

# IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025





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# A Letter From the CEO

For three decades, Challenge Aspen has helped countless people find connection, confidence, and joy through outdoor recreation.

Every milestone we have reached reflects the generosity and commitment of our community. As our programs grow, we see that expanding subsidized and free programming removes barriers and broadens access. Grants and donations help us ensure that cost is never a barrier to participation, because everyone deserves the opportunity to discover what can be possible for them.

With deep gratitude, I thank our participants, donors, partners, and volunteers for making this work possible. Looking to the future, we remain committed to strong financial stewardship, exceptional programs, and continuing to provide opportunities in adaptive recreation for years to come.

Sincerely,  
Lindsay Cagley, CEO





# MISSION

**Challenge Aspen is dedicated to impacting lives through year-round adaptive experiences for people with cognitive and/or physical disabilities. Challenge Aspen encourages participation in activities designed to redefine limits, recognize abilities, and transfer newfound courage to everyday life.**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Morgan Fixel, Cameron Kennedy, Jack Kennedy (President), Scott Kraemer, Tom McMahon, Ben Moss (Treasurer), Scott Shannon, Candice Stark, Richard Stettner, Patrick Tierney (Secretary)

## STAFF

Ryan Burtis, Lindsay Cagley, Molly DeMarr, Callie Dickson, Nate Gillette, Erin Loftus, Shelby Mosello, Daniele Mottier, Jenni Petersen, Tracy Pihl, Jesus Rangel, Brenna Sandstrom, Deb Sullivan, Josh Tannenbaum

# CHALLENGE ASPEN Programs

## INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

Adaptive Ski and Snowboard Lessons  
Winter Buddy Days  
Year-Round Custom Adventures

## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

The Locals Program  
The Locals Ski & Snowboard Development Program  
School Partner Programs  
School Inclusion Days  
The Aspen Valley Ski & Snowboard Club  
Partner Program

## GROUPS, CAMPS & CLINICS

Music & Dance Camp  
Custom Group Retreats

## VETERANS PROGRAMS

Rocky Mountain Retreats  
CAMO Partner Programs  
Western Slope Socials



# OUTDOOR ADAPTIVE RECREATION FOR Individuals and Families



## ADAPTIVE SKI & SNOWBOARD LESSONS

Challenge Aspen's adaptive certified instructors provide individualized support and coaching that equips every person for a successful day on the mountain. Sliding scale scholarships ensure everyone has access to mountain activities.

## WINTER BUDDY PROGRAM

Buddy days are designed for participants who are independent skiers or snowboarders, but who require some level of assistance for a successful day on the mountain. This program pairs participants with trained volunteers who accompany them on the mountain, ensuring they have the support they need for a successful day on the slopes.

## CUSTOM ADVENTURES

Challenge Aspen works with individuals and families to customize accessible recreation experiences in the Roaring Fork Valley through Custom Adventures.

# COMMUNITY Programs

## THE LOCALS PROGRAM

The Locals Program fosters community through affordable adaptive recreation for adults with cognitive and developmental disabilities residing in the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys. The Locals Program offers opportunities in winter, summer, and fall, with the option to train for and compete in Special Olympics events.

## LOCALS SKI & SNOWBOARD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Locals Development Program is for youth and adults in the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys who are interested in learning to ski or snowboard, or progressing their skills. This program helps participants gain confidence needed to ski or snowboard independently.

## THE AVSC BUDDY PROGRAM

This program pairs a trained 'buddy' with a child with a disability who is participating in Aspen Valley Ski and Snowboard Club's introductory and competitive ski programs. Buddies provide adaptive support that enables the athlete to successfully train and compete alongside their peers. This program is provided free of charge.



## SCHOOL PARTNER PROGRAMS

Designed and led by Challenge Aspen in partnership with schools from Aspen to Parachute, these adaptive activity days serve Special Education and Significant Support Needs (SSN) classes with tailored instruction in a supportive environment. Challenge Aspen facilitates school ski days, and other customized adaptive recreation experiences.

## SCHOOL INCLUSION DAYS

Students with physical or cognitive disabilities join their school's existing ski field trip at Aspen Snowmass with support from trained Challenge Aspen staff or volunteers, ensuring they can participate alongside their classmates in a fully unified experience. This program is offered through our partnership with Aspen Skiing Company.



# Groups, Camps, Clinics

## MUSIC & DANCE CAMP

Music & Dance Camp is a week-long summer camp that culminates in an original theater production where every actor/actress shines. Campers are paired one-on-one with a volunteer for rehearsals and adaptive recreation activities throughout the week.

