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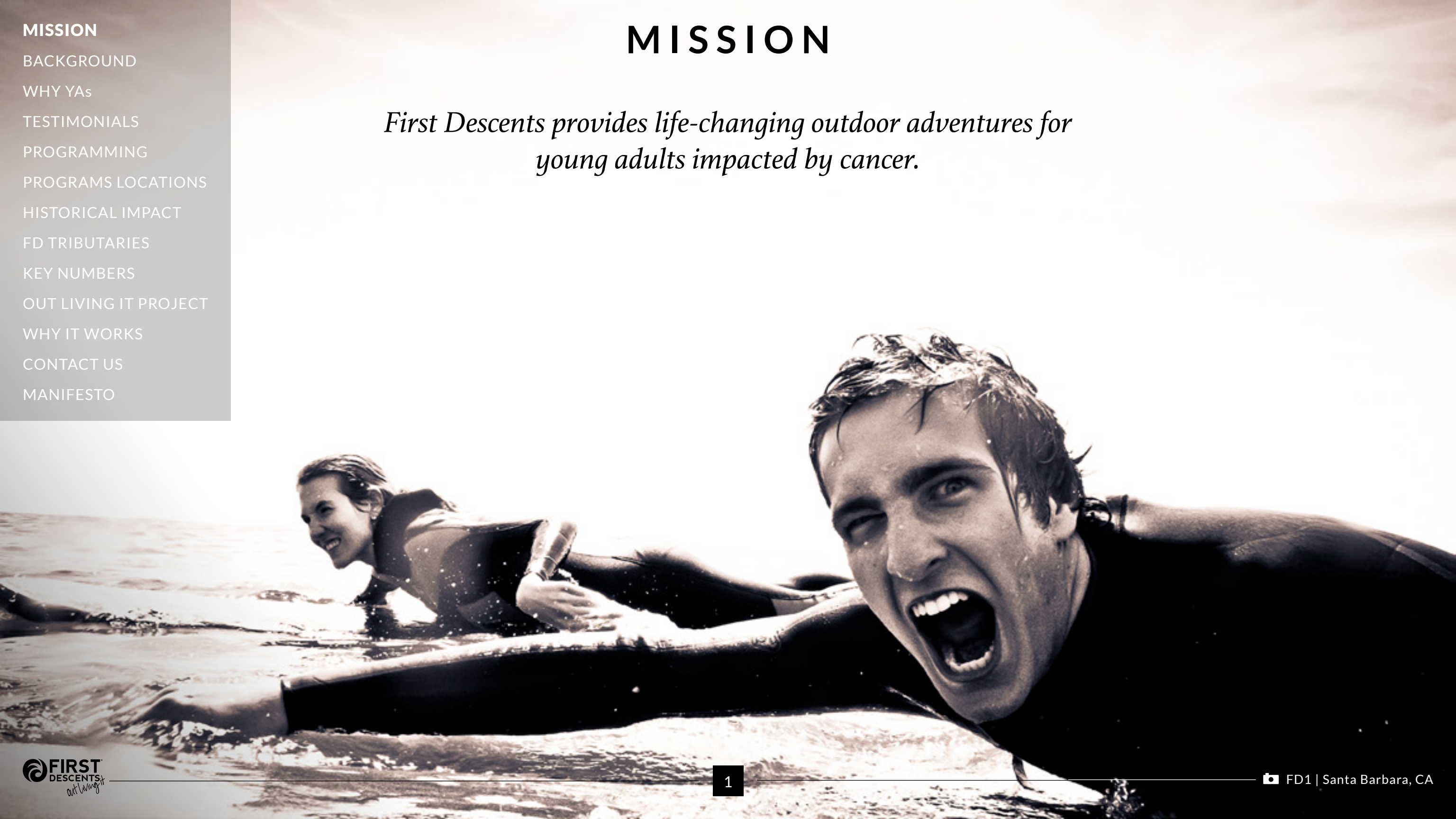
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# MISSION

*First Descents provides life-changing outdoor adventures for young adults impacted by cancer.*



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# BACKGROUND

Cancer goes after anyone and everyone without discrimination, mercy or relent. It breaks spirits, ruins homes, ends lives and steals hope. I saw all of this first-hand when cancer targeted my family, and that's when I targeted cancer.

