

STRIVE

2015 annual report



NORTH CAROLINA
OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL

Dear Friends,

The 2015 fiscal year (April 1, 2014 - March 31, 2015) was another year of significant achievement for North Carolina Outward Bound School (NCOBS). We successfully enrolled and delivered safe, high quality programs and again reached our ambitious scholarship goals. As we march steadily toward the 50th Anniversary of our first wilderness course in 1967 at the Table Rock Base Camp, we continue to offer life-changing, experiential education programs for a growing number of students from all walks of life.

In all, 4,391 students completed a North Carolina Outward Bound School course in 2015. These courageous individuals included students of all ages who participated in open enrollment courses, young people and educators from partner schools and community groups throughout the eastern United States, and adults who were served by specialized programs for military veterans and business professionals. In partnership with The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, we also added a new program called American Explorers toward the close of the fiscal year. NCOBS began serving future leaders from the Westside neighborhoods of Atlanta in the summer of 2015.

All NCOBS alumni share in a common course experience: they serve, they strive and they do not yield. It is the simple act of striving though, of persevering in the face of challenge, that unleashes the power of the Outward Bound experience. *When we strive to reach beyond our perceived limits we experience the depth of our true capabilities. This is the lesson that lasts a lifetime.*

The following pages include stories about our students persevering in the face of great challenge and, in this process, discovering their best selves. We report, too, on recent findings from researchers about how striving and perseverance can have a direct and positive impact on student success after their NCOBS course.

Of course, none of the thousands of positive transformations that occur at NCOBS every year could happen without the dedication and support of our donors, partner organizations and businesses, Board of Directors, and volunteers who strive to provide resources so that we may offer the best possible experience for the greatest number of students. On behalf of our students and staff, thank you for making it possible for us *"to serve, to strive and not to yield."*

