

2022 Annual Report

Year end Summary and Report—The Wampler Foundation mission is to “provide life changing outdoor educational experiences to physically disabled children”. These wilderness education programs teach physically challenged children self-confidence and motivation leading to increased optimism for education and overcoming physical challenges they inevitably face in life.

The monetary support this past year helped us along with many other foundations, corporation and private donors, sponsor 33 physically disabled children in the high Sierra’s of Northern California. The on going pandemic limited our enrollment because legal issues with vaccinations and country regulations. All funds were used directly to ensure that youth with physical disabilities from economically disadvantaged households are able to participate in these life-changing adventures.

The Wampler Foundation-- The Foundation incorporated in October 2001, becoming a fully recognized tax-exempt non-profit 501(c) 3 organization in March of 2003. Our outdoor programs started in August of 2004, welcoming 24 campers. The organization has grown over the past 20 years and sponsored 1,250 children at 5 camping programs last years. The Board of Directors consists of 5 members with a unique skill set to assure the success of the operating model and manage the organization and the structure. Board Committees include Finance, Program, Fund-raising and Executive with no less then two members on each committee. The annual budget of the Foundation for 2023 is \$1,250,250 with operating expenses of just over \$900,000 for our new facility project.

The Foundation and it’s programs are now going to focus on our new facility in the Sierra’s near Lake Tahoe that will still focus on outdoor education and helping the kids with physical disabilities feel comfortable in a wilderness setting. This new facility will allow the foundation to serve more then 125 children for 5 month out of the year. Our new facility is going to replace the five other programs and will enable the foundation to focus on 12 weeks of program without moving locations and just having 6 weeks of programs.

During the 7-day long programs the kids learn to fish, build shelters, identify flora and fauna, sleep under the stars and learn survival skills. Each day there is a set curriculum offering a variety of different activities are offered throughout the day. At the end of each

day the child is presented there is a challenge of some sort where the child has to apply what they learned either that day or the day before to be exempt from dish duty that night. At the conclusion of the week long program, the kids come away with increased self-confidence, new skills, a love of the outdoors, and a set of positive memories and experiences that help propel them to greater engagement and purpose in their lives.

We are overjoyed with the success of our programs and can't believe our good fortune over the last two decades and the profound life-changing impact that they have on the disabled children and young adults who are able to participate. Through these program, most of our campers have experienced they're first residential over night away from their family and caregivers. Being away from family, many children challenge themselves to accomplish daily living activities that their families or caregivers usually provide for them. Because all the children have a physical disability each child is assigned a personal counselor.

The foundation partners with a number of Universities, state colleges and park departments throughout the state to provide the staff. Most of the counselors are nursing and or recreation therapy students that are seeking the hands on experience and wanting a career in the field. The staff is select and trained by our program director that has been employed of the state. The programs have been operated by the foundation with a staff contract with the state parks system.

The experiences that our camper's have are transformative changes in their skills, capabilities, and attitudes. As one camper stated, "I now realize that I'm NOT just handicapped, I've got so many things to do and accomplish!" The objectives and outcomes of the programs, for each child, include:

- Open the world of environmental awareness and appreciation of the natural surroundings
- Encourage higher education
- Increase overall physical, leisure, and social capabilities
- Develop physical competencies
- Develop compensating skills and confidence
- Develop outdoor experiences and skills
- Foster emotional, social, and physical independence
- Develop a sense of personal worth and self-acceptance
- Realize that there are clear opportunities for a normal life

The degrees of personal development are measured by witnessing the children throughout the week and especially on the last day when the children leave. The hope and confidence realized is truly amazing. There is no other wilderness experience to match the value of such an achievement and transformational experience.

The children are changed forever after their experiences and adventures. While they make friends that they keep in touch with throughout the year, year after year, and while they call themselves, "Wampers", and have created their own calendar year that goes from the first day of camp one year to their first year of camp the next, there are also many measurable accomplishments these children attain as they grow into early adulthood.

