

# **Best Practices for Environmental Educators to Engage Diverse Audiences**

## **By Tony DeFalco and Marcelo Bonta**

### Section 1. Best Practices and Tips for Reaching Out to Communities of Color

How do you connect with communities of color and low-income communities? Communities are diverse in their make-up, geography, challenges, and history, so there is no one formula that works every time. For example, connecting with the Cuban community in Miami may call for a different approach than reaching out to the Mexican community in East Los Angeles. The most important aspect is making the connection, and as you continue to gain experience, you will develop your own methods for what works and doesn't work. As the U.S. society continues to become more diverse, you will continue to encounter more opportunities. The ride will not always be smooth. However, working on diversity is a life long journey and a basic skill set for successful work in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Below are some tips for successfully connecting and working with new audiences who can help you achieve your conservation goals.

*Listen and learn first. Ask about the needs, values, challenges, and struggles of the community. Connect your goals to their needs.*

Environmental Learning for Kids, a Colorado-based organization that cultivates a passion in science, leadership, and service to Colorado's urban youth through environmental experiences, started their programming by listening and learning to the community that they served, mainly the Latino and African-American populations based in Denver. From the outset, Environmental Learning for Kids staff made no assumptions of what the community wanted and listened to the community's interests before they developed programs. They then invited children and families to check them out first. Developing programs and activities was an organic process that was continually improved upon and honed as they listened to participants. Initial learning meant breaking down some of the barriers to participation, such as providing transportation, food, and outdoor clothing and equipment, and focusing on building relationships. Fifteen years later, Environmental Learning for Kids' commitment to listening and learning has resulted in the development of a program that serves children ages 6-24 years old and their families. Participants are just as committed to Environmental Learning for Kids as Environmental Learning for Kids is to them. When children sign up for Environmental Learning for Kids programs, 95 percent stay for multiple years and most stay connected for life. Some Environmental Learning for Kids graduates are introducing their own children to the organization.

*Invest time building relationships and start early*

Building relationships is arguably the most important component to connect to communities of color. In 2003, Audubon Center at Debs Park, an environmental education and conservation center for the communities of Northeast Los Angeles and the region, opened its nature center, which was located near a predominately Latino community. Audubon Center at Debs Park made

the mistake at assuming that “if they build it, they will come.” In other words, the assumption was that if they built a nature center next to a community of color then the community would immediately use it and connect to nature. Or so they thought. According to a 2008 survey, 71 percent of people, mainly Latino, from the community surrounding Debs Park were unaware of the Audubon Center at Debs Park. Audubon staff believed this lack of awareness was in part because staff did not maintain and build relationships with the Latino community. Community relationships that were initially formed in the 1990s were lost. Since the survey, Audubon staff has been intentional with building relationships with the surrounding community. They table at community events (whether there is an environmental theme or not), talk to community members one-on-one, connect to community leaders, provide flyers in Spanish and English, partner with groups and schools that serve the community, hire community members, and emphasize individual contact. By building relationships and listening they have been able create programs that are relevant and that would attract the nearby community. For example, they found a higher participation rate when they engaged families and the whole community rather than just individuals. Audubon has found that connecting with community members with whom they have relationships has been crucial and creates a ripple effect. As Chapman states, “[Community members] are the best connectors and spokespeople for our programs.” Building relationships remains a challenge but the intention is there and most importantly the people are accepting Audubon Center at Debs Park as a key community member.

Developing deep and long-term relationships takes time, but is probably the most important aspect of the success of Outward Bound Adventure, a community service organization that serves underserved urban youth in Southern California and other select cities, and their families, by promoting self empowerment, dignity, accountability, community commitment and environmental stewardship. Building long-term relationships has allowed them to become a trusted ally of the community. Outward Bound Adventure’s executive director, Charles Thomas, recommends the following approach to building relationships. First, ask the community what it wants and needs. Does it want to be served? The underpinnings of Outward Bound Adventures were in a community leader’s understanding of the community’s needs and close connections with community activists and leaders to develop a program that met the needs of the community. Second, understand the demographics and history of the community. One size does not fit all. Third, don’t assume you know all the answers. Instead, listen. The community likely has unfulfilled solutions to the problems it may face and it is critical to listen to figure out how you can be of service in solving those problems.

