



**SPRING 2019**  
CELEBRATING 23 YEARS  
OF OUTDOOR ADVENTURES!

A NON PROFIT 501(C)3 ORGANIZATION PROVIDING ACTIVE, HANDS-ON, NATURE-BASED OUTDOOR EDUCATION SINCE 1996

## Welcome to our 23<sup>rd</sup> year!

Another year of sharing our wonder, joy, & curiosity in the natural world through fun, healthy, engaging, & exciting outdoor adventures is underway! Our many programs implement a unique approach to developing a connection with nature & encouraging healthy, active lifestyles outdoors. From our Base Camp in El Prado, we venture out to explore the beautiful alpine peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the dramatic canyon landscapes of the Rio Grande Gorge and everything in between.

Our approach is always multi-faceted, team oriented, & educational with topics blending natural sciences & outdoor skills.

**We invite you to adventure, explore, connect, grow, learn, listen, see, and experience the world with us!**

**Please read on to learn about our programs,  
who supports us, upcoming events,  
and how to get involved.**



## FIT NEIGHBORHOOD CAMP

Active fun, DROP-IN program at Quail Ridge Taos!

Since 2013, we have been operating FIT Neighborhood, a summer camp based at Quail Ridge Taos. An engaging, active & fun way for kids ages 5-11 to spend summer days. Led by the incredible, Stephanie Vigil, this program offers a supervised, positive, structured environment with a wide variety of daily activities including swimming, tennis, group games, crafts, yoga, projects & more. FIT NEIGHBORHOOD believes in fun, teamwork, mentorship, & creativity...all with a FITaos flair.

Weekly enrollment as well as daily drop-ins are welcome! FIT NEIGHBORHOOD is open Monday through Friday from 8:30-4:30 throughout summer. Come for a month, a week, a few days or a few hours.

Parents are free to drop off or pick up their child at ANYTIME during these hours.

Opens Tuesday May 28<sup>th</sup>



## 2019 MOUNTAIN CAMPS

These summer sessions that give children meaningful, engaging, FUN outdoor experiences are where it all started back in 1996. With a focus on hiking, outdoor play, exploration, and immersion in the natural world, this program reaches over 300 young people ages 6-18 each summer.

Think engaging, exciting, age-appropriate, outdoor experiences and you will get the picture.

*ALL families who request scholarship assistance receive financial support.*

This year we are offering 15 different Mountain Camp sessions for various ages and interests including two new sessions: "Nature, Art, and Adventure" and "Farm, Folk, and Forest." With a total of 18 weeks of programming between May 28<sup>th</sup> and August 6<sup>th</sup>, there is sure to be a session for everyone!



For additional program info, registration, current news, and more, please visit [www.fitaos.org](http://www.fitaos.org), call (575) 770-2391, follow us on Facebook or Instagram, or stop by our Base Camp anytime the gate is open!



### Community Outreach and School Program Highlights

Our Community Outreach and School Programs have continued to expand and we now offer programming 10 months of the year. In 2018 we provided many EdVentures with several area schools, both on and off campus.

We are completing our 2<sup>nd</sup> year of providing Taos Charter School's daily after school program where children adventure outside in all types of weather to learn and play.

In collaboration with Youth Heartline, the Trails to Trees weekend program is going strong, giving youth opportunities to connect with self, others, and nature.

The Ranchos Elementary Life Skills program continues to reach yet another group of students who greatly benefit from the type of hands-on, active, outdoor learning FIT offers.

Our Trips for Kids Taos chapter celebrates riding bicycles with youth from Taos Pueblo Day School in spring and fall months.

A strong partnership with Taos Land Trust has been developing and we have had several groups of kids visit the new Rio Ferndo Park with our instructors as facilitators of FUN and learning. We are working on creating curriculum and offering more field trips to help local teachers meet the new Next Gen Science Standards.

This is just a sampling of our ongoing school and community programming...there is so much more happening!



### CITs & Junior Counselors

Our **Counselor In Training** program selects 30 youth who have been past campers to take on leadership internships. The popularity of this program shows the commitment to outdoor experiences (natural science education, leadership, outdoor skills, teamwork, & mentorship) that our programs develop in youth. Each CIT is an intern for 1-3 weeks with younger campers. Applicants ages 11 & up are selected based on experience, motivation, & enthusiasm. Each year there are about 16 **Junior Counselor** positions available. These paid youth mentors have demonstrated a very high level of commitment to working with youth in an outdoor setting. Each Junior Counselor must be at least 14 years old & available to work 3 - 5 weeks. CITs & Junior Counselors attend a training session covering programming, safety, rules, first aid & expectations (June 2<sup>nd</sup>).