Until our paths cross again, take care,



Whitney H. Montgomery
Executive Director

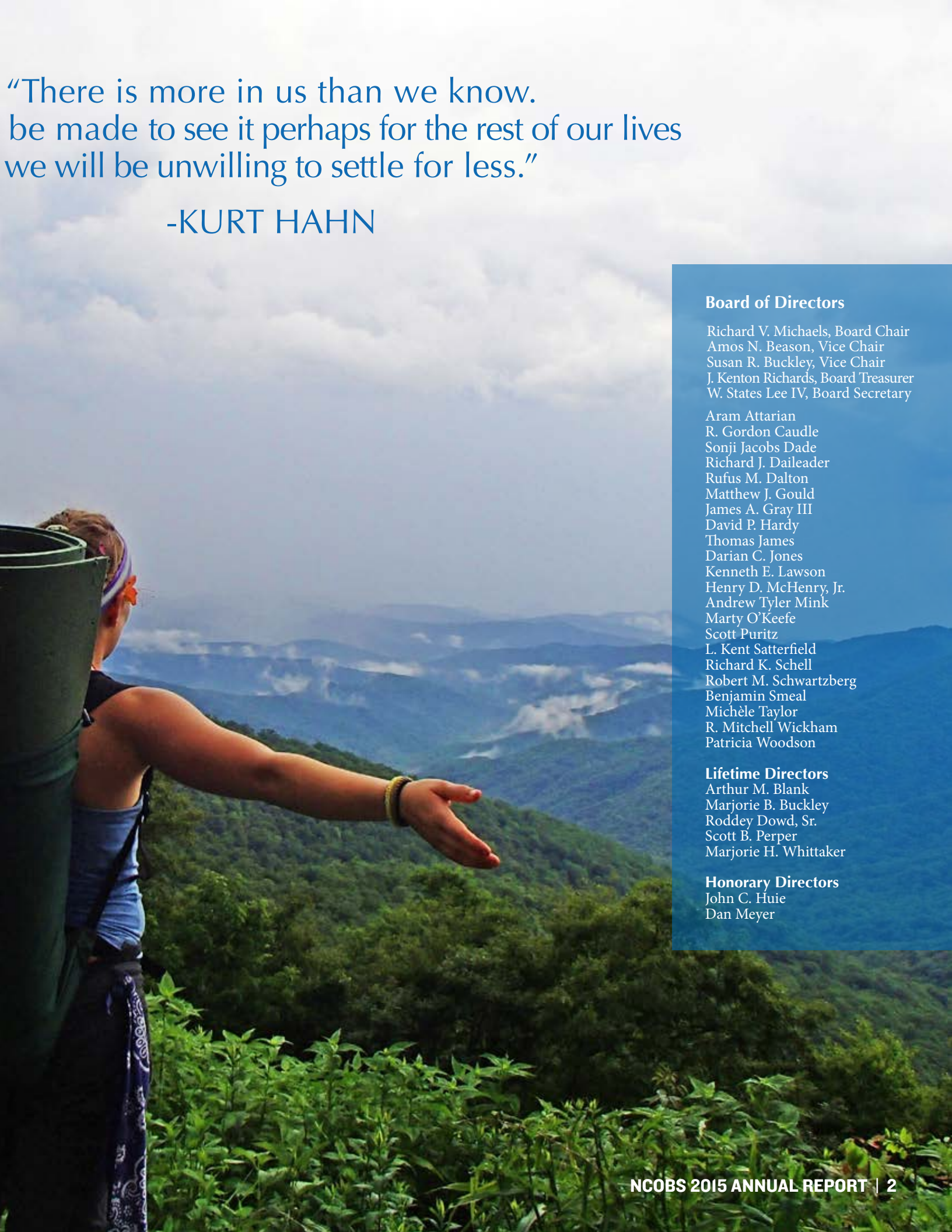


Richard V. Michaels
Chair, Board of Directors



If we can





“There is more in us than we know.
be made to see it perhaps for the rest of our lives
we will be unwilling to settle for less.”

-KURT HAHN

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MEASURING IMPACT: STUDENTS SERVED

At North Carolina Outward Bound School, we strive to provide a wide variety of life-changing programs for students of all ages and life experiences. In fiscal year 2015, 4,391 students participated in our diverse programs, representing 26,823 student program days (SPD's). These students attended courses for the general public offered in our seven spectacular wilderness settings, or participated in one of our custom programs for school groups and other unique populations.

Open Enrollment Wilderness Expeditions

Wilderness expeditions integrated with activities that build confidence, trust, cooperation, communication and leadership for students of all ages and backgrounds

580 students | 9,672 SPDs

Outward Bound Professional

Custom-designed programs that augment leadership training and team development at the workplace for business professionals

604 students | 692 SPDs

Outward Bound FINS (Families In Need of Services)

Wilderness-based prevention program delivered in Florida for at-risk youth emphasizing character development, academic achievement and social responsibility

189 students | 4,192 SPDs

Outward Bound Veterans

Tuition- and transportation-free wilderness expeditions designed specifically for veterans and active service members transitioning back to civilian lives




128 students | 764 SPDs

4,391
students
.....
26,823 SPDs

Intercept

Wilderness-based programs for struggling individuals and their families, designed to teach conflict resolution, goal-setting, communication and decision-making skills

103 students | 2,539 SPDs

-  **School-based Programs**
-  **Public Programs**
-  **Specialized Programs**

Group Education Programs

Short (4 - 7 day), wilderness-based, self-pay courses customized for intact groups from public and independent secondary schools, colleges and universities

1,380 students | 6,921 SPDs

Unity Project

Wilderness-based high school program, with a school-based component, to empower young people of diverse backgrounds to become compassionate leaders of social change with a school-based follow up component

36 students | 231 SPDs

Educators Initiative

Year-long professional development program for traditional, charter and independent school teachers that positively impacts classroom culture and curriculum through wilderness, classroom and online components

33 students | 262 SPDs

Outward Bound Atlanta

A wide range of leadership development and team-building programs delivered to groups of elementary, middle and high school students in Metro Atlanta and in the North Carolina mountains

1,338 students | 1,550 SPDs

91
nts
....
PDs

MEASURING IMPACT: CHARACTER

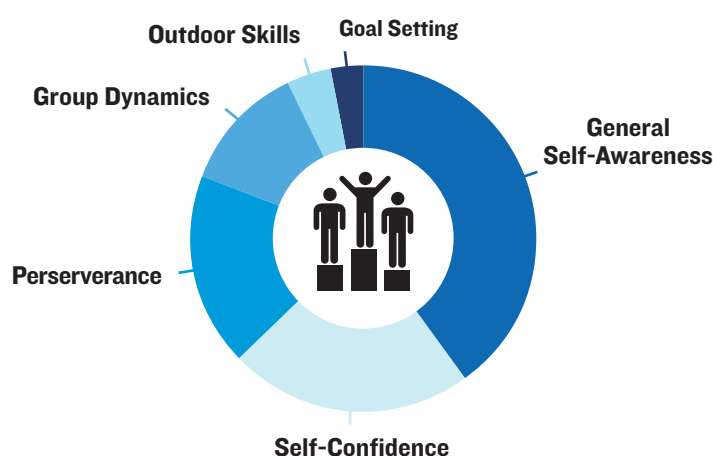
In 2011, North Carolina Outward Bound School began a research partnership with faculty from Montreat College and Western Carolina University to gain a better understanding of the impact of NCOBS wilderness expeditions on our students.

