

# Times Afield

*News and Events from the  
Outdoors Tomorrow Foundation*



The Outdoors Tomorrow Foundation (OTF) developed and implements the Outdoor Adventures (OA) curriculum, which is now in more than 1,400 K-12 public and private schools across all 50 states and Canada, annually teaching 140,000+ students a comprehensive range of outdoor skills they will use and enjoy for a lifetime.



## **Freddy Penka Named Outdoor Adventures Educator of the Year**

Freddy Penka of Pinkston Middle School in Mountain Home, Arkansas, is the 2024 Outdoor Adventures Educator of the Year. Freddy was presented the award at OTF's Annual Benefit Concert earlier this year.

[Watch Freddy's 2024 Educator Of The Year Video Here](#)



"I am honored to be named the Outdoor Adventures Educator of the Year. The legacy that I hope to leave with kids is that they value nature through outdoor activities and can find happiness and joy through them. I want to thank Arkansas Game and Fish, The Pinkston Middle School Administration, and the Outdoors Tomorrow Foundation for this award. Without their support, this wouldn't be possible," said Penka.



Freddy has been an educator for 27 years and first implemented Outdoor Adventures in the classroom in 2021. Since then, he has been passionate about helping students connect with nature and the outdoors. Freddy, along with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, have worked to teach students how to protect, conserve, and preserve various species of fish and wildlife in Arkansas.



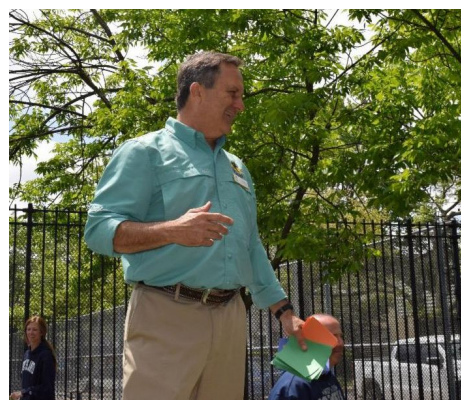
"We are so grateful for Freddy's commitment to the program and are honored to recognize him as the 2024 Educator of the Year. Freddy's Outdoor Adventures students are extremely fortunate to have a passionate and exceptional educator to bring the outdoors to life through our program," said OTF's Director of Education, Scot McClure.

**OTF Education Staff Train Future Outdoor Adventures Teachers  
in Brooklyn with Support from the DSC Northeast Chapter**



When you think about the best places to learn about fishing, hiking, and enjoying the great outdoors, Brooklyn and Queens may not be your first thought or even in your top 5 (or 10!). Recently, dozens of teachers from more than 50 schools in those boroughs were doing just that thanks to teacher training conducted by the Outdoors Tomorrow Foundation's (OTF) education staff and sponsored by the Dallas Safari Club's Northeast Chapter. The OTF's Outdoor Adventures K-12 (OA) in-school outdoor education curriculum is now in 1,400+ schools in all 50 states and Canada.

Scot McClure (bottom right photo), Director of Education, and Tari Garner (bottom left photo), Outdoor Adventures Coordinator, conducted training sessions on May 13-14. The physical education instructors were enthusiastic about learning new ways to engage their students in outdoor skills. Teachers learned various skills, including how to use a compass, cast a rod and reel, and tie fishing knots. Additionally, they learned how to teach survival skills, hiking, camping, and wildlife conservation.



Outdoor Adventures is the fastest-growing segment of the program, which is exciting for the overall success of the program since research proves that the earlier kids are introduced to the outdoors, the more likely they are to stay involved in outdoor activities as adults.

The training was a great success and the coordinator of the Queens district said 100% of her schools want to start Outdoor Adventures at their schools this fall. Tari Garner, OTF's OA Coordinator said, "Training NYC teachers was one of the most engaging trainings we've ever done! The teachers were so eager to learn outdoor skills and how to teach those skills in a variety of settings. Outdoor Adventures is going to be an exciting addition to NYC physical education programs, and teachers and students will love it!"

The OTF is looking for additional funding to help get OA in these New York schools. The OTF is a 501c3 nonprofit charitable organization, EIN 75-1761481. See [www.GoOTF.com](http://www.GoOTF.com) for more information or contact LeAnn

Outdoor Adventures is usually taught as a physical education class, and creative activities are used to teach conservation and outdoor skills. Most of the teachers at these sessions were elementary PE teachers. The elementary version of

Schmitt, Director of Partnership Development at (817) 410-5054 or email [LeAnn@GoOTF.com](mailto:LeAnn@GoOTF.com).



**Special thanks to the sponsors and live auction donors who helped make the 2024 OTF Benefit Concert a success!**

All proceeds from the concert support the growth of Outdoor Adventures, which is getting more kids outside! Look out in early fall for a save-the-date for the 2025 concert!

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Special thanks to these organizations for recent grants  
to support our mission of outdoor education:



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If you have any questions about your contribution, please contact Sean McLelland, Executive Director, at Sean@GoOTF.com or call (817) 410-5054.

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