2023 PROGRAM CATALOG

connecting people and nature

ADULT & FAMILY • SUMMER YOUTH • SCHOOL PROGRAMS
TEACHER DEVELOPMENT • COMMUNITY SCIENCE
Live and learn in
Great Smoky Mountains
National Park

Tremont Institute is situated about four miles from the Townsend,
Tennessee, entrance of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It is
surrounded by miles of trails, a rushing river, and half a million protected
acres of mountains and forests.

We can accommodate up to 135 people on-site and have a full kitchen staff
serving three hot meals a day.

Living and learning inside a national park certainly has its rewards. Feel
your worries melt away as you cross the bridge over the Middle Prong to
this quiet place tucked into the mountains. Roll out of bed each morning
and walk outdoors to a breathtaking view of Fodderstack Mountain—a
perfect way to begin a day in the national park!

Achieving our mission through:

- residential programs
- research that complements our learning laboratory
- advocacy for outdoor learning
- community engagement

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David Bryant
Education creates lasting positive change for people and our planet.

That's why Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont works to provide transformative learning opportunities that are personal, local, and relevant.

We facilitate experiential learning for youth, adults, and educators through programs that promote self-discovery, critical thinking, and effective teaching.

In partnership with Great Smoky Mountains National Park, our research and residential programs investigate the diversity that sustains all life, foster a sense of place, and cultivate a stewardship ethic that will influence lifelong decision-making.

**MEET THE PEOPLE**

Our faculty and staff take hospitality seriously. We want Walker Valley to feel like home so you can relax, enjoy, and discover what nature has to offer. Whether you are hiking a trail, enjoying a meal, shopping in our visitor’s center, or sharing stories around the campfire, you will recognize both warmth and professionalism in our team. Our faculty have years of experience teaching at Tremont Institute, in classrooms, and other centers around the country. Visit gsmi.org/about to meet our faculty, staff, and board of directors.

“The pandemic brought people outdoors and to the Smokies in record numbers. While it challenged us to grow in ways we never imagined possible, we now recognize our mission is more important than ever. We are honored to invite and inspire others to immerse themselves and spend time in nature, for we know our connection to the land is vital to our own well-being and the well-being of our environment. I hope through your experiences with Tremont, you find joy, wonder, and a personal relationship with nature.” Catey McClary, President & CEO

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As Superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, it is my honor to welcome you to some of the most rewarding experiences we offer for students of all ages at Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont. I’ve had the privilege of experiencing firsthand several of the unique educational programs provided by Tremont. These immersive programs are an integral part of the park’s overall Resource Education mission to help connect people to this special place and also to the overall lifelong benefits of having a relationship with the natural world. The memories created at Tremont now span several generations. What a legacy!

Park rangers and volunteers with the National Park Service provide a variety of educational experiences for school children and park visitors throughout the year. Tremont’s multi-day residential environmental education programs expand upon these opportunities and serve to deepen the connections between the history, diversity, beauty, and wonder of the Smokies. Through these overnight experiences, participants have the opportunity to fully immerse themselves in this incredible natural laboratory, one of the most diverse ecosystems in the temperate world. And, as we discover more about the world around us, we end up discovering much about ourselves.

The Smokies has long been a place of discovery and we invite you to explore the forests and waters of these ancient mountains with us. Thank you for supporting Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont and their efforts in changing the lives of thousands by introducing scores of teachers and young people to these precious cultural and natural resources, here at the Smokies, who otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity.

We hope you enjoy your stay in the heart of Great Smoky Mountains National Park and that you will be inspired to return again soon.

Cassius M. Cash, Superintendent
The Southern Appalachian Naturalist Certification Program (SANCP) is a field-based program that offers basic training in southern Appalachian ecology and interpretive techniques. Sign up for the classes that interest you, or choose a class to begin working toward your certification.

Our SANCP exemplifies rigorous learning that is fun. All courses are taught by Tremont faculty complemented by other experts, researchers, and park professionals. Complete all eight core classes to receive a certificate from the University of Tennessee.

