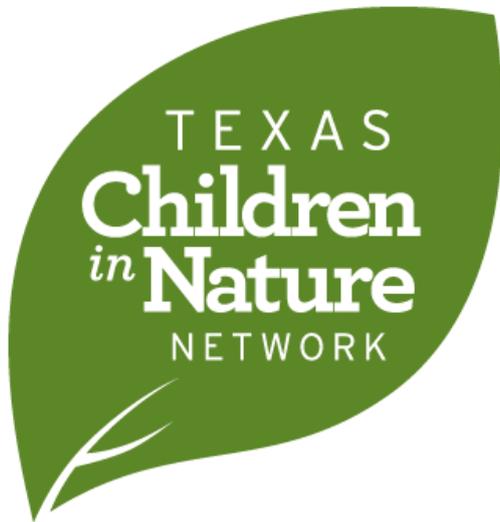


# TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE NETWORK 2021 SUMMIT



**December 2-3, 2021**

**Inspiring Leaders for Healthier,  
Happier, Smarter Kids**

**Fort Worth, Texas**

**Botanical Research Institute of  
Texas and The Fort Worth  
Botanic Garden**

**Sponsored By:**



Children & Nature Network

Hayden and Lynn Brooks  
Peggy and Matt Winkler  
Margy and Bob Ayres



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BOTANIC GARDEN



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# 2021 SUMMIT AT A GLANCE

## Thursday, December 2

- 8:45-9:15 - Welcome
- 9:35-10:35 - Concurrent Sessions
- 10:55-11:55 - Concurrent Sessions
- 11:55-1:15 - Lunch
- 1:15-2:15 - Concurrent Sessions
- 2:35-3:35 - Concurrent Sessions
- 3:55-5:15 - Keynote Speaker - Angela Hanscom
- 5:15-6:15 - Poster Sessions and Networking

## Thursday Evening, December 2

- 6:30-8:00 - Champions Awards Reception
  - Award Winners
    - Mrs. Laura Bush
    - Melissa Campbell
    - Marty Leonard
    - Black Outside, Inc
    - Dr. Amanda Mohammed
    - George Bristol

## Friday, December 3

- 8:30-9:30 - Equity in the Outdoors Panel
  - Juan Martinez
  - David Buggs
  - Melinda Chow
  - Jaime Gonzalez
  - Rocio Villalobos
  - Alex Bailey
- 9:50-11:00- Regional Collaborative Breakout Sessions
- 11:20-12:00 - Keynote Speaker - Lisa Carlson
- 12:00-12:30 - Close
- 1:00-3:00 Post Conference Workshop



# SUMMIT LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our 2021 Summit is taking place in Fort Worth, Texas. We are on the ancestral and unceded land of the Wichita, Tawakoni, Comanche, Kickapoo and Jumanos people. Our ongoing colonial presence on Indigenous lands compels us to take action now to counteract the effects of colonization. The work we do through the Texas Children in Nature Network etwork is one small step towards that effort.

Learn more about land acknowledgments and how to find out about your organization's land here: [native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgement](https://native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgement)

Learn more about the Wichita and Tawakoni: [wichitatribe.com](https://wichitatribe.com)

Learn more about the Comanche: [comanchenation.com](https://comanchenation.com)

Learn more about the Kickapoo: [kickapootexas.org](https://kickapootexas.org)

Learn more about the Jumanos: [jumano-nation.com](https://jumano-nation.com)

A resource featuring Indigenous voices to learn more about Indigenous People's history and current efforts to fight colonization is the [All My Relations Podcast](#).

As part of our efforts to counteract the effects of colonization, TCiNN has donated a portion of the proceeds of this Summit to [Great Promise for American Indians](#), an organization dedicated to working with teachers to engage students in Texas about Indigenous History.

# Follow Us On Social Media

Also, submit questions for our keynotes and panels via our twitter feed: @TXChildren



**@TXchildren**



**/texaschildreninnature**



**Texas Children  
in Nature**



**@texaschildren\_innature**



**/texas\_children\_in\_nature\_network**

# 2021 Keynote Speakers

## ANGELA HANSCOM

Angela Hanscom is an occupational therapist specializing in nature interventions, and the author of the popular book Balanced and Barefoot. Her work in child development at TimberNook center in New Hampshire is influencing healthcare, education and communities across the world.