In 2001, I took 15 young adults with cancer on a week-long kayak adventure. At the end, several of them told me that it was the most powerful week of their life. Those words lit a fire within me; I was on a mission to give a 'first descent' to everyone in need.

Now 14 years later, we have transformed more than 3,000 lives through a wide range of programming in dozens of domestic and international locations. We've added surfing, climbing, mountaineering, and hope to expand our sport offerings even further.

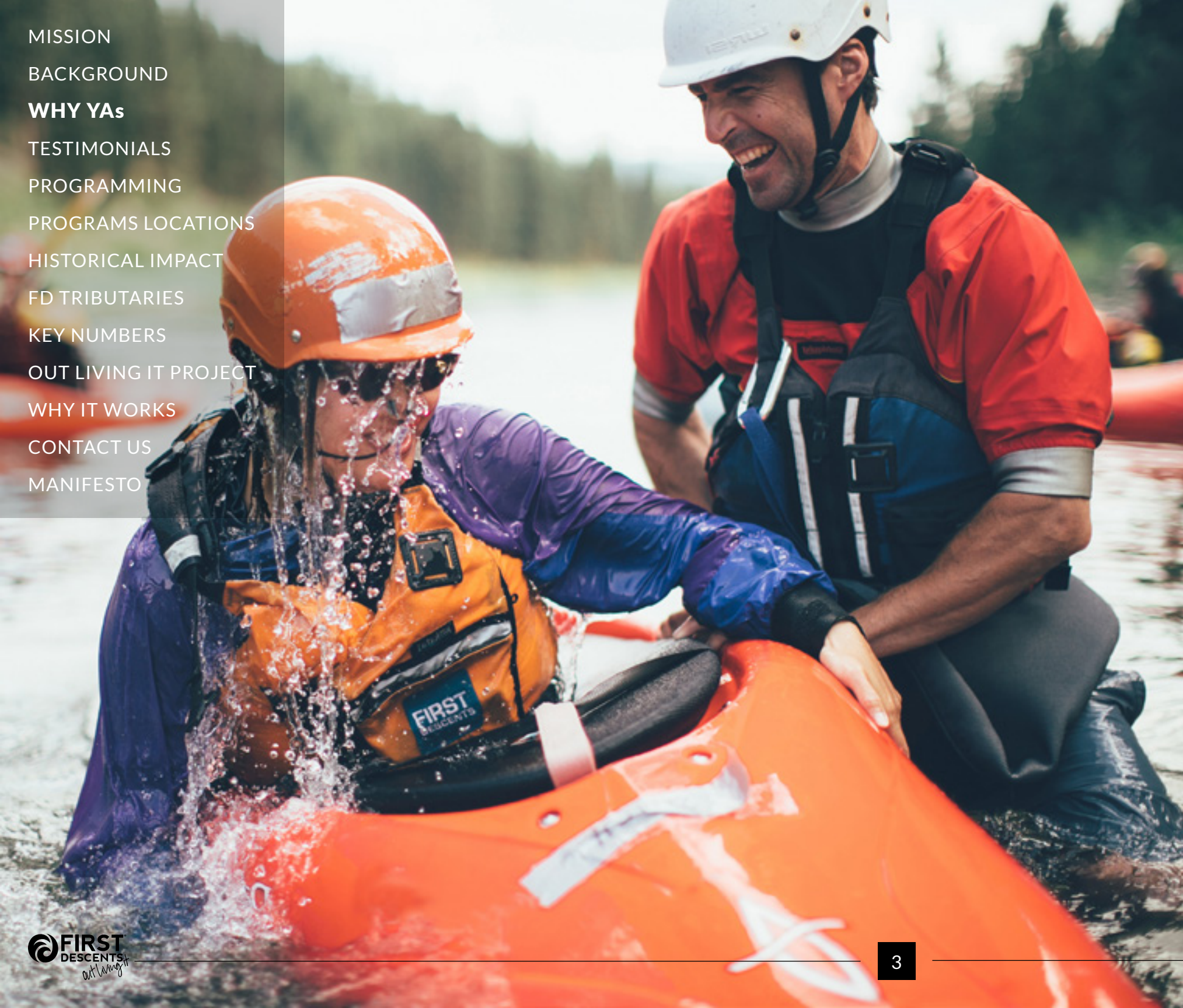
There are over 150,000 young adults who are eligible for our programs and currently fighting cancer in the U.S. We are living with a sense of urgency and purpose like never before.

