



YEAR IN REVIEW

OUT LIVING IT

2013



OUT LIVING IT

At First Descents, *Out Living It* isn't just a saying. It's a doing. In 2013, this credo rang truer than ever as participants, staff, volunteers, donors, and friends lived the First Descents philosophy to the absolute fullest, making every moment matter.

Welcome to the 2013 Year in Review. It was, without question, our greatest year yet.

*From now on, I'm a surfer. Maybe not a good one. Probably never a great one.
But given the choice between letting cancer get the best of me or reminding myself that it can't, I paddled out.
And I won't ever look back.*

#OutLivingIt



FROM BRAD

As excited as I am for the rapids downstream, I'm looking upstream at the rapid we've just come through, throwing my head back and screaming at the top of my lungs in celebration of our collective accomplishment.



One of my favorite views in the world is sitting in my kayak at the bottom of a rapid, looking back up at what I've just come through after kayaking it for the first time. All of the challenges associated with the rapid disappear and are quickly replaced with a sense of accomplishment, relief, and happiness that's difficult to put into words. The greatest celebrations in my life have been at the bottom of rapids.

I feel as though I'm sitting at the bottom of the most rewarding rapid I've ever run. That rapid is First Descents.

When I founded FD, I did so from a place of passion and with the intention of sharing that passion with young adults affected by cancer.

In those early days, FD was a small organization with the modest goal of hosting one or two camps each year. Our biggest challenges were finding the participants to attend the programs, raising a bit of money, and deciding who was in charge of getting lunches each day.

Fast-forward 14 years. FD has grown into a multimillion-dollar organization at the leading edge of the young adult cancer community, run by a dedicated and growing group of employees who are strategically scaling it to address an urgent need. Needless to say, our challenges have changed

from those early days, and along with them, my role. By way of necessity, I've had to evolve away from the reasons I founded FD, doing what was necessary to see it get to that place I had envisioned so long ago.

It is with great pride, happiness, and a feeling of collective accomplishment that I share with you that we have made it to that place. In Ryan O'Donoghue, we've found a passionate and qualified leader to take the reins and guide FD to amazing things ahead. By accepting the position of Executive Director, Ryan has enabled me to re-engage with the reasons I founded this organization so many years ago: the people, the places, and the story. Going forward, I'll be spending my time and energy attending more programs, focusing on our experience, doing more outreach and speaking engagements, and whatever else I can to help raise the money needed to expand FD's reach to as many young adults as possible.

As excited as I am for the rapids downstream, I'm looking upstream at the rapid we've just come through, throwing my head back and screaming at the top of my lungs in celebration of our collective accomplishment.

Onward!
Brad Ludden, Founder





FROM RYAN

Although I have been on staff only a short time, I can honestly say that serving as the Executive Director for First Descents (FD) has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career.

Like so many others, the course of my life has been deeply affected by cancer. And despite the challenges of that experience, I am fortunate it has created an opportunity to contribute to such a meaningful cause. I am motivated to serve the greater well being of young adults who face this disease, and I believe FD effectively addresses the unique and underserved challenges of this demographic unlike any other organization.

My cancer story involves my older brother Colin. Nine years ago, Colin passed away after a two-year battle. He was my best friend and mentor. As one can imagine, this was an incredibly difficult experience.

Colin was in the prime of his life when he was diagnosed. His hopes and dreams were put on hold, and his future became unknown, but what remained the same was the positive impact he had on others' lives. Colin had a special ability to connect with people and even though he was in an extremely vulnerable state, he was still able to provide solace to those concerned for his health. That uncommon bravery inspired me to embark on my current path in life, one that has led me to FD.

I am now inspired to find those connections that Colin so effortlessly nurtured, and I believe it is my duty to enact the lessons I learned from him to help others experiencing similar challenges. In other words, Colin is the fuel to my (camp)fire.

Over the past decade, there has been a growing effort to establish a new field of study: Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Oncology. As a community, we have worked hard to identify and support the

unique challenges and unmet needs of AYAs diagnosed with cancer.

