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News Release

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Kaibab National Forest and Arizona Trail Association host educational event for Arizona and Iowa high school students

Tusayan, Ariz., Aug. 1, 2017—For Immediate Release. Earlier this summer, the Kaibab National Forest and [Arizona Trail Association](#) hosted an educational event for 250 high school students from southeastern Iowa and the Grand Canyon region who were on a trip led by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Arizona Trail Association volunteers led the students on a hike down a portion of the iconic Arizona Trail, a non-motorized path stretching 800 miles across Arizona from Mexico to Utah, and the students made stops at several education stations hosted by both Kaibab National Forest employees and volunteers. From throwing atlatls, which are ancient hunting weapons that pre-date the bow and arrow, to identifying trail building tools to listening for birds, the students learned and asked questions about the different specialties that contribute to the stewardship of public lands.

“My favorite was the geology station because we work with rocks all of the time, and it’s really interesting to see which ones were common, what different types there were, and the chemical reactions were cool too,” said Lydia Youngquist, one of the high school students.

Dutch Maatman, a recreation specialist for the Kaibab National Forest, and Sabrina Carlson, northern Arizona regional coordinator for the Arizona Trail Association, planned the event with the goal of students getting to experience tools in their hands and their feet on a trail in order to build confidence, expand horizons, and provide the opportunity to create connections with the natural world. Once made, these connections benefit not only the students but also public land management agencies and nonprofit organizations like the Arizona Trail Association, which are upheld and invigorated by passionate volunteers.

“That’s 250 kids who didn’t know why public lands are important and worthy of their appreciation, and now they do,” said Heather Provencio, forest supervisor of the Kaibab National Forest. “Who knows how that might trickle out into support for keeping public lands public and encouraging youth to consider careers with us or other land management agencies or to offer their time as volunteers in the future.”

Follow the Kaibab National Forest on Facebook and Twitter [@KaibabNF](#). For more information on the Arizona Trail Association, visit www.aztrail.org.

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