First Descents is a passionate, progressive and driven organization that delivers an authentic and transformative experience to an underserved population. All of this exists because of the help and support of a growing FD community. We hope that you'll be the next to join us in this fight.

Thank you for your consideration,  
*BRAD LUDDEN, First Descents Founder*



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# WHY YAs?

*Each year, nearly 70,000 young adults (age 15 - 39) are diagnosed with cancer in the U.S. alone.\**

Young adults with cancer face a unique set of challenges including infertility, loss or lack of insurance, loss or lack of financial independence, re-entry into the workplace, and secondary malignancies. These challenges are frequently accompanied by feelings of alienation and isolation, depression, and decreased self-confidence.

First Descents uses outdoor adventure as a catalyst for addressing these issues by de-stigmatizing cancer, fostering a renewed sense of self, and creating a support community.

## *What happens at FD*

During the First Descents experience, young adult survivors and fighters are empowered through conquering legitimate outdoor challenges to push their limits and face their fears, and by doing so, they are able to regain the confidence and self-efficacy lost to cancer. First Descents places an emphasis on each individual's experience and provides the right support for every participant to achieve his or her goals for the week.

Each program is limited to 15 participants, ensuring individualized care, medical attention and an intimate experience with fellow survivors. First Descents programs are available to young adults with cancer regardless of their financial means. A variety of programs are available throughout the year in the U.S. and worldwide.

**Through our First Descent, we ascended and transcended from cancer survivors to a family empowered. I've kayaked beyond my turbulent life and paddled my way to OUT LIVING IT! Thanks so much.**

