Our approach to youth development in our national parks utilizes park resources to build skills and explore social and environmental justice themes, examining the past, present, and future. Urban Trailblazers (UTB) is a youth leadership program based in the Presidio of San Francisco designed especially for middle school-age youth. For seven weeks each summer, 66 culturally, racially, and economically diverse youth from San Francisco Bay Area public schools learn leadership through art, media, and science workshops and participate in service projects both within—and beyond—the Golden Gate National Parks.

For many youth, UTB is their first internship and upon completion offers a $250 education award. Youth continue the program during the school-year with the UTB Saturday program, delving deeper into the dynamics of leadership and engagement.

Exploring this park is a new experience for many of these young people. In this environment, youth deepen and expand their understanding of themselves, their parks and their communities.

These experiences build camaraderie, personal growth, and a connection to nature.

**Building Integrity Through Entrepreneurship (BITE)** is Project-Based Learning where youth examine businesses in and around national parks, allowing them to discuss lessons on the environment, society, and economic sustainability. They developed socially responsible pizza shops which were rated and scored by a panel of judges on taste, presentation, and the environmental impact of ingredients. With the money raised students were able to support local artists, community organizations, and individuals.

---

**2018 STATISTICS**

- **66** Participants completed a seven-week summer program
- **11** High school summer interns (4 were past UTB participants)
- **9** Middle schools represented (James Lick, Rooftop, Francisco, Marina, Roosevelt, Lawton Alternative, Alice Fong Yu Alternative, Visitacion Valley, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Academic Alternative)
- **212** Contact hours per participant during the seven-week program
- **16** Summer participants return for the school year UTB Saturday program
- **147.4** Contact hours per participant during the school-year program

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

**Rob Hill Ignite** is a multi-day overnight lesson where youth connect deeply with national parks and each other. Parks offer opportunities to challenge youth in socially, emotionally, and physically safe spaces.

Youth engage in group-based activities like ropes courses, camping, and talent shows.
For the last two years UTB's after-school program has been building connections with youth who can apply to the summer program. In 2019, we will offer Saturday programs to youth from Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School. Students will contribute to service projects within and around the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

UTB will also meet multiple times per week during the academic school year, and youth will explore neighborhoods to examine variables that contribute positively to communities. Students will learn about themselves through team-based games, activities, and lessons in self-identity, stereotypes, and prejudice. Over the course of 16 individual meetings, youth will connect with the Golden Gate National Parks through recreation, education, and service.