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# Columbia Sportswear Partners With Greening Youth Foundation to Tackle Representation Issues in the Outdoors

Columbia donations to help increase diversity on trails and unlock outdoor career opportunities for underrepresented communities

PORTLAND, Ore.-- Columbia Sportswear (Nasdaq: COLM), a leading innovator in active outdoor apparel, footwear, accessories and equipment, today announced a partnership with the Greening Youth Foundation to promote equitable outdoor industry career paths for diverse youth and young adults. As part of this ongoing relationship, Columbia has made a donation of product and funds totaling over \$50,000 this year to support its Historically Black Colleges & Universities Internship (HBCUI) Program that connects young people from underrepresented communities with outdoor industry job opportunities every year.

“Greening Youth Foundation is an amazing organization and we’ve worked closely with their (HBCUI) internship program for over four years to nurture diverse talent and provide them with gear needed to thrive in new outdoor career opportunities,” said Abel Navarrete, Vice President of Sustainability and Community Impact at Columbia Sportswear Company. “Columbia is committed to ensuring that everyone feels welcome in the outdoors and a crucial component in that mission is working to increase diversity in our industry.”

According to data from the [National Health Foundation](#), nearly 70 percent of people who visit national parks and wildlife refuges are white, despite the fact that 40 percent of the U.S. population consists of people of color. In the labor sector, 7 percent of the National Park Service staff is African-American while 79 percent is white, according to [National Parks Traveler](#).

“We’ve found that visitors and outdoor enthusiasts of color can often feel more welcome and comfortable on the trails if employees and interns working at the park reflect a strong degree of diversity as well. An extraordinary number of people have turned to the outdoors during this challenging year, and we were absolutely thrilled to receive hundreds of applicants for our biggest cohort to date,” said Eboni Preston, Director of Operations for Greening Youth Foundation. “It speaks to the powerful draw of the outdoors and we’re grateful to Columbia for helping us to expand our efforts and support participants in their careers, leadership and stewardship.”

Columbia has donated outdoor gear to each of the Greening Youth Foundation’s interns since 2017 to help them prepare for their upcoming multi-month roles in the National Park Service. As part of this year’s efforts, they will continue to work together to address the number of challenges that young people face when attempting to participate in outdoor recreation, including having access to the right clothing and equipment for working in

various outdoor conditions.

For more information about Columbia Sportswear and Greening Youth Foundation's ongoing partnership, please visit the Tough Mother Outdoor Guide [here](#).

### **About Columbia Sportswear:**

Columbia, the flagship brand of Portland, Oregon-based Columbia Sportswear Company, has been creating innovative apparel, footwear, accessories and equipment for outdoor enthusiasts since 1938. Columbia has become a leading global brand by channeling the company's passion for the outdoors and innovative spirit into technologies and performance products that keep people warm, dry, cool and protected year-round. To learn more, please visit the company's website at [www.columbia.com](http://www.columbia.com).

### **About Greening Youth Foundation**

The Greening Youth Foundation's (GYF) mission is to engage under-represented youth and young adults, while connecting them to the outdoors and careers in conservation. GYF's cultural based environmental education programming engages children from local communities and exposes them to healthy lifestyle choices in order to create an overall healthy community. GYF believes that youth and young adults from diverse backgrounds can greatly benefit from the career opportunities presented within the state and federal land management sectors. Accordingly, GYF continues to develop and strengthen partnerships with land management agencies to provide service and internship opportunities for youth and young adults thereby creating pathways to conservation careers.

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