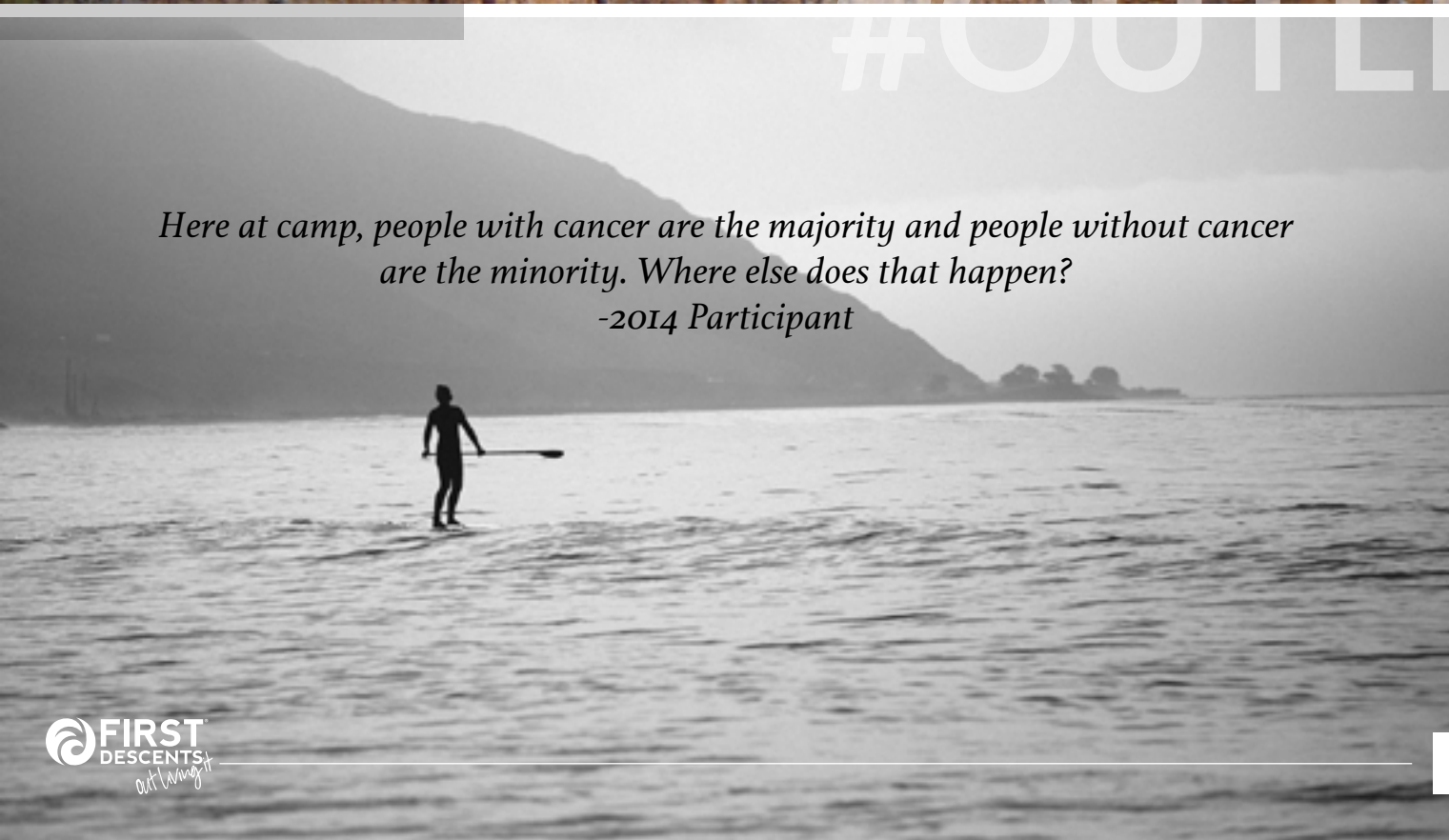
*- 2014 Participant*

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*FD was the quintessential experience. I have been having problems becoming comfortable in my new cancer body. My week at FD gave me the chance to know that I can still do whatever I put my mind to. The people there have given a new meaning to friendship and to caring.*  
*-2013 Participant*

# #OUTLIVINGIT



*Here at camp, people with cancer are the majority and people without cancer are the minority. Where else does that happen?*  
*-2014 Participant*



*Kayaking and cancer brought us together, but the living we experienced formed life long bonds.*  
*-2012 Participant*

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# PROGRAMMING

## **FDi: THE ORIGINAL**

The original First Descents experience. A multi-day adventure program centered around whitewater kayaking, rock climbing, ice climbing or surfing. Participants go beyond their limits, meet some of the most inspiring people and experience some of the most stunningly beautiful settings in the country.

