

The Audacious Foundation's 2026 Connecting Children to Nature Retreat



SPEAKER BIOS

Mia Sundstrom

CEO, NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PLAY

Mia Sundstrom is the CEO of the National Institute for Play (NIFPlay) and the granddaughter of NIFPlay founder and play expert Dr. Stuart Brown. Mia is an internationally recognized speaker, recently presenting at the Aspen Ideas Festival and the World Expo in Japan. She helps organizations leverage the science of play to unlock innovation, connection, and resilience. Mia was previously an NCAA Division I assistant coach for the University of Denver's top-10 gymnastics team. Before coaching, she was a student-athlete and captain for Denver Gymnastics, where she earned a bachelor's degree in business information and analytics and a master's degree in public policy.



David Beard

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, CHILDREN & NATURE NETWORK

David Beard (he/him) is the Director of Policy & Government Affairs at the Children & Nature Network, where he facilitates policy advocacy efforts to educate policymakers and works with outdoor learning and engagement providers and stakeholders to secure more funding and better policies that connect children and youth with nature. Throughout his career, David has advocated for children and families nationally and in three states on issues ranging from pre-K and out-of-school time to student discipline reform. In his free time, David enjoys exploring his home of King County, one of the world's most beautiful urban areas, and hiking in the Cascades.