### THANK YOU 2018 STAFF!

**CITs:** Dylan Abrams, Sofia Abrams, Ella Aquino, Yeri Barriento, Selina Bayles, Angie Burns, Aricela Chavez, Eliza Earl, Levi Emberton, Sage Esalli, Marielle Gomez, Helen Henry, Harper Higdon, Ari Kolman, Perry Kushner, Josie Leeson, Oz Leshem, Peter Liebman, Sophie Liebman, Jonathan Lucero, Amelia Martinez, Roman McAdams, Helena McMullin, Wren Robinson, Arwen Scarlata, Ella Seckler, Mia Van Willigen, and Otto Van Willigen.

**JUNIOR COUNSELORS:** Junipar Cortopassi, Ben Hastings, Sam Hastings, Aidan Heflin, Cole Hughes, Daisy Kirshbaum, Peyton Lacy, Lilu Marchasin, Isabella O'Donnell, Declan O'Leary, Jaimie Ritchie, Lily Sanborn, Kira Seckler, Goldie Vinella, Robbie Wooldridge & Timmo Wooldridge.

**ASSISTANT & LEAD INSTRUCTORS:** Germaine Bartlett-Graff, Kei Braun, Sean Cassily, McKenna Earl, Audrey Edinger, Susie Fiore, Bob Heflin, Sophia Moser, Malia Reeves, Aaron Rice, Liana Sonne, Lisa Thompson, Stephanie Vigil, and Nate Williard.

**"In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." John Muir**

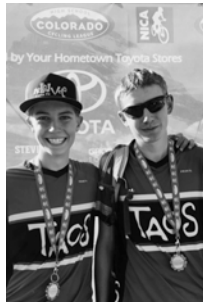




## Bike Swaps and Rodeos

We host Bike Rodeos within our community. In 2018, we partnered with the Town of Taos for a community-wide event. We also put on a bike rodeo at Taos Pueblo and one for Anansi Charter School.

We also coordinate Bike Swaps at our Base Camp in the Spring and Fall. These events are aimed at getting more people outside riding bikes!



**2019 SUMMER BIKE CAMPS** will include our **Durango Mountain Bike Camp** for strong intermediate riders, a **Moab Camp** and a **special high school Advanced Camp**, & the 4-day **Taos Mountain Bike Camp** where riders learn & practice skills on local trails. **Sign up & get more info on our website.**

We help youth develop skills & attitudes to safely explore their own physical abilities & the natural world.



AN INCLUSIVE, LOCAL CYCLING TEAM

**Team FITaos** encourages a **fun, supportive environment** & offers opportunities to **experience cycling, through education, training, & competition**. Team FITaos supports mentorship of youth, families, & individuals spanning **all ages & abilities of cyclists**. We host events and offer on-going rides in the evenings for team members. We look forward to many rides & races with a strong, energetic team.

**THANK YOU to our amazing sponsors for 2019!**

FX 18, N+1, Northside at TSV, PPC Solar, Taos Cyclery, Taos Ski Valley, Inc., Taos Veterinary Clinic, accessware, Angel Fire Small Animal Hospital, Boot Doctors, Cid's Food Market, Dala Balm, Edelweiss Lodge & Spa, Full Moon Development, i2i Institute, Charlie McGarity, Kachina Medical, KSP Power Tools, The Lora Company, Mogul Medical, New Mexico ACLU, Taos Cow, Pizaño's, Taos Mountain Energy Bars

## TAOS AREA HIGH SCHOOL MOUNTAIN BIKE TEAM

This team gives high school athletes from the Northern New Mexico the chance to train and compete in the exciting sport of mountain biking. 14 riders from 3 area schools and nearby communities attended 5 races with the Colorado League (National Interscholastic Cycling Association). Our riders proudly represented New Mexico throughout the season and into State Championships. We had individual podium results as well as our first 2 team podiums! We also had our first senior "Legacy Rider" (competed all 4 years of high school), Liam Haworth. Sponsors covered travel costs for the team to attend all races! Athletes raised funds during the Ride the Rift event. Coaches, parents and the local community really rallied behind the team. Thank you team sponsors: Team FITaos, Aceq, Anonymous X2, Brown Rice Internet, Colorado League, Linda Cosden, Dala Balm, Anna Holm, Pit Viper, Ken Price Studios, The Lora Company, Magee Build, Tony Skvarla, Metric Motors, Jude Negri, Kim and Scott Sheffield, and Taos Mountain Energy Bars!  
On Facebook: Taos Area High School Mountain Bike Team

## After School Mountain Bike Programs

Endurance & skills improve as riders learn about trail etiquette & respecting the environment while riding in a group. In 2017, we had 38 riders, ages 8-16, challenge themselves, learn new skills, & enjoy some good, dirt-filled physical activity. **Spring and Fall programs are offered.** Ages 8-12 ride Tuesdays & Thursdays. Ages 13 & up ride Mondays & Wednesdays. **Space is limited** to keep the group size manageable, safe, & respectful of the environment. We focus on environmental education, safety, fitness, & biking skills. Groups are always split by experience & ability level. Topics include bike maintenance, trail use & access issues, teamwork, fitness, nutrition, hydration, safety, riding skills & fun! **Cost is \$150 for 6 rides.**

**Loaner bikes, helmets, & scholarships are available!**





## THANK YOU TO ALL 2018 DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS!

With Base Camp established & adventures in progress...the ongoing support of so many **INDIVIDUALS & BUSINESSES** inspires us daily. Each donor & volunteer makes such an impact. We want to thank **PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS & FAMILIES**, Team FITaos **RIDERS & SPONSORS**, & those who supported the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual RUBBER DUCK RACE, YOUTH PHOTO PROJECT & BE FIT RAFFLE, RIDE the RIFT!



Accesso-Siriusware  
ACEQ Restaurant  
Andean Software  
Edy & Charlie Anderson  
Rose Blair Bauhs  
Alana Benjamin & Tim Corner  
Ursula and Lawrence  
Berkowitz  
Black Diamond Espresso  
Blonde Bear Tavern  
The Boot Doctors  
Dawn Boulware  
Box Canyon  
Brown Rice Internet  
Elisabeth Brownell  
Bumps  
Holly Burger  
Bureau of Land Management  
Marilyn Cassily  
Sean Cassily  
Centinel Bank of Taos  
Cid's Food Market  
Julie & Fred Closuit  
Carl & Romy Colonius  
Colorado League-NICA  
Austin, Doug, & Elaine Connor  
Copy Queen of Taos  
Linda Cosden  
Dala Balm

Robbie deBurlo  
Andrew Doust  
Mary Droste  
Kurt Edelbrock  
Edelweiss Lodge & Spa  
Deb & Gary Edidin  
Heather Riccardi  
Elevation Coffee  
Enchanted Forest XC Ski Area  
In Memory of Bill Etchemendy  
FX 18  
Ferguson Family Foundation  
Mary Ann & Owen Fiore  
Martha & Chris Flanders  
Helen & Kent Forté  
Hugh Friedman  
Full Moon Development Company  
Ken Gallard  
Gearing Up Bicycle Shop  
Carter T. Geyer  
Carl Gilmore  
Andy Grief  
Steve Hanks  
The Harbor Oaks Foundation  
Dennis Hedges  
High Altitude Health & Fitness  
Andrew Hoffman  
Anna Holm  
Sara and Gus Holm  
Hondo Restaurant  
Hotel St. Bernard  
Rebecca & Michael Jusbasche  
KSP Power Tools  
Kachina Medical  
Anne Kaplan  
Katherine Kett  
John & Marsha Kleinheinz  
KOKO Deli  
Lambert's Restaurant  
The Lora Company Real Estate

Roberta & Roger Lerman  
Cliff Loucks  
Linda & Spike Lynch  
Tantra Maat  
Magee Build  
Jean Mayer  
Neve McCutcheon  
Molly & Kyle McMullin  
Metric Motors  
Quigley Peterson - Mogul Medical  
Susan Moller  
Susan O'Leary  
Orlando's  
PPC Solar  
Pattison Family Trust  
Roger & Kerrie Pattison  
Jane Pilger  
Pizaño's  
Matt & Denise Poage  
Joan Pond  
Happy Price  
Ken Price Studios  
Quail Ridge Taos  
Cristina Ramirez  
The Reed Family Foundation  
Malia Reeves  
Jean Richards  
Stephen Rose & Barbara Zaring  
Round Barn Apothecary  
Dianna Sakai  
Santa Barbara Foundation  
The Scanlan Family  
Emily Schneider & Tom Wiard  
Karen and Scott Seitter  
Kim and Scott Sheffield  
Mountain Skills Guides  
Mudd N Flood Mountain Shop  
N+1  
Shane Natelson  
Jude Negri  
Greg Nelson  
New Belgium Brewing Company  
NM Department of Game & Fish  
Northside at TSV  
Ojo Caliente Mineral Springs

