

Colorado Outdoor Equity Grant Awards, 2023

Organization Name	Location	Grant Amount	Outdoor Equity Project Description
Access Unbound	Edwards	\$35,000	Access Unbound's mission is to make the empowering world of snow sports accessible to people with disabilities by providing crucial financial support and partnering with professional adaptive programs. The grant will cover scholarships and ski passes for participation in adaptive snowsports lessons through partner programs at ski resorts.
Adaptive Sports Association	Durango	\$75,000	ASA is committed to addressing barriers to participation in transformative outdoor recreational programs for individuals with disabilities. Funds from the OEGP will be used to support ASA's growing year-round program offerings. This includes ongoing financial assistance for participants and families in need, the purchase of safe and reliable adaptive equipment, instructor training programs, facility costs, and other program-related expenses for both winter and summer program offerings.
Adaptive Sports Center	Crested Butte	\$40,000	The Adaptive Sports Center (ASC) facilitates outdoor adventure recreation programs for groups and individuals with disabilities and their families. Of the 1,000 participants served annually, 36% live in Colorado. Approximately 38% of Colorado participants are disabled or at-risk youth and young adults 25 and younger. Grant funds will support the Adaptive Sports Center's new Access for All rate, which aims to eliminate cost as a barrier to participation in ASC programs for these participants and their families.
African Leadership Group	Denver	\$100,000	From the Outdoor Equity Grant, African Leadership Group (ALG) will serve its young African immigrant and African American members living in the Denver-Metro region through a multi-faceted, collaborative approach to expose youth to both outdoor recreational activities as well as education and hands-on experiences with self-sustaining lifestyle practices. This will include knowledge, experiential activities, and access to the outdoors and community gardening.
Amache Alliance	Granada	\$50,000	Amache Alliance unites Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Japanese American youth at Amache and Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Sites, fostering inter-generational healing and cross-cultural education on the Colorado prairie. Their program empowers youth to participate in site-based community events while building a coalition of stewards for Colorado's newest national park. The voices of Amache and Sand Creek Massacre youth descendants are essential for site conservation, yet often unheard. Amache Alliance aims to be a lasting partner in changing this dynamic.
Colorado Asian Culture And Education Network	Aurora	\$100,000	The Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network (CACEN) and Outdoor Asian Colorado (OAC) will increase access to the outdoors for Asian American and Pacific Islander youth and families by trip planning and transportation to unique outdoor opportunities through existing partnerships with CPW, the National Park Service, and other partners as well as metro area parks that combine outdoor recreation and cultural connection like Tai Chi in the park or the Dragon Boat Festival.
Colorado Center for the Blind	Littleton	\$50,000	The Colorado Center for the Blind empowers blind youth to live the life they choose by having more opportunities and learning responsibilities. With the Outdoor Equity Grant, Colorado Center for the Blind is transforming the great outdoors into an educational playground for blind youth. They believe that the most effective learning occurs when they ignite enthusiasm, immersing blind youth in outdoor recreation activities, natural resources education, career exploration and stewardship while breaking barriers of fear, opportunity and low expectations.

