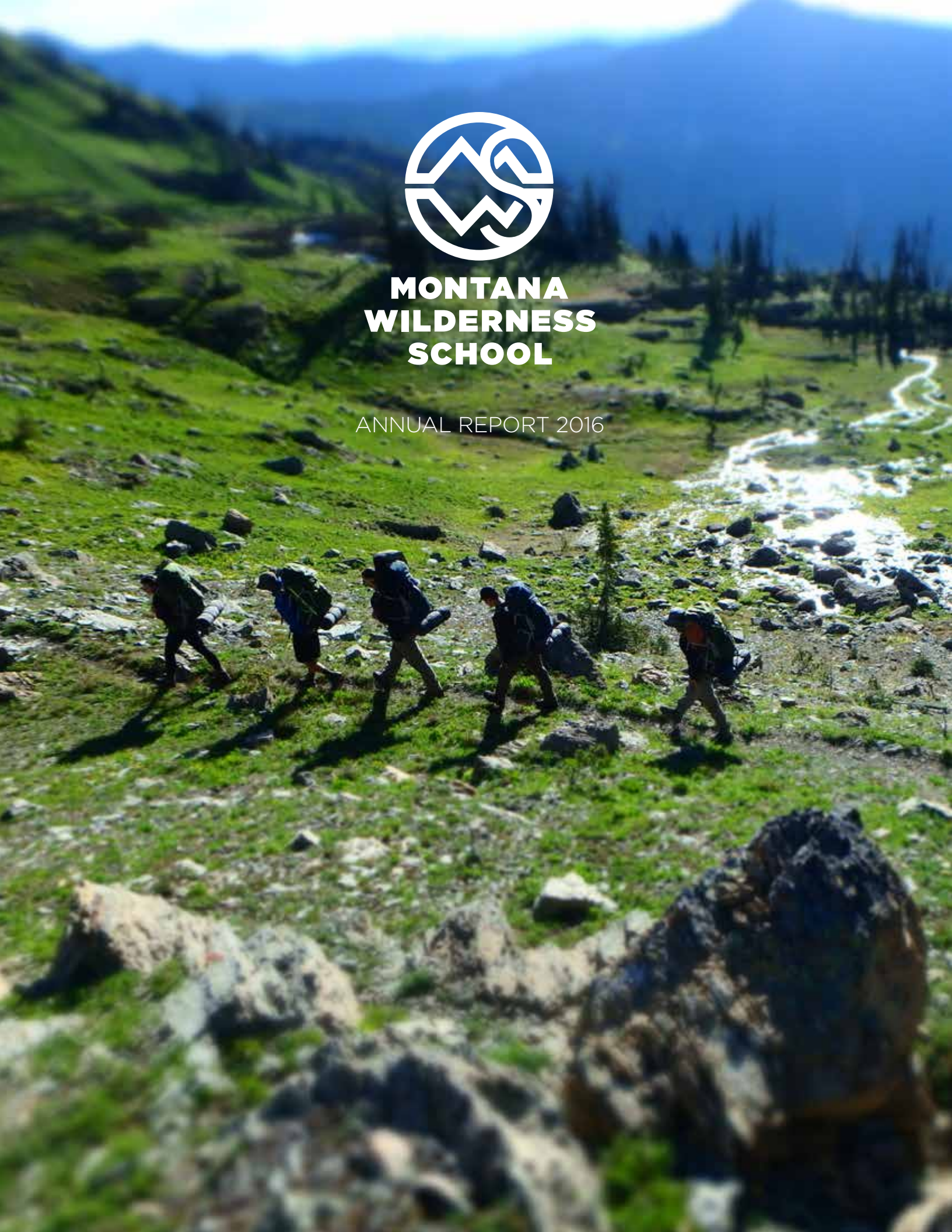




**MONTANA
WILDERNESS
SCHOOL**

ANNUAL REPORT 2016





LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2016 reminded me of how incredibly important it is that organizations like MWS are providing youth with empowering and transformative expeditionary experiences that help them build healthy communities as they bring those lessons back home.

The more tangible outcomes of MWS courses include connecting youth to the natural world, providing technical competencies and leadership experiences, and teaching students about the importance of stewardship to the land and each other. Yet, in my opinion, the most important aspect of our program is creating an atmosphere and community in which our students can grow and develop as individuals.