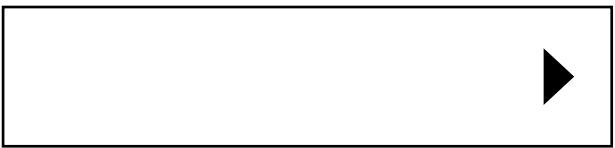
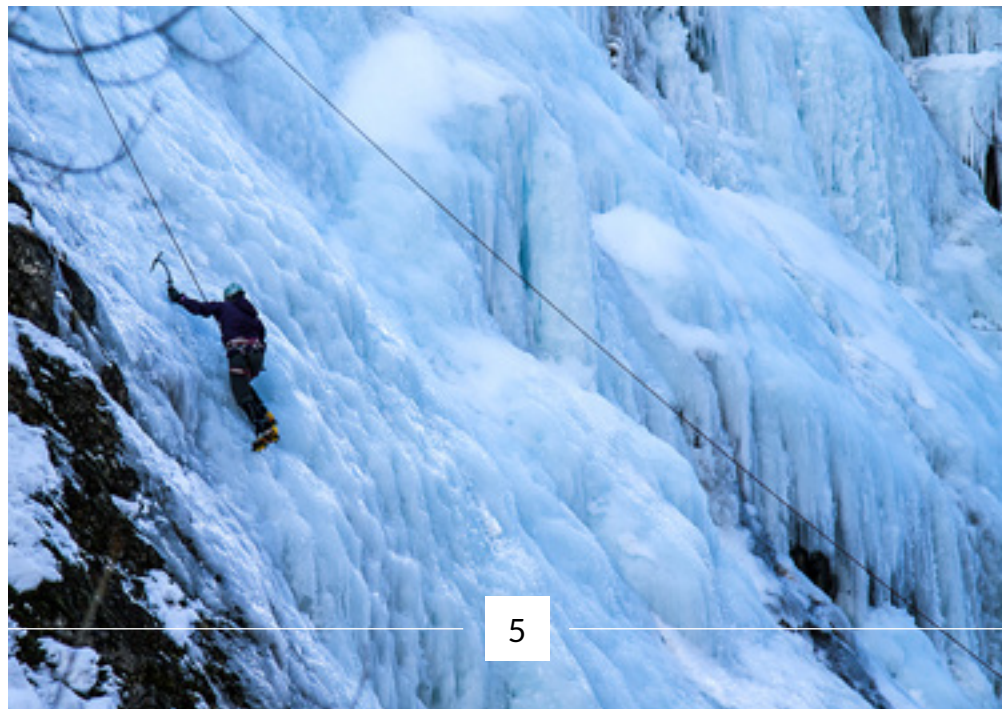
## **FDX: ADVENTURE INTO THE UNKNOWN**

The ultimate adventure experience. FDX is your ticket to pursuing life-long adventure and continuing to live the spirit of FD. First Descents works with our partnering outfitters to reserve outdoor expeditions all over the world. New for 2015, alum who are ambitious enough to dream of an FDX and make it happen, can challenge their imagination to find, fund and dream an FDX, providing it meets certain criteria with First Descents.

## **FDi: WEEKEND EXPERIENCES**

In an effort to reach even more young adult survivors and fighters, First Descents launched FDi. The “i” stands for introduction. FDi is a weekend program, set near urban areas and hosted in collaboration with medical centers across the country. FDi is the perfect adventure for those who want to experience FD but are unable to attend an FDi program due to health, treatment schedules, or family & work obligations.

*First Descents also offers a limited number of programs to caregivers and participants ages 40 – 49.*