*Build relationships now, especially before you need something. Establishing a solid relationship will make it easier to ask or accept a favor later on down the road, especially if you have a short time line.*

Opportunities to build relationships often do not begin around an actual project. It often begins by connecting one-on-one with community leaders, especially if you attend their community events. In 2005, Meryl Redisch, the executive director of Audubon Society of Portland, an organization that promotes the understanding, enjoyment, and protection of native birds, other wildlife, and their habitat, took advantage of an opportunity when she was invited to serve on a Portland Mayor visioning committee that included the voices of disenfranchised communities.

For the newly appointed executive director, connecting to marginalized communities and expanding the reach of the organization was a priority. While serving on the committee, she built a relationship with Pietro Ferrari, executive director of Hacienda Community Development Corporation (CDC), an organization that develops affordable housing and builds thriving communities in support of working Latino families and others by promoting healthy living and economic advancement. The two began discussions about connecting Audubon's education work to Hacienda CDC's mainly Latino constituency. A year later, Audubon provided summer camp programs for the Hacienda CDC children and has done so every year since. At the beginning of the partnership, Audubon was providing more funding to the programming. Now, Hacienda CDC has been providing more funding, writing Audubon into grants that address social determinants of health. Audubon's outdoor work is creating healthier lifestyles for a Latino community that suffers from health disparities, such as high rates of diabetes and heart disease.

*Provide value. Be relevant to the community.*

Environmental Learning for Kids continues to listen to the community they serve and is committed to providing value. For them, learning about the environment and science translates into real, tangible benefits for individuals who participate in their programming. African Americans and Latinos in Denver public schools have a 61 percent high school graduation rate. However, Environmental Learning for Kids youth have an astonishing 98 percent high school graduation rate. Environmental Learning for Kids did not stop there. They realized their further responsibility in preparing their children for college, many who are the first ones in their family to attend higher education. Environmental Learning for Kids noticed that many of their high school graduates struggled in college and some dropped out. To address this issue, they began to provide college visits, so high school student could get a feel for college life and meet important campus groups and departments, such as people of color student groups and financial aid services. Environmental Learning for Kids help in other ways as well, such as filling out financial aid forms, moving into dorm rooms, buying supplies, and providing tutoring. They even help their children take the next step and apply to graduate schools. Environmental Learning for Kids is truly invested in their youth participants. As executive director, Stacie Gilmore, states, "we have a holistic approach. We want our kids to be successful on all fronts." Environmental Learning for Kids is uniquely situated in the African American, Latino, and environmental communities in Denver. Through a focus on equity and community relationship building in their environmental programming, Environmental Learning for Kids provides numerous opportunities for people of color to both participate in the environmental movement and pursue higher education.

*Choose messengers wisely because the messenger may actually be more important than the message*

Outward Bound Adventures emphasizes having staff and instructors that look like the community they seek to engage or that have a similar lived experience to those they seek to engage. For Outward Bound Adventures, it's been critical to have staff and instructors that have an understanding of the lives and circumstances of those they serve to create a strong connection

to communities of color. Right up front, having instructors and staff who are people of color or if you are seeking to serve a low-income community, are people from a low-income background, sends a dual message to the community: (1) we've thought about who you are and what you are dealing with and (2) we value people like you and promote you within our organization.

Outdoor Outreach, an organization in San Diego County that empowers at-risk and underprivileged youth to make positive, lasting changes in their lives through comprehensive outdoor programming, employs instructors and staff that come from the same population they serve. Outdoor Outreach employs a leadership program to train to become instructors and staff. By cultivating an instructor base that comes from the same populations of youth it seeks to serve, Outdoor Outreach is able to demonstrate to new participants that it values their participation in programs and is genuinely interested in them staying involved. Furthermore, there are real opportunities for full and part-time employment, which many of the youth need. Having this pipeline for staffing is essential.