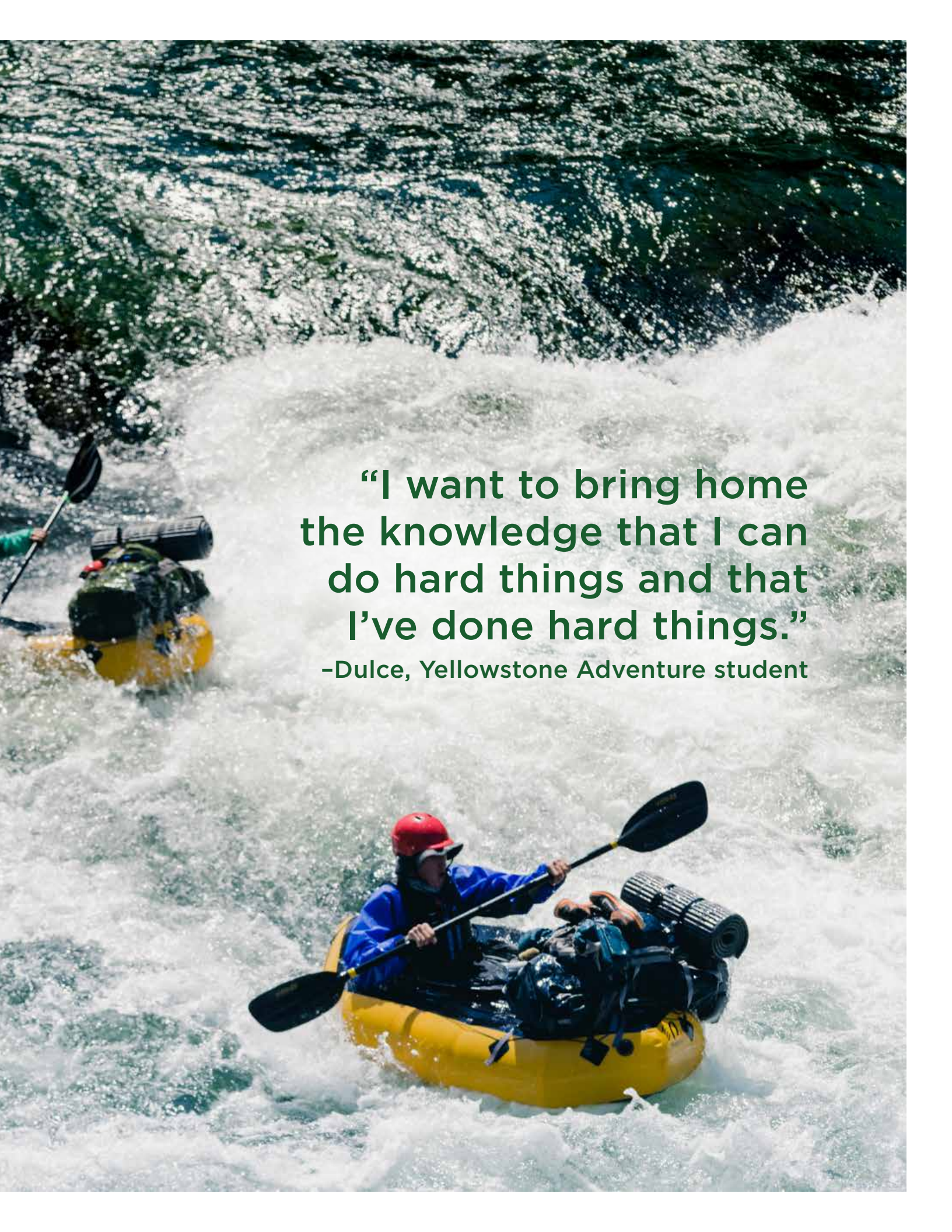
In 2016, the MWS Youth Wilderness Program was successful in nearly doubling both our course expeditions as well as our student enrollment, while improving virtually all aspects of our developing grassroots organization.

MWS was again fortunate to have a diversity of students on our expeditions creating more powerful experiences and building understanding and connections that positively affect both our local and global communities. Specifically, we had Montana students come from Bozeman, Livingston, Billings, Helena, Clancy, Missoula, Belgrade, and Whitehall; we also had students from California, Wisconsin, Colorado, England, France, and Mexico.

We are proud to be focused on serving Montana youth and we are committed to making the MWS experience accessible, regardless of students' economic background. In the past two seasons, 73% of our students were from Montana and 64% of them received some level of financial assistance through our MWS Scholarship Fund. In 2016, we awarded over \$40,000 in financial support through our MWS Scholarship Fund. We are extremely proud to say we have yet to turn away a deserving Montana student because of financial need, and we plan to continue building this important fund serving our underprivileged youth in the years ahead.

