Latinx Community Outreach: Articles, Guides, Models, and Organizations

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Articles and eGuides:

National Park Service, “Healthy Parks Healthy People” (eGuide), <https://www.nps.gov/Public_Health/hp/hphp/press/HealthyParksHealthyPeople_eGuide-acc.pdf>.

Created by the National Park Service and the National Parks Conservation Association’s Center for Park Management, this guide focuses on cultivating new and stronger relationships between parks and communities through health promotion. The authors make the important note that communities of color and low-income communities often face higher risks of various diseases and less access to parks. The guide also features a list of “key attributes of successful Healthy Parks Healthy People efforts” (p. 21-22), profiles of successful park programs, and an extensive list of relevant resources. Patapsco Heritage Greenway can turn to this eGuide for ways to promote recreational activities at Patapsco State Park as means for healthier lifestyles.

Stanfield McCown, Rebecca, et al*. Beyond Outreach Handbook: A Guide to Designing Effective Programs to Engage Diverse Communities*, Woodstock, VT: Conservation Study Institute, 2011, <http://waitak.pair.com/users/npca/cpm/09_pdf_items_for_helpful_resources_section_5%3A12%3A2014/ready_to_use_tools_for_helpful_resources_section/beyond%20outreach%20handbook.pdf>.

This handbook lays out a model for deep engagement with diverse communities. The authors push back on field trips or daylong activities and instead opt for programs that, while take longer to fully execute, develop strong connections with surrounding communities. As part of their deep engagement model, the authors recognize the value of understanding the culture of the community a park hopes to engage with as well as the importance of a park being able to reflect on the capabilities of its own staff members and work environment. While PHG can continue to hold short-term engagements with new communities now, PHG can look at this model and start developing ideas that can establish early connections with its increasingly diverse visitorship and lead to mutual benefits in the future.

Stanfield McCown, Rebecca, Daniel Laven, Robert Manning, and Nora Mitchell, “Engaging New and Diverse Audiences in the National Parks: An Exploratory Study of Current Knowledge and Learning Needs,” *The George Wright Forum*, 29, no. 2 (2012): 272-284,

<http://www.georgewright.org/292stanfield_mccown.pdf>.

Using interviews with personnel from the National Park Service and other organizations, the authors of this study identify six major themes and various subthemes that are critical to successful diversity initiatives. Though this study is intended for the NPS, many, if not all, of the six themes can be taken and applied to Patapsco State Park. The six themes include: program sustainability, inclusive interpretation and histories, media and communication, supportive NPS climate, workforce diversity, and community involvement. The authors stress that these themes are not listed in order of importance and are most effective when implemented simultaneously. One of the major messages carried in each of these three articles and eGuides is that whether a park is looking for short-term or long-term programming, it is crucial that parks understand the value of diversity and inclusivity initiatives from its oldest board members to its newest employees.

Model Park Programs:

Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, <https://www.nps.gov/boha/index.htm>, and the Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center, <https://thompsonisland.org/>.

At the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, the Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center offers a great example of a park making strong and meaningful connections with a population that does not make up a large portion of its vistors: Boston middle schoolers. The educational programs here “focus on enhancing education and collaboration, building trust and confidence, and teaching conflict resolution and leadership skills.” This program is well funded and may not be easy to replicate but a relationship in which a park supports local youth through long-term programs can help Patapsco State Park build a positive rapport with its newer communities.

Buta, Natalia Ph.D., “Maryland State Parks Diversity and Inclusion Efforts: Staff Perspectives and Media Reporting,” <https://www.recpro.org/assets/Conference_Proceedings/2017/buta_2017norc2.pdf>

Dr. Buta offers park examples that most closely relate to the difficulties faced by Patapsco State Park. In her PowerPoint, Dr. Buta provides a detailed analysis of the Latinx community in Maryland, notes the challenges of supporting new Latinx visitors at Rocky Gap State Park in Allegany County and Greenbrier State Park in Washington County (including “racist behavior” and signs that read “illegals out”), and lists some of the steps these parks have taken to make sure they meet the needs of new visitors.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park, “Get Up Get Out and Go,” <http://waitak.pair.com/users/npca/cpm/03_pdf_items_for_cuyahoga_valley__5%3A12%3A2014/cuyahoga_profile_template_v2_final.pdf>

and Lake Mead National Recreation Area, “Let’s Get Healthy Nature Prescription Initiative,” <http://waitak.pair.com/users/npca/cpm/06_pdf_items_for_lake_mead_profile_5%3A12%3A2014/lake_mead_profile_template_v2_final.pdf>

These two park models are featured in the “Healthy Parks Healthy People” eGuide but also listed here for their relevance to Patapsco State Park. CVNP’s “Get Up, Get Out, and Go” program is another example of long-term youth outreach. In this case, the park hosts weekly events for kids and their families over the summer. Transportation is an obstacle for many urban communities with parks just outside their city and at LMNRA, the park and its partners work “to routinely bring urban minority youth and their families into nature for health promotion.” (p. 1)

Model Toolkits:

Environment for the Americas toolkit, <https://www.environmentamericas.org/connecting-cultures/longmont-inspire-program/>

This toolkit by Environment for the Americas can serve as an excellent guide for organizations like PHG that are making an effort to increase or improve their outreach to Latinx communities. EFTA provides advice on how to collaborate, connect, participate, communicate, and other ideas and supplements this with relevant resources and case studies of successful outreach examples.