## LISA CARLSON

Lisa Carlson is the Past President of the American Public Health Association. Through her time working in public health she has seen demonstrated time and again the connection between equitable access to nature and our overall health. After this past year of COVID restrictions this has become even more apparent is a major part of her platform with the APHA.



# Equity Panelists



## **MODERATOR - DAVID BUGGS**

Mr. Buggs is the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), an agency of the state of Texas. His role is developing and managing the execution of TPWD's Diversity and Inclusion strategy. David is also the former Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for FedEx Office Inc. He is an accomplished cultural compliance and management professional with years of experience in the area of relationship building, leadership development, mentoring, training and executive coaching. David also provides insight on behavior management, cultural understanding, multigenerational management, and ethical and government compliance.



## **PANELIST - MELINDA CHOW**

Melinda has been the executive director of Austin Youth River Watch since 2016. Previously, she served as outreach coordinator and manager of Hot Science - Cool Talks at The University of Texas Environmental Science Institute. Her nonprofit experience spans two decades and includes Girls Rock Austin and KUT/KUTX, the South Memphis Alliance in Tennessee, and the National MultiCultural Institute in Washington D.C. Melinda has lived in Austin since 2006, and she has served on the boards of Girls Rock Austin and The Dumpster Project. She holds bachelor's degrees in Biology and Anthropology, and a master's degree in Applied Anthropology.

# Equity Panelists



## **PANELIST - ROCIO VILLALOBOS**

Rocío Villalobos is a Xicana Indigenous woman and a native Austinite whose transnational childhood shaped her understanding of community, family, migration, inequities, and borders. Rocío's entry into social justice movement work began when she was a first-year college student at the University of Texas at Austin. Her involvement with a grassroots environmental justice organization based in East Austin transformed the way she saw herself and the role she wanted to play in her community - one of an advocate, an agitator, and a mentor to young people.

Rocío received her B.S. in Applied Learning and Development and M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Cultural Studies in Education from the University of Texas at Austin. For over 15 years, Rocío has been involved in social justice movement work in Austin, covering education, immigration, and the outdoors/environment. She currently serves as the Immigrant Affairs Manager at the City of Austin's Equity Office. Rocío volunteers her time as a board member with Youth Rise Texas and Ecology Action of Texas, and as a Mentor with Explore Austin. She brings a commitment to equity and joy in her personal and professional life.

# Equity Panelists



## **PANELIST - ALEX BAILEY**

As a child, Alex remembers the fresh smell of mint leaves in his grandfather's garden. His grandfather's intimate love of the natural world is always inspiring to connect to the world around them. This familial connection to the outdoors always inspired him to connect deeply with nature, particularly in life's hardest moments. This foundational love and connection to nature led him to envision a program which radically transforms outdoor spaces and programming to be a beacon of joy and liberation for Black youth--- later to be known as Black Outside, Inc. Between 2018 and 2019, founder Alex Bailey embarked on a journey to observe and shadow summer camps and outdoor programs across the country to better understand the impact outdoor programming has on youth. He took those learnings and, alongside an amazing community of people, began building a culturally relevant program in the city of San Antonio which today collectively serves 150+ youth across central Texas. Alex is a proud fellow of Wild Gift, Echoing Green, a 2019 TedxSan Antonio speaker, and currently serves as the Board President for Black Outside, Inc.



## **PANELIST - JAIME GONZALEZ**

I am a father, husband, brother, son, neighbor, and active citizen. In my work life, I am a versatile, team-oriented and award-winning conservationist, environmental educator, biologist, communicator, systems thinker, writer, equity advocate, and collaborative servant leader - deeply rooted in Houston and Texas, with a global environmental perspective.

# TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE SUMMIT 2021

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### Thursday, Dec 2 - 9:35-10:35

- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Camelia
  - Living Laboratories: Creating School Gardens as Outdoor Classrooms
  - Presenter: Mark Broughton
  - Description: Engaging students in meaningful, outdoor science learning in a garden is challenging, but also worthwhile. Gardens open a door to scientific inquiry and discovery in the living world as well as nurture curiosity and even joy in young scientists. During this workshop, educators will learn practical gardening skills and explore evidence of the academic, physical, and mental benefits of working in a living laboratory with students as they explore important science concepts.
  - Strands: Education
- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Azalea
  - Scaling K-12 Environmental Literacy Programs: Tools to Build Alliances, Equity & Climate Resilience
  - Presenter: Celine Rendon
  - Learn about the state of K-12 environmental education in Texas and the results of a 2021 landscape analysis capturing nearly 400 unique programs. Presenters will share public tools for identifying gaps in services, partnership opportunities, and strategies for reaching our most vulnerable communities.
  - Strands: Education, Equity
- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Oak - Rose
  - Urban Prairies: Influencing Play and Pedagogy
  - Presenter: Anh Nguyen
  - Description: Learn about Katy High School's pocket prairie, the Tiger Prairie, that was started in 2018 by Dr. Rhonda Burrough and Mrs. Kelly Knight in an effort to promote prairie ecosystems and outdoor learning spaces. The presentation will demonstrate how the pocket prairie has proven to have a large potential to benefit students' health, their happiness, and the way that they learn, but there has been continuous community pushback. Audience members will participate in facilitated discussion regarding community interaction with prairies, and the importance of advocating for prairies for community benefit.
  - Strands: Education, OLE!



- Botanical Research Institute of Texas Room: Commons
  - Double Session - 9:35-11:55
  - The Art and Adaptations of Coyote Mentoring
  - Presenter: Lenny "Turtle" Scott
  - Description: The Art of Coyote Mentoring as taught by "Turtle" combines STEAM, TEKS, STARRS, SEL, Physical Health, and Nature Play to implement educational concepts into field applications to build authentic lifelong nature connections. Using techniques such as the Core Routines of nature connection, this form of mentoring is a holistic approach to education and stewardship that uses hidden objectives and invisible classrooms, inspires the spark, passions, and gifts of the student prompting critical thinking skills, problem solving and creative expression resulting in heightened awareness and connection to self, community, and nature.
  - Strands: Community, Education, Equity
- Botanical Research Institute of Texas Room: Classroom
  - Literacy in Nature: Starting Your Own StoryWalk
  - Presenter: Cheryl Potemkin
  - Description: This in-depth look will discuss working within copyrights, choosing books, affordable and weather resistant display options, events, community partnerships, and a walk through FWBG|BRIT's own StoryWalk on the Pollinator Pathway. Participants will have time to explore a variety of nature-based books and begin brainstorming for their own StoryWalk.
  - Strands: Community, Education

### Thursday, Dec 2 - 10:55-11:55

- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Camelia
  - 3 Mini Sessions
  - Can You Name Your Watershed? An Assessment of Learning Outcomes at Austin Youth River Watch
  - Natural Playscape Pilot for Texas State Parks
  - Risky Play, High Reward: The Impact of Outdoor Adventure on Youth Development
  - Strands: Access, Community, Education, Equity, Health



- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Azalea
  - Youth in the Lead: Equity & Youth Leadership in the outdoors
  - Presenters: Ashleigh Cibelli-Pettus, Britney Huynh, Ellyssa Saldivar, Pedro Hernandez, Kerstin Johansson, Jasmine Garcia
  - Description: Young leaders, along with program coordinators, from Cities Connecting Children to Nature Youth Leadership Group, will share their experiences and suggestions to incorporate more equity and youth leadership in programs. You'll get to view and learn about projects completed by youth from the City of Austin's Youth Forest Council and Park Ranger Cadet Program. We will discuss ways to apply this in your work, barriers you may face and how you might overcome them. \*Young folks have been involved with all parts of this session: design of presentation, creating stations that showcase their work, and will facilitate this session.
  - Strands: Access, Community, Equity
- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Oak - Rose
  - Green Play to Green Pay
  - Presenter: Jordan Joly
  - Learn about the state of K-12 environmental education in Texas and the results of a 2021 landscape analysis capturing nearly 400 unique programs. Presenters will share public tools for identifying gaps in services, partnership opportunities, and strategies for reaching our most vulnerable communities.
  - Strands: Education, Equity
- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Auditorium
  - Making the Case for Green Schoolyards: Assessing the Impact of Green Features on Air Temperature and Children's Play
  - Presenter: Melody Alcazar and Kevin Lanza
  - Description: Central Texas is known for its warm climate, yet temperatures are reaching dangerous levels and are disproportionately affecting under-resourced communities. Learn how CCCN Austin partnered with The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston to determine the impact of green features installed as part of the Green School Park strategy on the physical activity levels of school park users. Session participants will gain insight into government/university/school district partnerships, (re)discover the value of trees, and better understand data-driven methods for making the case for green schoolyards.
  - Strands: Access, Education, Equity, Health



- Botanical Research Institute of Texas Room: Classroom
  - How to Include Nature Based Learning into Your Curriculum for Preschoolers
  - Presenter: Deborah Tamez
  - Description: There isn't a one stop shop curriculum framework that combines nature and early childhood developmental milestones. In this presentation, resources and ideas will be shared on how to add nature based learning into your current lesson plans.
  - Strands: Education, OLE!

### Thursday, Dec 2 - 1:15-2:15

- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Camelia
  - Inspired by Nature: Art Experiences and Provocations for Young Children
  - Presenter: Beth Edwards
  - Join the fun and be inspired by nature to create art experiences for young children. In this session participants will have an opportunity to create art, gain ideas for their classrooms or nature programs, and learn about the importance of nature play for young children!
  - Strands: Access, Community, Education, Equity
- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Azalea
  - Supporting Health Equity and Environmental Resilience Through Green Playgrounds: A Texas Case Study
  - Presenter: Katheryn Lusk
  - 1 in 10 kids in the US lives in Texas, but disparities in access to play, recreation, and open space mean that many children of color and children from low-income communities are denied critical opportunities to grow and thrive. In partnership with statewide and local partners in Texas, KABOOM! is leading an ambitious effort to improve health and well-being outcomes of children by building environmentally resilient playspaces. In this panel, you'll hear from local leaders and the play experts at KABOOM! about the promise of playgrounds as an effective intervention to support health outcomes, environmental resilience, and equity at the same time.
  - Strands: Education, Equity, Health
- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Oak - Rose
  - 3 Mini Sessions
  - Teaching Children (and everyone else) to Take Care of Texas
  - Nature's Rhythm: Conservation Engagement Through Citizen Science Opportunities
  - Girl Scouts: More than Cookies, Camping and Crafts
  - Strands: Access, Community, Education



- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Auditorium
  - Adventures in True Community Engagement and Shared Decision Making
  - Presenter: Jennifer Boley
  - Description: This session will discuss Healthy Outdoor Communities' work in Acres Homes and Third Ward, two historically undervalued and underserved communities of color in Houston. In addition to discussing the collaborative itself, we will dive into how we work side-by-side with community members and organizations to build trust and understanding, break down organizational silos, combine efforts to create greater community impact, and share power and decision making with those we serve. Some Third Ward and Acres Homes community members will participate in the presentation/panel discussion and will answer questions from participants about their experience with Healthy Outdoor Communities.
  - Strands: Access, Community, Equity
- Botanical Research Institute of Texas Room: Commons
  - Growing Up WILD: a Sampler
  - Presenter: Kiki Corry
  - Description: Wake up your inner toddler to sing and play using Growing Up WILD. Then discuss the experience with your peers in education to see if it is a professional development and curriculum tool that you can use in your setting connecting children with nature.
  - Strands: Education, OLE!
- Botanical Research Institute of Texas Room: Classroom
  - Double Session: 1:15-3:35
  - Promoting Nature Access through Systems Change Goal Setting
  - Presenters: Julia Hill, Melody Alcazar, Anne Muller
  - Description: Participants will learn about the six conditions of systems change: policies, practices, resource flows, relationships and connections, power dynamics, and mental models. Participants will see examples of how CCCN Austin has used the systems change model to set goals and track progress. Participants will be able to look at ways to leverage systems change in their own work and to see how that aligns to the TCINN strategic plan. We recommend attending this session with a partner from your region so you can work together to identify pathways for advancing the equity work in your area.
  - Strands: Access, Community, Equity, Health