From 2011 to 2013, Drs. Andrew Bobilya and Brad Faircloth collected and analyzed pre- and post-course surveys from 455 NCOBS open enrollment wilderness program students. Based on their analysis of the quantitative data, they concluded that students of all ages, both male and female, developed a greater sense of character as a direct result of their NCOBS course. These changes in character development were significant regardless of the length of the student's course.¹

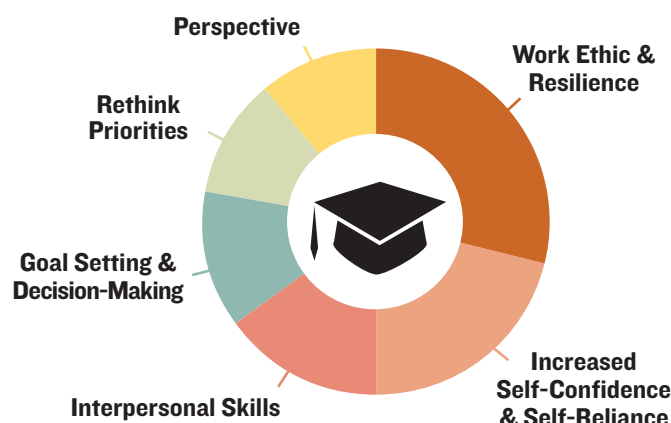
Results from the qualitative analysis of post-course surveys further support the impact of NCOBS wilderness courses on character development. The charts below capture what students discovered about themselves on course and how they predicted their course would enhance their ability to accomplish their goals in life.²

Character Development

What did you learn about yourself (or about life)
as a result of your course?



How will your course impact you at school
or in your career/life goals?



The study confirms that positive character development occurs when students are given the opportunity to *strive*—to push themselves harder than they ever thought possible—to confront difficulty and to overcome it.

Why is this important? Because researchers are increasingly linking so-called “noncognitive” skills—skills associated with character—to success in both education and the workplace.³ Three-quarters of a century after Kurt Hahn founded the first Outward Bound school at Aberdovey, his philosophy of education could not be more relevant to what is needed today. The character education that is being re-emphasized in schools across the country—one that embraces resilience, tenacity and grit as keys to student success—is Hahn’s legacy. It is the bedrock of every Outward Bound experience.

1 Faircloth, W. B., Bobilya, A. J. & Montgomery, W. H. (2014, October). A confirmatory assessment of a new Outward Bound outcomes instrument. Paper presented at the Association for Experiential Education International Conference: Symposium on Experiential Education Research (SEER), Chattanooga, TN.

2 The percentage reported indicates the number of qualitative participant responses categorized within a specific theme as percentage of the total number of responses.

3 Heckman, James and Rubinstein, Yona. The Importance of Noncognitive Skills: Lessons from the GED Testing Program, 2001



Alumni Profile

Outward Bound Veterans

In the years leading up to his Outward Bound Veterans course, Sergeant-Major Mark Felkner had become more and more withdrawn. His outlook on life had become skeptical, and he struggled with personal relationships.

“Life was stressful, and characterized by a lot of avoidance behaviors, which led to social and emotional isolation,” Mark recalls.

But in the spring of 2015, Mark embarked on a six-day NCOBS course that would change his life forever. The course gave him the opportunity to build community with other veterans which led him to become less withdrawn and, ultimately, to seek professional therapy through the Veterans Administration.

