



**BIG CITY  
MOUNTAINEERS**  
MENTORING UNDER-RESOURCED  
YOUTH OUTDOORS™

**2017  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**





# Staff, Board, & National Council Members

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Red Wing Shoes  
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Univ of San Francisco  
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Integer Group  
K&L Gates LLP  
EWM Realty International  
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## NATIONAL COUNCIL

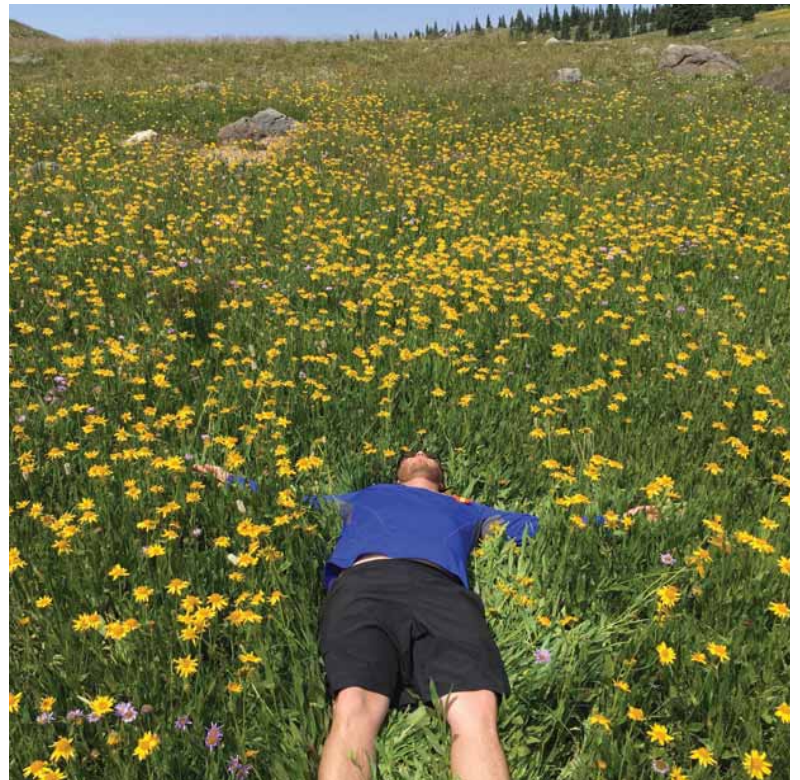
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Justin Welsh  
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Justus Hyatt  
Carl Johnson  
Jeff Labonte  
Porter Draper  
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Roberta Garrison  
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Hanold and Associates  
Stanley, A Division of PMI  
Therm A Rest  
Backbone Media  
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Pelley Group  
XL Construction  
Travelers  
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## STAFF

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Program Assistant  
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Director of Programs  
Pacific Northwest Program Manager  
California Program Manager  
Executive Director  
Corporate Relations Director  
Donor Relations Manager  
Director of Finance  
Colorado Program Manager  
Overnight Camp Manager



## A NOTE FROM BRYAN - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2017 was a watershed year for Big City Mountaineers and our movement. Whether it was introducing more youth to irreplaceable landscapes across the country, deepening our relationships with the youth agencies with which we partner, or promoting new programs that allow our students to take the first steps in their career in the outdoors, we achieved some of our most meaningful and significant accomplishments to date. Organizationally, we expanded our Board of Directors and established our National Council to ensure we have more direct leadership in the cities we serve. Moreover, BCM played a key role in important coalition efforts to advance the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the outdoor community vis a vis public lands, cultural experience, and environmental justice.

### For 28 years we've been helping youth to grow, to heal, and to experience a sense of place.

In this time of change, BCM forges on with confidence. We support strong leaders and volunteer mentors through education and training so they can execute top notch programs in the field; we help reveal to our students the best versions of themselves; we inspire our youth to engage deeply with their communities; we advocate for policies that ensure all Americans can enjoy our natural and cultural heritage; and we are connecting the importance of the outdoors to the next generation in ways that will last a lifetime.

While not a panacea, I firmly believe that experiences outdoors have the potential to heal much that ails us as a society. I believe shared experiences in nature can play a pivotal role in helping to bridge

our divides and build a consensus around the need for a healthy, vibrant communities for all. The more that people interact with each other one-on-one and focus on furthering a common, agreed-upon purpose, the more they discover each other's humanity and find a way forward together. And what better activity to bring people together than walking a long trail, paddling into the wilderness, or spending a night under the stars? This is what BCM does best.

Within the pages of this annual report you will see the stories that bring our work to life. The people who support us, the volunteers who care so deeply about our kids, the partnerships we have formed, and most importantly, the youth whose lives have been transformed by their experience with Big City Mountaineers.

For 28 years we've been helping youth to grow, to heal, and to experience a sense of place. Your involvement in our programs and generosity as supporters make this possible. Thank you for your partnership.





# Mission, Vision, Values

## Mission

Big City Mountaineers instills critical life skills in under-resourced youth through transformative wilderness mentoring experiences.

## Vision

A nation transformed by youth connected to and empowered by nature.

