

2023 COMMUNITY REPORT



Impact 2023

- 185 hikes with kids
- 98 bike rides with kids
- 25 Mountain Camp sessions
- 26 after school programs and school field trips
- 10 FIT Neighborhood sessions
- 5 after school bike sessions
- Presence at 9 community events
- 18 Guest Presenters
- High school and middle school bike teams
- Bike skills rodeos
- Team FITaos
- Special events
- A growing Youth Leader mentorship program
- Record amount in scholarship funding awarded



 **Scholarships!**
In 2023, we awarded
over **\$30,000** in
scholarship support
helping 226 children
attend camps!

**Scholarships are a direct result of
generous donations and grants.**



In 2023, we had 20 staff (Lead Instructors and Coaches) plus 17 paid Junior Counselors and 34 Counselors in Training who all supported our mission with enthusiasm and positivity. In-kind donations (volunteer hours, generous prize donations for fundraising events, and much more) have a huge impact on our organization with 23 business sponsors and 58 volunteers working many hours (bike coaches, special presenters, events, and the loyal FITaos Board of Directors).

We expanded our ability to reach a more diverse community by offering additional free summer camps, school programs, loaner bikes, scholarships, and free community events.



HOW MANY: Children and Sessions

Program	Session #	Kid #	Session Days*	Kid Days**
MOUNTAIN CAMPS	25	302	110	1484
FIT NEIGHBORHOOD	10	195	39	765
YOUTH LEADERS	36	51	149	402
AFTER SCHOOL BIKING	5	68	23	340
COMMUNITY and SCHOOL PROGRAMS	28	606	134	1704
HS/MS BIKE TEAMS	2	30	62	930
TOTALS	103	1216	517	5625

*Session Days: 1-hour to all-day, depending on program

**Kid Days: # of kids per session times # of session days

A FEW 2023 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Our **FREE Nature Explore** sessions (based at Rio Fernando Park) debuted in 2022 and **expanded** to 5 different 1-week sessions in 2023. Additionally, these sessions had access to a FIT van so groups were able to get out onto local trails for enhanced learning, exploration, and fun.

Building Bikes, Building Futures (our bike maintenance program for Taos Pueblo middle school students) is a consistent once per week program during the school year. With donated used bikes, students learn to repair bikes and, ultimately, take them home. Mentor supported repair of bikes incorporates observational, problem-solving, decision making, and relationship-building skills into experiential learning. This project addresses important developmental skills, with caring adults consistently working alongside kids to repair and maintain bikes. Youth are encouraged and guided to help their peers re-condition their own bikes, learning the importance of community service. An exciting increase in our hiking programs with Taos Pueblo youth grades K-8 at Taos Day School has gone hand in hand with the BBBF program.

As a way of recognizing the hard work of our **Youth Leaders** and providing additional opportunities to develop skills, we offered a special **Wilderness First Aid** course for our teen leaders, ages 14 and up. This course was made possible by a grant from the Turner Foundation (TG3) and was hugely successful.

These programs allow us to increase accessibility and reach new children and families who may not otherwise have opportunities like these. With sufficient funding, we will grow these programs, reaching additional underserved youth in our community in 2024.

A Note from the Director

2023 was truly a year of growth in our organization. We hired two key new staff members to join our core leadership team. In April, we brought on our first Program Director, Alastair Keith, who comes to us with extensive experience in the fields of Experiential and Outdoor Education and hit the ground running. Alastair has been working hard to get the "FIT Way" into a format that can be shared more effectively and replicated by new Instructors and in new programs. She is finding ways we can improve something that has grown organically (and exponentially) since FIT was founded in 1996. Sparrow Skywalker, a past FITaOs camper, Youth Leader, and Lead Instructor was hired as our "Admin Jedi." Her diverse experience within our programs, adaptability, attention to detail, knowledge of and connection with the Taos community, and ability to see the big picture have proven to be invaluable. Sparrow and Alastair have allowed me to continue working some sessions while also having the time and energy to do some things as E.D. that I just haven't had time for in past years. Sean Cassily has his hands full with running and expanding bike programs and managing the Base Camp facility and all FIT equipment. We are happy to report that we have installed an outdoor security system in hopes of stemming some harmful damage we faced in 2023.

Thanks for sticking with us! ☀️ Susie Fiore - Executive Director/Founder

Get Involved!

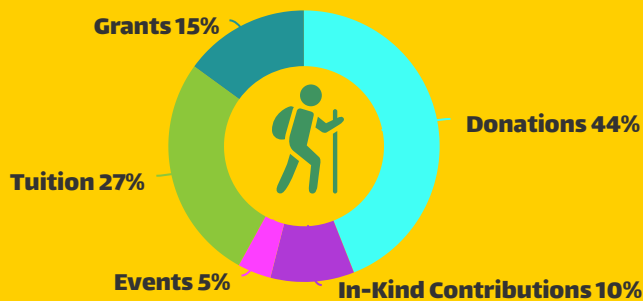
Volunteer, donate, sponsor, join our Board, participate...

JOIN US OUTSIDE!

www.fitaos.org



2023 Income Sources



THANK YOU To Our Donors, Board of Directors, Volunteers, and Community!

Our support comes from varied sources including individuals who give, new donors, and grants (including National Recreation Foundation, Fullwood Foundation, and Taos Community Foundation in 2023).

We recognize and appreciate the 51 Youth Leaders who served as incredible mentors in 2023 (*photo above*). Each summer, they jump into this opportunity for engaging work in outdoor education while learning and growing in leadership abilities and sharing their knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm.

Our 2023 events included the New Belgium Brewing Scavenger Hunt, July 4th Rubber Duck Race, Spring Bike Swap, and 2 Youth Bike Rodeos.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE WHO MADE THE FOLLOWING LANDMARKS POSSIBLE IN 2023:

- ☀️ Grew our fleet to 4 reliable 15-passenger vans for programs
- ☀️ A grant for beautiful bikes to add to our fleet of loaner bikes
- ☀️ Renewed our lease for Base Camp, now in year 7 of utilizing this gorgeous location to enhance our programs

