

Agenda

Tuesday, May 10

7:30 am - 9:00 pm ET

Included Pre-Convening Events

Breakfast & Registration
7:30 am - 8:30 am | Centennial Ballroom II

Children & Nature Network: Welcome and Opening
8:30 am - 9:00 am | Centennial Ballroom III

Children & Nature Network: Plenary Panel - Building a More Powerful Movement
9:00 am - 10:00 am | Centennial Ballroom III

Networking Break
10:00 am - 10:30 am | Centennial Foyer

Blue Sky Funders Forum Convening Begins

Welcome
10:30 am - 10:55 am | Centennial Ballroom I

Anupama Joshi, Blue Sky Funders Forum (Speaker Bio)

Jason Morris, Pisces Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Virtual: Chuck Sams, National Park Service (Speaker Bio)

Keynote - Culture Is Power: Art for an Interconnected Future in Harmony with Nature
10:55 am - 11:45 am | Centennial Ballroom I

Favianna is the co-founder and president of The Center for Cultural Power, a woman of color and artist-led organization inspiring artists and culture-makers to imagine a world where power is distributed equitably and where we live in harmony with nature. Supporting artists through fellowships, training, and opportunities for activation, The Center for Cultural Power creates intersectional stories and content addressing issues of migration, climate, gender, and racial justice. Using examples and case studies from

her own experiences, Favianna's keynote will touch on art as an expression of narrative change, the fundamental need to feel nature, and the role of philanthropy in elevating under-represented voices.

Favianna Rodriguez, The Center for Cultural Power (Speaker Bio)

Networking Lunch

11:45 am - 12:40 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

Spoken Word Performance

12:40 pm - 1:00 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

Ashlee Haze, Ashlee Haze (Speaker Bio)

A Sense of Place: A Spotlight on Local Leaders

1:00 pm - 1:45 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

To ground us in the place we are occupying this panel will highlight unique leaders, programs, challenges, and opportunities to connect people with nature. Panelists include impactful leaders who are innovating and making positive changes in their communities at the intersections of racial equity, food systems, land use, youth development, and early childhood education. Through a moderated panel discussion, panelists will elaborate on what drives change in their communities, and reflect on their approaches to connecting across sectors.

Dr. Na'Taki Osborne Jelks, West Atlanta Watershed Association (Speaker Bio)

Wande Okunoren-Meadows, Hand, Heart, and Soul Project (Speaker Bio)

Chris Lemons, Food Well Alliance (Speaker Bio)

Alexis Chase, Captain Planet Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Moderator: Suzanne Burnes, Partnership for Southern Equity (Speaker Bio)

Break

1:45 pm - 1:55 pm

Flash Talks & Table Discussions

1:55 pm - 3:05 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

A TED Talk style presentation on wide-ranging topics of interest to the Blue Sky community. Following the talks, the audience will be invited to self-select a topic and join a table discussion led by the speaker.

Topic #1 - Outdoor Learning Environments in Early Childhood: Meaningful outdoor experiences and learning in early childhood is one way to bridge the opportunity gap in children's outcomes related to educational success, physical and mental health, and well-being. With new emphasis on early learning, and federal investments becoming available, we have an opportunity to make outdoor learning an essential part of high-quality early childhood education for all young children. Join this table discussion to learn about specific funding needs for strengthening three core strategies (practice, policy advocacy, and research) for outdoor learning in early childhood.

Kathleen Belk Doffermyre, The George B. Storer Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Topic #2 - Nature + Nurture (N^2): Prioritizing Youth of Color Through Culturally Relevant and Meaningful Outdoor Experiences: Meaningful connection to the outdoors means more than classroom activities taught outside. Nature + Nurture (N^2), a program of the 11th Hour Project, prioritizes youth of color to lead through culturally-relevant experiences through and with the outdoors. Join this table discussion to

understand the nuances of this grantmaking priority - the whys and the hows of cultivating authentic engagement with communities of color and in particular Native communities

Hannah Shulman, 11th Hour Project / Schmidt Family Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Topic #3 - Improving Outdoor Access and Environmental Learning Through Networks: The William Penn Foundation (WPF) has supported several grantee networks under its Watershed Protection program, including the Alliance for Watershed Education, the Circuit Trails Coalition, the Discover the Delaware Partnership, and the Riverways Collaborative. Join this table discussion to learn about the successes and challenges that WPF and its grantees have experienced in these varied initiatives and discuss the roles and approaches funders can take in their support of grantee networks.

Michele Perch, William Penn Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Topic #4 - Just 20 Minutes Turns Your Kid into a Kid Again: Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Generation Wild's 2021 communications campaign "Just 20 minutes turns your kid into a kid again" was a playful way of emphasizing the restorative benefits of time spent outside. It captured the feeling of many parents whose children would benefit from the physical and mental release that only getting outside can provide. The campaign partnered with the Children's Hospital Colorado, statewide libraries, Boys and Girls Clubs, park and recreation centers, state parks, and many others to spread the messaging. Join this table discussion to explore the impacts of a coordinated communications campaign and how you can lead, facilitate, or participate in such an effort.