## Values

**Youth** – Youth possess power, potential, and resilience. We make organizational decisions based on what will be best for our students.

**Nature** – The outdoors restores, renews, inspires, and teaches. To experience nature is to unlock our own potential.

**Community** – Communities provide a context that drives our work – to be inclusive, impactful, and meaningful.

**Collaboration** – Partnership coaxes fresh perspectives and promotes creative problem solving, enabling us all to succeed.

**Accountability** – Transparency builds trust. Through a culture of communication we hold ourselves to the highest standards of safety, stewardship of resources, and program delivery.



## Leadership Laboratory

## Alumni Program

## Week-long Expedition

## Overnight Camps



**PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS MODEL**



## PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

### Overnight Camps

- 8-12 year olds
- 1:4 mentor to youth ratio
- 24-48 hour camping experience
- Instilling critical life skills: teamwork, increased sense of self, responsibility, respect for the outdoor world, and curiosity about nature.
- Overnight programs maintain BCM's model of working with partner youth agencies to choose the kids who will benefit most from the experience.

### Week-long Expedition

- BCM's Flagship Program
- 13-18 year olds
- 1:1 youth to mentor ratio
- 7-day backpacking or 8-day canoeing trips
- Instilling critical life skills: character citizenship, self-esteem, self-efficacy, goal setting, communication
- Culturally relevant programming conducted in a safe and supportive environment
- Transferring learning and breakthroughs back home
- Every expedition includes multiple touchpoints such as family meetings, day hikes, canoe trainings, reunions, and celebrations.

### Alumni Program

- Continued investment in BCM's returning students and rising stars
- Student-led expeditions
- Leadership development
- Deeper understanding of the personal assets – internal and external – unique to them
- Meaningful growth opportunities for the students who are aging out of our traditional program.
- Alumni "try on" mentorship role on week-long expeditions with their home agency.

### Leadership Laboratory

- 3-month training program designed to enhance their professional development and job-readiness skills.
- BCM serves as a connection point between many various professional networks.
- Cohorts participate in a student-led community project.
- Students will increase their understanding of their professional network and the resources available to them.
- Students walk away with very concrete accomplishments and products that will support them in establishing a career pathway.

**A nation transformed by youth connected  
to and empowered by nature.**



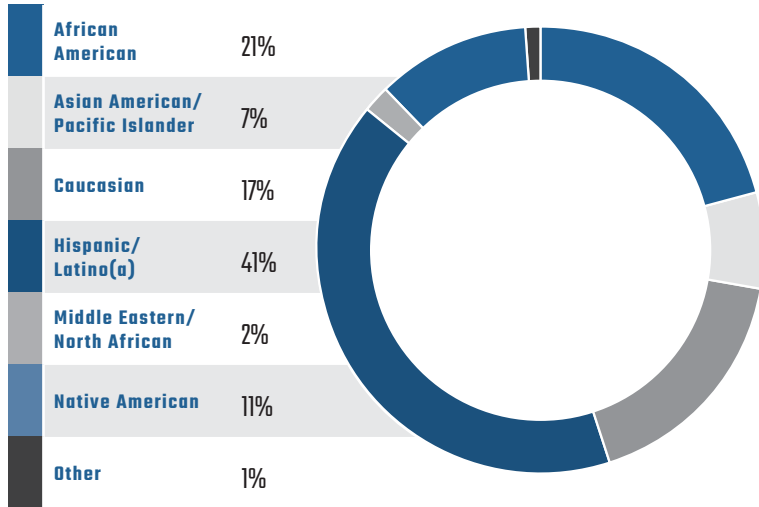
## PROGRAM NUMBERS

	Youth Participants	Adult Participants	Total Participants	Youth Program Days	Adult Program Days	Total Program Days	Total Volunteer Hours
Week-long Expeditions	204	137	390	1,463	982	2,075	19,728
Overnight Camps	389	91	480	741	178	800	2,184
Single Days/Family Nights/ Trainings	385	322	752	385	323	613	480
<b>Total</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>1,625</b>	<b>2,589</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>3,488</b>	<b>22,392</b>

