

# The National Park Trust

## A Very Special Contributor



February 5, 2016 was a very special day! Grace Lee, the executive director of the **National Park Trust (NPT)** in Washington DC, worked with the staff at Alderwood Elementary to surprise Krista during an all school assembly with the presentation of **NPTs "Buddy" National Teacher Award for Outstanding Environmental Stewardship**.

Alderwood received **NPT's "Kids in the Park" day grants** in 2014 and 2015. Their 2014 grant helped

fund the pilot program that launched the field trip. **NPT** was excited about how many students the **Salish Sea Experience** was able to connect with the local environment and wanted to acknowledge and continue to support the effort. **NPT** awarded Alderwood grants for both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade in 2016 as well as a grant with additional matching funds to make Cordata's field trip possible. They have funded two trips every year through the 2018 season. **NPT** featured an article about the field trip in their annual report.

Thank you, **National Park Trust**, for believing in the value of the **Salish Sea Experience** and supporting it for students!



SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2015

KIDSTOPARKS.ORG

Kids to Parks Day inspires kids, parents, teachers, cities, and towns to visit their local, state, and national parks where they can discover the unique science and history of their parks and experience the numerous healthy outdoor recreation opportunities available.

### KIDS TO PARKS DAY NATIONAL SCHOOL CONTEST: A CATALYST FOR A TEACHER

The Orcas off **Lime Kiln Point State Park** in Washington moved **Krista Gordon** to act, and she hoped they could have the same effect on her students. Krista, a substitute teacher in Bellingham (WA), had been through a challenging health crisis when she found strength and solace in watching the Orcas, the magnificent white and black marine mammals that forage off the shore of San Juan Island, about two hours north of Seattle.

“Students took pride and ownership of their experience because they earned their trip by preparing their contest entry. Receiving the grant let them know others felt their experience was valuable too.”  
— Krista Gordon, Teacher, Bellingham (WA)

### COLLABORATORS

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- America's State Parks
- Boy Scouts of America
- Bureau of Land Management
- Children & Nature Network
- City Parks Alliance
- National Environmental Education Foundation
- National Leagues of Cities
- National Geographic Kids
- National Park Service
- National Recreation and Park Association
- National Wildlife Federation
- Outdoor Alliance for Kids (OAK)
- Sierra Club
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- US Play Coalition

She decided to give something back to these amazing creatures, but wasn't sure what to do. Then, Krista learned about **Buddy Bison** and **NPT's Kids to Parks Day National School Contest**. A class she taught at **Alderwood Elementary**, an underserved school where 80% of the students qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch, prepared a contest entry and won a grant to cover the bus transportation to **Lime Kiln Point State Park**. Our contest was the catalyst for Krista. The following year, in addition to renewed funding for Alderwood through our school contest, Krista was also able to secure funding from a variety of other local sources to get 9 additional schools in her district out to the park – a total of 10 schools of the 14 in her school district!



### WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR WORK:

- Make a donation to our Kids to Parks Day National School Contest online. Support one school or more!
- Do you know someone celebrating a special birthday or anniversary? Consider making a gift to support Kids to Parks Day in their honor.
- To learn more, see page 13 or contact Grace Lee ([grace@parktrust.org](mailto:grace@parktrust.org)) or Dan Quinn ([danquinn@parktrust.org](mailto:danquinn@parktrust.org)) at 301-279-7275.

Krista believes that the experience of visiting **Lime Kiln Point** – taking the ferry, exploring the rocky seashore, meeting with scientists, and Orca-watching from shore impacts each child differently, stating “My job is to plant the seed of experience. Each student decides how those seeds will grow. All come away understanding their actions have an impact though and that simple things like picking up trash make a difference.” She added, “Students took pride and ownership of their experience because they earned their trip by preparing their contest entry. Receiving the grant let them know others felt their experience was valuable too.”

In support of:

