

Harnessing Nature: Promoting Student Well-being and Success across UNC System Campuses

- **Thursday, November 6, 2025:** 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Topic: Collaborative Partnerships

- **Tuesday, February 3, 2026:** 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Topic: NatureRX

- **Wednesday, April 8, 2026:** 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Topic: Wellness in Urban Settings

February 3, 2026

NatureRx for Higher Ed

Zoom Link: <https://northcarolina-edu.zoom.us/j/5878688663?omn=99919863919>

Substantial evidence shows a strong link between student well-being and academic success, and outdoor engagement is emerging as a powerful strategy for improving both. This webinar highlights collaborative approaches across the UNC System that connect students to nature, support diverse student experiences, and strengthen access to research opportunities.



Laura Biosvert Boyd

Laura Biosvert Boyd, M.Ed, LCMHC-S, NCC is a student affairs professional and clinician with over 20 years of experience in higher education and mental health services. She currently serves as the Associate Director of Prevention Services at NC State University. Laura is a co-founder of Campus Nature Rx and is working at the intersection of nature and mental health.



Dr. J. Aaron Hipp

J. Aaron Hipp, PhD, is Professor of Community Health and Sustainability, researching how our outdoor built environments support active living. He leads NC State's new Nature & Health Collaborative and is chair-elect of the National Physical Activity Plan.



Heather Kelejian

Heather Kelejian, MSW, NC Cooperative Extension Agent, Therapeutic Horticulture, New Hanover County, with 20 years of experience using plants and nature as a therapeutic tool. Heather supports nature-based interventions across the human life-span in a variety of different settings including public gardens. In addition to direct services, she also develops and delivers educational opportunities around nature engagement for overall wellness.



Dr. Megan Lupek

Dr. Megan Lupek is an Associate Teaching Professor and Co-Director of the Environmental Sciences Program at NC State University, where she designs and leads innovative, student-centered environmental courses and programs. She also co-founded NC State's Campus Nature Rx initiative and conducts scholarship of teaching and learning research on environmental courses and eco-emotions to support student well-being, engagement, and connection with nature.

Co-Host: Dr. James and HOPE Lab



Dr. Joy James, a Professor at Appalachian State University since 2007 and co-leader of the Healthy Outdoor Play and Exercise Lab, integrates her teaching and research in camps, park interpretation, and environmental education with her passion for lifelong learning to promote outdoor exploration, foster connections with nature, and advance professional engagement through the NCRPA since 2008.





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