



GREEN ACCESS

A GUIDE TO ACCESSIBLE HIKING IN MIDDLESEX, NJ



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Sustainability & Grassroots Activism Policy Tracks

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RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK

Institute for Women's Leadership

The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to practice leadership through action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women's Leadership's website at <http://iwl.rutgers.edu>.



Introduction ● ● ● ● ●

Hiking and outdoor recreation are good for our physical and mental health. However, physical and social inaccessibility makes it challenging for disabled people to enjoy green spaces.

- Disability & Identity
- Disability & Nature

Disability & Identity



Social Model of Disability

- Disabled by society's structure, not their medical condition

Exclusion in Feminist Movements

- White feminism & Ecofeminism excluded disabled people

Obesity, Disability & Gender

- Disabled women are most likely to be obese or experience secondhand conditions

Disability & Nature

Physical Barriers

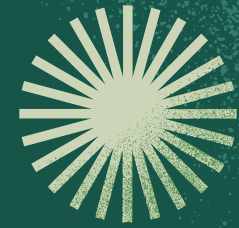
"In many cities not enough UGS (Urban Green Spaces) of a good quality is available or UGS is not publicly **accessible**" (De Haas et. all 9).

Social Barriers

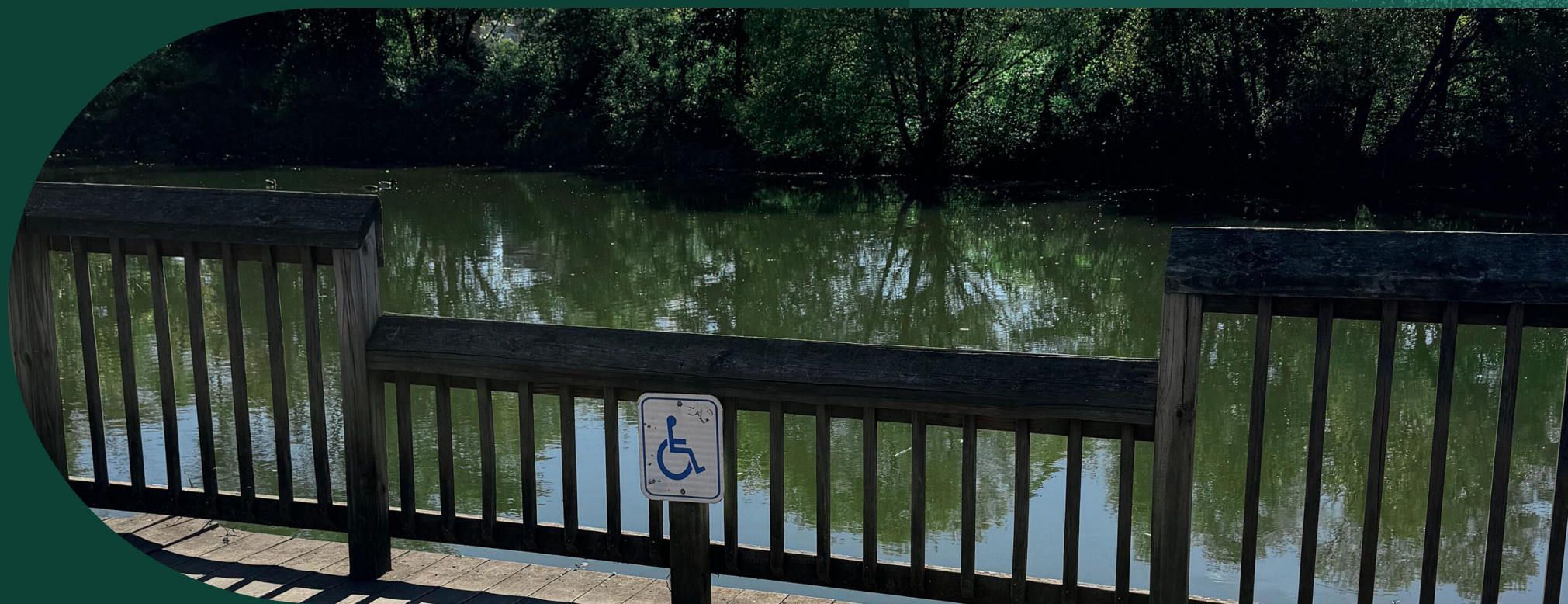
"...when able-bodied individuals receive societal support, it is not often viewed as help but an assumed right; however, support granted to individuals with disabilities is frequently perceived as **an accommodation**" (James et. all 1560).

Lack of Information

"...people did not participate [in an adaptive hiking program] simply because they did not know about it or misunderstood what the **program was about**" (James et. all 1588).



Green Access: A Guide to Accessible Hiking in Middlesex, NJ



**Providing accessibility
information & Breaking down
the social barriers to hiking.**



Goal Statement



My Social Action Project will address the social obstacles and information barriers to disabled hiking. I will create and share resources about inclusive outdoor recreation, including a video series providing accessibility information and an alternative hiking experience. My project will build connections between hikers, disabled people, and the outdoors.





Advocacy Strategy & Methodology

Content Creation

- Instagram
- TikTok
- YouTube

Hand-Outs

- Park Brochure

Speaking Events

- RU Outdoors Club
- Students for Environmental Awareness



Instagram & TikTok

Environmental Book Recommendations

By Women Authors



Environmental Justice Vocabulary

A beginner's guide to understanding (some) environmental justice terminology.