Audubon Center at Debs Park on numerous occasions has hired community members. They serve as effective connectors and communicators who have one foot in the Audubon culture while having the other foot in their community.

Audubon Society of Portland partners with Latino community serving organizations, such as Hacienda Community Development Corporation (CDC). While Hacienda CDC does not have an environmentally focused mission, they see the benefits of their community connecting to outdoor activities and often serve as the intermediary between Audubon Society of Portland and the Latino communities they serve.

### *Do your homework*

For Massachusetts Audubon Society, an organization that protects Massachusetts' nature for people and wildlife, tailoring environmental educational programming to the communities they work with is a high priority. Developing curriculum is a two-step process. First they research demographics of the targeted community. (Most demographic information can be found online on city, county, or state websites and/or the U.S. Census Bureau. Check annually because demographics shift quickly.) Second, they go into the community and ask what they need. For example, when they started a program in Lawrence, Massachusetts, Massachusetts Audubon Society staff worked with a group of college students to help with research of the community. They found out that Lawrence was 89.7% Latino, had a median age of 30, and the median income was \$14,000. They decided to create a curriculum working with young Latinos, but needed more specific information about what young Latinos like to do and how they relate to outdoor spaces. Massachusetts Audubon Society staff then went to the community to listen, learn, and start conversations. They discovered that the community valued community gardens, especially to grow diverse plantings from different cultures. Through the community gardens, Massachusetts Audubon Society found opportunities to discuss and grow native plants and to talk about birds in ways to connect people. For example, many birds in New England migrate from the Caribbean and Central American, regions where many of the Lawrence residents have roots. Lastly, community use helps inform the structure of the outdoor site, features of the park,

and the types of programming. Does the community like to picnic, go for walks, meditate, recreate as a family or community? Overall, Massachusetts Audubon Society is committed to providing programming that is relevant and unique to the local community.

Through their research and personal experiences, Environmental Learning for Kids staff understood that there were barriers to engage in outdoor activities unique to the Latino and African American populations they served. They addressed some of those barriers by providing transportation, food, and outdoor clothing and gear. They also understood that urban youth are often scared of nature and the outdoors. There are real fears of the wilderness, such as animals and even people possibly attacking them. There is a history in the U.S. of racist groups that inflict physical harm to African Americans in the wilderness. These are real fears that need to be understood and addressed. Environmental Learning for Kids staff have put mechanisms in place to alleviate these fears. For example, when camping, Environmental Learning for Kids usually requests being placed in a spot where they are allowed to be noisy in case their kids scream or talk late at night. Also, children are often scared of the dark and strange noises, such as crickets chirping. Environmental Learning for Kids staff pairs the younger children with mentors and time is spent explaining and teaching the children even if it is in the middle of the night. Lastly, Environmental Learning for Kids children always move in groups after the sun goes down to alleviate fears.

*Approach with good will, good intentions and humility.*

Understand that while your intention is teach the community about the environment, you will need to be committed to learning about and understanding any new community if you want to be effective at working with them. It will be a two-way learning process. Understand that you may make mistakes but that the most important issue is that you learn from them and use them to inform more effective work in the future. Jeff Chapman, executive director at the Audubon Center at Debs Park, describes their outreach work as “still a challenge. We are learning on a daily basis and are continually refining our approaches.”

*Be embedded in the community*

Key to Outward Bound Adventures’ success is its full-time presence in the community it serves. Having a presence in the community you wish to serve indicates that you value their community and desire to be part of it. It opens the door to consistent communication with community leaders and an ability to understand what is happening in the community in real-time, things that are hard to do from afar. It enables your organization to understand local and regional vernacular and be relevant to the community.