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Cottonwood Institute	Denver	\$50,000	Cottonwood Institute (CI) connects middle and high school students to nature and inspires them to protect it. In a world dominated by screens, their programs foster this critical connection between the outdoors, conservationism, and career pathways through no-cost educational, service, and apprentice programs that are integrated with schools and supported by partnerships. Their award-winning programs go beyond outdoor access, igniting an appreciation of nature and inspiring youth as environmental leaders.
Crowley Foundation, Inc.	Denver	\$100,000.	Funds will support the Crowley Foundation's mentorship programs, which connect youth with experienced outdoor enthusiasts and conservationists from their own communities. These mentors will guide and inspire participants, helping them develop leadership skills and a sense of stewardship for the environment. They will also organize a series of outdoor adventures and excursions, such as hiking, camping, and nature walks, specifically designed to introduce youth and families from underrepresented communities to the joys of outdoor recreation. These outings will be accessible, safe, and educational, fostering a love for nature.
Denver Indian Center, Inc.	Denver	\$75,000	The Denver Indian Center, Inc. will provide an opportunity for urban Native American youth to attend a 4 day outdoor retreat in a mountain location, CAL-WOOD Education Center in Jamestown, Colorado. They will experience learning about stewardship of the land from a Native American perspective, while experiencing a holistic approach to learning more about their Native culture through teachings of history, traditional values and leadership. This opportunity for Native youth will expose them to the outdoors and teach and encourage youth to experience nature that otherwise may not be available to them because of economic, social and educational disadvantages.
Easterseals Colorado	Lakewood	\$41,527	Easter Seals Colorado (ESC) will enhance programming at its Rocky Mountain Village (RMV) Camp. Funds will purchase five custom-made wall tents and install them on existing platforms. These tents will make camping accessible for a large number of youth with disabilities and expand ESC's Outdoor Living Skills program. This program, which instills conservation values in participants, will be able to offer a full camping experience to youth for whom it is currently out of reach.
elevateHER	Buena Vista	\$60,940	Funds will support elevateHER's year-round outdoor education programming for youth living in the greater upper Arkansas River Valley of Colorado. Funding from the Outdoor Equity Grant Program will specifically help fund the purchase of a passenger van and personnel costs for the Outdoor Mentor and Program Coordinator roles. elevateHER exists to increase access to the outdoors for young womxn by providing all the transportation, instruction, gear and food necessary for underserved youth to experience their big, beautiful backyard in Chaffee County.
Families Plus	Delta	\$25,750	Families Plus offers a high-impact wraparound program for at-risk, impoverished youth from all backgrounds who live in the most challenging situations. They will provide outdoor skill-building activities and outdoor prosocial activities. These programs encourage youth to be active and involved outside. Youth will learn safety and stewardship, and each activity will foster a positive relationship with youth and the outdoors.

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Fortaleza Familiar	Denver	\$99,550	Fortaleza Familiar is dedicated to the wellness of Indigenous, Chicanx, Latinx, lesbian, gay, bi, queer, trans, Two-Spirit young people and their families. Funds will support the expansion of Fortaleza En Naturaleza, which was created to increase access by breaking down barriers to the outdoors which include both racial inequities and safety concerns for the community of LGBTQ2S+ youth of color and their families. With the support of the OEG, Fortaleza Familiar were able to deliver a successful pilot program, which was requested to continue and expand by the community. With future funding support, Fortaleza en Naturaleza will continue to provide access to young people ages 10 to 25 and their families to positive environments outdoors, increase belonging to self, community, and outdoors, and build healthy relationships with trusted adults who affirm their identities.
Fort Collins High School	Fort Collins	\$21,525	The Fort Collins High School outdoor program is designed to offer low-income, Latino boys at Fort Collins High School the opportunity to develop a sense of self, community, and connectedness to nature through outdoor education. Students will participate in an outdoor education trip in the fall and engage in mentorship and leadership at school with the goal of building strong connections and, in turn, academic success. Additionally, students will meet recreation industry professionals to gain a clearer picture of what professional work opportunities exist in the Colorado outdoors.
Groundwork Denver	Denver	\$99,012	Funding will support Groundwork Denver's youth programs, which employ 60 under-resourced BIPOC youth facing disproportionate barriers to participation in the growing green jobs industry, outdoor education and outdoor recreation opportunities. In tandem with paid employment and job training focused on environmentally-based community improvement projects that place youth on pathways to green careers, youth will participate in outdoor recreation and education opportunities in the spaces they are working to protect.
Haseya Advocate Program	Colorado Springs	\$78,825	Haseya will utilize grant funding to host a Native cultural immersion 3-day camp at Tall Bull Memorial Grounds. This camp will serve the survivors of gender-based violence and their children. Funds will also support families to participate in an weekly equestrian therapy program.
High Valley Community Center, Inc.	Del Norte	\$70,784	High Valley Community Center (HVCC) focuses on outdoor education and equity in their after-school, Fridays, and summer programs. HVCC will provide no-cost opportunities for youth to engage in swimming, hiking, winter sports, waterfalls, rafting, avalanche safety, river-safety, state and national parks, and more. Youth who are historically unable to grow a love and appreciation for the outdoors will receive the same experiences as their peers, creating a life-long relationship with the amazing natural resources available to Colorado and the San Luis Valley.
Huerfano Re-1 School District and Walsenburg Jr./Sr. High School	Walsenburg	\$26,065	Funds will support an outdoor education program for seventh to twelfth graders that will increase students' knowledge of and access to outdoor recreation, sustainability practices, and career opportunities. Huerfano School District will partner with outdoor-focused organizations to bring in guest speakers, CPW archery, facilitate education and work in the school garden, and take students on hikes at Lathrop State Park where they will learn about trail building, sustainability, and maintenance. They will also participate in outdoor trips and excursion to ski areas, national and state, parks, and other green spaces.
Inside Out Youth Services	Colorado Springs	\$99,918	Queer Scouts is a new program at Inside Out Youth Services intended to provide LGBTQIA2+ youth and young adults age 13 to 24 with outdoor experiences and to learn about our environment and how to pay respect to the land that holds us. They envision a world where historically excluded queer, trans, and LGBTQIA2+ youth and adults create community, develop leadership skills, and gain confidence through the shared experience of outdoor adventure, resources, and physical activity.

