

MARIJKE HECHT

Marijke Hecht is currently a PhD student of Learning Sciences and Policy at the University of Pittsburgh's School of Education, where she is also a graduate student fellow with the Center for Urban Education.

Marijke is fascinated by the intersections of interest driven learning and content understanding. Her research focus is on how the natural world can best be used as a platform for student exploration of science, art, and other disciplines in the 21st Century. Before entering graduate school, Marijke worked for nearly 20 years in a variety of educational settings, including teaching middle school math and science in NYC public schools, teaching adults English in Bolivia, and educating community members about environmental health and stewardship. Most recently she was the Director of Education for the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy where she led an amazing team of educators in a mission to use public parks as classrooms for people of all ages. While there she also led the design and construction of the Frick Environmental Center, a new urban environmental education facility slated to meet LEED Platinum and Living Building Challenge certifications.

She received her Master of Science in Botany from the University of Vermont and her Bachelor's degree from Hampshire College. Marijke was recognized with the 2015 Leadership in STEM Education award by the Carnegie Science Center. She also received two 40 Under 40 awards: one from Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project & Pittsburgh Magazine; the other for statewide leadership in the environmental field from the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.