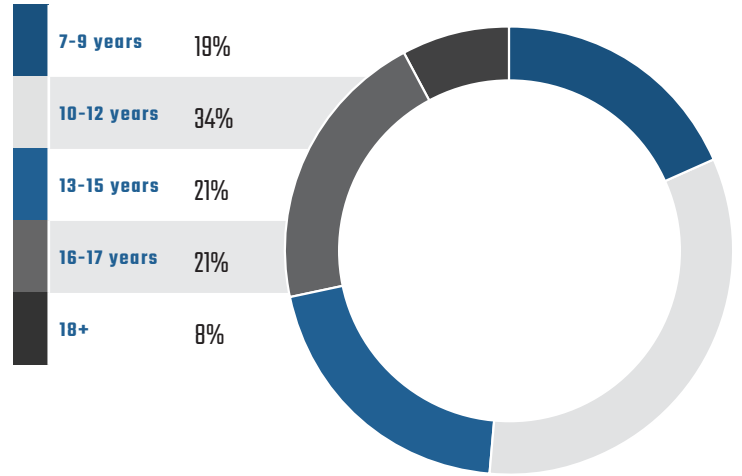


## PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS

### Ethnicity

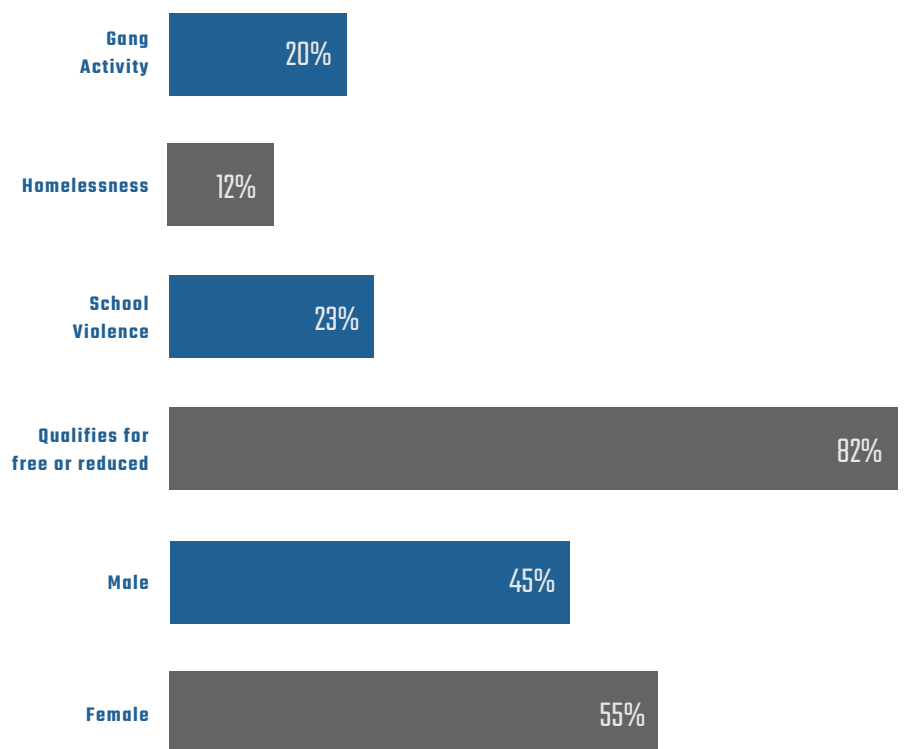


### Age groups



Guardianship	
Both parents	55%
Foster Parent(s)	1%
One Parent	40%
Other Guardian	4%

Expeditions	
Colorado	14
Colorado Overnights	13
California	6
Pacific Northwest	12
Minnesota	12
Miami	2
Boston Overnights	1
Expeditions Total	46
Overnight Camps Total	14





## LUZ'S STORY

When you talk with Luz about her outdoor experiences and involvement with various youth development organizations, she'll tell you how grateful she feels that she ended up in these positions. She smiles and shakes her head as she describes how she procrastinated on applications and showed up late to interviews. Last summer she even reflected that she used to be a "couch potato." At home she had negative influences that produced stress. She would often struggle to make decisions that were in her best interest and instead carried the burden of trying to please others.

When we were first introduced to Luz this stress was weighing on her mind.

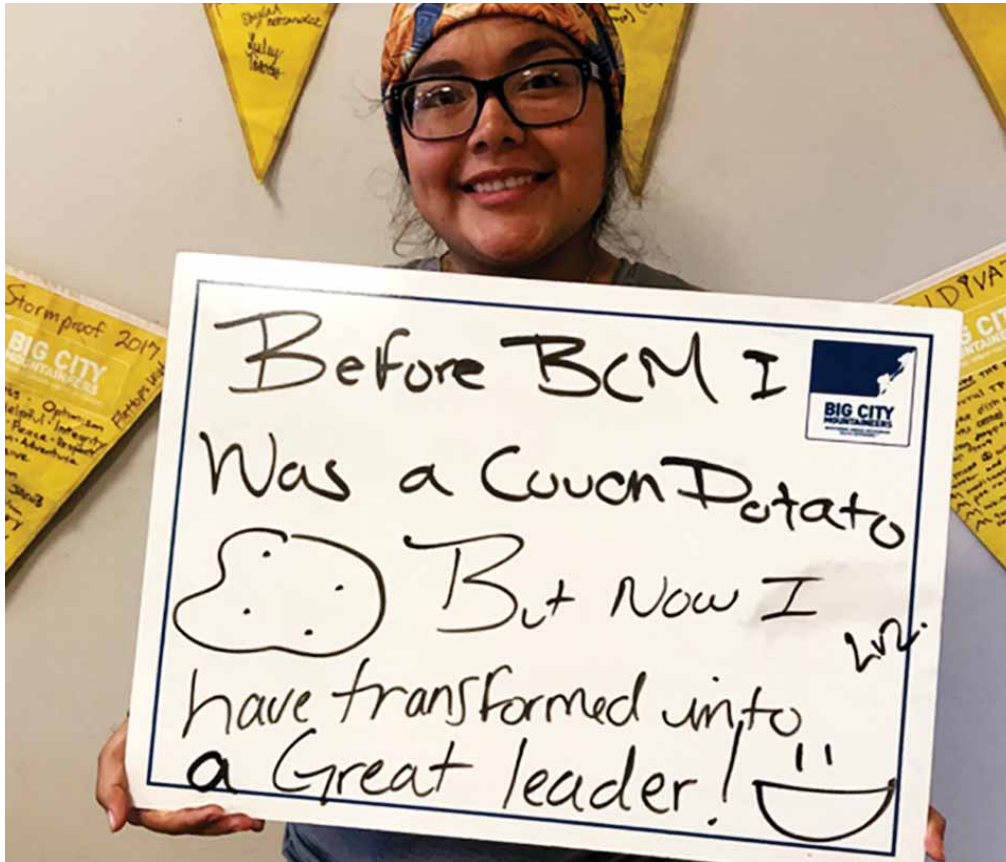
As she journeyed into the backcountry with BCM, she continued to worry about pleasing others. She recalled of the BCM experience, "In the backcountry you're in a brand new place, no one around, phones and technology gone. It gives you time to refocus and realize some things back home are just not as important as you once thought. You get to spend time with yourself and determine what's important for yourself without other influences on you."

