



2011 ANNUAL REPORT



# Thank you

FOR MAKING THIS FIRST DESCENT POSSIBLE!

Brad "Daril" Ludden

Founder and CEO, First Descents



At First Descents, we find ourselves using river metaphors to explain our places in the world, the events in our lives and the directions of our paths. The river seems to hold all of the answers, explain things we can't quite put words to and provide direction in a landscape otherwise void of signs. As such, it seems fitting to recap 2011 with the help of the river.

Any good first descent builds momentum as the kayaker travels from the source toward the sea. Tributaries join the main flow and add volume. The river changes form, characteristic and feel. Even though it's the same river, it's a new experience. First Descents experienced that same transition in 2011. We went from the organization we were in the beginning—the source, to the organization we've become and it's a whole new river.

In 2011, First Descents saw some incredible accomplishments and met impressive milestones. We nearly doubled program offerings from 15 to 27, added four new locations, expanded our Canadian programming and added the adventure of surfing to our roster. Additionally, we implemented a new and innovative tiered program model to better address the need for continual healing.

Of course, this expansion required increased financial support, which is why the organization kicked fundraising efforts into high gear, an effort rewarded by nearly doubled annual donations. First Descents' innovative fund and awareness raising arm—Team First Descents—grew from \$208,000 to a substantial \$806,000 dollars and from 144 athletes to 675.

First Descents has always grown under the dedicated and visionary eye of our Board, which expanded to include a diverse and experienced Medical Advisory Board in 2011. We attribute this added volume for FD to the continued support of long-time First Descents loyalists, the addition of countless new supporters and, of course, our alumni whose passion, courage and enthusiasm for adventure drives everything we do.

I can't thank you enough for believing in this adventure and making 2011 a water-mark year. As we look ahead, the momentum continues to build, the rapids grow, the horizon lines become more and more numerous and the rewards all the greater!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "BD" or a stylized version of the name Brad Ludden.



# Snapshot

27 PROGRAMS  
283 PARTICIPANTS

# 80%

PROGRAM OFFERING  
GROWTH

## 2011 PROGRAMMING

"This week out on the river  
has transformed me. I'm  
taking risks, I'm succeeding,  
I'm feeling strong."

*2011 First Descents Alumna*





Photo: Tony Hisgett, Creative Commons

## IMPACT

Why Young Adults? Each year, nearly 70,000 young adults (age 15 - 39) are diagnosed with cancer in the U.S. alone. In contrast to both younger and older patients, survival rates for young adults have not increased since 1975. Trapped between pediatric and adult oncology, young adults often slip between the cracks in terms of quality of care. Young adult cancer fighters and survivors face a unique set of challenges including infertility, loss or lack of insurance, loss or lack of financial independence, re-entry to the workplace and secondary malignancies. These challenges are frequently accompanied by psychosocial issues such as feelings of alienation and isolation, depression and decreased self-confidence.

First Descents uses outdoor adventure as a catalyst for addressing these issues by destigmatizing cancer, renewing a sense of self and creating a supportive community. Our programs have proven to be an incredibly effective way of reaching a demographic of fighters and survivors that has traditionally been very reluctant to reach out for conventional resources.

## INNOVATION

### *Tiered Program Model*

In 2011, we introduced an innovative new tiered program model, expanding our staple week-long programs to include FD1, FD2 and FDX level adventures. We recognized that survivorship is an ongoing challenge and designed our new program model to encourage growth and provide continued support:

**FD1:** Our original week-long adventure program for first-time participants.

**FD2:** A heightened experience, both physically and emotionally, for second-year participants.

**FDX:** The ultimate adventure experience. FDX programs are designed to allow third-year participants the opportunity to give back, stay connected and pursue adventure together. FDX participants raise \$1,000 through Team First Descents to sponsor a first-time survivor to attend an FD1 program. In this first seasons of our FDX programming, alumni tackled two noteworthy expeditions: a summit of Mt. Hood and a seven-day kayaking trip in the Idaho wilderness.