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International Rescue Committee	Denver	\$50,000	The International Rescue Committee in Denver's Youth Outdoor Learning Opportunities (YOLO) program is looking forward to expanding outdoor access for refugee youth and families by minimizing barriers to the outdoors and environmental education in a culturally responsive way. Building upon the accomplishments of the successful 2023 program, YOLO aims to expand its reach by adding multi-generational family events, park guides at events, and addressing language and transportation barriers.
Mile High Youth Corps	Denver	\$40,000	Mile High Youth Corps (MYHC) connects young adults, ages 18-24, with opportunities to earn while they learn and develop skills in meaningful career pathways. MHYC will increase access to the outdoors while providing hands-on conservation opportunities for BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ youth through their participation in Land Conservation program affinity crews. Working on conservation projects throughout the state and alongside peers with similar backgrounds, youth who have historically been discriminated against and marginalized will earn a paycheck, build skills for their future, and grow into their roles as future caretakers of the environment.
Montezuma Inspire Coalition	Cortez	\$100,000	The Montezuma Inspire Coalition (MIC) is a group of organizations in Montezuma County that work together to reduce barriers to getting youth and families into the outdoors. With grant funds, they will continue the work they began with their first OEG grant award with specific outreach to Latinx, tribal, exceptional student, and low-income youth for various outdoor programming through 7 different MIC partners.
Mountain Dreamers	Frisco	\$100,000	Mountain Dreamer's OSO Outdoors program will connect immigrant and Spanish speaking local families to the outdoors and will organically foster conservation opportunities. The program includes removing barriers to accessing, learning, and continuing on with skiing and snowboarding; increasing culturally and linguistically appropriate access to local trails; working behind the scenes to build a regional coalition for outdoor equity and inclusion; and leading by example in teaching community members the importance of recreating in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.
Mountain Pride	Avon	\$45,100	Grant funding will support Mountain Pride to enhance its efforts as the first LGBTQ+ summer camp programming on the Western Slope, creating a safe haven for queer youth to enjoy outdoor adventures. The summer camp blends outdoor exploration with conservation education, featuring LGBTQ+ role models, fostering a tight-knit community, and empowering participants to be advocates for nature and LGBTQ+ inclusivity.
Right Relationship Boulder	Boulder	\$50,000	The Mediators Foundation's week-long summer program at YMCA Of The Rockies connects Indigenous Arapaho youth and elders with their ancestral homelands in meaningful ways. Although these federally-recognized tribes were forcibly displaced to Wyoming and Oklahoma, their language, history, culture and heritage are rooted in the Colorado wilderness. Combining outdoor activities, language acquisition, and cultural revitalization, elders will teach youth and others about their homeland, local plants and animals, and how to identify important plants for food, medicine and sacred Arapaho ceremonies.
San Juan Mountains Association	Durango	\$75,000	San Jan Mountains Association's Youth Wellness in Nature Collaborative (WIN) provides outdoor experiences, environmental education, and opportunities to explore career pathways for rural, Latine, tribal, and under-resourced youth. The program engages students with the natural world through service learning, stewardship, community building, reaping the benefits of the outdoors through better mental health, connectedness, and inspiration for future careers. SJMA will work with students through after school programs, activity Fridays, and youth corps.