Over the course of the week, as she deepened relationships and learned what she was capable of, she started to display more courage and determination. She remembers the moment she reached a turning

point on the trip – it was on her summit day, as they were climbing a rocky mountain hillside. She thought to herself "this is great, this is so awesome!" as she faced a challenge and conquered it by her own strength. She thrived so much in that situation that while she was charging up the hill she switched her focus to motivating others who were struggling with the ascent. Her encouragement of her peers caught the eyes of BCM staff on the trip. The staff recognized budding leadership qualities within her and suggested that she apply to be a BCM camp instructor for elementary aged kids the following summer.







Luz returned home on a high, having found a new hobby she loved! In her words, it changed her “whole perspective on this world.” Her passion and enthusiasm landed her the position of camp instructor the next summer, to which she carried her budding confidence and leadership skills. In her new role, she used her past struggles to identify with the students.

At one of the camps, there was a young girl whose mother had passed away. Luz related because her mom passed away around the same age. The two bonded over their shared grief, and the girl left camp feeling comforted by Luz’s new friendship and understanding. In that moment, Luz recognized everything had come full circle – she was able to put a smile on the girl’s face just as so many mentors had done for Luz previously.

It inspires us to have seen Luz transform – in her own words – from a couch potato into a great leader! She credits her experiences outdoors with this newly revealed confidence and ability to trust her gut because “in the outdoors, that’s what you have to do – follow your gut.” She is now pursuing a career in social work. We’re looking forward to hearing about the lives Luz will continue to impact with her expressions of empathy and desire to pay it forward, thanks in part to her adventures outdoors.




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**In her words,  
it changed her  
“whole perspective  
on this world.”**

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## PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS & PLACES

BCM's unique program model relies on three component parts – People, Partnerships, and Places – coming together to effect positive change in the youth we serve.

### People

BCM Expeditions and Overnight Camps would not be the same without our volunteer mentors. Every year, caring adults invest in building relationships with our students using the outdoors as a perfect backdrop for learning critical life skills.

Their involvement ensures that our youth receive the maximum support needed to achieve their personal goals and gain the most they can throughout the experience.

- Over 300 Volunteer Mentors and Youth Agency Leaders
- 22,392 volunteer hours contributed
- 68% volunteer return rate

### Partnerships

Collaborative partnerships with community-based youth development agencies allow us to target the youth that would benefit the most from BCM's wilderness experiences. We have chosen this partnership model to maximize ongoing youth impact and to work alongside agency staff to develop curricula that advances goals and objectives that the agency has for the youth. BCM partners with agencies not often engaged in the outdoors — such as organizations serving youth-at-risk, refugee placement groups, immigrant welcome centers, transitional housing communities, and youth development community centers. Because of this, the experience is profound.

### 2017 AGENCY PARTNERS

- Denver Parks and Recreation Centers
- I Have a Dream Foundation of Boulder County
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Denver
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colorado
- Colorado I Have A Dream Foundation
- International Rescue Committee
- Hope Communities
- Northwest Passages High School
- Cross Plains High School
- So How Are the Children
- Red Wing Youth Outreach
- Waite House
- Pillsbury United Communities
- Sisterhood Boutique
- Touching Miami With Love
- Oregon Zoo
- Boys and Girls Club of Vancouver
- Police Athletic League
- Project YESS
- Squashbusters
- East Oakland Boxing Association
- Canal Welcome Center
- College Track
- Denver Kids, Inc
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- Denver City LAX
- Environmental Learning for Kids







## Places

BCM prides itself on the inspirational places it conducts its trips. The journeys we take into the backcountry serve as a catalyst for change. We visit amazing places such as the Flat Tops Wilderness Area, the White Mountains, the Wallowas in eastern Oregon, the Olympic Wilderness, Yosemite National Park, and Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

The length and depth of the experience is a key factor in our ability to effect positive change in the youth we serve.

