

Dr. Nina S. Roberts

Biographical Sketch ~ 2017



Nina Roberts is a dynamic educator and respected leader. Her research is highly regarded in the areas of race/ethnicity, culture and natural resources. She is also nationally known for her work around urban youth as well as women and girls outdoors including the connection to developing healthy lifestyles. Nina is a visionary with incredible energy to “get it done” as she is known to often be in perpetual motion. She has been acknowledged for her commitment to diversity and social justice with desire to break down barriers of inequality especially relating to park access and recreation opportunities on public lands. Her work provides leaders and managers in outdoor recreation/adventure, natural resource education, and conservation with ideas and resources needed to respond more effectively to changing demographics, as well as cultural shifts and trends across the U.S.

She is currently a Professor in the Department of Recreation, Parks, & Tourism at San Francisco State University and Faculty Director of the Institute for Civic & Community Engagement (ICCE). Prior to her role with ICCE, Nina was the director of SFSU’s Pacific Leadership Institute. Nina came to SFSU from the National Park Service (NPS) where she began her work through a graduate internship in the Intermountain Region while completing her Ph.D. at Colorado State University. She later obtained permanent status as an Education & Outreach Specialist with the Natural Resource Program Center. During this time, she completed a 3-month detail in the Director’s office and was one of the contributors to the NPS Report to Congress on Diversity Initiatives.

What people are saying

“I received knowledge and understanding that I have only just begun to figure out ...”

“I value your approach, your thoroughness, your honesty, your personal stories and experiences, your dedication to this work, the mixture of activities, listening, doing, talking was great.”

"Her enthusiasm brought to this subject was unmatched by any other speaker. All her data was relevant and helpful to me in my job..."

"Great information, engaging speaker! Laid it all out, status, discussed challenges, and got our group talking."

Prior to her work with the NPS, Nina was a Research Associate with the Student Conservation Association (SCA). Preceding this position, she was the Assistant Director of SCA’s National Urban and Diversity Programs managing several urban centers across the country. Her work engaged primarily young people of color and girls/women in natural resources, outdoor recreation, and career development. She continues to enjoy supporting the NPS, and park partners, as a social scientist involved with community engagement and outreach planning, youth evaluation; she’s often immersed in consultation from cultural competency training to recruitment and retention. Nina has also conducted youth development research with a variety of organizations including the well-regarded Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and East Bay Regional Parks. Additionally, she worked with a great team on visitor use/non-use studies with both Marin and San Mateo County Parks.



A Fulbright Scholar (Indo-American Environmental Leadership Program, India), Nina is a former Board member of the Yosemite Institute and National Parks Promotion Council as Research Committee Co-Chair, among other notable organizations. She is a former Advisory Council member of the NPCA Center for Park Management, and GirlVentures. She has collaborated with the U.S. Forest Service—and other scholars—on General Technical Reports regarding serving culturally diverse visitors to forests across the nation. She also plans and facilitates diversity trainings ranging from outdoor leaders at Princeton University to senior refuge managers with the Fish & Wildlife Service. She has also served as consultant for the Yale School of Forestry through involvement with their “Broadening the Base” conservation workshop for Land Trust Managers.

Nina has interviewed with *CNN.com*, *Boston Globe*, *L.A. Times*, *NBC News Bay Area*, *New America Media*, *The New York Times*, *High Country News*, and *Public Radio International* regarding diversity and national parks and use of public lands. She’s also interviewed with *WildeBeat* (the audio journal about wilderness), and *The Allegheny Front environmental radio* for western PA about “Welcoming Minorities to State Parks.” She’s featured in a landmark publication, *Black and Brown Faces in America’s Wild Places*, and was interviewed for a story with the NPCA *Parks* magazine on cultural diversity. Nina has is well published including numerous journal articles and book chapters about social and environmental justice, women/girls outdoors, youth leadership, and about her multiracial identity. She is humbled by the honors and recognition received for her work and dedication to the field of parks, recreation, conservation, with experiential learning at the core of her actions and convictions.

Nina is a native New Yorker and spent much of her upbringing in the Northeast
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