



# FIELD INSTITUTE OF TAOS

## 2014 COMMUNITY REPORT

Prepared by Susie Fiore, Executive Director



EDUCATION IS NOT THE FILLING OF A PAIL, BUT THE LIGHTING OF A FIRE.  
*William Butler Yeats*



A nonprofit 501(c)3 organization providing active, hands-on, nature-based outdoor education and promoting healthy lifestyles since 1996.

[www.fitaos.org](http://www.fitaos.org)

**Connecting young people with the natural world and encouraging healthy lifestyles is our passion.** Since 1996, we have established and maintained a reputation for excellence in our unique, educational outdoor programs based in Taos Ski Valley and beyond. Our programs continue to grow and now include summer day camps, camping and backpacking trips, school environmental education programs, after-school cycling programs, free youth mountain biking (Trips For Kids-Taos), an inclusive, family-oriented cycling team (Team FITaos), and FIT Neighborhood camp.

By offering positive, healthy opportunities for experiencing **hands-on nature studies** and **outdoor skills development**, our programs help youth build **self-esteem** and use **teamwork** while **exploring the outdoors**. In 2014 we offered more programs than ever throughout the year with a staff of over 40 including Lead Instructors, Junior Counselors and Counselors in Training.

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Total Income 2014	\$223,153
Donations/Grants	\$115,336
Fundraising Events	\$ 16,134
Tuition Paid	\$ 91,683
Total Expenses 2014	\$203,685
Net to Scholarship fund	\$ 19,468



Many thanks to all donors, volunteers and to our extended community. We truly value this support and could not share our vision with so many without it. Our success is firmly rooted in the generosity of individual donors who allow us to offer excellent programs at a reasonable cost. We now award scholarship assistance to **all** participants who request funding. Together we are making a huge difference in many lives.

**We challenge you to get involved** to help make a difference in our local community and the world. We are always looking for additional community support, grant writing assistance, excellent staff, volunteers for events, guest presenters, private land suitable for exploring the natural world, committed board members, and experienced advisors. Never knowing what the future will hold, a broad base of support and local involvement today allows us the ability to proceed with confidence and enthusiasm.

<http://www.fitaos.org/donors-and-community-events/donate/>

### SCHOLARSHIPS

Summer Mountain Camps: 97/231 or 42% of total kids totaling \$17,000+ in scholarship funds in 2014. Many additional scholarships and small grants were given to individuals and to school programs.

**2014 FUNDING** came from multiple sources including a large grant from an anonymous donor, fundraising events, in kind contributions, business and individual donors, volunteers, and our Board of Directors.

### FUNDRAISING EVENTS and ACTIVITIES

New Belgium Brewing Scavenger Hunt

July 4<sup>th</sup> Rubber Duck Race

Be FIT Raffle & Youth Nature Photo Exhibit

Festival of Trees

Spring Donor Request

Holiday Donor Request

<http://www.fitaos.org/donors-and-community-events/community-events/>



## 2014 FITAOS PROGRAM SUMMARY

### SUMMER CAMPS

**Mountain Camps** Based in Taos Ski Valley since 1996, these camps serve youth entering first grade and up. The focus is on active, hands-on learning experiences. Throughout each session, we integrate different themes (archaeology, river ecology, wildlife biology, orienteering, etc.) while exploring our surroundings through hikes, activities, and games. Observation, teamwork, and problem solving skills are developed in an exciting, fun, and creative outdoor learning environment. 231 individual youth participated in one and two week day camps, backpacking trips, extended camping trips, and mountain bike adventures. We operated at or near full capacity June 2-August 14, 2014. This was well over 1200 “camper days” with some participating in multiple sessions.

2014 sessions included:

Advanced Adventure

Adventure Week

Alpine Journey

Crested Butte Mountain Bike Adventure

Durango Mountain Bike Adventure

Leadership Adventure Week

Lettuce Grow Farm Camp

Nature Adventure #1

Nature Adventure #2

Nature Adventure MINI #1

Nature Adventure MINI #2

Outdoor Adventure

Outdoor Explore

Taos Mountain Bike Adventure



**FIT Neighborhood Camp** This summer program operates Monday-Friday at Quail Ridge Taos and is an engaging, active and fun way for kids ages 5-12 to spend summer days in a supervised, structured environment. Activities include swimming, tennis, group games, and crafts. FIT Neighborhood believes in fun, teamwork, mentorship, and creativity and welcomes weekly enrollment as well as daily drop-ins. This program had a total of 727 camper days in 2014. <http://www.fitaos.org/summer-camps/fit-neighborhood/>

**Youth Leadership** Our Youth Leadership programs have grown and now allow us to employ many young people ages 10 and up as interns and volunteers. This mentorship component of Field Institute of Taos is a vital aspect of our vision. We hire both Counselors In Training (volunteers) and Junior Counselors (paid interns) to work in all aspects of our summer programs as well as in our after school programs. In 2014 there were 43 staff members including 14 Junior Counselors, 17 Counselors In Training, and 12 Lead Instructors.