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**The journeys we take into the backcountry serve as a catalyst for change.**

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## MEASURING OUR IMPACT

### Highlights

Overall, BCM demonstrates effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes across diverse demographics, with a few groups doing better than others across select outcomes.

Reflecting previous years' trends, BCM continues to demonstrate a positive impact on positive youth development outcomes through the Expedition Program.

To evaluate the impact of our Expedition Program on youth outcomes, we use the Developmental Assets Profile assessment (DAP) developed by Search Institute. The DAP is psychometrically sound assessment tool aimed at measuring growth in a youth's developmental assets considered important for positive youth development across the contexts of personal, social, family, school, and community (Search Institute 2005). Search Institute has identified 40 positive supports and strengths that young people need to succeed. Half of the assets focus on the relationships and opportunities they need in their families, schools, and communities (external assets). The remaining assets focus on the social-emotional strengths, values, and commitments that are nurtured within young people (internal assets) which BCM programming is particularly adept at influencing positively. For more information on the Search Institute and the DAP please visit [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)

We take pre and post trip surveys of our students to determine the impact we have had in growing the number of assets they hold as well as their relative strength in



those asset categories. There are four categories in which Search Institute places students based on the number of assets a student reports having – Challenged, Vulnerable, Adequate, and Thriving. Our goal with each trip, and throughout the year with our agency partners, is to move our students out of the Challenged and Vulnerable categories and into the Adequate or Thriving categories. Of course, we also want to maintain youth who are reporting Adequate and Thriving levels of assets.

These shifts are important because the longitudinal analysis of this data by Search Institute has determined that:

1. Moving from Challenged to Vulnerable reduces your likelihood of using drugs or engaging in problem alcohol behavior by

over 50%. Moreover, your likelihood for engaging in violence drops from 60% to 34%.

2. Moving from Vulnerable to Adequate reduces your likelihood of using drugs or engaging in problem alcohol behavior from 25% to a less than 10% chance. Engaging in violent behavior drops to a 14% likelihood.

3. Youth with thriving levels of assets indicates a high degree of honesty, responsibility, self-esteem, and self-purpose.

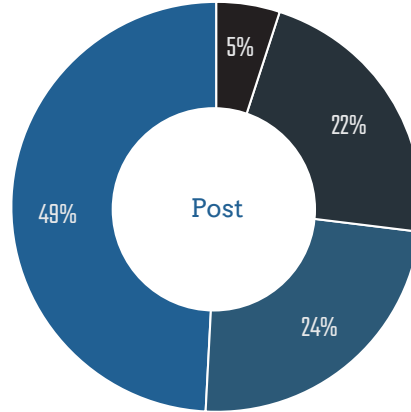
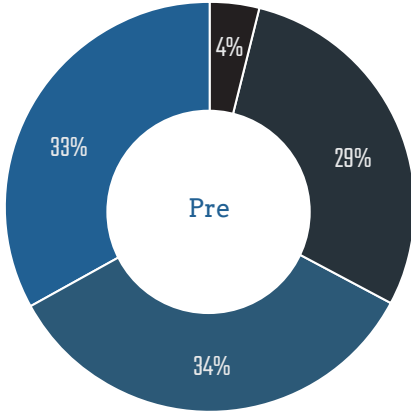
4. Youth that score high on the 40DA are typically more capable of effectively interacting with others, making healthy but sometimes difficult decisions, and believing in their own self-worth.



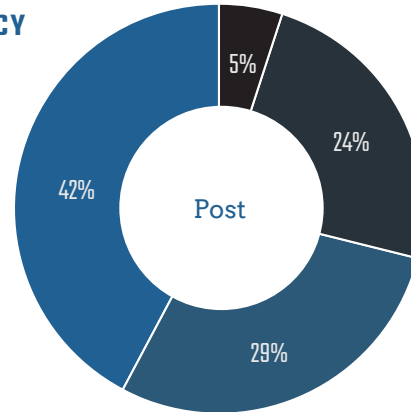
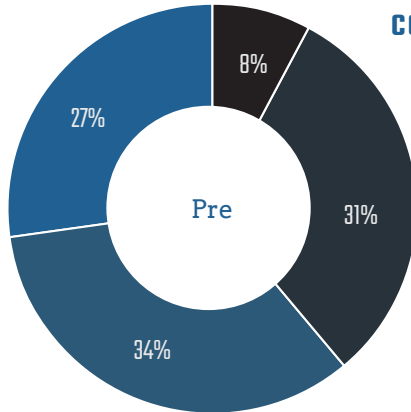
## 40 Developmental Assets Scores Before and After Expedition