4H “Latino Youth Outreach: Best Practices Toolkit,” <http://4hstaff.cce.cornell.edu/system/files/latino-youth-outreach-best-practicies-toolkit-v3.0-1_0.pdf>

This extensive toolkit by 4H is written for 4H but it carries an abundance of thoughtful research, planning, and understanding of the difficulties and promises of advancing relationships with the Latinx community. It follows the direction of other long-term approaches by encouraging strategies that require time, open-mindedness, and a genuine commitment to being an inclusive organization.

Organizations to Know:

Conexiones: <http://www.conexioneshc.org/>

The work of this organization is centered around helping Latinx children in Howard County. Part of their mission is to “develop partnerships with schools, community organizations, businesses, community leaders and parents to provide comprehensive programs to advance the leadership capabilities and educational achievement of Howard County Hispanic youth.” Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Conexiones.HC> Twitter (has not been used in a few years): <https://twitter.com/conexioneshc>

Environment for the Americas: <https://www.environmentamericas.org/>

EFTA originated out of an effort to raise awareness of Migratory Bird Day and they still do a lot work related to that but this organization has also made initiatives to make stronger connections between Latinxs, science, and the environment. Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/EnvironmentfortheAmericas/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/EFTA_birdday> Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/efta_birdday/>

GreenLatinos: <http://www.greenlatinos.org/mission>

GreenLatinos is a national organization led by Latino leaders “committed to addressing national, regional and local environmental, natural resources and conservation issues that significantly affect the health and welfare of the Latino community in the United States.” It is one of the six organizations that make up the Latino Conservation Alliance. Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/GreenLatinos/>

Hispanic Access Foundation: <https://www.hispanicaccess.org/>

HAF prides itself for its grassroots outreach to Latinx communities across the country. HAF works to identify the needs of the community and connecting them to organizations that can meet those needs. They have far-reaching projects in education and the environment, among others. HAF is one of the six organizations that make up the Latino Conservation Alliance. Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/HispanicAccessFoundation/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HispanicAccess>

Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting, and the Outdoors: <http://www.hechoonline.org/our-mission/>

HECHO is a national organization committed to “engag[ing] more Latinos to help balance development with conservation on public lands.” This group is also one of the six organizations that make up the Latino Conservation Alliance. Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/hechoonline/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HECHOOnline/>

Hispanic Federation: <https://hispanicfederation.org/programs/environment/>

Hispanic Federation has programs addressing many different issues including the environment. They believe “environmental equity is ultimately an issue of social justice.” Hispanic Federation co-founded the Latino Conservation Alliance. Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/hispanicfederation/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HispanicFed> Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/hispanic_federation/?hl=en>

La Madre Tierra: <http://www.lamadretierra.org/>

La Madre Tierra is a project set up by Resource Media, a communication services organization. In this project, La Madre Tierra collaborated with Latino leaders who are part of conservation efforts across the country. Their report, The Verde Paper, describes some of these Latino leaders’ most significant takeaways on the current state and future of conservation. They are part of the six organizations of the Latino Conservation Alliance. Their report can be found here: <http://www.lamadretierra.org/wp-content/uploads/Verde-Paper-Latino-Perspectives-on-Conservation-Leadership.pdf>

Latin American Youth Center: <http://www.layc-dc.org/about-us/>

The Latin American Youth Center has programs and initiatives that meet the needs of young people. Their mission is “to empower a diverse population of youth to achieve a successful transition to adulthood through multi-cultural, comprehensive, and innovative programs that address youths’ social, academic, and career needs.” Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/laycdc/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/THELAYC> Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/laycdc/?hl=en>

Latinos in Heritage Conservation: <https://www.latinoheritage.us/about-us>

Latinos in Heritage Conservation is a national organization dedicated to preserving the history and culture of Latinxs in the United States as well as improving Latinx participation in historic preservation. Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/latinoheritageconservation/>

Latino Outdoors: <http://latinooutdoors.org/about-us/>

The last member of the Latino Conservation Alliance, this national group led by Latinxs “working to create a national community of leaders in conservation and outdoor education.” Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LatinoOutdoors/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LatinoOutdoors> Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/latinooutdoors/>