## GROUP RETREATS

Challenge Aspen facilitates year-round accessible adaptive recreation retreats for groups and customizes itineraries to meet the needs of the group. Group retreats can include adaptive ski/snowboard lessons, ice skating, trips to the hot springs, and more. Challenge Aspen has worked with Tennessee School for the Blind, the Craig Hospital Teen Rehabilitation Program, and other disability serving non-profits to customize group retreats.



# VETERANS Programs

## WESTERN SLOPE SOCIALS

Western Slope Socials provide accessible, affordable drop-in recreational activities such as skiing/snowboarding, mountain biking, road biking, fly fishing, and archery for disabled veterans.

## CAMO PARTNER PROGRAMS

CAMO Partner Programs are week-long adaptive recreation and wellness retreats that collaborate with the VA, DOD, and other Veteran-serving non-profit organizations to bring veterans from groups such as The Center for the Intrepid, Fort Carson Military Hospital, Wounded Warriors, and The USSOCOM Care Coalition to the Roaring Fork Valley to work with Challenge Aspen.

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN RETREATS

Rocky Mountain Retreats are open enrollment week-long retreats for any veteran with a service-connected disability. They are application based and offered at no cost-free to the participant.

## A STORY OF UNSTOPPABLE COURAGE

# Growing Up With Challenge Aspen

For 30 years, Challenge Aspen has grown alongside the people we serve, and few friendships capture that journey better than Danielle and Max's. They met as young children through Challenge Aspen programs and have grown up together, cheering each other on through every new adventure, from their first wobbly turns on skis to racing slalom in the Special Olympics.

Born with cerebral palsy, Danielle Coulter was one of the first children to take part in Challenge Aspen's programming. She was just four years old when her mom signed up for ski lessons and play camp. Max Grange, who also began participating with Challenge Aspen at a young age, is fueled by the adrenaline of skiing — they don't call him "Big Air Max" for nothing. Together, he and Danielle have tackled the slopes, tried paddleboarding and archery, starred in Music & Dance Camp performances, and competed side by side in the Special Olympics. With Max at her side, Danielle has gone on to become a pioneer in adaptive snowboarding, opening doors for other athletes to follow.

They celebrate each other's victories, encourage each other to try what once seemed impossible, and remind everyone around them that friendship and possibility have no limits. That same spirit continues today in every program, every season, and every story.



# Thirty Years of Possibility

This year marks thirty years of Challenge Aspen. From humble beginnings to a world-class adaptive recreation organization, Challenge Aspen has been pushing boundaries, opening doors, and making the outdoors accessible for people with disabilities through it all.

Whether supporting someone recently injured to get back outside for the first time, bringing disabled veterans together to find friendship and camaraderie, or enabling a local child with a disability to ski alongside their friends, Challenge Aspen has and will continue to help people discover new possibilities for themselves.

As we take a moment to reflect on the impact of thirty years since our organization's founding, we recognize that our mission is more relevant than ever, and we promise to continue to evolve and innovate to help people with disabilities thrive for years to come.

**4.5**  
**MILLION**  
**IN**  
**SCHOLARSHIPS**  
**AWARDED**

**70%**  
**OF ACTIVITIES**  
**ARE DONOR**  
**FUNDED SO**  
**COST IS NEVER**  
**A BARRIER TO**  
**PARTICIPATION**

**100%**  
**OF VETERANS**  
**RECEIVE**  
**PARTIAL OR**  
**COMPLETE**  
**FINANCIAL**  
**SUPPORT**

**OVER**  
**18,000**  
**PEOPLE**  
**SERVED**

# Year-Round Limitless Adventure

## A STORY OF PARTNERSHIP, POSSIBILITY, AND LIFELONG IMPACT

When Basalt High School Principal Megan Hartmann watched her students strap on snowboards for the first time, she saw courage, connection, and community partnership in action.

“Today was the first day that some of our students have ever snowboarded, even though they’ve lived in the valley their whole lives,” Hartmann said. “What Challenge Aspen has done in creating an inclusive community and providing support for every single student in this valley to participate in skiing and snowboarding is incredible.”

Across the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys, moments like these are multiplying through Challenge Aspen’s School Partner Programs, developed in collaboration with local special education and transition classes to provide outdoor recreation for youth with disabilities. Programs include adaptive ski lessons for Significant Support Needs (SSN) classes and year-round activities such as hiking, cross-country skiing, paddleboarding, and archery— each building confidence, friendship, and a love of the outdoors.