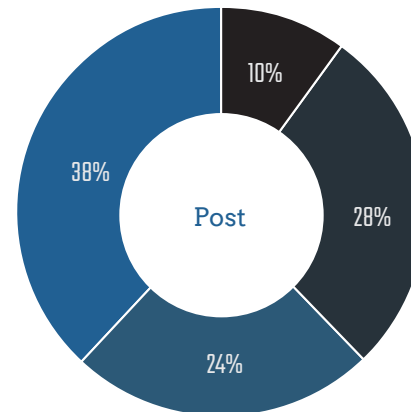
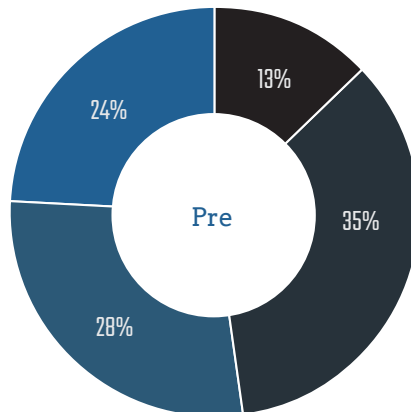
### POSITIVE VALUES



### SOCIAL COMPETENCY



### POSITIVE IDENTITY



a: youth missing 10% or more data on their pre- and/or post test were excluded from analyses.  
 b: one youth was missing scores for all items on this subscale.

\*p-value significant at 0.05;  
 \*\*p-value significant at 0.01;  
 \*\*\*p-value significant at 0.001

# Summit for Someone

Every year, people from across the country take on challenges of their own to support Big City Mountaineers. Be it through a guided Summit for Someone Climb or another personal challenge such as a thru-hike or a local running race, these outdoor lovers use their own adventures to give back and help youth experience the power of the outdoors. Scott's story below is an example of how one person can impact the lives of under-resourced youth while pursuing his own outdoor goals.

This was my second climb with SFS in less than a year. I first learned of BCM and SFS through a podcast called MtnMeister. On both trips I went solo not knowing anyone. I was a little nervous meeting new people and hoping I had the skills and strength to keep up. The two climbs (Grand Teton & Pico de Orizaba) combined I raised over \$8,000 for SFS. The fundraising was a lot of work but well worth it. Not only did I get to climb two mountains with hopes to reach the summit but I also helped raise money to get kids outdoors that normally

wouldn't have the chance. It means a lot to me knowing kids that wouldn't have the chance to camp in the wilderness under the stars can now experience that. As a kid I never camped or hiked, it's not what my family did. After I had open heart surgery in 2015, I thought I would start climbing mountains. I fell in love with it and continue to check off mountains. I put a lot of time, money and training into each climb. There is so much that goes into each climb on both sides (climbers/guides) but the friendships you make are

so worth it! You spend multiple days with the climbers and guides and learn to trust each other. When we made the summit on the Grand Teton it was a feeling of great accomplishment. We climbed to 17,600 feet on Pico de Orizaba, 900 feet short of the summit, we turned back due to icy conditions. It was really hard to turn back but it was for our safety. I'm excited to go back and finish Orizaba one day.

**- Scott Thorsteinson**





## SFS CLIMBER LIST

David Woodbury  
 Angela Bakas  
 Kerry Hermann  
 Josh Tracy  
 David McEachnie  
 Katie Wade  
 Ryan Gajewski  
 Katie Tompkins  
 Chelsea Daoust  
 Jon Rosenberg  
 Jeff Popp  
 Deirdre Rosenberg  
 Parker Semin  
 Yvonne Rivera  
 Alpine Loud  
 Vanessa Friedman  
 Heidi Chapple  
 Rylan Griffin  
 Steve Hill  
 Brian Pratt  
 Alexa Henderson  
 Adam Chojnacki  
 Jackie Abreu  
 Adam Goess  
 Kyle Adelman  
 Kevin Ravesi  
 Alex Lambesis  
 Kristina Hartjens  
 Jeff Brainard  
 Michael Hartjens  
 Mark Starkey  
 Jeff Hester  
 David Valino

Jesse Hallas  
 Yvonne Rivera  
 Elizabeth Fabio  
 Andre Nanni Mendes  
 Marc Carson  
 Adam Muldoon  
 Don Kettering  
 JR McLain  
 Daniel Callahan  
 Marc Carson  
 Chelsea Daoust  
 Jon Rosenberg  
 Ryan Gajewski  
 Jeffrey Suda  
 Adam Danielson  
 Scott Thorsteinson  
 Ken Hebb  
 Ricky French  
 Neal Robinson  
 Nicole Popovich  
 Matt Doubleday  
 Pam McComas  
 Carly Lochmandy  
 Travis Weaver  
 Thomas Mallon  
 Lori Flint  
 Lloyd Van Dyke  
 Gary Richards  
 George Geist  
 Cheryl Blevins  
 Michael Souza  
 Sean Estep  
 Kristian Randt

Seth Coakley  
 Brad Howard  
 Josh Tracy  
 William Pyne  
 Schyler Drain  
 Zig Lewon  
 Peter Carlson  
 Tagish Reber  
 Emily Waterman  
 Evan Farrell  
 Jennifer Crouch-Bragaw  
 Jared Kochik  
 Greg Fenati  
 Jon Kochik  
 Bryan Martin  
 Georgina Miranda  
 Jessica Hamel  
 Emma Walker  
 Elizabeth Williams  
 George Geist  
 Megan Aranow  
 Paul Andrews  
 Joy Walsh  
 Jessica Desormeaux  
 Paige Garlick  
 Gina Miller  
 Kelcey Hostetler  
 Koti Chen  
 Liberty Glaser  
 Kipp Kramer  
 Terry Cekola  
 Steven Orlinick

**In 2017, over 100 climbers raised over  
 \$220,000 for BCM Programs."**

## Corporate Partnerships

We outfit our kids from head to toe. As such, we rely on strong partnership with outdoor-industry companies across the country to provide much needed technical equipment so our youth can fully engage in our programming. A first-time experience in the backcountry can be challenging; providing high-quality outdoor clothing and gear ensures that our kids have a safe, warm, dry, and enjoyable time during their experience. Through the generosity of our outdoor industry partners, BCM received more than \$217,000 of in-kind product support in 2017!