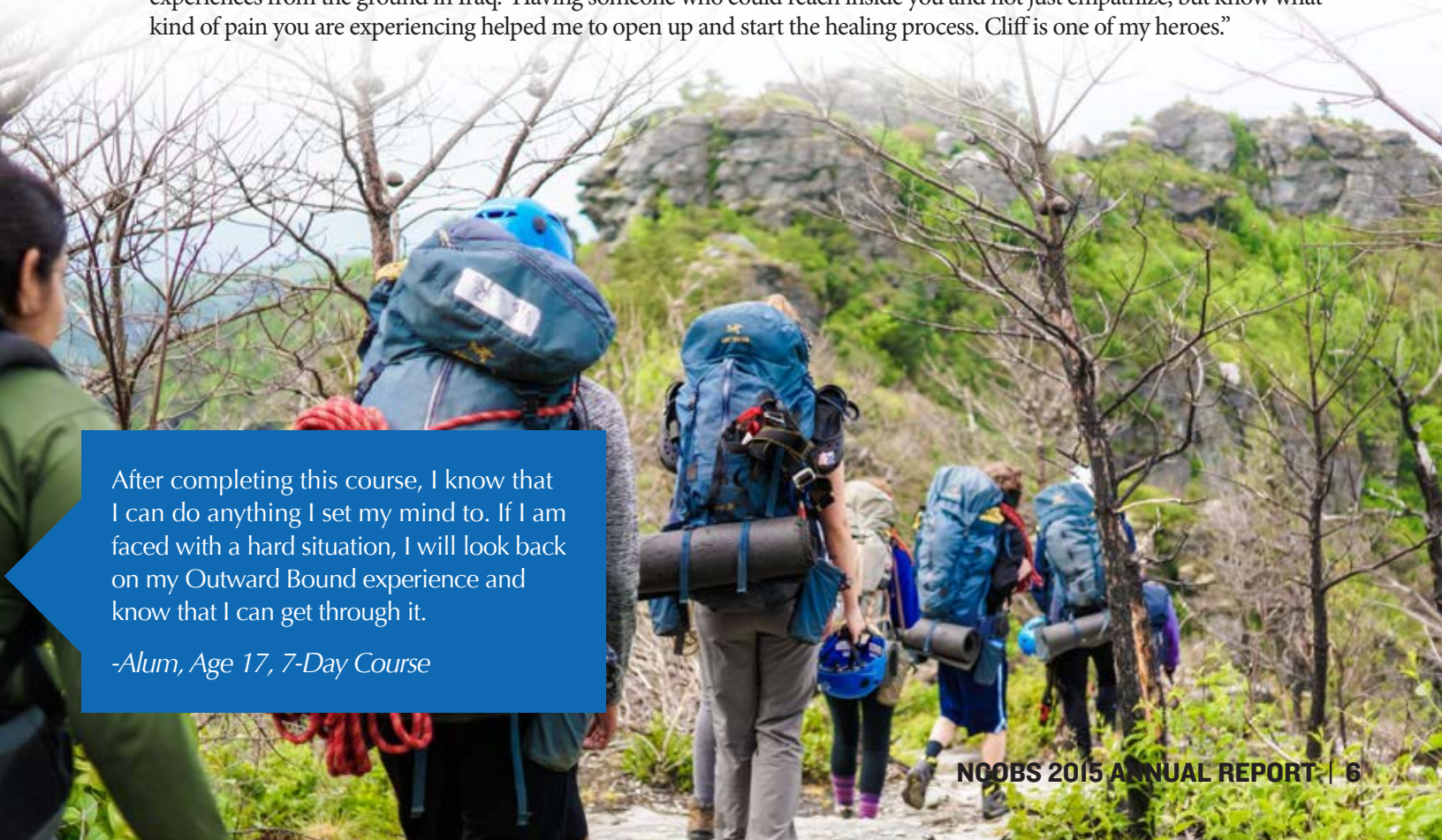
“I learned how to smile. Seems I had forgotten that over the course of the last 10 years.”

Mark was particularly touched by Cliff, one of his instructors who is himself a veteran. “We shared some of the same type of experiences from the ground in Iraq. Having someone who could reach inside you and not just empathize, but know what kind of pain you are experiencing helped me to open up and start the healing process. Cliff is one of my heroes.”

**I learned how to smile.
Seems I had forgotten
that over the course
of the last 10 years.**

After completing this course, I know that I can do anything I set my mind to. If I am faced with a hard situation, I will look back on my Outward Bound experience and know that I can get through it.