### Thursday, Dec 2 - 2:35-3:35

- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Camelia
  - Making a Case for Outdoor Education
  - Presenter: Tammy Davis
  - This session addresses equity and inclusion by highlighting some of the poorest children in the heartland of the United States. Local children are often denied access to nature when adults do not look past risk, or consider benefits of natural experiences. Assessment tool provided.
  - Strands: Access, Equity



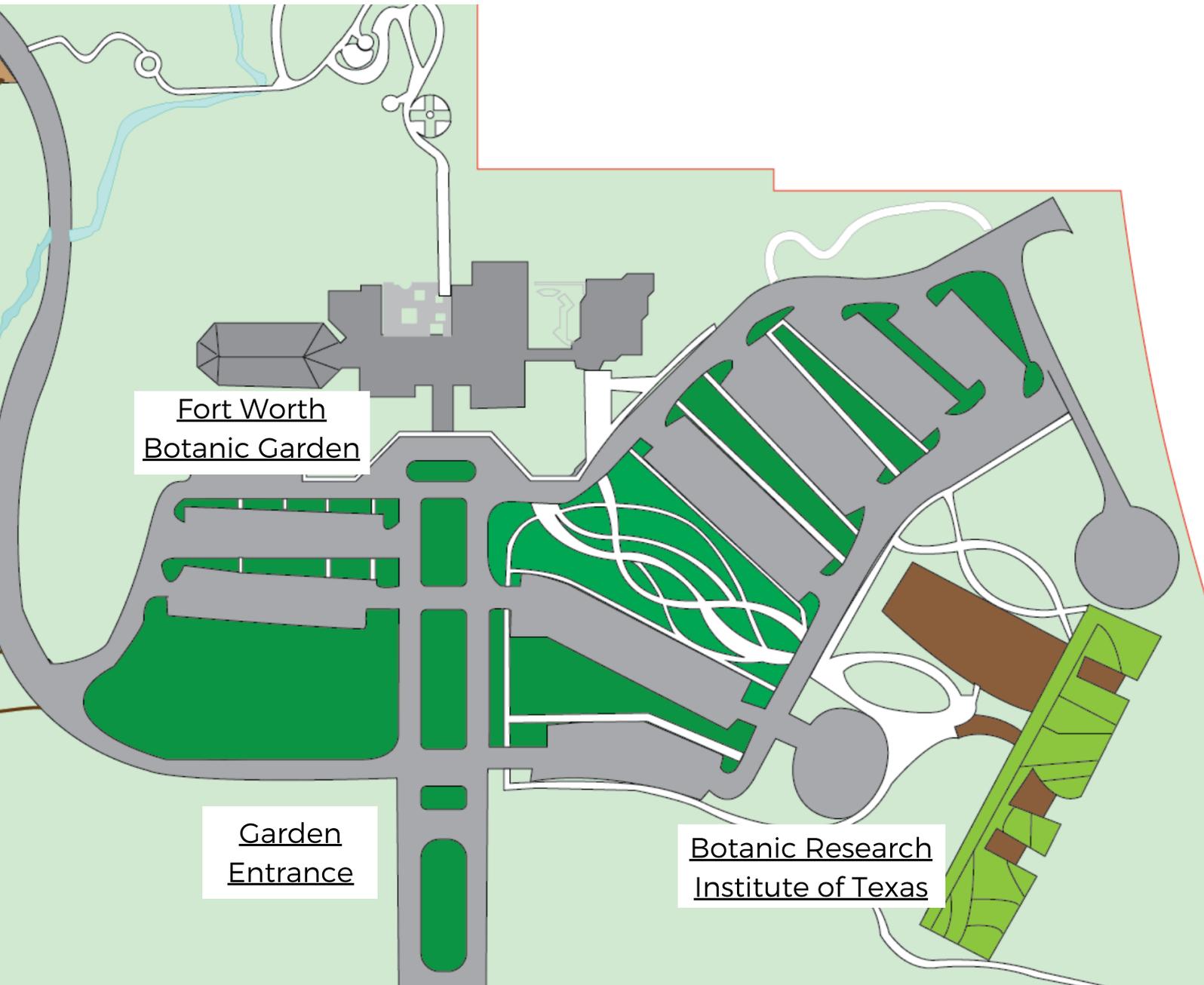
- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Azalea
  - Building Sustainability Through Clarity of Culture
  - Presenter: Adam Flores
  - Not planning for culture & climate can result in an organization with a fragmented culture, where groups of people develop their own norms and practices from their observations, and assumptions. The result can frequently be high turnover, or worse, a decline in organizational success. Presenters will review the key areas that leaders should focus on in planning for healthy and inclusive organizational cultures. From there, participants will have the opportunity to pick one or two areas where they see a need for clarity within their organization to begin tackling. We'll spend time working in small teams on a consultancy protocol in which participants will share their focus with tablemates and receive feedback on possible ways to proceed.
  - Strands: Community, Equity
- Fort Worth Botanic Garden Room: Oak - Rose
  - Mindfulness and Nature Connection
  - Presenter: Rob Dussler
  - Mindfulness is a powerful conduit in promoting nature connection in children and adults alike. This session will examine current research at The Meadows Center for Water and Environment related to mindfulness and nature connection in our environmental education programs and interpreter development. Additionally, this session will explore mindfulness based programs and practices which are being implemented at the center based on our research and practical experience.
  - Strands: Education, Health
- Botanical Research Institute of Texas Room: Commons
  - Tackling Hybrid Field Trips
  - Presenter: Matt Hendrix
  - We will discuss how to tackle hybrid learning from contacting local ISD's, creating content related to what your specialty is, and connecting that content to the students with a hybrid model using our program as an example.
  - Strands: Education

