

## MOHONK | PRESERVE



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Young Women Who Crush accept Mohonk Preserve's Thom Scheuer Award for Land Stewardship at the Gunks Climbing Film Festival.

## Young women Who Crush receive Mohonk Preserve stewardship award

**Y**OUNG WOMEN WHO Crush (YWWC), a diverse group of teen climbers based in New York City, were presented with the 2019 Thom Scheuer Land Stewardship Award during the 21st Annual Gunks Climbing Film Festival on Saturday, October 12 at the SUNY New Paltz Studley Theatre.

Led by Alexis Krauss, Eva Kalea and Emily Varisco, and supported by the Discover Outdoors Foundation and The Cliffs Climbing + Fitness, Young Women Who Crush is a climbing and leadership development program that provides opportunities for high school girls in New York City to experience the physical, mental and emotional benefits of rock climbing. Throughout the year, the girls are taught to value outdoor recreation and, through Leave No Trace and Wilderness First Aid trainings, they are given the concrete skills they need to become informed and empowered outdoor leaders.

The program culminates in two outdoor trips, allowing participants to experience nature and to translate a year's worth of hard work on indoor walls to real rock.

"Climbing at Mohonk Preserve -- the home of Gunks climbing -- had a profound effect on these young people," said Mohonk Preserve Associate Director of Visitor Services Jon Ross. "Their enthusiasm for being outdoors was immediately apparent. And when we invited them to help us out, they were eager to undertake a hands-on service project supported by Preserve Stewardship staff."

The Thom Scheuer Land Stewardship Award is presented annually to acknowledge a significant individual or group volunteer effort. Thom Scheuer, the beloved head ranger of Mohonk Preserve from 1972 until his death in 1999, dedicated his work and life to protecting and maintaining the Preserve as a place for world-class outdoor enjoyment within a high-quality ecosystem.

"Passing on the message of stewardship to a younger generation, to provide opportunities to learn about the importance of protecting the landscape and inspire them to care for their natural world, is a fundamental stewardship goal," Ross noted. "Thom Scheuer himself would be proud to present his award to the accomplished and committed Young Women Who Crush."