-Alum, Age 17, 7-Day Course

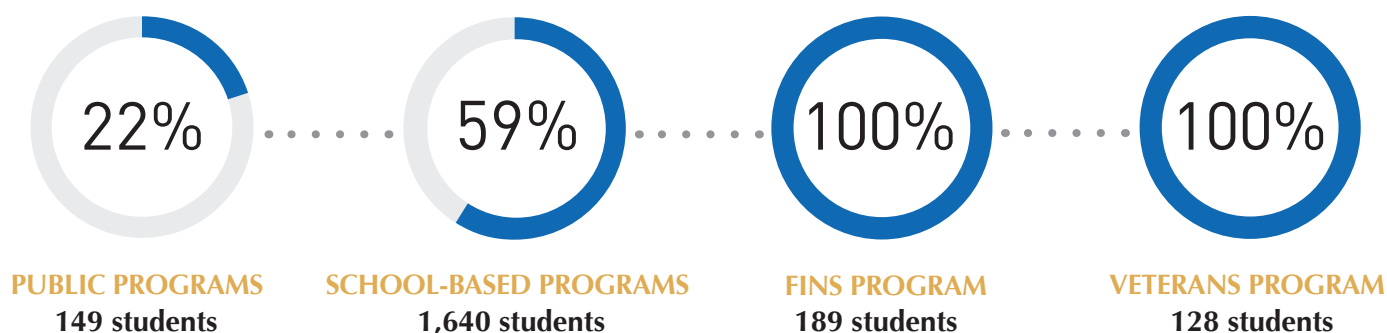


MEASURING IMPACT: SCHOLARSHIPS

At North Carolina Outward Bound School, we believe that everyone should have the opportunity to experience our life-changing wilderness courses, regardless of their financial resources. In 2015, 2,106 students—48% of our participants—received financial support as a result of scholarships or community partnerships.

Generous contributions from our donors and long-term commitments from our partners are what make the Outward Bound experience a reality for nearly half of our students. On behalf of the 2,106 students who received some form of scholarship last year, we are grateful for your support.

Financial Support Awarded By Program Type



82%
students received financial support through our regional scholarship programs in Philadelphia, Asheville, Charlotte and the Washington DC Area

48%

of students received full or partial financial support in 2015 totalling \$1,681,428

Endowments and Scholarship Funds

Endowments and scholarship funds sustain our scholarship outreach and general operating support. They are a wonderful way to honor a loved one and ensure that deserving students continue to be able to attend our high quality programs. You may create an endowment with a minimum of \$25,000 that can be paid over five years. To learn more, contact Dan Leroy, Director of Development at (828) 239-2103 or dleroy@ncobs.org.

Blank Enhancement Endowment
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Zeke Zelif Endowment for Leadership through Service

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

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Dave Genova Memorial Fund
Ryan Glass Memorial Scholarship Fund
Mark E. Headen Memorial Scholarship Fund
Stephen Hicks Scholarship Fund
Jubilee Scholarship Fund of the Community Foundation of Collier County
Sloan Memorial Fund



Alumni Profile

Outward Bound FINS Program

Tyrek Tisdale is the first to admit he was a distracted and temperamental 13 year-old boy the day he showed up for his Outward Bound FINS course in Scottsmoor, FL in 2011. “Before I came to Outward Bound,” recalls Tyrek, “I didn’t think I needed to focus on school or on sports, and I was pretty disrespectful.”

Fast-forward four years, and the Oak Ridge, Florida native has graduated from high school, received his driver’s license, and is on his way to the University of Florida where he will play wide receiver for the Florida Gators.

According to both Tyrek and his mother, Willette Tisdale, Tyrek’s Outward Bound experience played a pivotal role in getting Tyrek’s life on track and making him “a better person.”

“Outward Bound helped me focus more when I came to school,” said Tyrek. “It helped to me to think first and not act on what I was feeling right away. I learned to communicate better and watch what I say, and not be disrespectful, focus more.”

Looking back at his experience four years ago, Tyrek has fond memories of canoeing alongside dolphins and manatees. He also remembers the difficult times he overcame, in stormy



conditions, on solo with minimal food, and struggling to get every member of his crew through the course.

“There was a time on final [expedition], we were camping on an island, and there was a student that wanted to give up on the course and leave camp. It was low tide and he started to walk out into the water and the instructors challenged us to help motivate him to come back to camp and give the course another try. We ended up encouraging him and he was able to get through that hard time and finish the course.”

It was by overcoming these challenges that Tyrek learned what he was capable of. He discovered his inner strength and his capacity for leadership and compassion. “I learned that I was hard working, and I was determined.”