Massachusetts Audubon Society (through their Boston Nature Center) and Audubon Center at Debs Park have also realized the importance of embedding themselves in the community by erecting nature centers in communities of color. However, both organizations have realized that building a physical structure in the community is only one step in a broader commitment to building relationships and being relevant to the surrounding community.

*Develop partnerships. Work with groups that already work effectively with communities of color, including organizations of color. Work with organizations that have a track record and have earned the trust of the community.*

Outdoor Outreach's focus is to reach low-income youth and youth of color. The most fruitful path to these groups, according to executive director, Chris Rutgers, is through strong partnerships with youth service agencies. By partnering with youth service agencies, Outdoor Outreach is able to easily and effectively reach low-income youth and youth of color in at-risk situations.

For Audubon Center at Debs Park, partnerships were crucial for them to connect to Latino families and build strong ties to the community. They worked with Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services, Los Angeles Public Library, Arroyo Vista Family Health Center, Churches of Los Angeles Coalition, and the City of Los Angeles in numerous community events, such as festivals, health fairs, and speaking engagements. These partners had already earned trust from the community and Audubon gained credibility and access to the community by building relationships with these well-respected institutions.

*Think long-term/ Be in for the long haul*

A key component of Outdoor Outreach's success is its focus on creating comprehensive programming, not one-time experiences. The key to success is in long-term engagement with low-income youth and youth of color. Outdoor Outreach does this by providing consistent opportunities for youth to participate in programs and moving participants into instructor and staff positions.

Outward Bound Adventures cultivates a culture that recognizes the value of growing its own culture, staff and instructors from its participants. Though this is not easy, it has been essential for Outward Bound Adventures' success. Running children through the program and bringing them on as staff and instructors keeps Outward Bound Adventures linked to the community and provides institutional memory that is not possible to create otherwise. Outward Bound Adventures makes sure participants, past, present and future have opportunities to engage in the program over time. They constantly evaluate whether they are delivering the community's desired products and whether they are relevant in the community. Lastly, Outward Bound Adventures tracks participants over time and highlights their continued engagement in environmental stewardship.

*Be comprehensively committed to diversity and equity*

Your organization's outreach efforts (and overall diversity work) will be more successful if your organization and leadership is comprehensively committed to diversity both internally and externally, meaning working on creating an inclusive culture, recruitment, retention, integrating

diversity into policies, practices, program, partnerships, and outreach. This also means having staff, board, and volunteers who are culturally competent and have a deep understand the role of power and privilege, especially as it relates to race and socioeconomic status, in the environmental movement. For example, the environmental movement has historically been for the upper middle class whites. Not only understand how that dynamic has created inequities in our society, but also understand that the individuals and organizations who succeed at addressing equity are those who truly understand the role of power and privilege.

Audubon Society of Portland, Environmental Learning for Kids, and Trustees of Reservations have embarked on internal diversity work. They are working with consultants to assess organizational diversity, develop a strategic framework for progress, and provide trainings on diversity, cultural competence, and power and privilege issues. This internal work not only enhances their outreach and partnerships but it also helps their bottom line, attracting new funding sources, broader public support, and more members and volunteers. By being committed to diversity both inside and out, these organizations are becoming models for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, especially by 2042 when the U.S. will be over 50 percent people of color.

#### *Understand and work through the community's main information sources*

Community centers and churches are often common places for communities of color to congregate. Also, elders and long time community residents may be the most respected leaders in the community. Taking time to build relationships and learning about the community will allow you to access and understand the main information sources.

Part of Audubon Center at Debs Park's success engaging the local Latino community was working with local church leaders from All Saints Church and St. Ignatius Parish. They also found non-traditional sources, such as families and individuals, that community members seek for leadership.

#### *Language matters*

Engage in effective communication, whether it's a different language altogether, such as Spanish, Mandarin, or Tagalog, or more accessible wording, like using "plants and animals" instead of the term "biodiversity."

