



Adventure, Risk & Challenge

UC Berkeley, Sagehen Creek Research Facility & UC Santa Barbara, Sedgwick Reserve
An Integration of Leadership & Literacy

Mission: *ARC teaches English Language Learner (ELL and re-designated) students literacy and leadership skills through a rigorous academic and outdoor education curriculum with a six-week intensive summer immersion program and subsequent follow-up support.*

Who are we? Founded in 2004, the ARC (Adventure Risk & Challenge) Program is an exciting summer school and year-round follow-up opportunity for English Language Learner (ELL) students. ARC combines best practices from classroom teaching with place based, experiential and adventure learning experiences. Sagehen Creek Field Station, a University of California, Berkeley Research & Education Facility, 5 miles north of Truckee, hosts and serves as an integral partner for this program. In 2007, we expanded our program to the UC Natural Reserve System Field Station in northern Santa Barbara County – the Sedgwick Reserve. In 2009, we will expand into Yosemite National Park with a new site in Wawona in partnership with UC Merced.

The Students: Eight to ten ninth and tenth grade, high level, motivated ELL students participate at each field station. Our students are primarily youth who speak Spanish at home, who are seeking educational opportunities and additional skills, and who are in need of both academic and leadership training. During our initial immersion course, our students make substantial growth in their reading, speaking, and writing, as well as their overall confidence. Helping these students succeed in school provides positive role models for their peers, creating a wider impact in their communities. Returning graduates mentor new students each year.

The Curriculum: The six week summer immersion program is a combination of an intensive academic base camp curriculum and a series of backcountry expeditions focused on leadership and self-sufficiency skills. We stress the *adventure, risks and challenges* faced in the outdoors, in personal growth, in social interactions, and in academic learning. Research shows that intensive literacy instruction combined with meaningful outdoor leadership curricula raises student performance by two grade levels in one six-week session. Three subjects are intertwined throughout the summer program: 1) Language Arts curriculum, 2) Science -- Environmental and Wilderness Medicine, and 3) Leadership and Physical Fitness. Each course focuses on improving English language reading, writing, and public speaking. The curriculum is aligned with California State Standards, service learning guidelines, and meets requirements for high school credits. Additional support for the students includes year-round mentoring, tutoring, college counseling and community service projects.

Our Successes: We administer pre and post tests based on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Our students improve as much as **23 percent**. We tutor ARC graduates before taking the CAHSEE, and **our passing rates for ARC graduates is 88- 93%**, compared to much lower state, county and district statistics for this population group (33% - 51%.) Graduates become readers, find confidence, voice, and enjoyment in their writing, and bring new motivation to their academic learning. We also monitor their continued interest in service activities and outdoor experiences. All graduates are placed in community service projects for the school year. In our fifth year, three of our graduates are attending California State Universities, several others in community college and the rest at various grades in high school.

Funding: Diverse funding helps ensure that students participate free of charge. We rely on donations and grants and are a 501(c)3 program. See attached for a list of our past and current supporters.

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Funding Continued: If you would like to support this wonderful program, please contact:

Katie Zanto: sagehen@berkeley.ucnrs.org or look for our donation link on our website

<http://sagehen.ucnrs.org>

Partners:

Sagehen ((Tahoe-Truckee Region) program partners: Sagehen Creek Field Station, UC Berkeley, TTUSD, North Tahoe High's ESL program, Truckee High's ESL program, the Tahoe National Forest Service, Summer Search, King's Beach Boys & Girls Club, Sierra Watershed Education Partners (SWEP), Truckee River Watershed Council (TRWC) Teichert mines, California State Parks, Creciendo Unidos, Project Discovery, Kayak Tahoe, Placer County's Health and Human Services, Project Mana, Tahoe Women's Services, The Truckee Family Resource Center, Summer Search and many other local organizations.

Sedgwick program (Santa Barbara Region) partners: Sedgwick Reserve, UCSB Office of Academic Preparation and Equal Opportunity (APEO), The Marine Sciences Institute (MSI) Santa Ynez School District, Camp Whittier, Sequoia National Park, Santa Maria Boys and Girls Club, Sedgwick docents, Summer Search, and many other local organizations.

Funding sources (both regions):

Tahoe Mountain Resorts Foundation
Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation
Teichert Foundation
Tahoe Truckee Unified School District
Jad Canning Foundation
Truckee Rotary
Tahoe City Rotary
North Tahoe Kiwanis
Soroptimists
The Alpine Winter Foundation
Queen of Hearts Foundation
Placer County Health and Human Services
Stewardship Council
Orfaela Foundation
Montana Yellowstone Expeditions Foundation
UC Santa Barbara Office of Academic Preparation and Equal Opportunity
Faculty Outreach Grant
Santa Ynez School District
Private Donors

Founder / Director: Katie Zanto

Advisory Council:

Dannielle Adler, Jeff Brown, Neil Cunningham, Reini Jensen, Jay Lambiotte, Susie Lippuner, Eve Giovenco, Ray Villaman, Emily Wexler, Dave Miller, Julie Maurer, Valerie Fletcher
Biographies available.

Media Coverage:

In 2007, ABC News did a feature piece on ARC - http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=abc7_focus&id=5631644 –
In 2005, the ARC Program was featured in a 28 minute radio documentary aired nationally. Our students' essays and poems have also been published by many local papers in both Spanish and English and in the Transect, a publication of the University of California Natural Reserve System. This spring, we posted a Youth Voices radio documentary piece by ARC graduate Tania Cabrera. All can be found on our website.