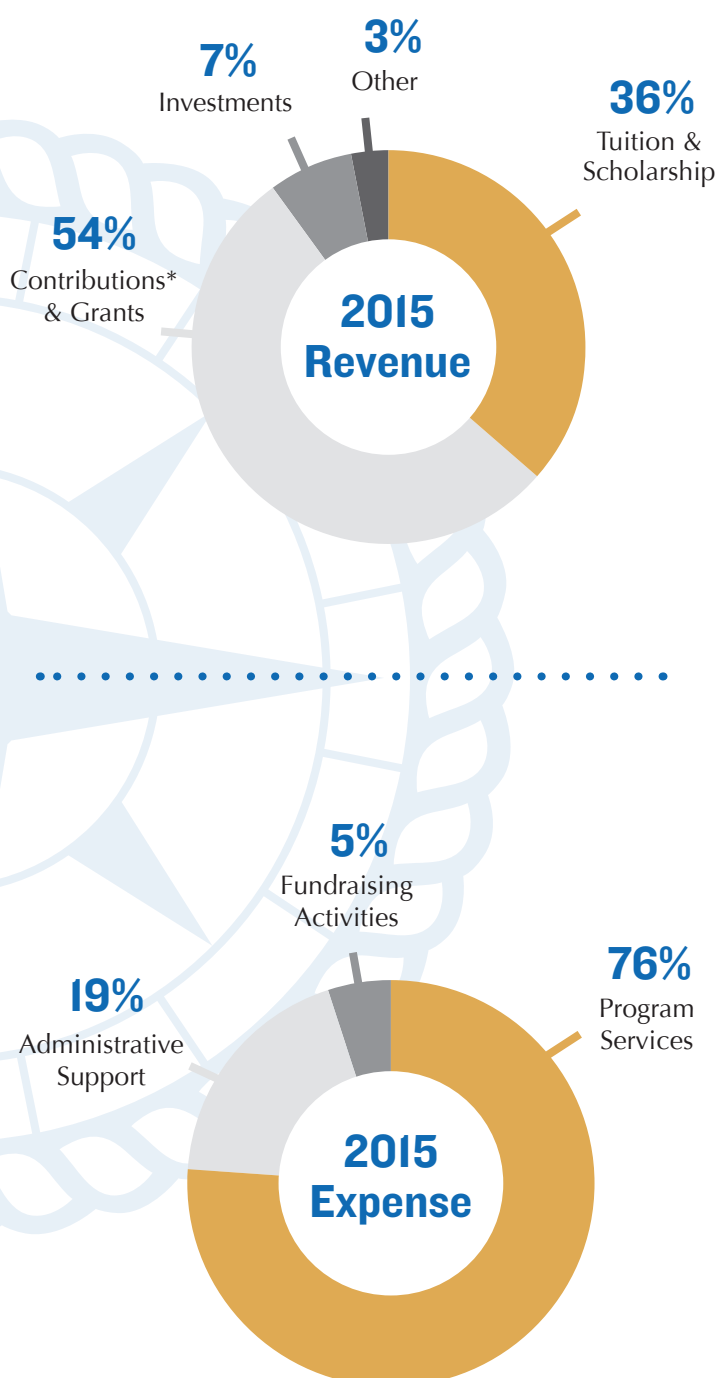
Tyrek is planning to make time between his classes and football practices this fall to return to Scottsmoor Base Camp so he can talk to other young people embarking on their Outward Bound FINS experience. He plans to tell them how much the program “will help them in the end,” no matter how hard it is.

“You’ll look back and think that it was a good thing. It helps you change.”

You’ll look back and think that it was a good thing. It helps you change.

MEASURING IMPACT: FINANCIALS

Fiscal year 2015 represented another year of stability and strong financial performance for North Carolina Outward Bound School. From program to administration, we managed a sustainable balance of revenue and expenses. We experienced significant growth of our endowments thanks to generous early gifts for our upcoming 50th Anniversary Campaign. And for the seventh year in a row, we closed the fiscal year with a modest operating budget surplus.