At Bridges High School, Ready for the World teacher Chelsea Robson has seen those changes firsthand. The program helps young adults with disabilities build independence and

life skills after graduation. “Challenge Aspen has truly been a lifeline for my students,” Robson said. “Their confidence and health have grown through every challenge, and the friendships they’ve built through Challenge Aspen have far outlasted the school system itself, creating a lasting sense of community and belonging.”

**“I’ve learned so much to become independent. I got out of my comfort zone to try skiing, archery, and paddleboarding.”**

**— Kendra Fernandez**

From Aspen to Parachute, students in local special-education and transition programs are discovering their strength, their voice, and their place in nature. All programs are offered at no cost to schools or families, thanks to donations and grant funding, so every student has the chance to experience what’s possible.

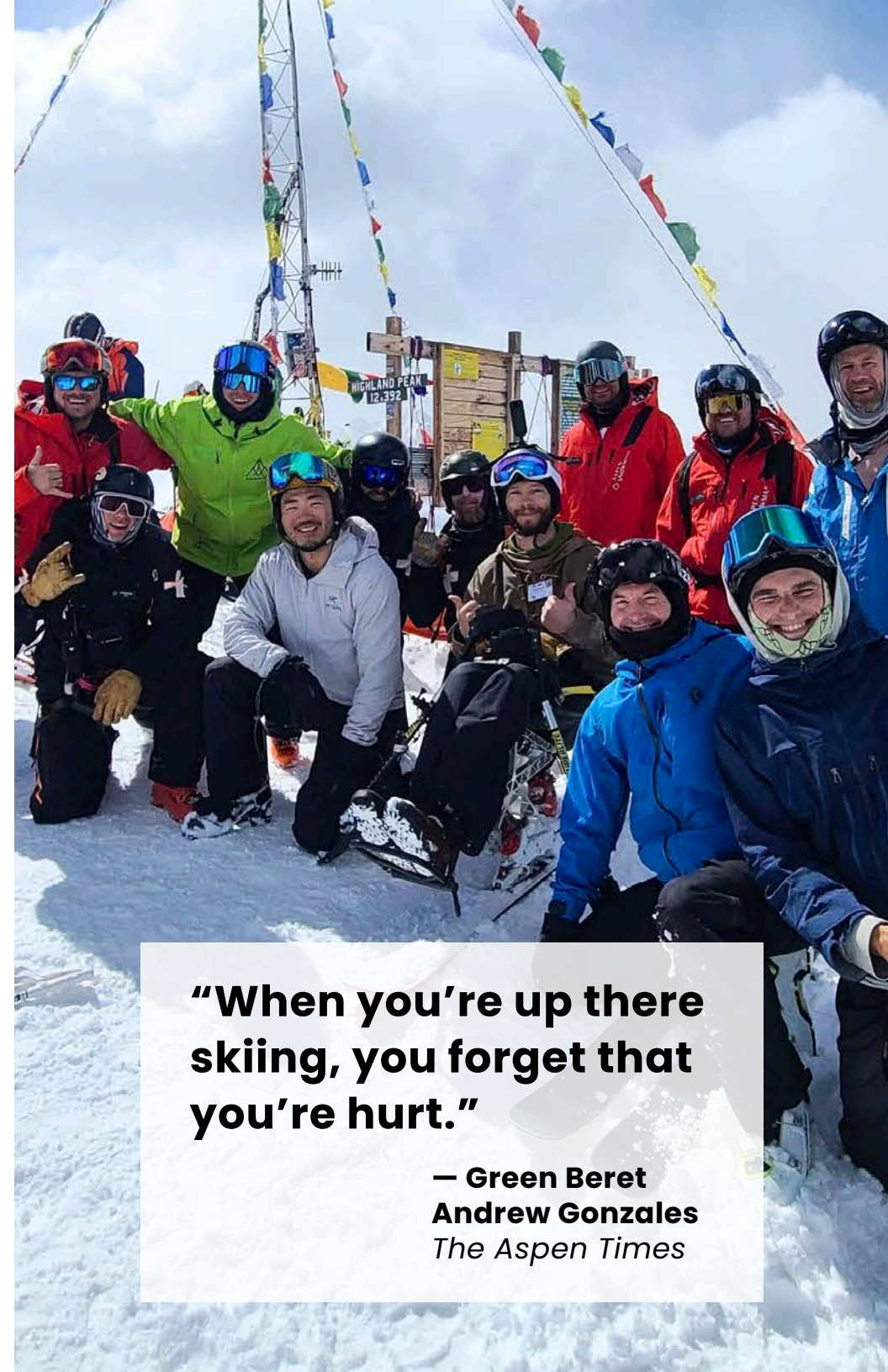
Challenge Aspen today, and into the future, is a year-round, regional partner shaping inclusive communities and writing new stories of courage and connection every day.