Audubon Center at Debs Park and Massachusetts Audubon Society have staff members and seasonal staff who are bilingual (Spanish and English speakers) to better connect their work to the Latino community. Audubon Society of Portland's partners provide bilingual staff members at their summer camps. Audubon Center at Debs Park also provides outreach materials and signage in both Spanish and English.

*Research past interactions you, your organization, other environmental organizations, and predominately white institutions have had with this community.*

In the 1990s National Audubon Society ran programs in Debs Park but had no physical structure in place. During this time they hired a well-respected individual from the Latino community surrounding the park to research and talk to influential leaders in the community. Audubon discovered that building trust, which was not an easy task, was a key element to successfully engaging the Latino community. Many organizations and institutions over the years have come in to the community, taken what they want and left. They needed to set up an office and/or physical presence in the community to show their commitment. At the time, Audubon's office was in Marina del Rey, an affluent part of Los Angeles. This was the beginning of developing the Audubon Center at Debs Park.

*Meet communities of color where they are and speak to their environmental values.*

People of color often follow environmentally-friendly practices but may not call what they do environmentalism or themselves environmentalists. For example, an Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative report, called "Climate of Change," shows that African Americans emit 20 percent less greenhouse gas emissions than whites. Conserving energy and consuming and driving less save money and are ways of life for many people of color, especially those from low-income communities, across the nation. Environmental educators will be more successful connecting to new constituencies if they value, acknowledge, encourage and reward these behaviors, and also reserve judgment upon individuals who don't follow an environmental ethic in every aspect of their lives. For example, Jeff Chapman of Audubon Center at Debs Park recounts an experience where Latino day laborers were at the center learning about green landscaping concepts, such as installing native plants and water conservation techniques. Many brought their meals in Styrofoam containers. There was some angst among Audubon staff to say something, but in the end, they did not. Chapman states, "We shouldn't judge. If we did, we would have lost a strong constituency."

*Understand that conservation and environmental protection goals can lead to people and community goals, such as economic opportunity, health, family, and/or community building, and vice versa.*

Audubon Society of Portland discovered that family is important to connecting to the Latino community. Through numerous experiences they found more success when they built strong relationships with families and provided family-specific programming. For example, the first year Audubon provided overnight summer camp for children, no one participated. The community was not ready for this type of programming. Audubon realized that trust and stronger relationships with families needed to be built first and that programs need to be tailored to the community. On another occasion, Audubon found little success sending vans to the Latino neighborhoods to pick up the children for their youth programs. Not many would get on board. One day, a young boy asked if his family could come along. The Audubon driver said, "yes," and since then the van has been packed with families.



Audubon Center at Debs Park has also resituated their programming after receiving feedback from community focus groups that they would like experiences for families not for individuals. They also found that working with schools has been key to connecting with families.

Audubon Center at Debs Park, Outdoor Outreach, and Outward Bound Adventures emphasize recruiting from the communities they serve, not only to have effective messengers but to also provide jobs, real economic opportunities and invaluable experience in environmental careers, which are often difficult to find.

Lastly, the African American Outdoor Association, an organization that encourages and supports the efforts of African Americans to increase their fitness, health and wellness by pursuing vigorous outdoor activities that bring them into the natural environment, was founded for two main purposes: (1) to address health disparities, such as high rates of heart disease and obesity, among the African American population and (2) to build community. Through the organization's events, African Americans can experience the outdoors as a group, which can be empowering. They can overcome any fears they may have together. Also, many long standing African American communities in Portland are being fractured through gentrification. African American Outdoor Association events are helping to keep the African American community in Portland cohesive and connected. The African American Outdoor Association uniquely uses outdoor experiences and recreation as a way to achieve its health and community building goals for the African American community.

Section 2. A prescribed recommendation for a step-by-step process for environmental educators to reach out to diverse audiences (drawing from the best practices and our expert knowledge.)

