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## January Newsletter



### Director's Corner

Dear Friends,

While the weather is chilly outside, we are enjoying a very active winter here at the New Jersey School of Conservation.

We spent January preparing our campus for students, who will be returning in February, by continuing with critical repairs to our historic campus and by hosting another master educator training to introduce our educators to new and updated curriculum.

We were so grateful to host dozens of volunteers in Stokes State Forest to commemorate Martin Luther King Day with a day of service.

And we continue to engage with our colleagues from across New Jersey — and around the world. I was excited to participate in an international panel discussion and learn more about environmental education centers located in countries as far away as India and to recognize one of our own master educators, Erin Colfax, who received a prestigious award in honor of her work developing New Jersey's climate change education standards.

In Friendship,



Kerry Kirk Pflugh,  
Executive Director

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## NJSOC Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

Last week, NJSOC hosted our third annual Martin Luther King Jr. day of service in honor of his legacy of service. We opened the day with a reflection on Dr. King's remarkable life and recounted some of his many accomplishments:

- he was a brilliant student who attended college at age 15;
- he was the youngest person at that time to become a Nobel Peace Laureate in 1964;
- he led a bus boycott lasting 382 days which led to the Supreme Court decision that segregation on busing is unconstitutional;
- he was an advocate for civil rights, which led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- his work led to the framing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and
- he was an early fighter for environmental justice, although that term had yet to be created.

In 1967 on Christmas Eve, Dr. King delivered a sermon that included a statement relevant to the work of the NJSOC:

"It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all captured in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. We are made to live together because of the interrelated structure of reality."

At the NJSOC we seek to embrace the spirit of Dr. King's message of inclusion, acceptance and collaboration in the lessons we teach and in our mission to create responsible stewards of the earth who promote sustainability practices, climate change mitigation and environmental justice.

We are very grateful to our volunteers who participated in our MLK Day of service by helping with snow removal, cleaning the L.B. Sharp Library, and priming the new maintenance storage area. The Volunteer Archive Team also continued their work to organize our historical archives. The day concluded with a delicious hot lunch courtesy of Chefs Mike and Shaun and a cozy fire at Big Timbers. Thank you to all who participated to help care for our environment and improve our campus!

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## Kerry Kirk Pflugh Participates in International Forum on Environmental Education

NJSOC Executive Director Kerry Kirk Pflugh has been engaged by the the Ethical in Education Network to speak as part of an international forum of environmental education leaders who manage environmental education centers in various countries.

Kerry participated in the first of the three salon forums entitled "The World We Want." Kerry will also speak at the third salon on Saturday February 21.

Speakers included Ramji Raghavan of the [Agastya International Foundation](#) and Juan Mora y Araujo of [the Center for Artistry and Scholarship](#).

It will be a wonderful opportunity to showcase NJSOC to educators around the globe and learn more about peer institutions. We share a common vision for what environmental education should look like — even in wildly different circumstances.

If you'd like to learn more about peer institutions, here is the [suggested reading list](#) for the event, as well as a [video](#) from Agastya International to see what the organization's center in India looks like.

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## **NJSOC Advances Kittatinny Hall Faculty Annex Project**

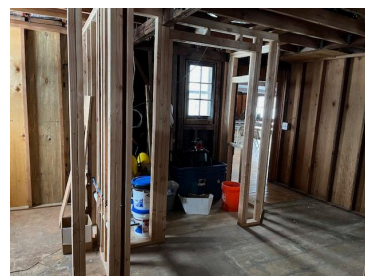
There are numerous special places throughout NJSOC's Sussex County campus, each with its own character. Kittatinny Hall, NJSOC's largest meeting space, has a cozy and rustic feel. With its fireplace, a moosehead and a large set of books, the space is a perfect place for faculty to plan lessons and prepare to welcome visitors to campus.

The space is about to be made even better. Plans are underway for a modernization of the Faculty Annex space at Kittatinny Hall to improve work and preparation stations for the staff, interns, and Master Educators — making it more usable while also preserving the aesthetic charm enjoyed at the location for almost 100 years. The renovation will include new office spaces for the program staff, as well as a kitchenette and a new accessible bathroom.

The project should come to fruition this spring. Permits are in place. Gutting and framing are complete and HVAC is installed, with functioning heat. Plumbing was completed in December as well. Electrical work will start soon. After "systems" inspections the walls will be closed up and finish work can begin.

The clean up and demolition work led to many discoveries. Facilities Director Bern Weintraub considered the process to be "a trip through history." Facilities crew members found in the walls and attic space program guides and brochures from the 1970s and 1980s, old fishing rods made of bamboo, old cups and saucers from the Civilian Conservation Corps days, and other artifacts of historical interest—materials that interested colleagues who are undertaking an archival project. With the new Faculty Annex upgrade, the next chapter of NJSOC is being written.

With a new attic, better space to lesson-plan, new bathroom and kitchenette, and more storage areas — Master Educators, interns and staff are going to love their new faculty space!



## NJSOC Master Educator Receives Award

We would like to congratulate our wonderful climate change education consultant Erin Colfax, who was honored with the Governor's Environmental Excellence Award in Environmental Education late last year.

The award was given to her in recognition of her work as both a classroom teacher and as a non-formal educator.

Erin is one of several master educators who worked to develop the climate change education standards for New Jersey — the nation's first. And we've been privileged to work with her to develop cutting-edge curriculums that are being used in schools across the state to introduce students at different grade levels to the problem of climate change and to empower the next generation to respond to this threat.

We are so grateful for Erin's support of our programs and could not be prouder of her achievement.



# Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education



## NJSOC Education Team Attends ANJEE Conference

The NJSOC Education Team attended this year's Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE) Winter Conference, where Erin Colfax delivered the keynote address!

Tanya Sulikowski, NJSOC education director, as well as Allyson Lance, our environmental education coordinator, and Aliza Kaweck, NJSOC's community outreach coordinator, were excited to engage with environmental educators from every corner of New Jersey.

As our state's premier year-round outdoor environmental education center, we want to hear from colleagues in schools across our state to stay on top of the latest trends and ensure that we are responding to the needs of schools in our fast-changing world.

We are so grateful to work with like-minded friends and partners committed to advancing environmental education, environmental literacy and healthy futures in our state.



## Our Mission

The mission of the New Jersey School of Conservation is to foster environmental knowledge and action through education programs delivered in a natural setting. We are a community of diverse, responsible stewards of the earth who promote sustainability practices, climate change mitigation and environmental justice.

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