Statement of Financial Position

Year Ended March 31, 2015

Assets

Cash and equivalents	\$1,749,767
Contributions and grants receivable	\$1,316,889
Property and equipment	\$1,483,745
Long-term investments	\$15,455,871
Total Assets	\$20,006,272

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities	\$1,178,104
Long-term liabilities	\$1,026,933
Total liabilities	\$2,205,037
Unrestricted Assets	\$268,041
Temporarily restricted assets	\$7,607,560
Permanently restricted assets	\$9,925,634
Total liabilities and net assets	\$20,006,272

Statement of Activities

Year Ended March 31, 2015

Support and Revenue

Tuition and Scholarships	\$4,674,855
Contributions and Grants	
Contributions*	\$6,033,293
Federal and state grants	\$833,701
Investments	
Interest and dividends, net	\$325,903
Net gains (losses) on investments	\$569,993
Gain (loss) on sale of equipment	\$15,133
Other Revenue	\$358,480
Total Support and Revenue	\$12,811,358

Expenses

Program Services	
Program delivery	\$4,447,402
Program Administration	\$1,079,290
Student Services	\$454,365
Total school program services	\$5,981,057
Supporting Services	
General and administrative	\$829,764
Marketing	\$634,532
Total support and services	\$1,464,296
Fundraising Activities	
Development	\$389,411
Total Expenses	\$7,834,764

MEASURING IMPACT: GIVING

North Carolina Outward Bound School enjoyed extraordinary financial support from individual donors and private foundations in 2015. Thanks, in part, to advance leadership gifts to our upcoming 50th Anniversary Campaign, NCOBS received \$6,282,699 in contributions during the fiscal year, 76% of which is designated for scholarships.

Summit Society - \$25,000 +

The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation
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Alpinist - \$10,000 - \$24,999

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Explorer - \$5,000 - \$9,999

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Beyaler - \$2,500 - \$4,999

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Mary Lindsay and Jason Evans
Henry and Molly Froelich
Alex and Patricia Funderburg

*Includes advance leadership gifts from supporters of our upcoming 50th Anniversary Campaign

Make an enduring impact on lives through a legacy gift. By including North Carolina Outward Bound School as a beneficiary of your will, trust, or other estate plan, you can ensure a lasting impact on NCOBS and our students for generations to come. *To learn more about planned giving options, contact Dan Leroy, Director of Development, at (828) 239-2103 or dleroy@ncobs.org.*

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76%

**of contributions
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By making an honorary or memorial gift to NCOBS, donors can offer valuable support to the School while honoring the lives of people they love and respect. We gratefully acknowledge the following donors for gifts made in honor or memory of specific individuals in fiscal year 2015.

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Virginia Ford

In honor of Amos N. Beason

Peter and Amy Barry
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In honor of James Belikove

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In honor of Irwin Belk

Rufus M. Dalton

In honor of Arthur M. Blank

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In memory of James Butterworth

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In memory of David K. Genova

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We are also grateful to the many donors who chose to honor their loved ones by contributing to one or more of our established endowments or scholarship funds, listed on page seven. The following two funds were newly established by donors in fiscal year 2015:

- **The Jacob Peach Memorial Fund**
- **The Rufus Dalton Scholarship Fund**

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Group Education Program Clients

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Agnes Irwin School, PA
Appalachian State University, NC
Atlanta Public Schools, GA
Camp Coleman, GA
Camp Judaea, NC
Cannon School, NC
Canterbury School, FL
Cape Fear Academy, NC
Charlotte Latin School, NC
Creative Learning Academy, FL
Donegal High School Experiential Education Program, PA
Episcopal Academy, PA
Episcopal Day School, GA
Erwin High School, NC
Everglades Wilderness Writing Expedition, FL
Evergreen Community Charter School, NC
Exploris Middle School, NC
Highland School, VA
Mt. Vernon School, GA
North Carolina Wesleyan College, NC
Owen High School, NC
Palmer Trinity, FL
Ransom Everglades School, FL
Saint Mary's School, NC
Savannah Country Day School, GA
The Field School, Washington DC
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
School of Education (MEDX), NC
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Student Government, NC
Warren Wilson College, NC
William Jewell College, MI

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Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, MD
Boys' Latin of Philadelphia Charter School, PA
Charles D. Owen High School, NC
Clyde A. Erwin High School, NC
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Episcopal Academy, PA
Freire Charter School, PA
Georgetown Day School, PA
Horace Mann Elementary School, DC
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Pyle Middle School, MD
Riverdale Country School, NY
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Tandem Friends School, NC
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This trip has taught me not only leadership but also it has allowed me to break out of my comfort zone. I have faced many different situations, pushing me to new limits.

