

Media contact:

Scott Roller
412.682.7275 ext. 220
OR 412.725.0023 (mobile)
sroller@pittsburghparks.org

**Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy News**

For immediate release

Editor's note: high-res images available upon request

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Director of Education Marijke Hecht named 2015 Carnegie Science Center Award Recipient

Lauded for success in experiential environmental education

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Director of Education Marijke Hecht has been named as the recipient of the 2015 Carnegie Science Center Award in the Leadership in STEM Education category. The awards honor those whose contributions in the fields of science, technology, and education have impacted our region's industrial, academic, and environmental vitality.

"The attention this award brings to our amazing students and educators, and to the Parks Conservancy's use of public parks as classrooms, is wonderful", said Hecht. "Outdoor environmental education is a valuable tool for engaging children in science and math, and I'm grateful for the focus that the Carnegie Science Center Awards brings to this work."

With the Parks Conservancy since 2009, Hecht directs pre-K through high school [education programs](#) that immerse a diverse group of participants in the natural world. Hecht has fostered the Parks Conservancy's education programs as they have been developed and evaluated in collaboration with teachers and curriculum experts, and mapped with state academic standards across a range of STEM-related disciplines, skills, and practices.

Hecht is project director of the new Frick Environmental Center, currently under construction in Frick Park.

The [2015 Carnegie Science Center Awards](#) will be held at 6:30 pm on May 8, 2015 at Carnegie Music Hall in Oakland.

About the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy:

The [Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy](#) was founded in December 1996 by a group of citizens concerned with the deteriorating conditions of Pittsburgh's historic city parks. A nonprofit organization, the Parks Conservancy works closely with the City of Pittsburgh under an official public-private partnership agreement to restore and improve the city's park system to its full potential. Originally including Highland, Schenley, Frick, and Riverview Parks, the scope of the Park Conservancy's work now includes a focus on community parks including Allegheny Commons, Arsenal Park, Cliffside Park, McKinley Park, and Mellon Park.

To date, the Parks Conservancy has raised over \$80 million toward park improvements. The Parks Conservancy works with thousands of volunteers annually, stewards over 1,700 acres, and has completed 14 capital projects.

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