



For Immediate Release

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Adirondack Wild Presents Award to Executive Director of the Adirondack Diversity Initiative



Nicole "Nicky" Hylton-Patterson. Photo by Ken Rimany

Saranac Lake, NY - *Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve* has honored the work of **Nicole "Nicky" Hylton-Patterson**, the executive director of the **Adirondack Diversity Initiative**, a project of the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA). The group presented her with Adirondack Wild's 2020 *Wild Stewardship Award* in recognition of her initiating and elevating difficult conversations about race, shared power, and influence in the Adirondack region over the past year. Such conversations are integral to improved and shared stewardship of the Adirondack Park.

Nicky Hylton-Patterson, joined by the ADI's core team of volunteers, leads this necessary educational work in all its complexity. Adirondack Wild's award recognizes Ms. Hylton-Patterson's intelligence, personality, and courage, in addition to her collaborative and educational talents, which have all been brought to bear on anti-racism progression in the Adirondack Park.

"Nicky's 'Anti-Racism 101' and other seminars are breaking down barriers and opening eyes, minds, and hearts. In just one year, cooperators have learned from her how to become accomplices through the consequential work of learning to become an antiracist," reads Adirondack Wild's award letter.

"We, too, wish to grow as an accomplice because we want the Adirondack region to be a welcoming place for people of all colors and backgrounds, and because for we have a vital, vested interest in the Park's care, protection, and stewardship," said Adirondack Wild's managing partner David Gibson.

"If people of all colors and backgrounds don't feel welcome in the Park, why would they feel ownership, obligation and responsibility to support the Adirondack Park's protection, its communities, finances and forever wild constitution," Gibson asks.



Dave Gibson presenting the 2020 Wild Stewardship Award. Photo by Ken Rimany

"Nicky carries out her work with patience, grace, and courage even under threatening and trying conditions," said Adirondack Wild's advisor in Saranac Lake, Sunita Halasz.

"The Park's mountains, streams, lakes, workplaces, homes, and neighborhoods should and do belong to people of color as much as to white people," she added. "While these are difficult conversations, Nicky's life experiences, professionalism and personal warmth and energy are breaking down barriers and bringing folks together to make them happen. We want to recognize and to thank her."

The award presentation took place on Friday, November 27, 2020 outside the Adirondack Diversity Initiative's offices at the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) in Saranac Lake.

Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve is a not for profit, membership organization devoted to the protection of wild lands through advocacy, science and legal action, found on the web at www.adirondackwild.org.