### *Surfing*

We hosted our inaugural surf program in Santa Barbara, CA in September thanks to a generous sponsorship from Teva. This highly anticipated program was an enormous success. Fifteen participants came together to experience the thrill of getting up on that first wave and the healing properties of the ocean. Surfing proved to be a perfect platform for delivering the FD experience.

### *International Programming*

First Descents was proud to announce an expansion into international programming in 2011. We hosted our first international program in Ottawa, Ontario Canada in partnership with the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation.



Moab

Kalispell

Mt. Hood

Main Salmon

Santa Barbara

## LOCATIONS

Moab, UT  
Estes Park, CO  
Bryson City, NC\*  
Hood River, OR  
Kalispell, MT  
Vail, CO  
Santa Barbara, CA\*  
Mt. Hood, OR (FDX)\*  
Main Salmon River, ID (FDX)\*  
Ottawa, Ontario (Canada)\*

\*New for 2011.





## TEAM FIRST DESCENTS

"As a past participant raising money to help another young adult with cancer was all I ever needed, however as I walked over the 5K finish line my spirit was filled with an additional boost of energy and better outlook on life."

*2011 First Descents Alumna*

Snapshot

675  
ATHLETES

**\$806K**

RAISED





First Descents' largest single source of revenue, Team First Descents, is a social fundraising platform through which athletes select a challenge (anything from a marathon to a personalized yoga challenge), train, fundraise, and integrate the First Descents culture of 'Out Living It' into their lives. Team First Descents is about even more than the epic accomplishment of running a marathon; it's about mile 26.3 - the lifestyle changes athletes make, the fears they overcome, the FD family members they meet, and honoring the First Descents culture of living with adventure and challenge for the rest of their lives.

As 2011 progressed, Team First Descents blew its original fundraising goal of \$300K out of the water and ended the year with 675 athletes who raised \$806,740.82 for First Descents. This year Team First Descents found its niche with different events that sell highly coveted spots to non-profit organizations. We were able to obtain entries into big-time events such as the NYC Marathon, Leadville 100 MTB, and Ironman events around the world. Athletes 'paid it forward' as their participation in and fundraising for these events raised significant funds and awareness for First Descents. The end of the 2011 Team First Descents season left us with a lot of potential, excitement and room for innovation for 2012.



# FINANCIALS

## Statement of Financial Position

### December 31, 2011

#### Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$	464,953
Contributions receivable		54,396
Prepaid expenses		51,142
Inventory		4,510
Property and equipment, net		105,391
Other assets		16,323

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<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$696,715</b>
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#### Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$	28,340
Payable to related party		39,394

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<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>\$67,734</b>
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#### Commitments and contingencies

#### Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$	478,981
Temporarily restricted		150,000

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Total net assets	\$	628,981
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<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>		<b>\$696,715</b>
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"As ironic as it sounds, I feel so fortunate to have been diagnosed with cancer as a young adult because it means I get to be a part of FD."  
*2011 First Descents Alumnas*



# FINANCIALS

## Statement of Activities

### December 31, 2011

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
<b>Support, revenue and gains</b>			
Team FD	\$ 806,741	\$ -	\$ 806,741
Net store loss	(342)	-	(342)
Net event income	87,740	-	87,740
General contributions	255,699	-	255,699
Grants	322,206	150,000	472,206
Other income	345	-	345
In kind contributions	227,097	-	227,097
<b>Total support, revenue and gains</b>	<b>1,699,486</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>1,849,486</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Program services	1,023,516	-	1,023,516
Administrative	110,437	-	110,437
Fundraising:			
Team FD	188,114	-	188,114
General donor development	168,398	-	168,398
<b>Total fundraising</b>	<b>356,512</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>356,512</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>1,490,465</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,490,465</b>
Change in net assets before other expenses	209,021	150,000	359,021
Other expenses	(48,332)	-	(48,332)
Increase in net assets	160,689	150,000	310,689
<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	<b>318,292</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>318,292</b>
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 478,981</b>	<b>\$ 150,000</b>	<b>\$ 628,981</b>