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San Luis Valley Great Outdoors!	Alamosa	\$100,000	The grant for the San Luis Valley Genwild Coalition will support four key program areas: the Boys and Girls Club (BGC) outdoor education program and its expansion into rural communities, the Rio Grande Farm Park (RGFP) and its Rising Stewards program, the SLV GO! Embajadores program, and the creation of a mobile gear library. The programs will directly serve the Hispanic and minority communities within the SLV, and the gear library will support programs and help break down equipment barriers.
SOS Outreach	Edwards	\$65,000	SOS Outreach will alleviate access and inclusivity barriers for 450 low-income and racially and ethnically diverse Eagle County youth and families, creating a sense of belonging in the mountains through responsible recreation via skiing and snowboarding. The organization will deepen equity efforts through the expansion of the alumni network and the consistent incorporation of participant feedback, and expand opportunities for career pathways for our young adults with a career development program.
The Cycle Effect	Eagle	\$100,000	The Cycle Effect will increase access to the outdoors and promote stewardship of the environment by engaging underrepresented youth and their families in the sport of mountain biking, building a sense of belonging in outdoor recreation and establishing a supportive community for individuals to pursue their interests and feel empowered to make positive change in their lives.
Urban Peak	Denver	\$24,000	Funding will support outdoor activities and adventure therapy for the 900 youth Urban Peak serves each year. Outdoor activities will consist of social-centered, enjoyment-based outdoor events and outings for the sake of fun, exposure, and conservation promotion. Urban Peak will utilize adventure therapy to kinesthetically engage clients on cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels.
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe	Towaoc	\$100,000	The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe will weave together several youth-serving programs to increase access to the outdoors. Grant activities will include visiting ancestral lands with overnight hiking and camping at Lizard Head Pass and surrounding areas and a one-week hiking and camping retreat at Pinecrest Ranch, the Tribe's protected camping and conservation area. They will also host ski trips to Telluride, Purgatory Resort in Durango, and Wolf Creek in Pagosa Springs, purchase mountain bikes for local youth programming to use on a newly installed bike park and existing dirt trails on the reservation, and host an outdoor career fair for youth.
Vibe Tribe Adventures	Aurora	\$40,000	Vibe Tribe Adventures works to ensure that financial constraints, lack of representation, and cultural barriers no longer hinder individuals from enjoying the benefits of outdoor recreation. By offering no-cost and affordable programming, educational resources, and community engagement, they aim to increase access to the outdoors, promote conservation opportunities, empower individuals to connect with nature, develop a love for the outdoors, and lead healthier lives. Funding will support the BIPOC Mountain Collective, which unites and empowers individuals from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, who share a profound passion for snow sports and outdoor adventures.
Wilderness Workshop	Carbondale	\$17,105	Wilderness Workshop launched their Defiende Nuestra Tierra Program (Defend our Land) in 2018 to better engage and build power within the Latinx community in our region, and work together to close the outdoor equity gap while promoting a culture of environmental activism and conservation. They offer relevant youth and family-oriented programs to the Latinx youth and families, connecting participants with the outdoors and opportunities to take action to protect public lands. Their programs will connect Latinx families with the outdoors by offering free, bilingual, and family friendly events on public lands in the Western Slope region.

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Women's Wilderness	Boulder	\$100,000	Funds will support Women's Wilderness Outdoor G.I.R.L.S (Immigrant Refugee Leadership Series) program, which improves participants' mental and physical health through increased connection with the outdoors. Outdoor G.I.R.L.S. is an after school program for immigrant, refugee and newcomer girls ages 9-18. The program layers socioemotional skills learning with outdoor recreation experiences, such as nature immersion, hiking, and indoor and outdoor rock climbing. Sessions are led by a combination of certified female outdoor guides, community leaders, and local youth mentors who hold similar identities as the girls. Outdoor G.I.R.L.S. leverages the power of connection to the outdoors and play to support the physical and mental health, social connectivity and leadership development of girls.
Young Masterminds Initiative	Aurora	\$95,000	Young Masterminds Initiative's Camping to Connect program uses outdoor recreation and nature immersion to address the diverse issues faced by young men of color. Addressing the gap where minorities make up 31% of Colorado's population but are underrepresented in outdoor activities, their program offers nature-based journeys led by mentors who represent the communities they serve. These outings include environmental education and leadership training, aiming to break down barriers and cultivating a conservation mindset.
Youth Club of Trinidad	Trinidad	\$40,000	Youth Club of Trinidad serves youth that are often excluded from outdoor recreation who come from low income, disadvantaged families. About 70% of the youth they serve are low income, 30% have various disabilities and challenges, and most of their youth are ethnically diverse. Funding will support the club's summer camp, where youth participate in activities such as fishing, hiking, and visiting ranches and state parks in an inclusive and welcoming environment.