informed by young people of color, Tappin' Roots amplifies youth voice and widens STEM and environmental justice career pathways for local teens.

From developing curriculum and internships to mentoring and workplace development, these organizations do amazing work centered around environmental issues and Gray Family Foundation appreciates their commitment to students here in Oregon.

Outdoor School Gathering: February 23-24, 2022

Gray Family Foundation, OSU Extension's Outdoor School and Friends of Outdoor School will hold a virtual convening on February 23-24th for teachers, outdoor school providers, facility staff, and others who work in this sector. This free event will be an opportunity to deepen your commitment to equity work in outdoor education, cultivate relationships, and engage in professional learning. Topics include positive behavior intervention, trauma-informed practices and mental health support for students, fire ecology curriculum enhancements, camp facility and programming resilience, lessons learned on starting an outdoor school program, and equity, diversity, and accessibility in programming and with camp facilities. [Click here](#) to learn more and register for this event.

Supporting Nonprofit Capacity: A Survey

The Nonprofit Association of Oregon (NOA) is working with the [Building Movement Project](#) (BMP) to launch a survey that aims to collect insights on the challenges and capacity supports available to nonprofit leaders as they pursue their organization's mission. [Click here](#) to share your thoughts, experiences, challenges, and needs as a nonprofit executive. Your insights will help identify and increase the capacity supports available to nonprofit leaders. The survey should take about 15-20 minutes to complete, and all participants can choose to enter a raffle to win a \$100 Visa gift card! The survey will close on March 4, 2022.

Funding Opportunity

The Roundhouse Foundation is offering multiple grants in 2022. To learn more and see if your program is eligible to apply visit <https://roundhousefoundation.org/how-to-apply-for-roundhouse-grants/>