# Opening Doors to Possibility

Challenge Aspen Military Opportunities (CAMO) was formed in 2005 in response to large numbers of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans returning home with service-related injuries.

CAMO began by inviting wounded service members to the slopes of Snowmass for winter retreats that encompassed everything from adaptive ski and snowboard lessons to yoga, breathwork and music therapy designed to promote camaraderie, movement, laughter, and healing. The goal of CAMO retreats has and continues to be giving disabled veterans the opportunity to connect with each other, support to try new things, and the chance to develop a fresh, positive outlook on life that they can take home with them. What started as a handful of winter retreats has since grown to become one of the country's leading military adaptive recreation programs, uniting veterans their families through shared experiences in Colorado's great outdoors.

Today, CAMO hosts year-round adventures — from cycling up Independence Pass and rafting down the Roaring Fork River. Veterans describe the program as a lifeline, offering camaraderie and belonging that lasts long after each trip ends.



**“When you’re up there skiing, you forget that you’re hurt.”**

**— Green Beret  
Andrew Gonzales**  
*The Aspen Times*



## ON A RIDE TOWARD **Access for All**

Adam Lavender always loved the rush of mountain biking. In the early nineties, he helped establish many of the valley's now beloved trail networks and raced downhill at a semi-professional level. Until a crash at a Freeride Mountain Bike World Tour event in 2012 shattered his C4 vertebrae, leaving him paralyzed from the neck down.

The crash ended one chapter of Adam's life and began another defined by resilience and certainly not without struggle. It took him two years just to be able to lift his arm. He recognizes that healing is a never-ending journey, and the key, he shared, is to "celebrate the wins, and never stop working towards your goals." For the first time since his injury, Adam celebrated one of the biggest wins of his life with Challenge Aspen when he rode an adaptive mountain bike on a local trail this summer. Adaptive mountain biking is still new territory, but Adam is proving that the same trails he helped build can now open doors for adaptive riders.



# Strategic Plan

**Improve quality of life for people with disabilities through adaptive recreation**

- Improve quality across all programs
- Increase program access for new participants and rural communities
- Increase the quantity of participant days and unique participants served annually

**Modernize technology to increase programmatic capacity**

- Establish a database that serves the needs of programs and fundraising
- Improve data collection and reporting accuracy

**Improve fundraising capacity with a focus on long-term financial sustainability**

- Endowment campaign study
- Diversify funding sources

**Establish a long-range capital plan for facilities, housing and storage**

- Establish facility needs and partnerships in preparation for long range growth
- Secure additional employee housing

**Strategic Development of Staff and Board**

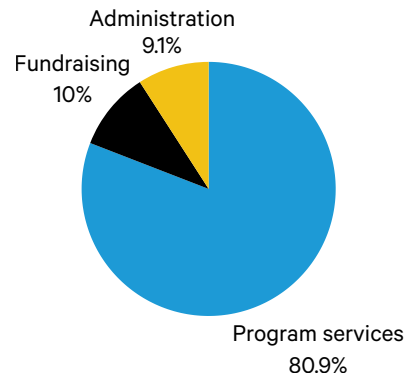
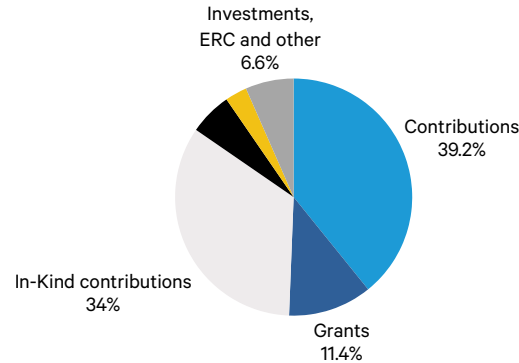
- Establish professional development and diverse training opportunities for staff and Board
- Increase focus on succession planning and talent development

# Financials

For the fiscal year June 2024 through May 2025, Challenge Aspen generated \$6,529,833 in operating revenue. This strong foundation provides additional, necessary resources, such as scholarships, training & adaptive equipment, allowing us to expand access and improve the quality of our programs.