**SANCP Core Courses** | $449 per course
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Naturalist Skills - Feb. 3-5 & Sep. 29-Oct. 1
Skills for Sharing Nature - Feb. 17-19
Birds of the Smokies - May 12-14
Plants of the Smokies - May 12-14
Reptiles & Amphibians - July 7-9
Aquatic Natural History - July 31-Aug. 2
Southern Appalachian Ecology - Sep. 29-Oct. 1
Mammals - Nov. 10-12

**Elective Courses**
- Not required for certification - enjoy these SANCP bonuses!
- Winter Woody Plant ID - Feb. 4 | $80
- Likin’ Lichens - Feb. 17-19 | $449
- Geology - Nov. 10-12 | $449

**Summer Camp for Adults**
Naturalist Week - June 19-23 | $899
Whether you’re a beginner or advanced naturalist, you’ll learn from nature, deepen your connection to the natural world, and develop your outdoor skills at a one-of-a-kind summer camp for curious adults. (Can’t make this in person? Check out the Virtual Naturalist Week on page 9.)

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I have been given the benefit of learning a new way to appreciate nature.
– Women’s Fall Backpack participant

**Women’s Fall Backpack**
Oct. 5-8 | $524
Enjoy early fall with a group of adventurous women on the trail and around the campfire. Join two experienced naturalist guides on a three-day (two-night) beginner backpacking adventure. Food, permits, transportation to and from the trail, group equipment (including tents, cookware, backpacks, and sleeping bags), and extensive knowledge of the Smokies will be provided.

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**Sierra Club: Autumn Glory in the Smokies**
Oct. 15-20
Come hike with fellow outdoor enthusiasts through the hiking club founded by John Muir in 1892. Beginner and experienced hikers are welcome. For pricing and registration, visit gsmit.org/sierra-club.
For complete program information and to register, visit gsmit.org.

**ADULT & FAMILY**

**PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS**

**Springtime in the Smokies**
April 14-17 | $829

Our photography workshops feature renowned photographers such as Tom Vadnais, Susan Milinkovich, Todd Moore, Dan Thompson and Steve Zigler guiding you through the best photo spots in the Smokies. Whether you are a beginner or a professional photographer, you will benefit from one-on-one assistance and helpful critiques during these energizing weekend workshops.

**Autumn Brilliance**
Nov. 3-6 | $829

**WILDERNESS EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONDER**

**Wilderness Emergency Medical Responder Course**
Jan. 8-15 | $997

Led by instructors from Roane State Community College, the program curriculum meets the Tennessee Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and national registry standards for First Responder training.

**Wilderness Emergency Medical Responder Refresher**
Jan. 27-29 | $535

This program satisfies the requirements for the renewal of your First Responder certification. It is also an excellent review of wilderness medical information and skills.

**All overnight programs include meals, lodging, and instruction.**

Ask about our Louise Barber Scholarship for first responder courses!

**FAMILY EVENTS**

**Firefly Camp**
July 4-7 (Choose one, two, or three nights) | $85+

Children and their grown-ups will bond during a one-, two-, or three-night stay in the park! Play games that build confidence and awaken the senses. Learn about the forest and wade in a mountain stream. Sing songs around the campfire and watch the fireflies as dusk falls. This popular camp fills quickly so sign up early! Children ages 4–9.

**Smoky Mountain Family Camp**
July 10-15 | $560+

Let us host your family vacation in the Smokies! With so many options like hikes, swim time, nature activities, crafts, music, and more, the hardest part will be deciding how you want to spend your week together.

**Virtual Naturalist Week**
June 19-23 | Free

Celebrate nature from wherever you are! While the Naturalist Week adult summer camp is at Tremont (see page 7), people of all ages are invited to join in on the exploration from their own backyards.

**Register online at gsmit.org**
NATURE EXPLORATION

**Discovery Camp**
June 12-17 & June 26-July 1 | $722
This is a great introductory camp for those looking to discover the Smokies by swimming in the river, playing in the forest, hiking over mountains, and more. Ages 9–12.