But our relationships with corporate partners does not stop there. We engage companies from all sectors to advance our mission. Whether through direct sponsorship of our trips, promotional support at events, cause-related marketing campaigns, volunteer engagement, or other in-kind professional services, our partners are investing in the future of the young people we serve and make life-changing wilderness mentoring experiences possible. We are grateful for their belief in BCM and their generosity in creating more opportunities for youth in the outdoors.





\$50,000 +



\$25,000 +



\$15,000 +



\$10,000 +



\$5,000 +

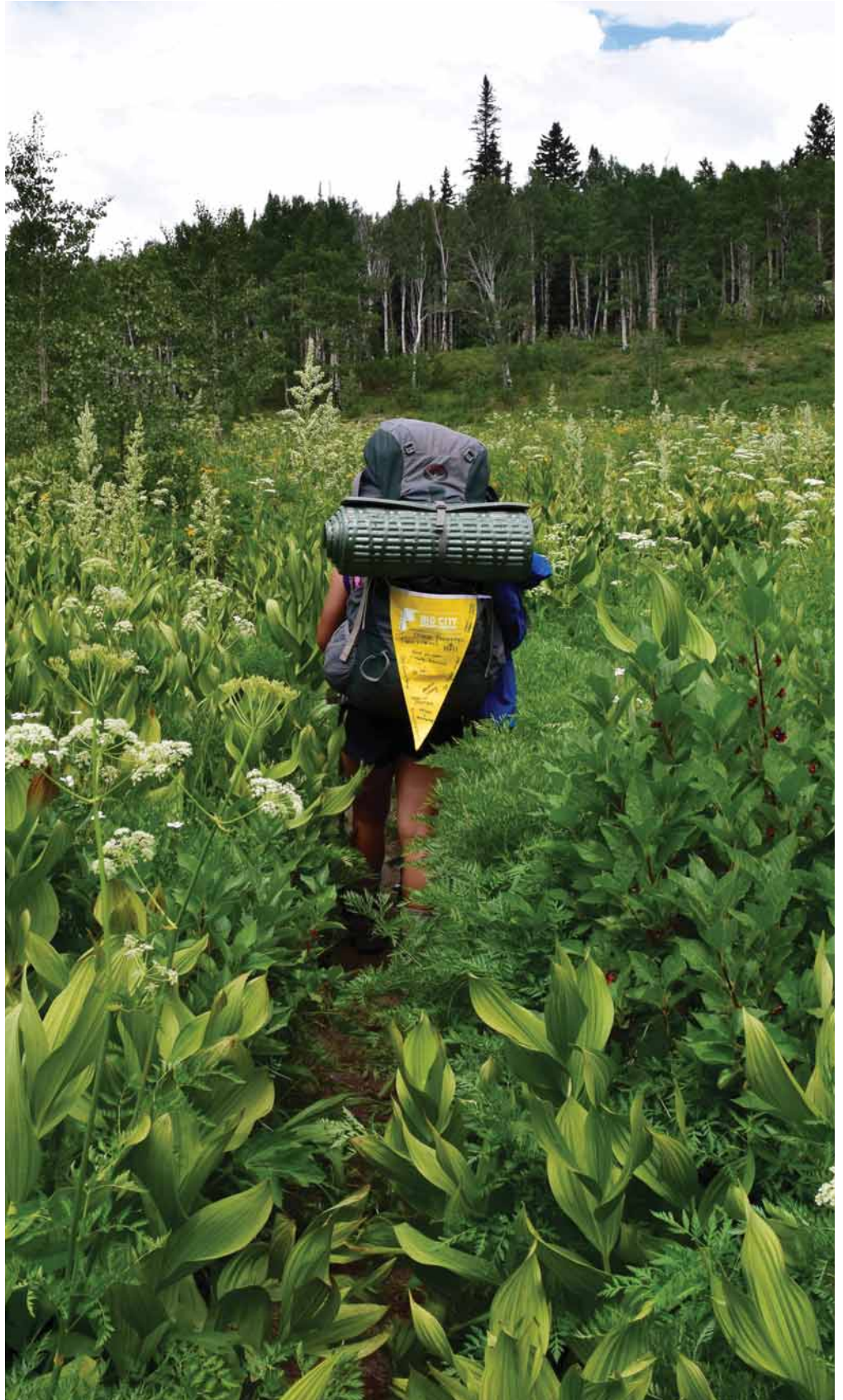


Less than \$5,000

Fjallraven	Fisher and Baker	Xcel Energy Foundation	Northwest River Supply	TD Gulfstream Partners, LLC	Toad & Co Golden
Deuter	Light My Fire	Three Saints Outdoor	Benjamin Douglas Consulting	Vinas & Deluca, PLLC	Polar Bottle
Gear Junkie	Mountainsmith	Pro Ski and Mountain Service	Brandlive	Wonderful Giving	BenAri Jewelers
PowderMonarch LLC	Stay Involved, Inc. DBA BNI	10 Barrel Brewing Company	Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP	Zurixx LLC	BNI Miami Dade Inc - BNI Success Link
Exxel Outdoors	Miami-Dade, Inc.	Mountain Safety Research	Kaiser Permanente Community Health Fund	WETFLY	Evolucion Innovations
Industrial Revolution	T & S Roofing Systems, Inc	Google Inc	KPMG	Kind LLC	Fusionstorm
Osborne Lumber Company	Tender Corporation	Exped	Law Offices of Alex Sirulnik	Conservation Resource Center	Olomomo Nut Company
Chaos	IBEX Outdoor Clothing	GSI Outdoors	Lowa Boots, LLC	Eventbrite	Picky Picky Surplus, Inc.
GCI Outdoor	Mountain Khakis	Abide Brewing	Mercedes-Benz of Coral Gables	McGuckin Hardware	Upslope Brewing
Helly Hansen	Waterford Publishing Group, LLC	Leta Kalfas - MtnStuff	MtnStuff	Pacific Gas & Electric	Zipsprout
Josh Klontz - Rank One Computing	The Boeing Company			Notogroup	
EWM Realtors	Apple Matching Gifts Program			Travel Country Outfitters	
National Valuation Consultants Inc.					

# Foundation Support

- Caerus Foundation
- TJX Foundation
- The M.S. Grumbacher Foundation
- The Red Wing Shoe Company Foundation
- Benson Family Foundation
- Smartwool Advocacy Fund
- Denver Foundation Environmental Affinity Group
- Payback Foundation
- Youth Philanthropy Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation
- The Guardsmen
- Clif Bar Family Foundation
- What Would Ward Do Memorial Fund
- Denver Active 20-30 Children's Foundation
- Denver Mountain Parks Foundation
- The Colorado Trust Directed Contributions Program
- The Grainger Foundation
- The Hubbard Broadcasting Foundation
- The Joseph Henry Edmondson Foundation