Through our commitment to sound financial practices, we strive to leverage our expenses to maximize impact. In FY24-25, we directed 81% to program services, 9% to administration, and 10% to fundraising.

Challenge Aspen closed the year with a net surplus of \$1,947,057, including investment returns, strengthening our ability to plan responsibly for future organizational needs.



## ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents:	\$ 822,179
Pledges receivable (net):	\$ 663,152
Prepaid exp. and other assets:	\$ 94,525
Investments designated by the Board:	\$ 5,745,565
ROU operating lease asset:	\$ 242,246
Property & equipment (net):	<u>\$ 222,711</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 7,790,378</b>

## REVENUE

Contributions:	\$ 2,556,679
Grants:	\$ 747,937
In Kind Contributions:	\$2,215,848
Special Events (Net):	\$ 381,111
Program Fees (Net):	\$ 199,236
Investments & Other:	<u>\$ 429,022</u>
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$6,529,833</b>

## EXPENSES

Program Services:	\$ 3,703,995
Fundraising:	\$ 459,685
Administration:	\$ 363,514
Other Expenses -Non Ops:	<u>\$ 55,582</u>
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$ 4,582,776</b>

## NET

Net Operating Activities:	\$ 1,947,057
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## LIABILITIES

Accounts payable:	\$ 136,881
Accrued expenses:	\$ 68,440
Deferred revenue:	\$ 13,816
ROU operating lease liability:	\$ <u>249,321</u>
<b>Total Liabilities:</b>	<b>\$ 468,458</b>

## NET ASSETS

Without donor restrictions	\$ 6,686,931
With donor restrictions	<u>\$ 634,989</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>\$ 7,321,920</b>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS: \$ 7,790,378**

# THE POWER OF Your Support

## TOGETHER, WE MAKE POSSIBILITIES A REALITY

Every adventure, breakthrough, and moment of joy at Challenge Aspen is fueled by the generosity of donors. Thanks to your support, we expanded access to adaptive recreation, providing the opportunity for more people with disabilities than ever before to experience life without limits.

## THIS YEAR:

- 1,982 donors supported Challenge Aspen
- Revenue from donor contributions surpassed \$2,556,679, exceeding our goal by 173%.
- 105 Active National Council members sustained and supported Challenge Aspen's mission through annual gifts of \$5,000 or more.

## [LEARN MORE ABOUT NATIONAL COUNCIL](#)

## COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT

Beyond individual donors, our work is made possible through the generosity of grantors, corporate sponsors, volunteers, and in-kind partners, whose support help fund programs, provide essential equipment, and ensure everyone has the opportunity to experience adventure without limits.



# THANK YOU TO Our Sponsors

## \$100K+

Aspen Skiing Company  
Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Snowmass Sports

## \$10K+

Aspen Community Foundation  
Alpine Bank  
Après Wine Party, Inc  
Clarks Market, Inc.  
Mountain Chalet  
Pitkin County Board of Commissioners  
Southwest Airlines  
The Aspen Times  
The Snowmass Club

**And Other Anonymous Donors**

## \$25K+

The Dunbar  
Giving Network  
Fisher House  
Jonathan D & Mark C. Lewis Foundation  
US Department of Health and Human Services  
Kevin & Chelsea Washington

## \$5K+

The Aspen Institute  
City of Aspen  
Leitner-Poma of America, Inc  
Modern Luxury  
Move United Boeing Invictus Legacy Grant  
Summit Photo & Film  
Wilhelm Farms

## \$1K+

Alice + Olivia  
Alpine Ace Hardware  
Aspen Snowmass Sothebys  
Aspen Thrift Store  
Charitable Adult Rides & Services Inc  
The Colorado Trust  
Eagle County Board of Commissioners  
Flybook LLC  
Fraternal Order of the Eagles #184  
Garfield County Human Services  
Gorsuch Ski  
Kenichi Snowmass  
LS Group  
Northstar Travel Group / Mountain Travel Symposium  
OnXMaps Inc.  
Ranger Stitch  
Snowmass Village Rotary Club  
Special Olympics Colorado  
State Farm Agent Derron Cloud  
Town of Snowmass Village  
Venga Venga



# WHEN ACCESS IS EQUAL POSSIBILITIES ARE LIMITLESS



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