A large majority of our children go on to graduate from college, get jobs and rent and buy houses. Additionally, one of our first camper from a few years back, went on to finish college, become a computer engineer, and she, Laura Smith, recently got married.

Without exception during the week the kids find themselves around the campfire asking Steve about life and how he navigated his way through college, found his first job and how he met his wife.

There is something about the camp experience for these kids that sets them on a path that we are certain wasn't often part of their plan before they experienced the triumphs and important milestones that camp provided them. These kids enjoy a new courage and morale and a self-reliance that comes from friends who they commiserate with and who understand them, and they also have the sense of accomplishment from having pushed themselves at camp in a way that they never had before. The kids seem to enjoy a new kind of certainty and self-reliance, almost across the board.

At the conclusion of each program, the participant child is given a questionnaire and asked to describe their experience and how it improved and / or changed their life. The feed back from both the camper and parents are both compiled by both the program director and Steve. The two directors for the Board of directors then formulate a report to present to the board so the board can assure the goals and objectives of the organization are being fulfilled. This report is then condensed down to a two page annual report for our donors.

Who We Serve-- The addressable population of physically challenged or disabled children is quite large and enrichment services and opportunities for them are quite limited. We serve children with a wide range of physical disabilities including cerebral palsy, quadriplegia, paralysis, spina bifida and limb loss. These children often come from low-income households and have had limited exposure to the outdoors or to personally challenging environments away from their daily caregivers. They are often low in confidence, and motivation.

Operations and Finances-- Because all the children have a physical disability, each child is assigned a personal counselor. Staff and counselors have been provided by a partner organization and most of the counselors are nursing and or recreation therapy students seeking the hands-on experience. We will be looking to hire a full time Program Director as soon as the new facility is built in 2016.

The funding avenues that helped the foundation achieve our goals in 2018 for the foundation. We partnered with the ESET Corporation in 2009 and the corporation donates on average \$50,000 per year. The following foundations, corporations or individuals who have funded our programs on a ongoing bases are as follows: Moccasin Lake Foundation (25,000) Safeway Corporation (\$30,000), The Anderson Family Foundation (\$10,000) The Westphal Family Foundation (\$5,000), The Lipp Family Foundation (\$5,000), San Diego Boy's and Girl's Foundation (\$2,500), Vanguard Charitable Foundation (\$1,000) and The Boyd Family Foundation (\$2,500). We were the recipients of a \$2,500 donation from the San Diego Century Club, which sponsors the PGA Farmers Insurance Open. Additionally, we had several hundred individuals who contributed between \$25,000 and \$100 each. The Jasper Family Trust and the Whitbeck Family Trust have been our biggest individual donors over the years.

A majority of our capital comes from corporate and private foundation grants. Also the foundation has two fundraising events a year. This year we are attempting to raise over one million dollars in addition to the very generous donation of the property from an anonymous donor. (In the past several years the foundation has raised between \$600k and 750k. So far to date we have raised \$800,000 toward the project with commitments from two smaller foundations.

The focus of the foundation is to provide full or partial tuition for children to attend camping program after all the facilities are built next year. The programs that need additional funding cost the foundation on average \$350k per year to operate starting in 2022.

Future Plans and Goals--The foundation has already begun working on the next phase of our environmental education plans from its original programs started at Hawley Lake in 2004 and other programs throughout the western US. We have begun building a unique wilderness facility and experiences to this special population of children this coming summer and continue our project over the next couple of decades. We know it will excite and inspire the kids to learn more about themselves in the great outdoors when the facility is completed in October of 2025.

Conclusion-- The Wampler Foundation is committed to building and strengthening the offering of its unique environmental educational programs targeted to kids and young adults with physical disabilities. The Foundation seeks to increase the number of children

the organization serves in the coming years, continue to enhance its programs, and further build a stable funding base.