- The Rifkin Foundation
- Madison Community Foundation / Trevor Marsh Fund
- Brickyard Berridge Fund
- Colorado Parks & Recreation Association
- Mt. Hood Community College
- Rendle Family Charitable Foundation
- Ryan Patrick Kautz Foundation
- Garrod S Post & Robert A Hill Fund
- Paulsen Family Foundation
- Community First Foundation
- Binning Family Foundation





2017 FINANCIALS	ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		\$	
ASSETS	Cash and Cash Equivalents		313,540	
	Investments		9,941	
	Contributions and Grants Receivable		176,692	
	Prepaid Expenses and Other		3,170	
	Inventory		267,636	
	Property and Equipment, Net		119,225	
	Investments - Endowment		103,091	
Total Assets			\$ 993,295	
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	Liabilities		50,041	
	Net Assets	Undesignated	394,076	
		Investment in Property and Equipment	119,225	
		Temporarily Restricted	329,953	
		Permanently Restricted	100,000	
	Total Net Assets		\$ 943,254	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets			\$ 993,295	
SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES	Program	Contributions	784,695	
		Program Income	25,388	
		In-Kind Support	397,362	
		Other Income	99,932	
				\$ 1,307,377
	Summit For Someone	Contributions	266,110	
		In-Kind Support	177,434	
				\$ 443,544
	Expenses	Program Services	1,080,144	
		General and Administrative	91,928	
Fundraising Expenses		132,307		
Summit For Someone		332,911		
Total 2017 Expenses			\$ 1,637,290	
Change in Net Assets			\$ 113,631	

# Individual Donors

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS WHO GAVE \$250.00 OR MORE

Rocky & Laura Henderson  
 Scott Thorsteinson  
 Jeff & Judy Weidman  
 Mitch Campbell  
 Emily Waterman  
 Kelly & Mark Kraus  
 Blair Johnson  
 Natalie Bybee & Matthew Texler  
 Neal Robinson  
 Dennis Lewon  
 Phyllis Sim  
 Paul Andrews & Ciel Lawrence  
 Carly Lochmandy  
 John & Erin Telford  
 Lori Flint  
 Ken Hebb  
 Bill & Carol Sweasy  
 Bill & Mary Kay Stoehr  
 Carolyn Campion  
 Matt Sherman  
 Robyn Garrison  
 Ben Gipson & Olivia Cao  
 Chris & Cara Chandler  
 Gregg & Julie Hosfeldt  
 John Graff  
 Scott Marcus  
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 Jonathan & Laura Kochik  
 Johnny Jesson  
 Tom Maceyka  
 Blake James  
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 Adam Sher

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 Nathan & Katharine Knarreborg  
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 Peter & Teresa Bourbonais Carlson  
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 Thy Agustin  
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