<http://www.fitaos.org/who-we-are/youth-leaders/>

### OTHER PROGRAMS

**Team FITaos Cycling** This unique team spans all ages and abilities. Team FITaos promotes cycling in the Taos area while developing the abilities of local athletes. Through training and competition, Team FITaos provides a fun, supportive environment focused on mentoring youth, families, and individuals. The 2014 Team had over 50 Taos area youth and adults. In 2014, we hosted 5 Hill Climb Events on Taos Ski Valley Road for all ages and abilities as well as weekly junior mountain bike rides and women’s rides.

<http://www.fitaos.org/team-fitaos-cycling-programs/team-fitaos/>

**FITaos Edventures** This innovative program gives students and teachers of Taos area schools a unique experience bridging the classroom and the natural world in an outdoor setting. Diverse lessons are conducted utilizing multiple learning methods enabling students to participate in active hands-on activities. Students (among their peers) embrace concepts of environmental and social matters with more depth. Programs compliment and enhance the school curriculum with focus areas adapted to enhance classroom concepts.

<http://www.fitaos.org/programs/school-programs/>

**Nature Out There** This exciting program takes place outside of traditional school hours with a unique blend of environmental education and outdoor adventure that is fun, educational, and physically challenging. We thoughtfully engage students while exploring connections to the natural world through active, hands-on activities. <http://www.fitaos.org/programs/n-o-t-school/>

## 2014 ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

- **After School Mountain Biking** Spring and Fall Programs for ages 7+; serving 40 youth
- **Anansi Charter School** N.O.T. School adventures (after school) as well as end of year EdVentures
- **Bicycle Rodeos** Skills and safety education clinics at Arroyos del Norte and Anansi Charter Schools
- **Classroom Outreach** Programs with Enos Garcia, Taos Charter School, Ranchos Elementary, Arroyos Del Norte, and Taos Middle School
- **Lettuce Grow Farm Camp** with **ECHO Kids**, a nonprofit organization created by Dr. Silvia Villarreal to help young people in northern New Mexico develop healthy, active lifestyles
- **Taos Academy** Edventures with students as well as Professional Development Training for teachers
- **Taos Day School (Taos Pueblo)** Trips for Kids afterschool mountain biking program
- **Taos Integrated School for the Arts** EdVentures for multiple classrooms; N.O.T. School programming free to all youth participants
- **Trips For Kids Taos** Using bicycles as a vehicle for confidence building, achievement, health, fitness and environmental awareness and encourages the simple act of having fun while riding a bike
- **Wilderness Therapy Outings** with **Youth Heartline**, a nonprofit organization serving abused and neglected children in Taos Colfax, and Union Counties and providing invaluable services to youth in these communities

## PARTNERSHIPS

- **BLM** Permit holder
- **ChoKuRei Farm and Ranch** Support and share food systems education and facility
- **Community Against Violence** Anti oppression, youth empowerment content and programming
- **Enchanted Forest XC Ski Area** Community outreach education
- **Lettuce Grow** Support and share food systems programming and facility
- **Northside at Taos Ski Valley** Private land access to high alpine terrain
- **PPC Solar** Support and share energy education programming (new for 2015)
- **Singing River Field Center** Private land access and facility (new for 2015)
- **Taos Ski Valley, Inc.** Private land access, chair lift access and use of indoor facility
- **USFS** Permit holder
- **Village of Taos Ski Valley** Support, advertising and funds through Lodgers' Tax Grant
- **Wildlandance** Materials, support training and restoration projects

For more information about Field Institute of Taos & to view photos of our programs in operation, please visit our website [www.fitaos.org](http://www.fitaos.org).



I AM WELL AGAIN, I CAME TO LIFE IN THE COOL WINDS  
& CRYSTAL WATERS OF THE MOUNTAINS... *John Muir*

Selected 2014 FITaos Photos



More 2014 FITaos Photos

