



Nantahala Racing Club Competes for \$25k Grant

North Face Explore Fund Grant provides gear, support and outdoor experiences for underserved kids.

Bryson City, N.C. (July 14, 2014)— Nantahala Outdoor Center's (NOC) non-profit partner Nantahala Racing Club (NRC) is one of 10 finalists to receive The North Face Explore Fund Grant for 2014. Winning the \$25k award would accelerate NRC's efforts to connect underserved children with the outdoors in Western North Carolina. Voting will take place at <http://bit.ly/2014explorefund> until July 18, 2014, and anyone can vote once per day to support the club. Winners will be announced by The North Face in late July.

As a finalist NRC is already guaranteed to receive \$10k but the additional funds would make it possible to take programming and outreach to another level: engaging an additional 200 youth in nearly 4,000 hours of healthy outdoor recreation in the form of after-school kayaking sessions, family whitewater weekends, educational training programs, and even access to participate in the 2014 Whitewater Junior Olympics being held at NOC this August.

Beyond programming, this grant would allow NRC to expand key relationships with other partners in the region who share the mission of benefiting the lives of children. Outside of NOC, these partners include the area's schools and retailers, USA Canoe/Kayak, Endless River Adventures, the Cherokee Tribal Council and the Snowbird Recreation Department, part of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

The work being done by NRC's programs to empower youth through outdoor recreation is vital on a regional and national level. The club's efforts provide kids with the transportation, equipment and training they need to experience the region's natural resources. The club also surrounds children with a supportive community and introduces participants to new possibilities of outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship in their own backyard and beyond.

From a physical and mental health standpoint, the Explore Fund will help NRC fight high obesity rates through active play and a family-friendly approach to recreation. In an area of the country where 34% of youth under the age of 18 live below the poverty level, and where 17% of the state's children are obese, NRC's efforts can make a significant impact on public health*.

NRC Explore Fund video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BB1iU_sWAg

*Cited from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014.