### Friday, Dec 3 - 9:50-11:00

- Regional Break Out Groups
  - Caprock: Camelia
  - North Texas: Azalea
  - Austin: Oak - Rose
  - San Antonio: Botanical Research Institute Commons
  - Pineywoods: Botanical Research Institute Classroom
  - Houston: Botanical Gardens Patio
  - Coastal Bend: Botanical Research Institute Exhibit Hall
  - Rio Grande Valley: Auditorium



# MAP OF THE SITE





## Thank You to Our 2021 Texas Children in Nature Network Board Members

- Chair - Molly Stevens
- Treasurer - Hayden Brooks
- Secretary - Dustin Miller
- Haily Summerford
- Nancy Herron
- Ryan Spencer
- Darcy Bontempo
- Juan Martinez
- April Conkey

If you are interested in serving on the Texas Children in Nature Network Board contact Sarah Coles for more information



# Thank You to Our Founder's Circle Members

## Organizations

- Fossil Rim

## Individuals

- Annette Renaud
- Buddy and Maggie Steele
- Hayden Brooks
- Jaime Gonzalez
- Margy and Bob Ayres
- Molly Stevens
- Nancy Herron
- Peggy Winkler
- Ryan Spencer

The Texas Children in Nature Founder's Circle is made of friends who have made the commitment to give \$1000/year to TCiNN for its first three years to help us get our start.

**Become a  
Founder's  
Circle  
Member  
today**





## BECOME A TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE NETWORK PARTNER TODAY

Texas Children in Nature Network is a collaborative of over 600 partner organizations that are dedicated to connecting children and families with nature to be healthier, happier and smarter.

In order to become an official partner of Texas Children in Nature Network we are asking for organizations to read our strategic plan and sign on to support our mission, no fees involved. As a partner organization you will be eligible to attend partner networking events, share resources, your logo will be displayed on our website, and more!

I hope your organization will become a partner of Texas Children in Nature Network. We are looking forward to an amazing next three years and can't wait to get started!