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# LOCATIONS



FRANCE  
PUERTO RICO  
ICELAND



HOOD RIVER, OR



MISSOULA, MT



MOAB, UT



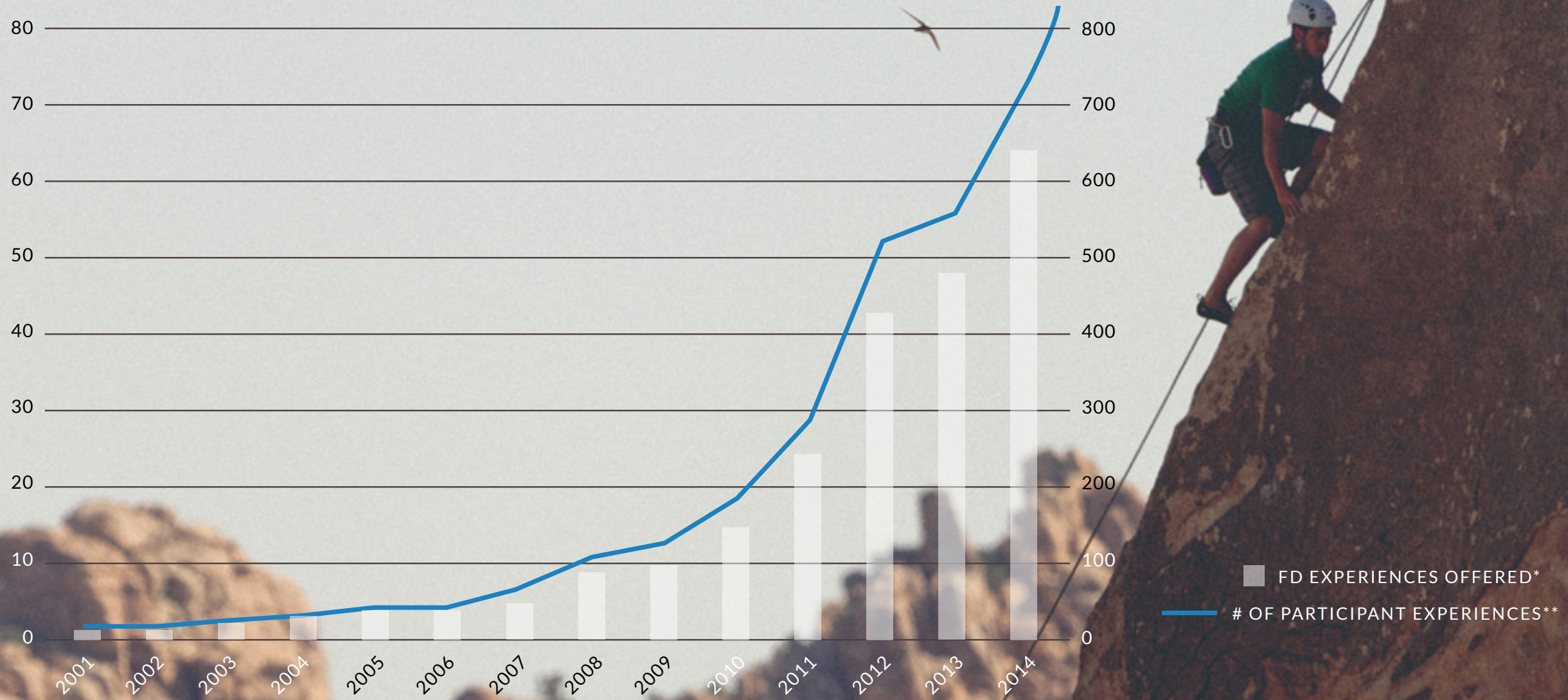
OUTER BANKS, NC



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# HISTORICAL IMPACT

*Throughout its 14-year history, First Descents has impacted thousands of lives.*



\* Experiences Offered- accounts for every unique First Descents experience, whether it be a week-long program, or single / multi-day adventures offered through FDi and FDTributaries.

\*\* Participant Experiences- FD offers a unique set of program offerings. This metric accounts for each unique FD Participant experience, both prior to (e.g., FDi) and following (e.g., FDTribs) a signature week-long experience. It is determined by the total participation across all programs, taking into consideration some participants attend multiple FD experiences in a single calendar year.



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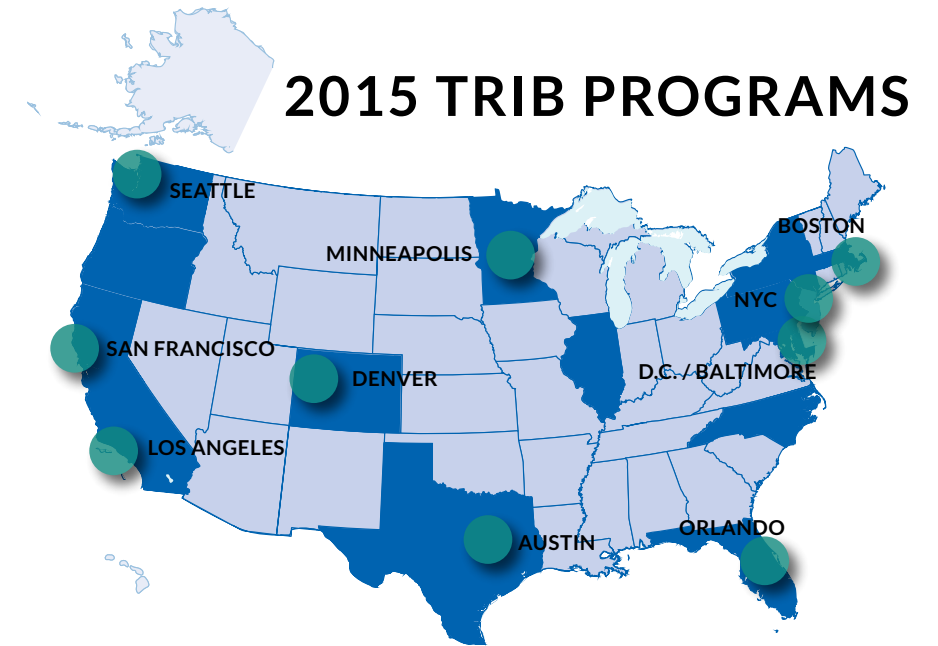
# FD TRIBUTARIES