**Trout Adventure Camp**
June 19-24
Gain an appreciation of cold-water conservation through the sport of fly fishing. Campers will learn fly casting, tying flies, and secrets of fishing in mountain streams from experienced mentors from Trout Unlimited. For pricing and registration, visit gsmi.org/trout.

**Firefly Camp & Family Camp**
For campers and their grown-ups. See page 9 for more details.

WILDERNESS BACKPACKING

**Wilderness Adventure Trek** - June 12-17 & June 26-July 1 | $803
You’ll start by learning the skills necessary for planning and enjoying a safe, successful backpacking trip. And before you know it, you’ll be climbing a mountain, carrying everything you need to survive for four days and three nights. Ages 13–17.

**Teen High Adventure** - July 17-27 | $1,552
Spend six nights and seven days backpacking in the national park. You will be amazed at the skills and confidence you gain from this 10-day adventure. Ages 13–17.

SCIENCE

**Girls in Science**
June 12-17 | Price varies based on need
Join other intrepid girls for the adventure of your life, getting up close and personal with critters, plants, and the forces that shape our natural world. Ages 12-15.

**Backcountry Ecological Expedition**
June 26-July 1 | $845
Explore relatively undisturbed areas of the park, conducting field experiments and recording observations. You’ll explore creeks and hollows in search of the next organism new to the park or even to science! Ages 13–17.

**EARN COLLEGE CREDIT**

**Maryville College Great Smokies Experience** - July 17-23
Hike, paddle, and explore in the mountains while learning about biodiversity, sustainability, and sense of place. Students spend half of their time at Tremont, and the other half living on campus at Maryville College. For rising high school juniors and seniors, this once-in-a-lifetime experience offers the most fun you can have while earning three credit hours in environmental studies. For pricing and registration, visit gsmi.org/gse.

Money shouldn’t be a barrier for a life-changing summer experience. Learn more at gsmi.org/financial-aid.

Visit gsmi.org/summer-youth to learn about summer camp discounts.
WHAT WE BELIEVE

- Belonging to a healthy and happy school community is a right.
- School communities are happier and healthier when teachers and students are learning with curiosity and a sense of wonder.
- There are cascading academic, health, and community benefits to learning in the natural world.

WHAT WE DO

Engage teachers and students through hands-on experiences

Help students build critical thinking skills and scientific literacy

Challenge teachers and students to develop personal and meaningful connections to the land and to each other

Model best teaching practices through cooperative teaching

Immerse participants in the biodiversity and beauty of Great Smoky Mountains National Park

OUR CORE EDUCATIONAL PILLARS

Curiosity sparking excitement for learning

Rich Experiences facilitation that captures a full cycle of learning

Growth emotionally, socially, academically

WHAT WE DELIVER

For Students
- Rediscovered joy in learning
- Increased willingness to act as stewards of the environment
- Better understanding of science and the natural world
- Closer relationships with classroom community

For Teachers
- Closer relationships with classroom community
- Professional development
- Renewed love of teaching
- Meaningful, real-world context for students to meet classroom standards

FINANCIAL AID

We strive for our experiences to be accessible to all—regardless of financial means. Tremont provides limited financial aid and can share successful fundraising strategies from other schools just like yours! Call us at (865) 448-6709. Visit gsmit.org/financial-aid.

For complete program information and to register, visit gsmit.org.
WHAT WE BELIEVE
Teaching and learning outdoors unlocks student potential and curiosity while increasing enthusiasm for learning. We want this to become a reality for more teachers and students.

WE ENVISION SCHOOL COMMUNITIES WHERE:
• Outdoor experiential education is integral and frequent.
• Teachers and students share curiosity about their subject matter and their world.
• Deep student-teacher relationships are foundational.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT
Increased student learning
Student-teacher bonding
Teacher support network for experiential education

COOPERATIVE TEACHING
Cooperative teaching is a nationally recognized model that connects classroom learning with experiences at Tremont. It can work for you.

EDUCATOR WORKSHOPS
Visit gsmit.org/newsletter to sign up to learn when new workshops are added.