This was another big year for MWS and I am grateful for having so many amazing students that took a risk to do something challenging, exciting, and powerful. I am equally thankful to work alongside an incredible staff giving so much to make MWS possible. And thankful to all of you; our volunteers, donors, business supporters, and foundations who have been there at our side believing in us and helping us impact the lives of so many of our younger people. Thank you!





“I want to bring home
the knowledge that I can
do hard things and that
I’ve done hard things.”

-Dulce, Yellowstone Adventure student



Board of Directors

Becky Edwards
Co-Chair

Mark Parlett
Co-Chair

Betsy Beauvais
Treasurer

Whitney Lonsdale
Secretary

Michael Fiebig
Alex Kosseff
Gar Duke

Staff

Gar Duke
Executive Director

Josh Olsen
Program Director

Alexandra Yannakos
Operations Manager

Rachel Glass
Student Outreach
Coordinator

Nicki Bailey
Logistics Coordinator

Janine Welton
Field Instructor

Ty Guarino
Field Instructor

Brandon Tyrrell
Field Instructor

Quinn Mawhinney
Field Instructor

Volunteers

Dr. Steven Halvorson
Volunteer Medical Director

Abinandh Devan
Kris Olsen

Greg Smith

Jennifer Fiebig

Pat Straub

April Craighead

Dave Zinn



THE MISSION

of the Montana Wilderness School is to provide empowering expeditionary wilderness courses to youth that foster personal growth and cultivate a conservation ethic through connecting with remote landscapes and wild places.

OUR VISION

is to develop the highest quality expeditionary outdoor education program in the United States. We strive to serve diverse and motivated youth in communities throughout Montana. Through challenging and empowering experiences on our courses, youth will develop a deeper connection to the natural world, and will return to their communities as more skilled, confident, and compassionate leaders.



2016 PROGRAM REPORT

2016 was a remarkable year of growth at the Montana Wilderness School. Twenty-eight students had fundamentally transformative experiences in five unique landscapes of Montana. Students were educated about wilderness self-care, camp craft, Leave No Trace, wilderness medicine, leadership, communication, mountaineering and whitewater paddling. Students were challenged by terrain and weather, developed cohesive expedition teams and made lifelong friendships.

The 2016 field season provided both organizational successes as well as significant programmatic challenges, which ultimately shaped our identification of areas of growth for our organizational capacity and solutions to move toward sustainability. While our student numbers increased by 75%, MWS still faced challenges with enrollment and connecting with interested students and parents. MWS has identified new approaches and avenues to connect with interested students with the goal of increasing our enrollment, and is implementing such approaches in 2017. The resoundingly positive feedback from participants and parents highlighted an outstanding season for MWS. The student experience continues to fuel momentum and energy at MWS as we strive to fulfill our mission.

28
MWS STUDENTS

\$40,000
OF MWS SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS GRANTED TO DESERVING MONTANA STUDENTS

5
MULTI-WEEK BACKCOUNTRY EXPEDITIONS

500
USFS/BLM/NPS USER DAYS ON MONTANA PUBLIC LANDS

4
GRIZZLY BEAR SIGHTINGS

814
MILES HIKED

228
RIVER MILES PADDLED

1
WOLVERINE SIGHTING

23
STUDENTS RECEIVED LEAVE NO TRACE (LNT) TRAINING CERTIFICATIONS

4
STUDENTS RECEIVED WILDERNESS FIRST AID (WFA) CERTIFICATIONS

FINANCIALS



INCOME

- Individual & Business Donations: \$102,339
- Student Tuition Fees: \$93,470
- Grants: \$53,000
- Individual & Business Scholarship Donations: \$40,305
- In-Kind Contributions: \$18,962
- Miscellaneous Income: \$2,087

Total: \$310,163



EXPENSES

- Administration: \$18,589
- Fundraising: \$2,704
- Youth Wilderness Program: \$264,080

Total: \$285,373



“Looking back on my journal and pictures and remembering everything so vividly really shows how deeply this experience is rooted in my heart and how much of an effect it had on my life. It was definitely the most difficult thing I’ve experienced, but everything was just so real and open and every emotion you felt was so raw. I have never been so challenged and happy and scared and overwhelmed and amazed all at once. It is truly the definition of a once in a life time experience.”