Tony Skvarla  
Liana Sonne  
Scarlet Southern  
Storyteller Taos Theaters  
James Stuart  
Taos Community Foundation  
Taos Cow  
Taos Cyclery  
Taos Landscaping, Inc.  
Taos Land Trust  
Taos Mountain Bike Alliance  
Taos Mountain Energy Bars  
Taos Ski Valley Foundation  
Taos Ski Valley, Inc.  
Taos Sports Alliance  
TSV Chamber of Commerce  
Taos Valley Honey  
Taos Veterinary Clinic  
Taos Video Works  
Jim Thompson Foundation  
Iris & Day Thornton  
Trips for Kids  
Turner Foundation  
USDA Forest Service  
Village of Taos Ski Valley  
Barbara Wiard  
In Memory of Keri & Amy Wiard  
Ted & Marcella Wiard  
Bob Wilkinson  
World Cup

**If you are not on this list but feel you should be, please forgive our error & notify us so we can correct it. Thank you!**



**We have established a charitable fund at Taos Community Foundation (TCF)** to build financial sustainability. The fund accepts charitable gifts (both cash and more complex gifts such as stocks, securities, IRA's, art, and property) from any donor, at any time during the year. There are also options to make planned giving a great way to support FIT well into the future. We hope to use an ESG (environment, social, and governance) strategy in investing. Please visit FIT's webpage on the TCF website [www.taoscf.org/community-impact/agency-endowment-partners](http://www.taoscf.org/community-impact/agency-endowment-partners) for more details, or contact TCF directly.

Thanks to our donors, over 50% of our Mountain Campers received scholarship support in 2018!

**Donor contributions help us grow and improve our programs!** These funds allow us to offer more scholarships, increase & improve our program offerings, help us train & develop our staff, add additional staff to our team, & provide much needed infrastructure improvements. **Your continued support will allow us to maintain all that we have built while seeing our dreams come true.**

Please stay connected via our **website** and social media!





# SPRING 2019

## EXCITING NEWS for Diversity, Equality, Accessibility, and Inclusion in Outdoor Opportunities!

New Mexico has become the first state with an **Outdoor Equity Fund** as part of the new Division of Outdoor Recreation! "This fund will help underserved youth explore New Mexico's rivers, forests, mountains, and deserts." Field Institute of Taos will continue to support this effort.

[www.nuestra-tierra.org/outdoor-equity-fund](http://www.nuestra-tierra.org/outdoor-equity-fund)

Field Institute of Taos has signed the **Diversify Outdoors Pledge** stating that, "We are passionate about promoting equity and access to the outdoors for all, that includes being body positive and celebrating people of all skill levels and abilities."

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

### 2018 Events Review

Last year was busy as, in addition to our programming, we hosted several community events including Spring and Fall Bike Swaps, our July 4<sup>th</sup> Rubber Duck Race, Spring and Summer BioBlitzes, the Be FIT Raffle, our Youth Nature Photo Exhibit, a community-wide bike rodeo, bike rodeos at Taos Pueblo and at the Gusdorf Housing Project, hill climbs, and our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Ride the Rift 6-hour community mountain bike event.

We also had a presence at many community events including Earth Day Celebrations, Invent Event, Parks RX Day, Taos Yoga Festival, Regeneration Festival, PASEO, and more!

### FITaOs Base Camp ROCKS!

We are so grateful for each and every day we have the privilege of working from our Base Camp in El Prado. The natural beauty inspires us to do our very best and to continue helping youth and families develop a stronger sense of place and connecting more children with the outdoors. This space houses our offices, field equipment and activity supplies, as well as "kid space" with youth nature photos on display, an amazing video microscope for up-close exploration, trees and grass for playing, and so much more. Located conveniently just off the main road through Taos, we welcome you to stop by and visit for an up close look at all we do.



### UPCOMING 2019 FITaOs COMMUNITY EVENTS:

- Summer Camp Sign-ups (ongoing)
- Earth Day Celebrations
- FITaOs KNCE Radio Show (monthly)
- Spring Bike Swap (April 28)
- Team FITaOs Sign-Up (ongoing)
- Taos Area High School MTB Team Recruitment
- Team FITaOs Grassroots Hill Climbs (monthly from May-September)
- Women's Mountain Bike Rides (weekly)
- 18<sup>th</sup> Annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Rubber Duck Race in TSV
- Youth Nature Photo Exhibit
- Fall Bike Swap
- Be FIT Raffle
- Ride the Rift (October 13)

**For dates and details, keep an eye on our website, emails, and social media posts!**



**"If we want children to flourish, to become truly empowered, then let us allow them to love the earth before we ask them to save it." David Sobel**





# 2018 ADVENTURES

## FIELD INSTITUTE OF TAOS