Engaging diverse audiences is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor. Nor are all individuals and organizations starting at the same level. Therefore, the following steps are points at which organizations can start from depending on the audience and the level of cultural competency and organization has.

Step 1. Establish an organizational commitment to addressing diversity.

This can be done at the board or staff level and could be part of the strategic plan or a resolution from the board. Depending on your organization's size, create a team of board, staff and/or volunteers to carry out these steps.

Step 2. Identify a community of color you seek to serve.

This may be as specific as a Latino community in a specific neighborhood or a dispersed community of African-Americans across a region. Utilize demographic information from the U.S. Census Bureau and its more detailed American Community Survey data. Use care with such data and ground-truth it with on-the-ground conversations with local experts and community leaders as such data has historically under-counted people of color.

Step 3. Do your homework about the community you seek to serve.

Understand the cultural and historical issues at play with respect to the community in the broader context as well as its members' relationship to the environment. Is it a predominantly Mexican-American community whose members come from farm-working backgrounds? How might your existing programming come across to such a community? Utilize sources of information such as community organization's newsletters, websites or meetings to understand the issues the community is most concerned with.

Step 4. Understand the power and privilege of your own organization and members.

Utilize diversity training or cultural competency training to assess your organization's level of awareness in working with a community of color. Set out a plan of action to create a culturally-competent, inclusive organization that is self-aware and explicitly aware of the perception of itself and its members by the community you seek to serve.

Step 5. Establish a presence in the community.

Attend community meetings, fundraisers, events and spend time in places where community members regularly gather (parks, churches, plazas, etc.). Sponsor an event, place an ad in a newsletter or volunteer in one of their events.

Step 6. Establish communications with community leaders and organizations.

Set up meetings to listen and learn about what is important to the community. Don't ask for anything at these introductory meetings. The purpose of these meetings are to build relationships and gather additional information to figure out how your organization can serve the community through your existing or modified programs.

Step 7. Share your work.

As you establish relationships, share information about the environmental education work your organization does. Ask leaders and organizations if they want to be served in some way by your organization. Based on your prior homework and learning, come prepared with ideas about how your existing programming or modified programming can serve the most important needs of the community. Be prepared to accept challenges to your ideas and be open to ideas that may fundamentally challenge you and your organization.

Step 8. Refine or create programs to serve the community.

Involve community members in planning programs for maximum participation. This has the additional benefit of incorporating culturally-specific nuances into programming to ensure participation and sustained engagement. Continue to listen and learn from participants to refine programs.

Step 9. Make it a long-term investment.

Seek to bring youth participants into your organization as instructors, staff, and volunteers by providing consistent opportunities for participation that results in tangible benefits they can use. Identify opportunities to formally partner with community-based organizations and share resources with them. If you are working with a geographically-defined community and are not physically located in the community, establish a physical presence there with an office, staff co-located with a community group or perhaps a booth or table at a regularly occurring community event. If you serving a dispersed community, take advantage of opportunities where your organization can regularly interact with key community groups or leaders.

Step 10. Bring community members into board, staff and volunteer leadership positions.

Your organization will grow and innovate as members of the community come into leadership positions and strengthen the bonds between your organization and the community.

### Section 3. Annotated bibliography

Enderle, E., editor. 2007. Diversity and the future of the U.S. environmental movement. Yale Environmental Studies Program, New Haven, CT.

Available at: <http://environment.yale.edu/news/5175>

Essays from environmental and social justice experts identify seminal issues for environmental organizations to grapple with in the context of class and race diversity in the U.S. Essays highlight the exclusionary history of the environmental movement, the results of that exclusion and pathways to build a more inclusive movement.

Environmental Education and Training Partnership. 2010. Delivering culturally relevant environmental education to diverse audiences. Available at:

[http://www.eetap.org/pages/dynamic/web.page.php?page\\_id=68&topology\\_id=1&eod=1](http://www.eetap.org/pages/dynamic/web.page.php?page_id=68&topology_id=1&eod=1)

The University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, Intercambios and three environmental education organizations developed strategies to help the three EE organizations become more inclusive. Evaluation of the strategies developed will be captured for a future publication identifying best practices.