# FINANCIALS

## Statement of Functional Expenses

### December 31, 2011

Description of Expenses	Supporting Services				
	Program Services	Fundraising			Total
		Team FD	Development	Administrative	
Salaries	\$ 216,011	\$ 30,000	\$ 107,222	\$ 64,889	\$ 418,122
Payroll taxes and benefits	29,648	5,246	13,490	12,283	60,667
Conferences and meetings	13,083	-	508	2,544	16,135
Events	-	-	22,401	-	22,401
Cost of direct benefit to donors	-	-	61,238	-	61,238
Donated cost of direct benefit to donors	-	-	189,704	-	189,704
Marketing	12,571	54,104	3,813	980	71,468
Postage and shipping	1,563	3,859	2,482	798	8,702
Cost of goods sold	-	-	1,535	-	1,535
Public relations	20,137	3,181	3,182	-	26,500
Participant recruiting	69,123	-	-	-	69,123
Program facilities rent	95,172	-	-	-	95,172
Program meals	57,875	-	-	-	57,875
Program eqmnt and vehicle rentals	59,701	-	-	-	59,701
Program supplies	19,554	-	-	-	19,554
Contract staff	298,503	-	5,000	-	303,503
Rent, utilities and supplies	439	7,333	5,542	7,285	20,599
Payroll processing expenses	1,178	182	468	203	2,031
Travel and meals	100,326	-	14,519	6,182	121,027
Event entries	-	44,214	-	-	44,214
IT/Web development	21,441	-	6,486	-	27,927
Alumni outreach	25	-	-	-	25
Insurance	1,430	-	-	3,411	4,841
Accounting, legal and consulting	-	-	-	9,761	9,761
Bank and merchant fees	-	39,995	4,461	1,280	45,736
Dues and subscriptions	-	-	-	806	806
Depreciation	5,736	-	417	15	6,168
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,023,516</b>	<b>\$188,114</b>	<b>\$442,468</b>	<b>\$110,437</b>	<b>\$1,764,535</b>
Less expenses netted against revenue:					
Events	-	-	21,593	-	21,593
Cost of direct benefit to donors	-	-	250,942	-	250,942
Cost of goods sold	-	-	1,535	-	1,535
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,023,516</b>	<b>\$188,114</b>	<b>\$168,398</b>	<b>\$110,437</b>	<b>\$1,490,465</b>
Functional expenses as a percentage of total expense	69%	13%	11%	7%	100%





## 2011 DONORS

\$50,000+

Genentech  
Brad and Kammi Reiss  
The John Wayne Cancer Foundation

\$25,000+

The Anschutz Foundation  
Deckers Outdoor Corporation/TEVA  
Grady and Lori Durham  
Kirk and Kathy MacKenzie  
Sportsgrants, Inc.

\$10,000+

Amware Logistics Services  
Joel Appel  
Banner Life Insurance Company  
Colorado Relay  
Downey-Short Foundation  
Eddyflower International  
Empowered Wealth Foundation  
E.P.I.C. Foundation  
GlobalGiving Foundation  
Jon & Mindy Gray Family Foundation  
Vicki and Michael Gross Family Foundation  
Bruce and Marni Gutkin  
Joel and Kelly Heath  
David and Megan Howell  
Katie Jozwicki  
Nestle Purina PetCare Company  
The Precourt Foundation  
Southbeach Foundation  
Triford Foundation  
Pete and Sue Worley

"I can guarantee that  
whether you were able to  
donate a dollar, a million  
dollars, or anything in be-  
tween, It'll be the best mon-  
ey you ever spent."

*2011 First Descents Alumnas*



## 2011 DONORS - continued

\$5,000+

Gary and Melanie Alecusan  
American Recreation Products  
Richard and Carol Barron  
Noah Bremen  
Community Bankshares Inc  
Denver Foundation  
Fairfield County Community Foundation  
The Gatorade Company  
Lisa and Brent Goldstein  
Dan and Mary Beth Jester  
Jinny and Chuck Ludden  
Geoff McFarlane  
Anne and Jeff Meisner  
Mellam Family Foundation  
Kathy and Doug Milham  
Christine and Gary Musket  
Amanda Precourt  
Dave and Janice Sachs  
Rob Schuham  
Ruth Tesar  
TogoRun  
Amanda and Adam Williams