Teacher Escape Weekends
Aug. 19-20, Sep. 9-10 & Sep. 23-24 | $80
This fun retreat highlights the power of experiential learning and our cooperative teaching method. First-timers and 20-year veterans will meet, share best practices, and engage in experiential learning as a community of practice. There is no better way to prepare for a Tremont trip—or for teaching in your schoolyard.

The Schoolyard Network is free for educators across the country. Learn more at gsmit.org/schoolyard-network.

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The culture of my classroom has totally changed since coming to Tremont. I have had a breakthrough in my career.
—Elementary School Teacher

FIND SUCCESS IN THE SCHOOLYARD NETWORK
Join our virtual network of peer educators contributing resources, sharing field-tested success stories, and offering support for schoolyard learning. The Schoolyard Network is free for educators across the country. Learn more at gsmit.org/schoolyard-network.
People of all ages can take part in the scientific process through our nationally recognized community science program. We will train you to collect data that are shared with collaborating scientists, park resource managers, national databases, and the public. You won’t believe how fun science can be!

Community science brings participants and volunteers together with research partners including:

- Caterpillars Count!
- Discover Life in America
- Hands on the Land
- Institute for Bird Populations
- Maryville College
- Monarch Watch
- National Park Service
- National Phenology Network
- University of Tennessee

*Formerly citizen science. See gsmit.org to learn why we made the change!

**GET INVOLVED**

Monitor salamander populations as hemlock forests decline. Record species observations to help better understand Smokies biodiversity and track changes in phenology in our area. These are just two of our community science projects you can take part in. Email erin@gsmit.org to get involved!

**FOR TEACHERS**

Projects can be woven directly into your school programs. At Tremont, students can take part in monitoring daily weather patterns in Walker Valley or assessing the water quality of our river, the Middle Prong. Many community science projects can be adapted and taken back to your own schoolyard.

**YOU CAN**

- Contribute to research that informs REAL management decisions.
- Develop a deeper sense of place in the park and your own backyard.
- Be part of global efforts to understand how our world works.

Learn how you can help by visiting gsmit.org/community-science

Visit gsmit.org/community-science for project dates and more info.
GET INVOLVED

SUPPORT LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCES IN THE SMOKIES
Participants of our programs show greater appreciation for their surroundings, increased enthusiasm for learning, and deeper connections to nature and one another. Our community of supporters includes individuals, organizations, foundations, and corporations who value our mission and want to enrich and empower their communities. As a nonprofit, we depend on contributions from you to equitably provide educational experiences that lead to life-changing discoveries and inspire the next generation of nature’s stewards and champions.

DONATE ONLINE
Visit gsmit.org/donate to make your impact!

SHOP IN OUR STORE
All proceeds from the store support Tremont programs.

DONATE BY MAIL
Mail your donation to:
Tremont Institute
9275 Tremont Rd.,
Townsend, TN 37882

Contact our Development Manager, Megan Womack, to explore additional ways you can make an impact on Tremont’s future.

To learn more about supporting Tremont through our endowment fund, planned giving, stock donations, corporate sponsorships, or shopping give-back programs, contact Megan at megan@gsmit.org or visit gsmit.org/donate.

Let’s work together to bring more people to the Smokies for transformational experiences in nature!

SPECIAL EVENTS
Our annual special events are a great opportunity to have some fun getting to know Tremont Institute while also providing the support needed to bring more kids to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Visit gsmit.org/events.

VOLUNTEER
Throughout the year, our dedicated volunteers assist with a variety of activities such as event planning, friend-raising, fundraising, community science, and maintenance projects. If you enjoy working with others who believe in environmental education for all ages, and you want to be part of a group that is making a difference in the lives of all who come to Tremont, contact us today to let us know how you might help us fulfill our mission. Learn more at gsmit.org/volunteer.

Contact our Development Manager, Megan Womack, to explore additional ways you can make an impact on Tremont’s future.

Visit gsmit.org/donate to learn how you can make a lasting impact.

For complete program information and to register, visit gsmit.org.