ALL WE CAN SAVE

Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis

Edited by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson & Katharine K. Wilkinson

ALL WE CAN SAVE

AYANA ELIZABETH JOHNSON & KATHARINE K. WILKINSON

ALL WE CAN SAVE CONTAINS A COLLECTION OF INSPIRING ESSAYS, POEMS, AND ART. THE VARIETY OF WORKS AND DIFFERENT CREATORS TELL OF CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH STORIES, SCIENCE, AND POLICY. ABOVE ALL, JOHNSON AND WILKINSON'S FEEL LEAVES THE READER WITH ONE OVERARCHING MESSAGE: THERE IS HOPE FOR A CLIMATE FRIENDLY FUTURE.

Intersectionality

Term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw describing the complex way different forms of oppression overlap to create unique experiences

BRAIDING SWEETGRASS

Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants

ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

BRAIDING SWEETGRASS

ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

KIMMERER TEACHES THE READER ABOUT RECIPROCALITY AND OR CONNECTIONS, BOTH TO ONE ANOTHER AND THE EARTH THROUGH HER POWERFUL, LYRICAL ESSAYS. KIMMERER COMBINES HER BOTANICAL KNOWLEDGE WITH STORIES OF LOVE, HOPE, AND COMMUNITY.

Radical Imagination

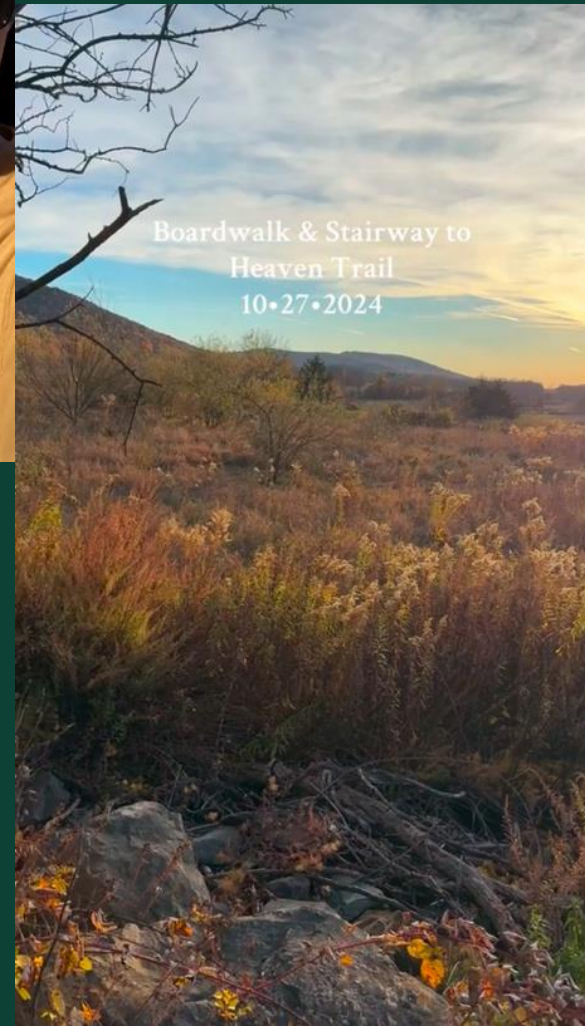
The ability to envision a future completely different than the present to inspire action, hope, and change

mini backpacking vlog

hiking vlog
10•20•24

Boardwalk & Stairway to
Heaven Trail
10•27•2024

Minnewaska State Park
11•16•2024



YouTube: March 2024

Eco-
Preserve

RU
Gardens
Trail

Johnson
Park

Donaldson
Park

Roosevelt
Park

Davidson
Mill Pond
Park

Park Brochure:

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the official Middlesex County website for more information:

<https://www.middlesexcountynj.gov/find-programs-and-resources/parks-recreation>

**HAVE ANY RECCS?
WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram: @megans.journeys

TikTok: @megans.journeys



ABOUT

Outdoor recreation can be good for your mental and physical health. This brochure explores some of the accessibility features of 2 parks near campus.

Regardless of your accessibility needs, athletic ability, or identity, there is room for you to have fun in nature!



GREEN ACCESS

**EXPLORING THE
ACCESSIBILITY OF
HIKING TRAILS NEAR RU**



DONALDSON PARK

Donaldson Park's peaceful atmosphere and views of the Raritan River make for a great trip off-campus.

- Accessible Parking Spaces
- A paved trail with some bumps
- Benches along the trail
- Pickleball courts
- Dog park
- & more!



Things to Do Outside

- Go for a stroll
- Birdwatch
- Meditate
- Have a picnic
- Yoga/Chair Yoga



JOHNSON PARK

Near Busch Campus on River Road, this 478 acre park holds a variety spaces for recreation and relaxation

- Accessible Parking Spaces
- Paved trails
- Benches and picnic tables along the trail
- Wheelchair accessible pond and river views
- Soccer & softball fields
- & More!





Rutgers Outdoors Club

Speaking Events:



Students for Environmental Awareness



My Future Steps

Rutgers Green Space Communications
Working Group, January 2024

YouTube series, March 2024

Continued Content Creation



Potential Expansions

Group visits to accessible trails

Improve transportation & access to RU Gardens

Research on accessibility & outdoor recreation

Feminist Leadership

Advocacy

- Identifying resource and research gaps
- Educating others on underrepresented topics

Empathy & Listening

- Encouraging others to share their stories
- Teaching others to acknowledge and celebrate other experiences

Community Building

- Creating conversations between groups
- Facilitating connections and shared joy

Personal Growth



Creativity



Communications & Media
Creation



Authenticity

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- **Rutgers Institute for Women's Leadership**
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 - **Dr. Javier Robles**
 - **Prof. Rita LeDuc**
 - **The Writer's House Staff**



THANK YOU!



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Megan's Journeys

Resources

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