

Nature Based Education Institute

May 19, 2018

Sponsored by University of Maine at Farmington

[Back to Conference Homepage](#)

Session Title: Out the Door! Experiential Activities for All Ages with Project Learning Tree!

Session I 12:30 - 1:45

Location: North Dining Hall C

Presenter

- Patricia Maloney
- Laurie Haines
- Joanne Alex

Who will benefit most from this session?

- Any age/grade Educator

Who else may benefit:

- Out of school educators (4-H, museum, camp settings)
- School Administrators

Session Goal: All participants will connect with hands-on experiential opportunities that are ready to use in any outdoor setting while exploring potential community connections in support of outdoor learning.

Session Outcomes:

1. Participants will be professionally ready to bring children outdoors with ready to use lessons.
2. Participants will call upon community volunteers with expertise in the natural world in order to enrich student learning.
3. Participants will connect with other educators to explore opportunities for cross grade level partnerships and inclusion of integrated content.

Session Description: Participants will engage with and explore outdoor lessons from the highly acclaimed and multi-disciplinary Project Learning Tree (PLT) curriculum. Activities will span early childhood through high school as we seek to expand use of experiential learning in the natural world. Integrate math, science, language arts, social studies, art, music and movement during our exploratory walk with ready-to-use take home lessons.

Each participant will receive a Nature Detective Kit to use as we take a station to station nature walk. We will engage in a variety of activities that build on knowledge from previous stations while using the nature kit tools. All STEAM, STEM and place-based too! Examine how observations and measurements, and rich PLT activities may be adapted to a variety of ages. Here are a few examples from the PLT curriculum: Early Childhood: The Shape of Things; Early Childhood through 8: Adopt A Tree, Bursting Buds; Pre-k-6: The Closer You Look; Grades K-8: Have Seeds Will Travel; Pre-K through 8: How Big Is Your Tree?; High School: Focus on Forests - Monitoring Forest Health. Please note that handouts for each activity will be provided.

During station walks and talks, learn how to bring older students and young students together for outdoor learning opportunities. Older students assume a real sense of responsibility for their own learning which is then translated to younger students. Who in your community may be an excellent volunteer willing to share expertise on any natural world topics from tree ID to Maine forest facts? Join us to learn how experienced facilitators have successfully used these lessons outdoors and bring your questions and ideas to build upon our common interest in

getting students outdoors

How will participants engage in nature during your session? Each participant will receive not only ready to use lessons but also a Nature Kit provided by facilitators. Use of Kit items supports investigations at each outdoor learning station. Our walk and talk, station to station exploration offers ideas for how best to use nature stations, a building block for outdoor classrooms, as well as time for sharing and engaging with one another about our common passions for involving students in natural and real world learning.

Presenter Biographies

- Patricia Maloney: As the state coordinator for Maine Project Learning Tree, Pat arranges professional development workshops throughout the state for educators, natural resource professionals, and community leaders. She publishes the bi-annual MEPLT newsletter and is actively involved with National PLT. Pat is the former President of the Maine Environmental Educational Association.
- Joanne Alex: MEd (Science): During Joanne's 40-year teaching career she has served as head teacher at Stillwater Montessori School, adjunct faculty at UMaine and College of the Atlantic, PLT facilitator and advocate for environmental education, and received numerous recognitions for her outstanding teaching, including 1998 Maine Teacher of the Year.
- Laurie Haines: Laurie is a Lewiston High School earth science teacher with over 25 years of experience leading experiential science field trips for high school students. She is on the steering committee for Project Learning Tree, is a PLT facilitator and recipient of the 2017 MEPLT Stewardship award.