James, K. and McAvoy, L.H. 1992. A qualitative study of factors influencing racial diversity in environmental education: preliminary results. United States Forest Service, General Technical Report PSW-132.

Research suggests environmental education practitioners incorporate inclusive definitions of environmentalism to foster greater participation of people of color. Such definitions would include urban issues and social justice. Recruitment efforts to increase racial diversity in the field should be carefully thought out and implemented.

Jefferson County Public Schools Center for Environmental Education. 2003. Environmental education and diversity within a multicultural society. Jefferson County Public Schools Center for Environmental Education. Available at:

<http://www.jcpsky.net/Departments/EnvironmentalEd/images/tchrrespdfs/peediversity.pdf>

Article highlights the disproportionate environmental burdens poor communities bear and the need for wider concerns such as economic opportunity, are integrally connected to environmental concerns. Such a focus requires greater emphasis and awareness of diversity and equity and efforts to make the field of environmental education more inclusive of people of color.

Lozar Glenn, J.M. 2009. Still developing the toolbox: making environmental education relevant for culturally diverse groups. Environmental Education and Training Partnership, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point.

Available at:

[http://www.eetap.org/pages/dynamic/web.page.php?page\\_id=84&topology\\_id=25&eod=1](http://www.eetap.org/pages/dynamic/web.page.php?page_id=84&topology_id=25&eod=1)

Lozar Glenn profiles five organizations working to make environmental education relevant for culturally diverse groups. The author identifies ten key findings for environmental educators seeking to engage diverse audiences.

Madfes, T.J. 2004. What's fair got to do with it? Diversity cases from environmental educators. WestEd, EETAP and NAAEE, <http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/rs/727>.

Author reviews environmental education experiences of a diverse group of environmental educators revealing the real and perceived power relationships that cultural differences elicit. Useful as a tool to promote dialogue and develop principle of practice for environmental educators in engaging diverse audiences.

Matsumoto, K. and Poppo, 2003. Re-evaluating our purpose: environmental education and diversity. New Horizons for Learning, [www.newhorizons.org](http://www.newhorizons.org)

Available at: [http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/environmental/matsumoto\\_poppo.htm](http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/environmental/matsumoto_poppo.htm)

The authors discuss their experiences as environmental educators vis-à-vis diversity, noting the paucity of environmental educators of color, lack of diversity in environmental education curriculum, and the need for environmental education to embrace issues of relevance to local communities.

Mayeno, A.S. 2000. Environmental Education Needs and Preferences of an Inner City Community of Color. Master's thesis, San Francisco State University.

Available at:

[http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?\\_nfpb=true&\\_ERICExtSearch\\_SearchValue\\_0=ED463167&ERICExtSearch\\_SearchType\\_0=no&accno=ED463167](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED463167&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED463167)

The author interviewed students, parents and teachers from nine schools in southeast Oakland, California as to their perspectives on environmental education. The study confirmed other findings that African Americans tend to see nature as a sustainer of human life and stress the interdependence of human and wildlife systems. Study identified barriers to participation for youth of color: funding, lack of awareness of teachers of existing programs, lack of bilingual programming, and developing programming that involves families and in some way benefits the local community.

North American Association for Environmental Education. 2010. Cultural diversity articles and success stories. <http://www.naaee.org/programs-and-initiatives/diversity/cultural-diversity-eetap>

Series of installments highlight topics such as cultural competency, glossaries of key diversity-related concepts in environmental education, and practical steps for organizations seeking to engage diverse audiences.

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. 2010. Making environmental education relevant to culturally diverse audiences. UWSP. Available at:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/natres/eetap/makeEErelevant.aspx>

Online course provides participants with basic knowledge and skills necessary to make environmental education relevant to culturally diverse audiences.