In order to provide ongoing post-program support at the community level, First Descents launched a new initiative in 2013 to provide the opportunity for year-round adventure experiences through local chapters. Keeping with the theme of rivers, FD has dubbed these chapters Tributaries (Trib).

In 2014, Tribs reached 412 people, including 200 alumni, 58 primary caregivers (or “rocks”), and 87 young adults living with cancer who had not yet attended an FD program. For these participants, Tribs serve as a great introduction while they await their first week-long program. Some 2014 highlights include:

- » Stand-up paddling (Class I-III rapids) and camping on the Upper Colorado River
- » Bioluminescent night kayaking in Orlando
- » Surfing in San Diego
- » 2-night backcountry hut trip with snow safety awareness education on Vail Pass
- » Culinary workshops in SF and NYC teaching healthy cooking techniques
- » Rock climbing in Chicago, Denver, Seattle, and Los Angeles

*I'm a survivor but I'm dealing with side effects and other issues that make it so I can't do a week-long FD program; hopefully next year. I'm so happy for the NYC Trib. It allows me to still get out and do cool things and meet other fighters and survivors in my area who are dealing with the same thing.*  
 - 2013 Waitlist Member, NYC Trib Participant



*Each year, the demand for FD programs continues to grow. Tribs helps FD reach more participants nationwide.*



FDtributaries Presents

## floatilla

A weekend of Rafting • Camping • Colorado Love  
For Young Adult Cancer Fighters & Survivors  
The adventure begins at PumpHouse Campground  
Don't miss the Best Weekend of the Summer

JULY 27th - 28th



FD TRIBUTARIES  
PRESENTS

## SUNSET LAKESHORE YOGA IN CHICAGO

JULY 23RD  
6:00-8:30PM

MONTROSE HARBOR, CHICAGO, IL 60613  
1 HOUR SUNSET YOGA SESSION  
LED BY GERRI BLEIER FROM YOGAVIEW  
CATERED BEACH PICNIC TO FOLLOW



fd tributaries  
**SEATTLE** | Sail Onto The Puget Sound  
in style  
Friday, July 18th  
7:00pm-9:30pm



ORLANDO - 7/26/14 - 7 TO 10PM  
HAULOVER CANAL LAUNCH

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## KEY NUMBERS

**300**

FIRST-TIME PARTICIPANTS  
SERVED THROUGH FD PROGRAMS

**700**

CHOSE TO JOIN THE OUT LIVING IT PROJECT

**RAISING \$600,000**

**27 TRIBS EVENTS SERVED**

**11 CITIES AND 412 PARTICIPANTS**

**700 POUNDS OF KIND BARS EATEN**

**147 RENTAL VAN DANCE PARTIES**

**634 CHEF-PREPARED MEALS**

**34 PARTY WAVES RIDDEN**

**828**

**EXPERIENCES PROVIDED**

**\$2.59M**

**TOTAL RAISED IN 2014**

**11 STATES | 4 COUNTRIES**

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# THE OUT LIVING IT PROJECT

*In 2014, over 700 participants and 4,300 supporters raised over \$600,000 through their Out Living It Project efforts.*

Previously Team FD, the newly renamed Out Living It Project is where the First Descents community fosters a spirit of adventure, creativity, and philanthropy. OLI Projects are unique ways to fundraise for First Descents and range from marathons to back yard barbecues to meditation challenges. Anyone can join a project or create a project of his or her own design.