First Descents was early to recognize the gap in services available to AYAs, and has developed recognized programs that empower young adults with cancer through unforgettable outdoor adventures.

Over the years, FD has evolved its programs to address the changing needs of young adults, and has acted as a reputable voice in the AYA oncology movement. Our research clearly demonstrates the positive psychosocial benefits of First Descents' programs.

FD incorporates challenge, humility, humor, and adventure into every aspect of its being, and in doing so, creates a powerful community of peers and a lifestyle supported by our philosophy of *Out Living It*.

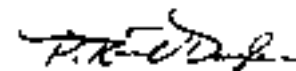
A talented staff, generous partners, and individual supporters—a collective team effort—allow FD to serve those in a time of great need. I strive to uphold that ideal in my position as Executive Director.

And while we are extremely proud of our accomplishments, our work has only just begun. With hundreds of thousands of young adults living with cancer in America today, and over 70,000 diagnosed each year, the need for FD is only growing.

We challenge you to join us on our mission, and look forward to many adventures in the future.

Thank you for your support!

Ryan O'Donoghue, Executive Director





EACH YEAR, NEARLY 70,000 YOUNG ADULTS (AGE 15 – 39) ARE DIAGNOSED WITH CANCER IN THE U.S. ALONE.*

SURVIVAL RATES HAVE NOT IMPROVED SINCE THE 1970s.

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 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 de-stigmatizing cancer, fostering a renewed sense of self, and creating a support community. Our programs have proven to be incredibly effective.

*All I understand about the knots is that they'd better be tied correctly.
Looking down isn't an option. Trusting my feet is almost impossible. Almost.
Yesterday, the only thing I could think about was defying cancer.
Today, the only thing on my mind is defying gravity.*

#OutLivingIt



STATES: 13

CA, CO, DC, ID, GA, MA, MT, NC, NY,
OR, TX, WA, WY

COUNTRIES: 2

INDONESIA & CHILE

36

PROGRAMS

414

PARTICIPANTS

FD TRIBUTARIES

First Descents provided

13 Trib Events in

7 states for

217 participants.

TOTAL SERVED:

551



AS A RESULT OF OUR EFFECTIVE PROGRAM MODEL, THE WAITLIST TO ATTEND A WEEK-LONG PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW.

AT THE CLOSE OF 2013, THERE WERE MORE THAN 700 YAs ON THE WAITLIST FOR THEIR FIRST FD PROGRAM.



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

In 2013, Tribs reached more than 200 people, including 98 alumni and 32 young adults living with cancer who had not attended an FD program. This is significant, considering that, without Trib events, these individuals would have had to wait until 2014 to have an FD experience. Some highlights of the 2013 Tribs events:

- » Overnight river trip on the Upper Colo. River
- » 3 culinary workshops teaching healthy cooking techniques in D.C., New York City, and Denver
- » Beach volleyball and stand up paddling clinic in Southern California
- » Urban kayaking and fireworks during a night time trip on the Chicago River

The inaugural year of Tribs was underwritten through a generous \$25,000 donation from Kirk and Kathy MacKenzie. In 2013, Tribs proved to be a successful and much needed program. We have received an overwhelming amount of support and desire for more Tribs programs from our alumni, waitlist members, and the larger FD community. We are excited to keep growing the FDtributaries program in 2014, while continually supporting and strengthening the young adult cancer community.

“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 that are dealing with the same thing.”

2013 Waitlist Member, NYC Trib Participant



PUBLIC RELATIONS →

In September 2013, First Descents began working with the leading public relations firm in the active lifestyle market, Backbone Media. We have tasked them with creating PR storytelling opportunities on many levels, including medical publications, outdoor lifestyle coverage, regional coverage to support our event marketing efforts, sponsor news and of course, broad market opportunities.

PARTNERSHIPS →

First Descents is proud to have added the following NEW partners to our lineup in 2013.



PRIMAL
CYCLING // APPAREL



5 POINT
FILM
INSPIRING ADVENTURE



POLARTEC[®]



ONLINE EXPERIENCE

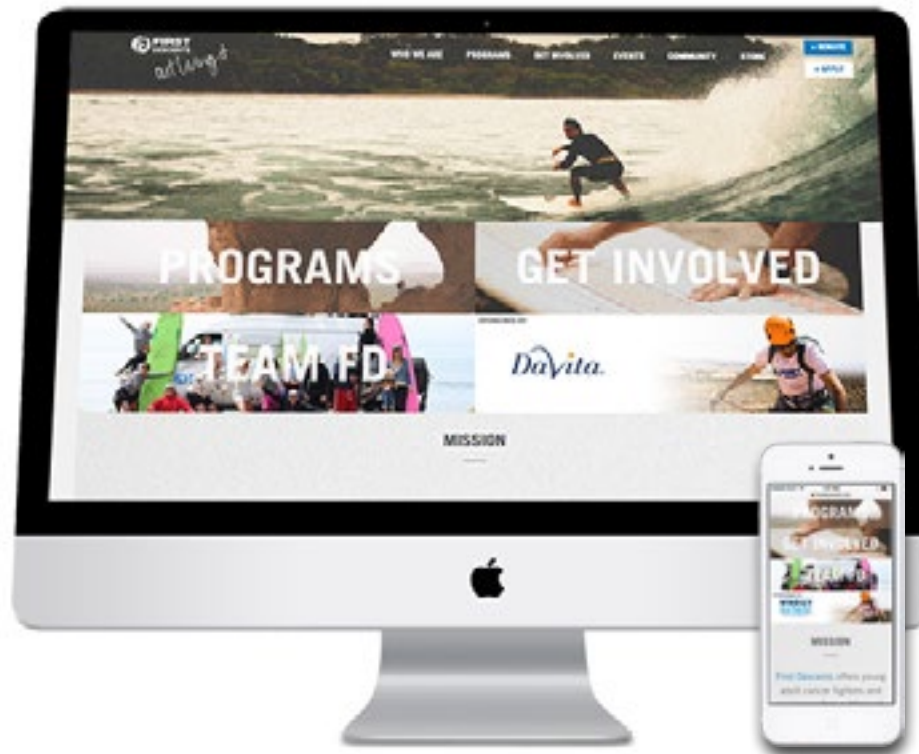
In 2013, we redesigned our online presence. Our new responsive website and e-newsletter platforms have resulted in increased engagement, donor retention, and extended participant brand involvement.

To better focus our outreach as well as keep our community of more than 20,000 engaged more regularly, we created a new First Descents monthly newsletter that incorporates all of our major engagement opportunities in one branded location. Beyond that, we focused our end-of-year donor outreach with targeted emails that highlighted the new and creative ways to donate including Gifts that Give Back and Colorado Gives Day.

'END OF YEAR' CAMPAIGN RESULTED IN:

\$83,072
RAISED

11%
INCREASE IN GIFTS



[VIEW FULL SITE](#)

TEAM FIRST DESCENTS

In 2013, Team First Descents held steady as the single largest source of funding at FD. Through approximately 300 individuals and teams, Team FD participants raised more than \$700,000!

THE 4th ANNUAL CLIMB-A-THON

\$27,460 raised

388 climbers

18 gyms across the country

TEAM Hardcore

Formed by her friends to honor the memory of Kristen "Hardcore" Schraven—an FD alumna who passed away in 2013—raised more than \$50,000 to support FD. With these funds, FD will host a new camp in North Conway, NH in Hardcore's name in 2014.

THE BOSTON MARATHON

\$10,000 raised

4 runners

All four runners were unharmed during the bombings, and we are so proud of their perseverance and dedication.

LEAVILLE 100 MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE

\$129,665

raised (A RECORD!)

19 riders

THE NYC MARATHON

\$70,000 raised

19 runners



EVENTS



2013 was a terrific year for events at First Descents! The 7th Annual FD Ball was a resounding success, and took place in March at The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch in Avon, CO. We were honored to have Nate "Scooter" Post and Rochelle "Hefty" Shoretz as our alumni speakers, and are incredibly grateful to the more than 400 guests who attended and gave generous, raising a record-breaking \$400,000 to support our programs.

The first annual Fall Affair was held in Denver in mid-October. More than 300 guests came out in their finest "speak-easy" attire and helped fund 3 camps! Thank you to Jennifer "Galaxy Girl"

Jackson for sharing her story with the FD family. And, a big thank you to Justin Ball and the Bespoke Event Group who pulled off the event and have become an integral partner of FD.

The Annual 80s Ski Party was the perfect kick-off to the 2013-14 ski season! More than 1,000 people filled Mile High Station in Denver, CO, dressed to the nines in their finest 80s ski wear. Fun was had by all, and the event raised more than \$12,000 to support FD!

\$450,000+

RAISED

7th Annual First Descents Ball

*March, 23, 2013
Bachelor Gulch, CO*

Fall Affair

*October 12, 2013
Denver, CO*

80s Ski Party

*November 15, 2013
Denver, CO*



LEADERSHIP TEAM

STAFF

*Brad “Daril” Ludden
Founder*

*Ryan “Wolf” O’Donoghue
Executive Director*

*Sarah “Huddle” Hubbard
Director of Marketing*

*Nina “Seabass” Sharma
Director of Development*

*Peta “Uncle Pete” Sheridan
Programs Manager*

*Willie “Sweet D” Kern
Global Experience Developer*

*Corey “Daryl” Nielsen
Founding Member,
Global Experience Developer*

*Julie “Fruit Boots” Kinamore
Manager of Tributaries and
Alumni Engagement*

*Jenna “Lucy” Catalona
Marketing Coordinator*

*Paul “Crash” Kelly
Programs Coordinator*

*Joshua “Wildflower” Serna
Programs Coordinator*

*Kristin “Bandit” Morgan
Development Manager*

*Laura “Ra” Hemker
Grants Manager*

*Kristen “Pumba” Moree
Administrative Coordinator*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Brent “Sunday” Goldstein
Chairman
Joel “War Child” Appel
Josh “Bear” Behr
Jennifer “Shivvers” Feikin
Debbie King “Zipper” Ford
Eva “Pacman” Ho
Brad “Daryl” Ludden
Founder
David Lee
Corey “Daryl” Nielsen
Brad “Uncle Brad” Reiss
Rochelle “Hefty” Shoretz
Alumni Liaison
Larry “Larry Boy” Smith
Medical Advisor*

ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD

*Andy “X2C” Fleming
Alix “Snooki” Berglund
Christina “Braveheart” Dixon
Meghan “Carnage” Kearny
Anne “Sunshine” Meisner
Chairperson
Beth “Ripple” Pointer
David “Podo” Podein
Susan “Hawk” Rafferty
Craig “Mountie” Stein
Jason “Fuel” Zimmerman*

MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD

*Ken Adnan, MD
Archie Bleyer, MD
Sara Terez Malka, MD
Ms. Robbie Gluckson
Daniel H. Silverman, MD, Ph.D.
Marc Slatkoff, MD
Larry Smith, MD
Ms. Michelle Snyder
Ms. Ruth Tesar
Leonard S. Sender, MD
Laurence Tokaz, MD
Pam Tokaz, MD
Brad Zebrack, Ph.D.*

LEARN MORE ABOUT US

*Today I find myself in a Class III rapid fighting for balance, aiming for the still water at the horizon.
And when I make it through, the only thing cancer can claim
is that it's the reason I put on the river in the first place.*

#OutLivingIt



FINANCIALS – 2013 BALANCE SHEET

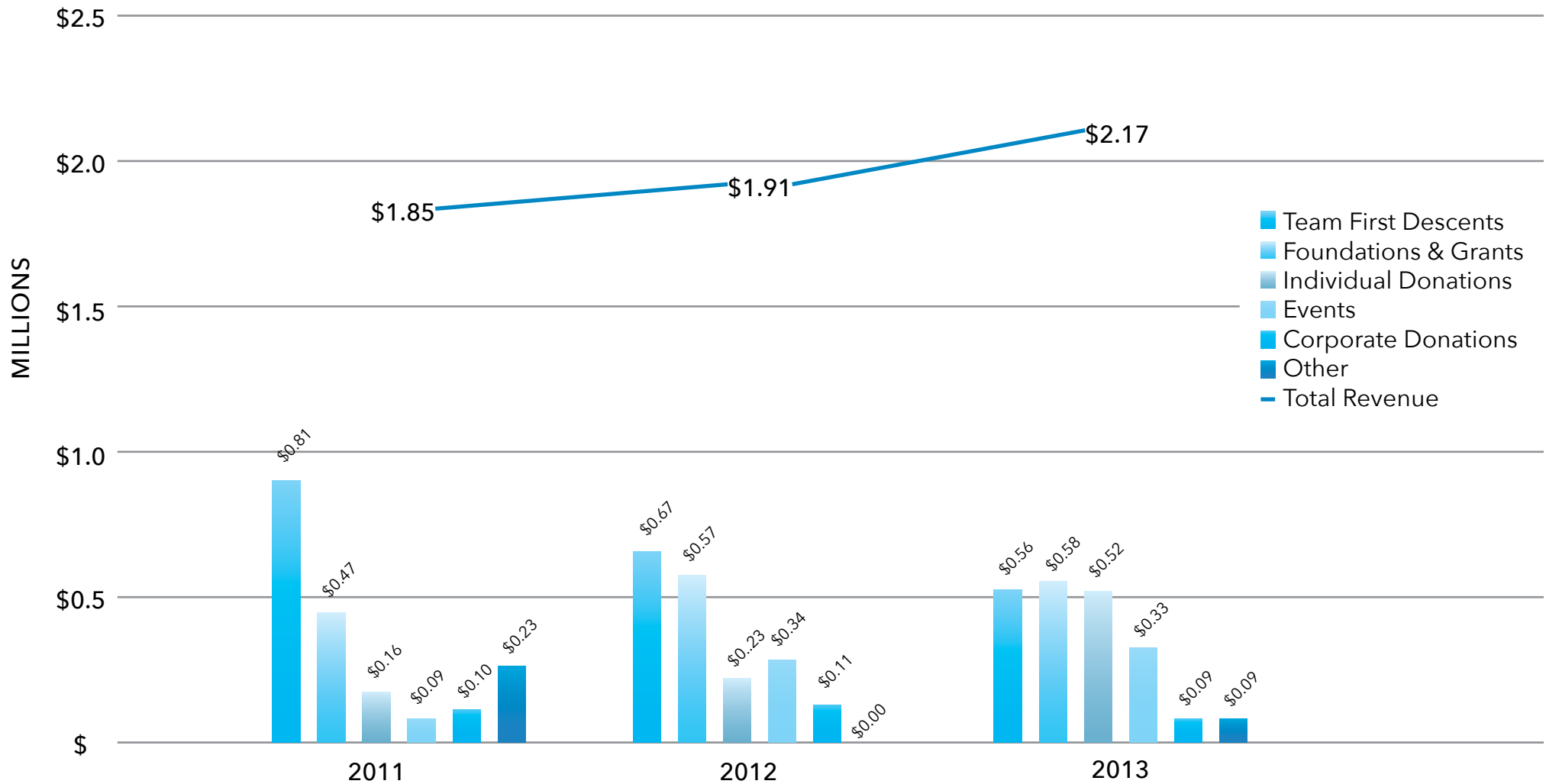
FIRST DESCENTS BALANCE SHEET AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2013

Assets	Dec. 31, 2013
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	\$ 609,144.09
Accounts Receivable	\$ 170,602.75
Other Current Assets	\$ 8,872.01
Fixed Assets	\$ 8,397.01
Other Assets	\$ 83,765.44
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 880,781.30
Liabilities & Equity	Dec. 31, 2013
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$ 25,129.56
Credit Cards	\$ 12,215.91
Other Current Liabilities	\$ 12,724.51
Equity	
Retained Earnings	\$ 696,304.32
Net Income	\$ 134,407.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 880,781.30



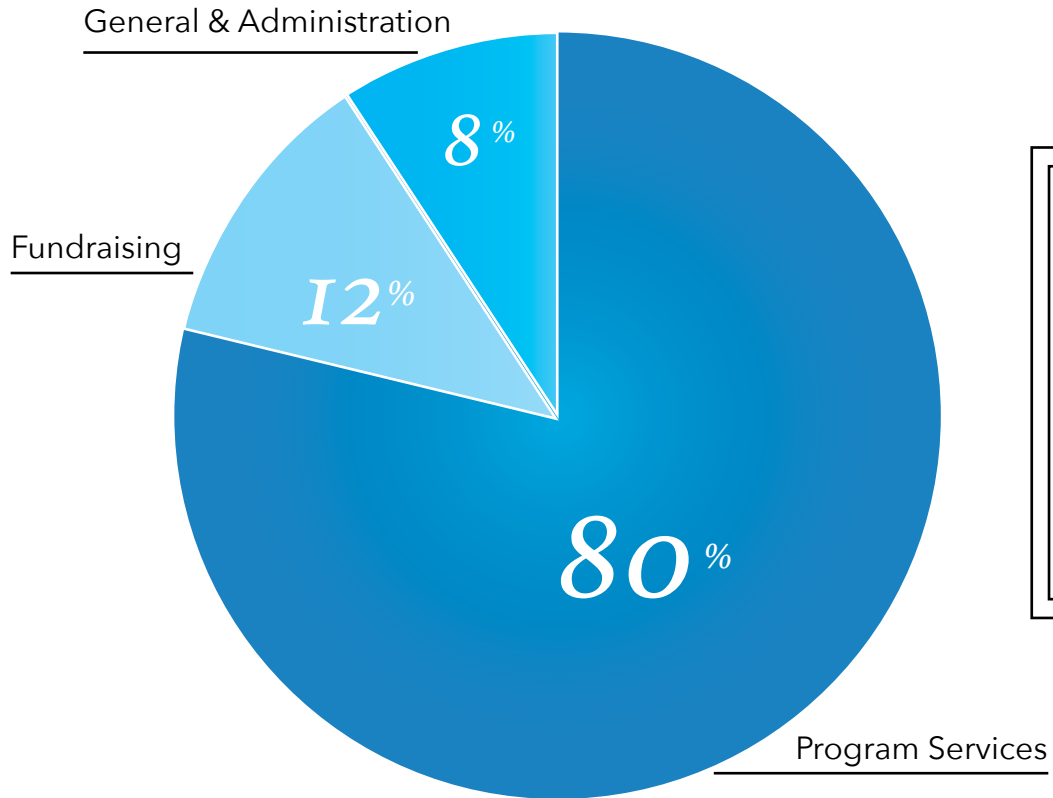
FINANCIALS – REVENUE SUMMARY

A 2011 - 2013 year-over-year snapshot of First Descents' financial revenue.





FINANCIALS – SUMMARY OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES



Category	Expense	%
Program Services	\$ 1,623,136	80%
Fundraising	\$ 248,246	12%
General & Administrative	\$ 159,320	8%
TOTAL	\$ 2,030,702	100%



FINANCIALS SUMMARY: 2011 - 2013

FIRST DESCENTS REVENUE SUMMARY (2011 - 2013 BUDGETED)

Category	2011	2012	2013
Team First Descents	\$ 806,741	\$ 665,508	\$ 561,392
Foundations & Grants	\$ 472,206	\$ 565,546	\$ 578,001
Individual Donations	\$ 156,780	\$ 226,133	\$ 515,987
Events	\$ 87,740	\$ 338,573	\$ 327,049
Corporate Donations	\$ 98,919	\$ 106,839	\$ 94,836
Other	\$ 227,100	\$ 4,181	\$ 87,843
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 1,849,486	\$ 1,906,780	\$ 2,165,107

FD SUMMARY OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES (2011 - 2013 BUDGETED)

Category	2011	2012	2013
Program Services	\$ 1,023,516	\$ 1,587,807	\$ 1,623,136
Fundraising	\$ 356,512	\$ 245,186	\$ 248,246
General & Administrative	\$ 110,437	\$ 107,829	\$ 159,320
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,490,465	\$ 1,940,822	\$ 2,030,702
Net Ordinary Income	\$ 359,021	\$ (34,042)	\$ 134,406
Other Income	\$ (48,332)	\$ 101,363	\$ -
NET INCOME	\$ 310,689	\$ 67,321	\$ 134,406

Category	2011	2012	2013
Revenue*	\$ 1,801,154	\$ 2,008,143	\$ 2,165,107
Expense	\$ 1,490,465	\$ 1,940,822	\$ 2,030,702
NET INCOME	\$ 310,689	\$ 67,321	\$ 134,406



\$100,000+

Genentech
Kirk & Kathy MacKenzie

\$40,000 - \$99,000

Joel Appel
Nancy Lazkani / Icon Media Direct

\$25,000 - \$39,000

Lori & Grady Durham
Jennifer Feikin
Jon & Mindy Gray Family Foundation
The Gross Family Foundation, Inc.
The John Wayne Cancer Foundation
The Outdoor Foundation
The Palette Fund
Brad & Kammi Reiss
Wacky Warriors

\$10,000 - \$24,999

The Aptman Family
DaVita University
Brady & Kristen Dolsen
Downey-Short Foundation
Epic Foundation, Inc.
Scott Erickson

Jewish Community Foundation of
Milwaukee Jewish Federation
Kaufman Family Foundation
Land Title Guarantee Company
Chad McWhinney
Doug & Katthy Milham
Millennium Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Rob Schuham
The Triford Foundation
The Wishlist Foundation

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Ariad
Elysa Barron
Josh & Jennifer Behr
Ted Brown
Gary Cole
Crawford Family Foundation
Ron & Cheryl Crews
Justin Dangel
Epic Shore to Shore
Sam & Peggy Grossman
Family Foundation
Bruce & Marni Gutkin
Haymakers for Hope
The Held Foundation
Eva Ho
Chuck & Jinny Ludden
Mellam Family Foundation
The Mile High Five Foundation
Mile High United Way
Gary Muskett
Newton and French

Nancy Oaks
Alice Park
Hap & Darci Pool
The Precourt Foundation
Daniel Ritchie
The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch
Gary Rohr
Rose Community Foundation
Mark & Marshall Stockseth
The Tappan Foundation

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Bank of America Corporation
Jon Beall
Oregon Community Foundation
Cancer League of Colorado
Laura & Kevin Chavaree
The Community Foundation for the
National Capital Region
Jay Coughlon
Pam Davis
Denver Foundation
Eagle Street Restaurants, LLC
Earthfax Engineering
David Fetter
FirstBank
Going to the Sun Rally
Goldman Sachs Gives
Great Divide Brewing Company
Hammond's Candies LLC
Englewood Mortgage Company
Danita Kessler
Mayer Family Foundation

Melanie Miller
Morphotek
Barbara Paco
Howard Postal
Proximo Spirits Inc
Liz Richards
Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers
Sage Hospitality Resources
Janet & Sansar Sharma
Ryan & Trista Sutter
Nick Troutman
Craig Vaccaro
Vail Valley Surgery Center, LLC
Wade Vizena
Scott Webber
Jonathan Werts

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Carrie Accardi
American Endowment Foundation
Beth Anderson
Carey Anderson
Roger Anderson
Atlas Family Foundation
Richard Badenhausen
Karson & Jason Beaty
Carolyn Belfer
Josh Bezoni
Bibler Resources Company
Jeffrey Biskup
BlueSky Restoration Contractors
Joanne Blumhardt



\$1,000 - \$2,499 - cont.

*Beth Blumhardt
Nathan Boyd
Mindy Boyum
Limbo Braithwaite
Christopher Brigham
Scott Brubaker
Russell Bundy
Chris Carrera
Thomas Civik
Neil Cohen
Shawn Colo
Krista Colvin
Sheila Conner
Jackie Cooper
David Corkery
Corporate Office Properties Trust
Visra Cox
Crossfit Jai
K.C. Cumbermack & Jennifer Jackson
Robert Darrow
Richard Davis
Darren Davis
Bryce Denton
Taylor Dolan
Rhonda Dolsen
Marcia Donziger
Margaret Duffy
Ben Eisler
Lorna Elkus
Gaylon Eoff
Epperson Family Foundation*

*Sargent Family
First American Title Insurance Company
Jill Forbes
Joseph Fowler
Julius J. Franchini Family
Charitable Foundation
Graham Frank
Eric Fretz
Tal Friedman
Greg Gaffney
Garbanzo Mediterranean Grill
Eduardo Garcia
John Geller
Kathy Giess
Jerry Glick
Tiffany Glucksman
David Gordon
Christopher Gray
David Greenspahn
Carol Halcro
The Half Barrel
KJ Hammer Co., Inc
Ronda Hartzel
Timothy Helmig
Kyle Herren
Highland Investments
Jeffrey Hoffman
Ashley Hudson
Nancy Hughes
Matthew Hulsizer
Sarah Iverson
Jim Jacobs
Cristin Jacobson
Brad Jerris*

*Christopher Johns
Tina Johnston
Paul Johson
Gary Jones
Kevin Kane
Jordan Kessler
Mountain Khakis
Todd Klindworth
Mark Kogod
Susan & Don Krapinski
Belinda Kuo
Lauren Lauritano
Melissa Lawrence
Jeanne Lebish
Frank Lee
Andrea Levy
Sandra Levy
Elliot Liffman
Amy Lin
Timothy Love
Brad Ludden
Erik Lynum
Kelly & Jamie Malin
Ronald Masters
Kelly Matty
Francis Mawn
Peter McGlynn
Jim McGuire
Philip McManus
Kenneth Mendelsberg
Brad Mendelson
Meghan Menendez
Merck Partnership for Giving
Tammy Miller*

*Samantha Miller
Jennifer Mills
Jennifer Mowad
Cory & Mike Munro
Shelley Nolden
Luke Norris
Jim Norton
Terry Nugent
Ryan O'Donoghue
Mary Panici
Greener Pastures
Ann Pateros
Lori Pederson
Piccard Homes of Delaware
David Podein
Merle Postal
Michael Potts
Joshua Powe
Ann Railsback
Kristin Reed
Linda Rivard
Bill Ross
Leanh Sam
Erin Schaffner
Christina Schleicher
Allen Schwartz
Seirus
Toni Serra
David Shapiro
Chad Sheets
Jamie Sherman
Rochelle Shoretz
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
John Singleton*



\$1,000 - \$2,499 - cont.

*Jim Skipper
Carel & Marc Slatkoff
Kathleen Smith
Larry & Missi Smith
John Snow, Inc.
Hector Soler
Craig Stein
Jaclyn Suffling
Kayti Sullivan & Morgen Newman
Surfing for Life Foundation
Sutter Medical Group
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Inc.
Testronics
Douglas Thayer
The van Swaay Charitable Foundation
Tundra Restaurant Supply
Christine Turner Landry
Tyler L Rigg Memorial Foundation
US National Whitewater Center
Mike Valvano
Ariel Warszawski
Washington Kayak Club
What Would Willie Do
Thomas Mark Whatley
Bryson White
Willie Wickman
Timothy Wiebe
Theresa Wilson
Bruce & Ellen Winston
Ben Woodley
Woodspear Properties
Alexandros Xakoustis
Marta Zamiska*





THANK YOU

www.FirstDescents.org