



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The North Face Launches *PlanetExplore* to Connect More People, Especially Youth, to the Outdoors

Beginning in the Bay Area, individuals can find and participate in outdoor activities and events in their community

San Leandro, CA – September 22, 2009 – The North Face®, the world's premier supplier of authentic, innovative and technically advanced outdoor apparel, equipment and footwear, today announced the Bay Area launch of PlanetExplore, a new online community that connects people to the outdoors in meaningful ways by serving as a hub for outdoor activities and events in their community.

"PlanetExplore is a virtual community board for outdoor exploration," says Steve Rendle, president of The North Face and VF Corporation's Outdoor Americas coalition. "It creates opportunities to connect individuals to outdoor activities within their communities to help develop the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts and conservationists."

As part of PlanetExplore, The North Face has partnered with organizations that promote outdoor participation, such as Outward Bound, Children & Nature Network, Sierra Club, Conservation Next, and American Hiking Society.

According to a study by The Outdoor Foundation, more than 85% of the U.S. population will be living in urban areas in the coming years. "Since we are becoming a more urban nation, we support the fact that PlanetExplore will increase access to unstructured outdoor activity in urban areas," says Christine Fanning, executive director of The Outdoor Foundation. "It's a wonderful resource to connect people to the outdoors."

The Outdoor Foundation study also points out that 90% of adult participants in outdoor recreation were introduced to outdoor activities between the ages of 5 and 18. PlanetExplore engages the community, with a focus on youth, by generating awareness and access to outdoor activities by providing information on events and the ability to connect with others in outdoor pursuits.

PlanetExplore is a one-stop social media portal for people interested in hiking, biking, climbing, running and other activities. Individuals can search PlanetExplore for activities and events in their community that are offered by one of the many organizations The North Face has partnered with. Events are listed by region and activity, and individuals can access the information they need to maximize their outdoor experience.

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"It's important that children learn to connect with nature and the outdoors at an early age as a growing body of evidence indicates that children who participate in unstructured outdoor activities are healthier, happier, and better learners, and these assets can carry into adulthood," says Richard Louv, chairman of the Children & Nature Network and the author of seven books, including his most recent *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*. "I'm confident that PlanetExplore will become a catalyst for children and their families to get outdoors and get moving for all the right reasons."

"Partnering with The North Face on PlanetExplore allows small nonprofits like ours to get our message to a bigger community of active outdoors people and engage them in our work." says Roger Miller, Executive Director of Bay Area Wilderness Training, a Bay area PlanetExplore partner that has helped get over 10,000 youth into the wilderness since 1999.

California's Bay Area is the first official region where PlanetExplore is launching. The North Face has partnered with local Bay Area organizations such as: GirlVentures, who since 1997 has helped 3,000 Bay Area girls explore self, community, culture and environment through outdoor adventure, creative arts and group experiences; and NatureBridge, who has introduced almost one million students to the wonder of our National Parks and inspired them to conservation and service.

"The combination of our rich heritage of over 40 years in the Bay Area and this region's passion for the outdoors makes it an ideal community for launching this effort," concludes Rendle.

Later in 2009, PlanetExplore will launch in Denver and New York City.

PlanetExplore can be accessed by visiting www.thenorthface.com/planetexplore. Facebook users can log in and become a member of PlanetExplore by using their Facebook username and password.

About The North Face®

The North Face, a division of VF Outdoor, Inc., was founded in 1968. Headquartered in San Leandro, California, the company offers the most technically advanced products in the market to accomplished climbers, mountaineers, snow sport athletes, endurance athletes, and explorers. The company's products are sold in specialty mountaineering, backpacking, running, and snow sport retailers, premium-sporting goods retailers and major outdoor specialty retail chains.

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