



## PROGRAM ON THE ENVIRONMENT

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

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### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: EXPANDING ACCESS HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

Session A, Breakout Room #: 11

Caitlin Naqvi, @NaqviCait

Program on the Environment, University of Washington

Site Supervisor: Julia Glassy, Fiddleheads Forest School, University of Washington Botanical Gardens

Faculty Advisor(s): Faculty Advisor: Timothy Billo, Program on the Environment, University of Washington

Understanding and learning from our environment is a fundamental right, yet is often treated as a privilege. Environmental education (EE) offers a multitude of benefits ranging from individual welfare to broader cultivation of environmental stewardship. The aim of this study was to identify barriers to environmental education and generate solutions that schools, communities, and individuals can realistically implement. I completed an internship with Fiddleheads Forest School where I learned about creating curricula centered around the environment. I conducted six informational interviews with Fiddleheads staff and other experts in the field to learn about the barriers to EE and potential solutions that will increase access. I also completed a literature review where I gathered important context and background information regarding specific groups' experiences with and participation in EE. Through this research, I identified seven main barriers to environmental education. These obstacles extend across many communities, with each facing unique challenges respective to their cultural and historical backgrounds. I formulated seven solutions in response to those barriers that can be reasonably executed on a small scale. Expanding access to environmental education will yield broad and profound benefits for communities historically deprived of such opportunities. We need a diverse body of voices in environmental movements because we are all impacted by the climate crisis, and we need a myriad of perspectives in order to move forward in the most effective, inclusive, and relevant way.