



Philadelphia Outward Bound School receives grant from international funding competition



September 1, 2022 - The Philadelphia Outward Bound School (POBS) has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$233,377 as part of the John Templeton Foundation's new Character Through Community funding competition. The competition, announced in early 2021, received over 800 applications from organizations around the world.

Funding from the grant will support three years of collaborative programming with Learning Network 11 of the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) — the group of pre-K-8 schools in the North Philadelphia neighborhoods of Strawberry Mansion, Allegheny West, and Hunting Park.

During this time, POBS will bring hundreds of 7th grade students from these schools to The Discovery Center – its home base in East Fairmount Park, opened in 2018 – for day programs. After students have had their first Outward Bound experience, they will be offered the opportunity to join POBS for a five-day expedition in the mid-Atlantic wilderness the following year, when they are in 8th grade.

POBS will also work closely with Learning Network 11 teachers, administrators, and support staff to ensure that these programs meet the specific needs of these students, and that Outward Bound's approach to social-emotional learning will have continuing relevance in the classroom.

"We were thrilled to receive news of this grant," said Meg Wise, executive director of the Philadelphia Outward Bound School. "Since its founding 30 years ago, POBS has focused on students attending public school in Philadelphia and the SDP has been our biggest partner.

Our goal is to help students discover that they have the strength to face up to any challenge life throws at them. Our partnership with Learning Network 11 will bring experiences of challenge and discovery to youth and teachers who need them more than ever, especially after the extraordinary disruptions of the last two years."

The grant award has been made by the West Conshohocken, Pa.-based Templeton Foundation's Character Virtue Development Program, which supports organizations that seek to develop the qualities of an individual – qualities such as perseverance, curiosity, and generosity – that are good for the self as well as the community.

"We are very excited about the award to POBS. This is one of the projects that stood out to us because it leverages the great work and long-term history of the Outward Bound program," said Sarah Clement, senior director of character virtue development at the John Templeton Foundation. "We were also interested in supporting more work in the Philadelphia region, where our own offices are located. We look forward to hearing about how these youth learn and grow as a result of their experiences with POBS!"

Programs supported by this grant from the Templeton Foundation began this summer and will continue through mid-2025.

"Our students are confronting a particular set of challenges that are unlike anything anyone alive today has ever seen," said Amelia Coleman-Brown, assistant superintendent for Learning Network 11. "Outward Bound is a valuable partner in helping them build resilience, discover their inner strengths, and build connections with each other during an important transitional moment in their educational journey."