## 2014 KEY NUMBERS

**700**  
PARTICIPANTS

**4,300**  
SUPPORTERS

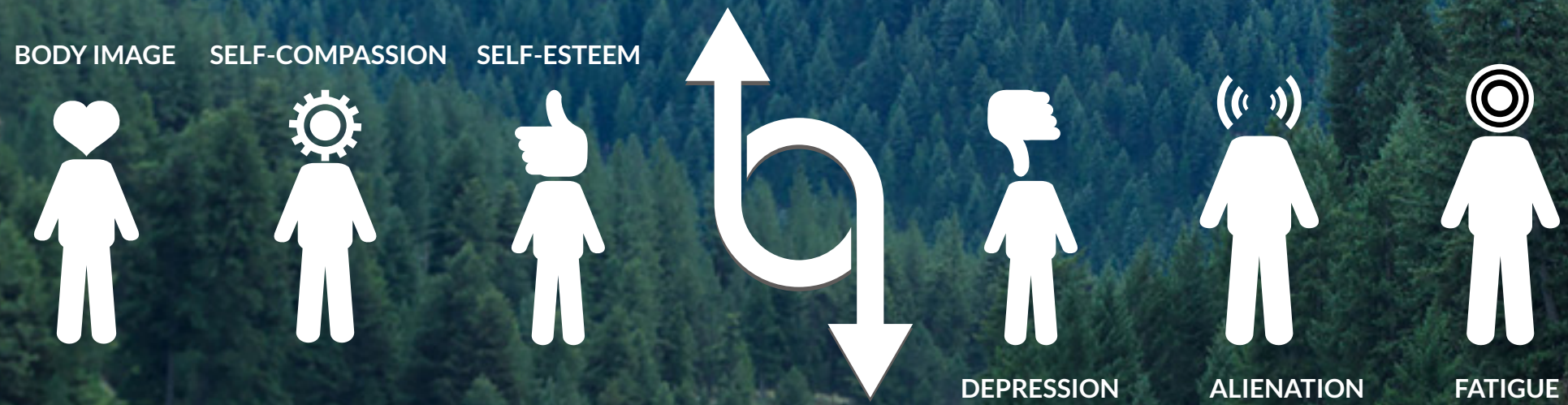
**\$600,000**  
RAISED



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# WHY IT WORKS

First Descents partnered with clinical psychologist Dr. Robin Rosenberg and Dr. Stephen Kosslyn, founding Dean of the Minerva Schools at the Keck Graduate Institute, to understand the impact of the FD experience on a host of psychological issues common to young adults with cancer. The study showed the FD programs reduce depression, alienation, and fatigue while improving body image, self-compassion and self-esteem.




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# TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT:

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303.800.6821

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#OutLivingIt

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[www.FirstDescents.org](http://www.FirstDescents.org)

# MANIFESTO

**WE ARE A TRIBE.** A COLLECTIVE. A TEAM. AND A FAMILY BROUGHT TOGETHER FOR THE MOST DESPICABLE REASON, THE UGLIEST IMPACT: CANCER.

**BUT**

WE STAND AND PADDLE AND SURF AND CLIMB AND THRIVE TOGETHER NOW NOT BECAUSE OF CANCER,  
**BUT BECAUSE OF FIRST DESCENTS.**

**CANCER CAN COME A-KNOCKIN' ALL IT WANTS.** IT CAN YELL AND SCREAM AND THROW FITS AND TAKE LIMBS AND MEMORIES. SHAKE ITS CATHETERS AND CHEMO IN OUR FACES.  
**BUT IN THIS FAMILY, IT'LL GET NOWHERE.**

BECAUSE THE ROAR OF THE RIVER, THE SILENCE OF THE SUMMIT, THE CLASH OF THE SURF AND  
**THE WAR CRIES OF THIS TRIBE WILL ALWAYS WIN.**

WE ARE FIRST DESCENTS.  
WE ARE **#OUTLIVINGIT.**

*And this is our manifesto.*