

From Southern Nevada:

First Lady Michelle Obama Kicks Off “Let’s Move Outside!” SNAP Hosts Event at Red Rock Canyon

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LAS VEGAS — The magnificent Red Rock Canyon provided the backdrop as First Lady Michelle Obama struck a blow against childhood obesity while promoting her “Let’s Move!”



First Lady Michelle Obama addresses invited guests in the amphitheater behind the new visitor center at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. The first lady visited Red Rock Canyon on June 1, 2010 to promote her Let’s Move! Initiative and kickoff the Let’s Move Outside! Campaign in Nevada.

initiative. The first lady kicked-off the “Let’s Move Outside!” campaign in Nevada during the June 1, 2010 event at the national conservation area just west of Las Vegas.

“Let’s Move Outside!” promotes outdoor activities and encourages people to take advantage of the national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests, and other public lands in the state.

The Southern Nevada Agency Partnership (SNAP) hosted the event, which included appearances by U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), U.S. Representative Dina Titus (D-NV, 3rd), and Assistant Interior Secretary Rhea Suh. SNAP is a partnership comprised of professionals from the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service. Representatives from the agencies work together with communities and partners to conserve and enhance the federal lands of southern Nevada for current and future generations.

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The Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex was well represented, both during the planning stages and at the event. Under the guidance of Project Leader and SNAP board member Cynthia Martinez, Visitor Services Manager Angelina Yost played a major role on the planning team and was the on-site lead as she escorted the first lady and Senator Reid during the field activities. Supervisory Law Enforcement Officer Rob Peloquin and Officer Lionel Castillo were part of the security team, and Visitor Services Specialist Ida Castillo assisted with the field activities. Additionally, yours truly served as the lead news media contact and escort.



Angelina Yost (Right) escorts First Lady Michelle Obama and Senator Harry Reid along the trail to Sandstone Quarry at the Red Rock National Conservation Area. Yost is the Visitor Services Manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Michelle Obama delivered an inspiring 10-minute talk to the roughly 100 invited guests, making it clear she wanted to end childhood obesity in one generation’s time. She reminded the baby boomers in the crowd of the importance of exercise and getting outside with her own example, saying her parents “kicked us outside. In fact, they told us not to come back inside” until dinner time.

“Now, children spend too much time in front of the TV and computer, playing video games,” Obama continued.

Following her speech, the first lady and Senator Reid joined the children for some real exercise at Sandstone Quarry. The quarry is at one of several trail heads along the canyon’s 13-mile scenic drive. It boasts of magnificent red and yellow sandstone formations carved over millions of years by wind and water. The steep rock walls attract hikers and climbers from around the world.

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The first lady and the senator participated in “geology stretching” exercises with the children in the shadow of a massive sandstone formation in the middle of a wash. The exercises require the participant to mimic a geologic feature or natural force through body positioning and motion. On this day, Obama and the others learned how to be a mountain, a boulder, and stretched out horizontally while standing on one leg to demonstrate erosion.



First Lady Michelle Obama and Senator Harry Reid go through geology stretching exercises at Sandstone Quarry with children from the Winchester Cultural Center in Las Vegas.

It was the boulder exercise that brought the biggest laugh of the day. The participant begins the activity in a squatting position. The first lady, wearing a bright green knee-length skirt, blurted out, “I’m not doing that!”



First Lady Michelle Obama shares a high-five with 10-year-old Paige Owens after successfully completing a geology stretching exercise.

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The group then moved to the base of large red sandstone outcropping that gives the canyon its name. There, the first lady and Senator Reid watched as the children scrambled up the side of the red rock formation.

The event culminated with Obama administering the Junior Ranger Oath to the children, which she did in a very animated fashion — especially emphasizing the need to keep the “wild” in wildlife. She then announced to those 20 school children from Las Vegas that they were the first Junior Rangers of the “Lets Move Outside!” campaign in the entire country.

THE JUNIOR RANGER OATH

- **I promise to protect, respect, and enjoy our public lands;**
- **I will leave rocks, plants, and historic objects where I find them;**
- **I will improve my health by playing outside;**
- **I will keep the “wild” in wildlife;**
- **I will share what I learned with others.**

For more information about the “Let’s Move!” and “Let’s Move Outside!” campaigns, visit <http://www.letsmove.gov/>.



First Lady Michelle Obama congratulates the children from the Winchester Cultural Center as they celebrate becoming the first Junior Rangers of the “Let’s Move Outside!” campaign in the U.S. Also pictured are (L to R) Senator Harry Reid, Assistant Interior Secretary Rhea Suh, and Angelina Yost, Visitor Services Manager for the Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex.