MISSION

FIRST DESCENTS PROVIDES LIFE-CHANGING OUTDOOR ADVENTURES FOR YOUNG ADULTS (AGES 18-39) IMPACTED BY CANCER AND OTHER SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITIONS

MISSION
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

FIRST DESCENTS (FD) IS THE LEADER IN ADVENTURE-BASED HEALING. THROUGH OUTDOOR ADVENTURE, COMMUNITY BUILDING, AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, FD IMPROVES LONG-TERM SURVIVORSHIP AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR YOUNG ADULTS IMPACTED BY CANCER AND OTHER SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITIONS.
Cancer is the leading disease-related cause of death in adolescents and young adults (AYAs).

MS is the most common neuroinflammatory disease affecting young adults.

Cancer, MS, and all serious health conditions present unique challenges and obstacles to young adults.

**PROBLEMS**

Cancer is the leading disease-related cause of death in adolescents and young adults (AYAs).

MS is the most common neuroinflammatory disease affecting young adults.

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**OBSTACLES**

- 80,000 adolescents & young adults are diagnosed with cancer each year
- Minimal peer support
- Rare and aggressive tumor biology
- Lack of participation in clinical trials
- Disrupts normative milestones of adulthood
- Higher rate of depression and psychosocial distress in young adults impacted by MS and cancer

**FD PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

- 100% of participants reported increased ability to cope with cancer and its effects
- 81% reported increased self-efficacy
- 99% of participants want to stay involved
- 17% to 7% participants who reported feeling depressed before and after first descents

L E A R N M O R E
Experiences Provided

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Programs Administered

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*In 2020, FD originally planned to deliver 220 programs and ~2,000 unique experiences. As a result of the pandemic, FD suspended 72% of programming for that year. The 62 programs that were implemented include Hero Recharge and online programs, developed in direct response to the pandemic.
WHO WE SERVE

YOUNG ADULTS LIVING WITH AND SURVIVING CANCER

Founded in 2001, First Descents’ mission was to serve young adults impacted by cancer. Since that first whitewater kayaking program, we’ve provided outdoor adventures to thousands of oncology participants who have since built and maintained a thriving community of adventure and peer support.

YOUNG ADULTS LIVING WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

In 2018, First Descents piloted our first program for young adults impacted by MS. After FD Founder Brad Ludden was recognized in 2016 as a Top 10 CNN Hero, we realized that adventure could be transformative for young adults impacted by other serious health conditions. Now, we have the research and experience to prove it. Since 2018, we’ve continued to develop our programs for those living with MS year after year.

CAREGIVERS

In an effort to better serve young adults, First Descents continues to expand programs to new communities. We know that serious health conditions impact family members and supporters, though these caregivers are often left without resources and community. Since 2013, we’ve offered programs to oncology caregivers. As we continue to expand our MS programs, we plan to provide outdoor adventures to MS caregivers as well.

HEALTHCARE WORKERS

In partnership with the Dunkin Joy in Childhood Foundation, First Descents launched HERO RECHARGE - outdoor adventure programs for frontline healthcare workers in 2020. Initially focused on healthcare workers fighting on the COVID-19 frontlines, First Descents plans to scale our healthcare worker programming to those who serve oncology and MS patients.
**PRIORITIES**

**OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

**Build Community**

Young adults coping with health conditions often experience feelings of isolation and alienation. FD will strengthen local adventure communities and nurture supportive peer relationships that provide ongoing healing.

**Prescribe Adventure**

Hospitals lack age-appropriate psychosocial survivorship programs for young adults. FD will build upon its network of healthcare professionals to reach more young adults earlier in the treatment process.

**Expand Programs**

With more than 640,000 young adult cancer survivors living in the U.S., First Descents (FD) will expand programs to improve survivorship and quality of life. Further, FD will explore and develop programs for young adults coping with other health conditions.
First Descents builds partnerships with companies seeking meaningful corporate social responsibility activation.
With over 10,000 participants served, there are endless opportunities to create stories together about the healing power of adventure, community, and resilience in the face of a cancer or MS diagnosis.

Engage in joint brand storytelling opportunities and content creation for use in marketing and community engagement.

Examples Include:
- Out Living It Blog Features
- Internal Communications Content
- Visual Asset Creation (films, narrative documentaries, photos, etc.)
- Cause Marketing Materials

These are the stories from our team, supporters, and members of the FD community that teach us every day what it means to Out Live It.
First Descents specializes in cause marketing efforts with national brands. Join us and take your corporate social responsibility to the next level by building cause marketing campaigns that extend the healing power of adventure to more young adults impacted by cancer and MS. Examples include:

- Digital campaigns and point-of-sale activations highlighted across First Descents’ communications channels and in our 45,000+ newsletter
- A co-branded consumer packaged good promoted on your company website and our online store with proceeds benefitting First Descents
- A percentage or portion of proceeds from an existing product line promoted across your company and First Descents’ communication channels in support of First Descents’ programming
For over 20 years, First Descents has built large-scale events that help us expand programs, build community, and Prescribe Adventure to more participants. Activate your brand and engage employees at First Descents feature events:

- **The First Descents Ball**  
  March 25, 2023

  Our annual 400 person gala in Beaver Creek, Colorado that raises nearly $1 million for First Descents each year.

- **First Descents 80’s Ski Party**  
  Denver | October 15, 2022  
  NYC | September 17, 2022  
  San Francisco | Date TBD

  First Descents' annual 80’s Ski Party is one of the raddest, most excellent parties of the year. So rad that we are bringing the party coast-to-coast with stops this fall in Denver, New York City and San Francisco.
Become an Omaze Ambassador or Partner and help raise leadership funds for First Descents!

Omaze designs next-level experiences and prize opportunities that raise funds and awareness for charities. Their all-pro staff work directly with your team to coordinate content and social media outreach, creating tremendous impact with a proven, turn-key approach.

First Descents has a storied partnership with Omaze with more than $1,000,000 raised since 2019.
First Descents is a leader in outdoor adventure programming and healthcare innovation.

Invite First Descents Founder and CNN Hero Awardee Brad Ludden to speak at your event or to address your organization. Brad has delivered inspirational keynotes to nationally recognized brands on the following topics:

- Conquering Uncharted Waters
- Managing change, stress, and innovation within your company
- Incorporating the healing power of adventure to improve overall health
Stoke Broker and First Descents create life-defining outdoor adventures that ignite impact.

As one of the world’s first cause-corporations, Stoke Broker offers custom-curated adventure experiences for individuals, companies, and nonprofit organizations. All profits benefit First Descents and help fuel program expansion for young adults impacted by cancer and other serious health conditions.

Plan your next corporate retreat with Stoke Broker to include First Descents in your CSR objectives.
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