\$2,500+

Alpine Bank  
Amerigroup Corporation  
Apollo Investments  
Eileen and Lowell Aptman  
David Corkery  
Crawford Family Foundation  
East West Partners  
Shawna and Graham Frank  
Amy Gaines  
Greenberg Traurig  
Kyle Herren  
Location3 Media, Inc.  
William O'Donnell  
Arnold and Madeleine Penner  
Linda and Howard Postal  
Proximo Spirits Inc.  
Earl and Maxine Reiss  
Christina Schleicher  
Jim and Katie Smith  
Sullivan Productions  
Vail Valley Surgery Center

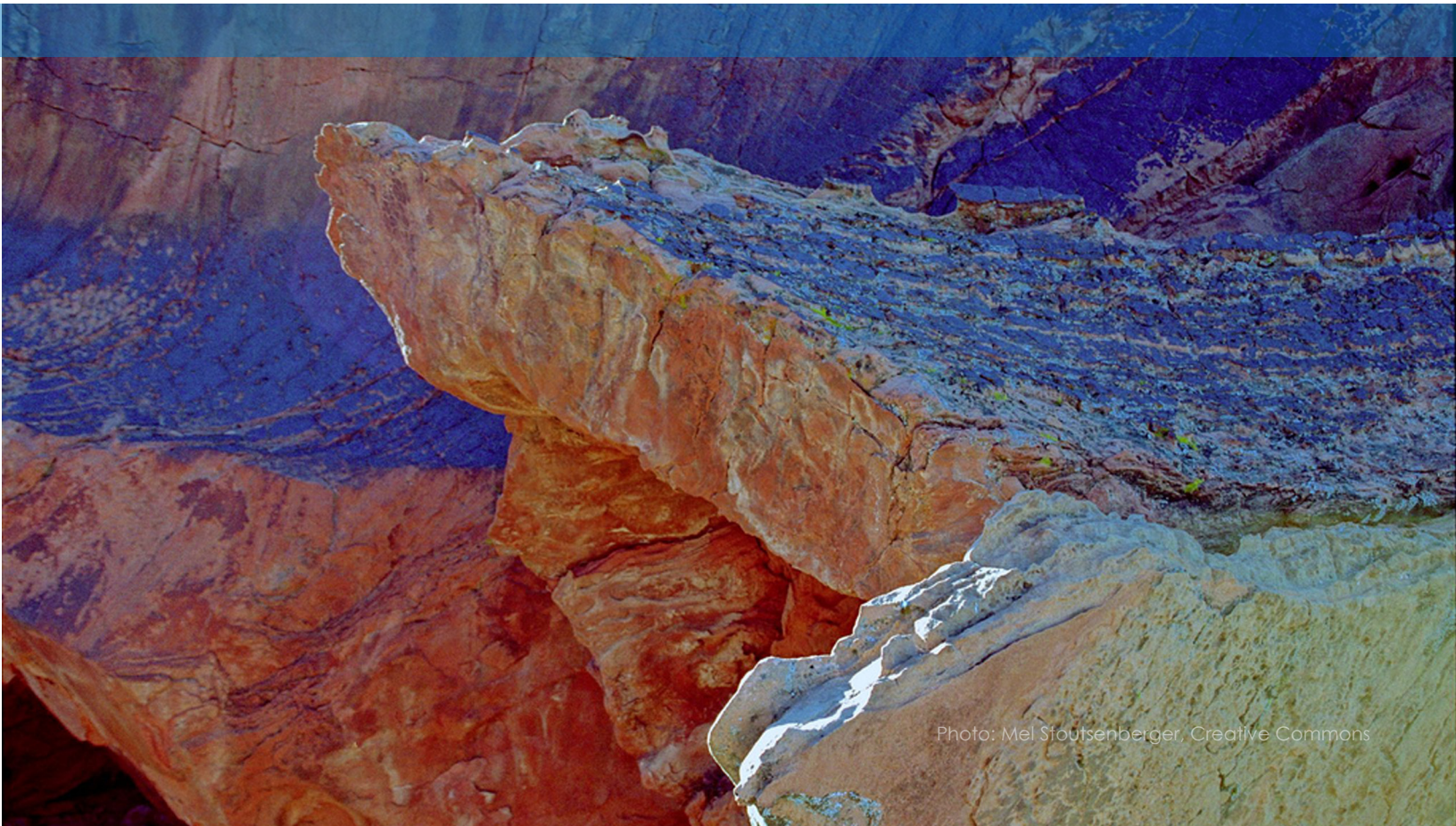


Photo: Mel Stoutsenberger, Creative Commons

## 2011 DONORS - continued

\$1,000+

Mike and Carrie Accardi  
Lee and Elyse Alper  
Beth Anderson  
Marc and Marilyn Andersen  
Elaine and Max Appel  
RJ & ML Badenhausen Charitable Fund  
Bailey Family Foundation  
Charles Baker  
Jen and Josh Behr  
Linda and Rich Behr  
Bennett High School  
Hans and Alix Berglund  
The Bibler Foundation  
Beth Blumhardt  
Joanne Blumhardt  
Garry Boxer  
Marlene Braham  
Lori and Lee Brower  
Russell Bundy  
Jemma Cabral  
CHC: Foundation for Children's Hope Classic  
Marsha Chelec  
Children's Respiratory and Critical Care  
Marci and Neil Cohen  
Colorado Kayak Supply  
Crestone Capital Advisors  
Cruz Bay Publishing  
John Cunney and Jared Wollaston  
Don Daly  
Pam and Barry Davis  
Troy Dayton  
Carla DeVelder and Marijo Besiljevac  
Catherine Dixon  
Eagle Street Restaurants  
Patricia Eastman  
Shirley and Ben Eisler  
Epperson Family Foundation  
Katherine Estes Rogers Foundation  
Fannie Mae  
Jennifer Feikin  
Nancy and Mark Ferro  
Foster Friess  
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Casey Gard  
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Helene and Andrew Glick

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Gravity Play Sports  
Erica Green  
Jill and Jim Hammerschmidt  
Melissa Hartridge  
Emily Hay  
Granny Henderson  
Highlands Behavioral Health  
Eva Ho  