These past nine days have given me experiences and memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life. This journey is not yet over for me though, in fact it is only starting; I plan on using my new skills throughout the school and community. My goal is to teach others that compassion is a key to living a happy life.

-Alum, Age 16, 9-Day Course

MEASURING IMPACT: STAFF

One of the things that makes the North Carolina Outward Bound School experience exceptional is our cadre of committed instructors. These compassionate educators work tirelessly to create life-changing experiences and lasting memories for all of our students.

Our highly skilled instructors offer our students carefully designed opportunities to confront challenge and explore their limits safely, to lead successfully when they may doubt they can, and to learn from failure. In doing so, these exceptional educators make the Outward Bound experience transformative.

2015 Staff Recognition Awards

The Catcher in the Rye Award

Kelly Biasioli, Course Director, Instructor, Climber and Outward Bound Professional Facilitator

Given to one staff member throughout the national Outward Bound system of 11 schools who best exemplifies the values of absolute safety of those entrusted to Outward Bound, the highest quality of experiential education, and the provision of character-building experiences.

The Buckley Bearing Award

Mary Rachel Moore, Lead Instructor and Resident Course Director | Clay Kennedy, Instructor and Head Climber | Nolan Barry, Logistics Coordinator and Former Kitchen Manager | Lindsay Ward, Lead Instructor, Course Director, Associate Program Director

Named after NCOBS's inspirational founder Marjorie Buckley, the Buckley Bearing Award recognizes those who provide exemplary direction and leadership to our school. Recipients demonstrate the highest levels of initiative, integrity and commitment to the ideals and passion of Outward Bound.

Gray Wolf Award

Hillary Colvin, Controller

Named after longtime NCOBS instructor Dave Genova, a.k.a Gray Wolf, this award honors the administrative staff member whose belief in the mission and the spirit of Outward Bound is conveyed through his or her everyday actions.

2015 Ten Year Awards

*Justinn Steffe | Jimbo Schley | Dana Havner | Christie Moldovan
Carrie Fritsch | Leslie Frey | Paige Werhan*

Our instructors are very special people and I will forever be grateful for the time we spent with them. They each created, in their own unique way, a very comfortable and emotionally safe environment for our group. They were kind, patient, encouraging, insightful, knowledgeable and reassuring that we can do more than we think we can. As a group we all became very united in a just a few hours and I attribute that to the foundation that the instructors created as our leaders.

-Alum, 4-Day Parent-Child Course





Stay Connected



Give

Nearly half of students who go on an NCOBS course receive a scholarship to help offset the cost of tuition. Every gift made to NCOBS has a lasting impact on the organization and its participants. In addition to giving an unrestricted gift, you have the option to give in other ways as well:

- Make a monthly donation
- Make a bequest
- Hold a fundraising event
- Create a scholarship or endowment in memory of a loved one
- Ask your employer to match your gift
- Make a stock gift

Keep in Touch

- Sign-up for our e-newsletter to stay up to date with School news. You can do so by emailing us at: info@ncobs.org.
- Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram or Pinterest
- Check out our website: www.ncobs.org

Go on Course

Remind yourself why you fell in love with Outward Bound in the first place and challenge yourself to go on another course or introduce a friend to the adventure of a lifetime.



I didn't just survive - I thrived in the mountains for five days.



WOW! I cannot say enough great things about my son's trip - he had an incredible time and returned with more confidence in his abilities and a stronger sense of who he is. He will be starting high school this fall and I firmly believe this was the best investment we could have made in his education. We have discussed his experience a lot in the weeks since he has been home and he says this was, by far, the most difficult challenge he has ever faced, but also the most rewarding.



Walking through the airport in my Outward Bound shirt after course, tanned and a little bug bitten. I feel beyond awesome. Do these people know what I just accomplished!? They couldn't possibly understand how I feel. Yeah my hair is washed and I'm in jeans, but I am different. I am anew and feel much more self aware. I know what I can do; I am stronger, and I feel invincible. It was only a week, but it mattered. I changed. I am forever going to hold myself to a higher standard because I know I can.

North Carolina Outward Bound School

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NC North Carolina State Parks
Ocala National Forest, FL
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Sumter National Forest, SC
St. Johns River Management District, FL
Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge, FL



**NORTH CAROLINA
OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL**

THE LEADER IN EXPERIENTIAL AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Changing lives through challenge and discovery