-Audrey, Montana Mountaineering Student

2016 DONORS

\$1000+

David Agger
In Honor of Robert Friend
Anonymous
Jon Christensen
Brighton Clemons
Abinandh Devan & Alexandra Yannakos
Robert Duke
Robert & Michelle Friend
Nicole Friend & Gar Duke
Josh Gibson & Shannon Douglass
Herst Ventures
In Honor of Robert Friend
Brian & Caroline Lurie
William & Geraldine Olsen
Bernard Osher
Outdoor Safety Institute
Mark & Kim Parlett
Philip Schlein
Sitka Gear -WL Gore
Spire Climbing Center
The Friend Family

Foundation
Wisetail Works, Inc.
\$500-\$999
Don & Betty Alder
In Honor of Jennifer Kisker
Chuck Arnold
Sue & Jerry Campana
Rob & Diane Cassil
Paul Hardwick
Carolyn Herst
In Memory of Judith Duke
Mint Dental Studio
David & Deborah Peters
\$250-\$499
Suzanne & Tony Bell
Bridger Brewing Company
Intrinsic Architecture
Bryce & Jennifer Kisker
Terry & Karen Kreitzberg
Map Brewery
Peggy Parlett
Sandra Pruisner
Justin Stalpes & Lindsay Beck

Peter & Jane Weingarten
\$100 - \$249
Stefan Anderson
Keith Armstrong
Betsy Beauvais
Bill Blackburn
Deanne Buck
Community Outdoor Recreation Association
Gia Duke
Bennett Ford
Jennifer Krengel
Nancy Lonsdale
Whitney Lonsdale
Jake Maenpa
Peter Metcalf
John Morf
Linda Mornell
Barbara Penington
Damien Powledge
Justin Rawls
Douglas Richmond
Luann & Jim Rosendale
Dirk Schenck

SK4 Designs
Mark Snyder
Jill Wheeler
Under \$100
Michelle Albert
Diane Bailes
Mark & Meg Baker
Clare Berkey
Weston Birkeland
John & Virginia Clarke
Charles Drimal
Erik Esper
Michael & Jenny Fiebig
Marylis Filipovich
Barbara Fiore
Christa & Robert Haderlie
Keir Johnson
Caleb Kasper
Sherab Kloppenburg
Donald & Joan LeMay
Bronwen Lodato
Matthew MacKenzie
Meike Meissner & Mike

McMahon
Jace Meng
Ivy Merriot
Zachary Meyers
Kris and Allison Wynhoff-Olsen
Penelope & Ben Pierce
John & Virginia Platt
Judith Raymond
Maggie Rickert
Michael Rubovits
Greg Smith
Adina Smith & Richard Hartman
Stein Haus, Inc
Vernon & Linda Svensrud
Kathryn Teson
James Todd
Sas Weber
Jared White
Kimberly White
Jess & Andy Wickstrom
Dave Zinn

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Aerie Backcountry Medicine
Abinandh Devan
Alexandra Yannakos
Arc'teryx
Astral Designs
Becky Edwards
Boundary Expeditions
Bozeman Reel
Claire Kleese Design
Duckworth
Kokopelli Raft Company
Oboz Footwear
Map Brewing Company
Montana Fishing Outfitters
Reid Morth Photography
Mystery Ranch Backpacks
REI Bozeman
Schnee's Boots and Shoes

Simms Fishing
Sitka Gear
Adina Smith and Richard Hartman
Spire Climbing Center
Yogesh Simpson Design
Tim Baucom and Andrew Morehouse of Walcrik

FOUNDATION GRANT AWARDS

Mountain Sky Guest Ranch Fund
The Kendeda Fund
Wisetail Works
Yellowstone Club Community Foundation

FOUNDERS' PROGRAM

The MWS Founders' Program is an exclusive group of Legacy Partners that have come together to support the establishment and formation of MWS during our inaugural years. This generous family of founding members have made significant financial contributions and helped make a substantial impact on the lives of Montana youth during our organization's grassroots inception. **Thank You!**

Business:

Duckworth Clothing
Kokopelli Packrafts
Map Brewing Company
Oboz Footwear
Outdoor Safety Institute
Schnee's Boots and Shoes
Sitka Gear
Wisetail Works

Individuals:

Anonymous
Brighton Clemons
Jon Christensen
Abinandh Devan and Alexandra Yannakos

Robert and Judy Duke
Nicole Friend and Gar Duke
Janie and Donald Friend
Jason and Benjamin Friend
Robert and Michelle Friend
Josh Gibson and Shannon Douglass
Douglas and Carolyn Herst
Linda Mornell
William and Geraldine Olsen
Bernard Osher
Bina Peters and Josh Olsen
David and Deborah Peters
Philip Schlein
Justin Stalpes and Lindsey Beck

INDUSTRY AND ORGANIZATION PARTNERS:





**MONTANA
WILDERNESS
SCHOOL**

P.O.Box 1183 | Bozeman, MT 59771
info@montanawildernessschool.org
406.522.1525

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



BEGIN THE ADVENTURE AT
montanawildernessschool.org