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Julie and Martin Franklin Charitable Foundation  
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Danny and Michele Kaufman  
Donald Kelley  
Bonner Kiernan Trebach & Crociata  
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Kelsey Klevenberg  
Linda and Mark Kogod  
Bryan Korobkin  
Josh Kuriloff  
Stefan Lalos  
Nancy and Joe Lazkani  
Sandy and Elliot Liss  
David and Valerie London  
London Foundation  
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Mantis Associates  
Salomon Marcos  
Kevin and Deborah Maselka  
Lambchop McBride  
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Michael McGuinn  
Don and Barbara McLucas  
Chad McWhinney  
Holly and Brad Mendelson  
Susan Milhoan  
Milford Mill United Methodist Church  
Kimberly Moody  
Mug & Mallet  
Roger Newman  
Novant Health Inc  
Oro y Plata Foundation  
John and Lisa Ourisman  
Paragon Technology Group



## 2011 DONORS - continued

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Pints for Paddlers  
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Cheryl and Rich Rhodes  
Liz Richards  
Kevin Riegler  
Rise Above It  
Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch  
Jake Roach  
Gary Rohr  
Daniel and Sharon Roitman  
Dave Sachs  
Dale Sand  
Melissa Sanseverino  
Steven Schram  
Sensor Films  
William Shanahan  
Milton Shoong Foundation  
Rochelle Shoretz

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Slifer Smith & Frampton  
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Karim Souki  
Steadman Hawkins Clinic  
Craig Stein  
Synapse Partners  
Tony Tamer  
Stephen Tanzer  
Kent Thiry and Denise O'Leary  
Vail Resorts Echo/Community Connection Party  
Raffaele Verde  
Kim and Lawrence Weinberg  
What Would Willie Want  
Jason Whichard  
Cary White  
Willie and Darrell Wickman  
Ellen and Bruce Winston  
Your Cause Sports  
Whitney and Kevin Zimmerman  
Zia Taqueria Ltd



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