Jackie Miller, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) (Speaker Bio)

Topic #5 - Joining Forces: The Impact of Funder Collaboratives: Funders Collaboratives strengthen philanthropy in a geographic region or in a thematic area such as environmental education and connections to nature. Examples include the Environmental Education Funders Collaborative (EEFC, San Francisco Bay Area), the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network (Chesapeake Bay), and of course the Blue Sky Funders Forum at the national level. Join this session to learn from the EEFC experience how to learn from peer funders in your region or state, and what next steps you can take to explore a collaborative action agenda.

Jason Morris, Pisces Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Break

3:05 pm - 3:15 pm

Access to Nature: A Strategy for Health Equity

3:15 pm - 4:00 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

There is ample data positively correlating the benefits of time spent in nature with a range of mental, physical, and community health benefits. Inequities in access to nature and greenspaces mirror inequities in public health infrastructure and access to care, which have been further elevated during the pandemic. As we emerge from this crisis, it is imperative we rethink philanthropic investments and redefine the narrative to approach urgent systemic infrastructure needs ensuring the health and well-being of diverse communities. This moderated panel discussion will feature initiatives and strategies for engaging constituents in nature experiences to promote good health, enjoyment, and environmental stewardship. Presenters will discuss grantmaking practices and actions to support cross-sectoral collaborative programs and policies while addressing infrastructure needs for creating meaningful and equitable opportunities for outdoor experiences and learning.

Christopher Smith, Colorado Health Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Vernessa Perry, The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) (Speaker Bio)

Elizabeth Steward Burger, Sunflower Foundation: Health Care for Kansans (Speaker Bio)

Eric Gray, Catalyst Sports (Speaker Bio)

Moderator: Dr. Hanaa Hamdi (Speaker Bio)

Blue Sky's Bold Vision

4:00 pm - 4:15 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

A brief overview of Blue Sky's progress on current strategic priorities and an opportunity to inform future activities.

Anupama Joshi, Blue Sky Funders Forum (Speaker Bio)

Berkeley Bryant, Blue Sky Funders Forum (Speaker Bio)

Being in Community: Rethink Outside™ Fellowship

4:15 pm - 4:45 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

This panel is self-designed by representatives from the inaugural cohort of the Rethink Outside™ Fellowship - a 6-month engagement for leaders and storytellers identifying as Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Fellows will share their stories and reflect on their fellowship experience being in community, sharing and accessing resources, and co-creating to elevate the benefits of time spent outdoors as a human right.

Priscilla Ybarra, University of North Texas and Rethink Outside™ Fellow (Speaker Bio)

Cristina Mancilla, Rethink Outside™ Fellow (Speaker Bio)

Nicole Rawlinson, Blue Star Families and Rethink Outside™ Fellow (Speaker Bio)

Alliyah Lusuegro, Ocean Conservancy and Rethink Outside™ Fellow (Speaker Bio)

Elizabeth Allen, Valley Youth House and Rethink Outside™ Fellow (Speaker Bio)

Brandon Hill, Rethink Outside™ Fellow (Speaker Bio)

Closing

4:45 pm - 5:00 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

Break

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Networking Reception & Dinner - Blue Sky Convening Attendees and Invited Guests

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm | White Oak Kitchen & Cocktails (Walking Directions)

White Oak Kitchen & Cocktails, located around the corner from the Hyatt Regency, prepares food that reflects the dynamic contradictions of Southern life. This reception is open to all Blue Sky Convening attendees and select guests and will be an opportunity to break bread, build trust, and foster community. (Vegan and Gluten-Free Friendly)

Wednesday, May 11

7:30 am - 1:00 pm ET

Included Pre-Convening Events

Breakfast

7:30 am - 8:30 am | Centennial Ballroom II

Break

8:30 am - 9:00 am

Blue Sky Funders Forum Convening Begins

Welcome, Day 2

9:00 am - 9:30 am | Centennial Ballroom I

Nancy Bales, Gray Family Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Equity & Power Sharing in Philanthropy

9:30 am - 10:30 am | Centennial Ballroom I

This session will discuss authentic relationship building and efforts to address internal culture and systems in order to center equity, build trust, and share power in philanthropy. Panelists include funders who have embarked on a journey to align grantmaking and organizational values to reimagine priorities, processes, and systems. Through a moderated panel discussion, panelists will elaborate on their experiences and challenges and offer concrete steps that funders can take to apply these concepts within the context of their organization.

Tom Boutureira, Elmina B. Sewall Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Jennie Swantz, Swantz Family Foundation and The Nonprofit Gardener (Speaker Bio)

Daniel Walker, Arc'teryx (Speaker Bio)

Moderator: Nancy Bales, Gray Family Foundation (Speaker Bio)

Break

10:30 am - 10:40 am

Peer Connection and Reflection

10:40 am - 11:35 am | Centennial Ballroom I

Closing

11:35 am - 12:00 pm | Centennial Ballroom I

Grab & Go Lunch

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm | Centennial Ballroom I