

For Immediate Release

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[Breckenridge, Colo., July 17, 2020] – On behalf of all of us at the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC), we want to share with you our hope for a safe, healthy, and joyful summer, despite the current challenges we are all experiencing. I want to thank you personally for all you have done to bring BOEC to our 44th year. Because you care so much about our mission, this letter is to provide you with an update on how BOEC is handling these unprecedented times.

BOEC Programming & Team Update

Since early March, when COVID-19 shut down BOEC, our team has spoken to many of BOEC's friends and supporters, and the experience has been truly humbling. Your words of encouragement and support have sustained and inspired us in more ways than you know, and for that you have my heartfelt thanks.

One of the key elements that makes the BOEC so special is the incredible team of creative, giving, skilled and committed team members who work daily with our participants or who work behind the scenes helping make this organization what it is. Thankfully, we were able to provide a small severance to each of the ski instructors whose positions ended so suddenly on March 13th with the early closure of the ski program. We felt strongly that it was important to ensure that our team was looked after to the best of our ability, and we will continue to make that a priority throughout this challenging time. Our application for Payment Protection Plan (PPP) funding was approved which has allowed us to ensure that our core full time staff remains intact and can plan for a re-opening when safe to do so. Still, we were forced to make some very difficult decisions including the cancelation of the majority of our summer programming involving all overnight programs and the BOEC Internship program for the first time in its 44-year history.

Currently, BOEC is helping our local and extended community through the crisis with limited in-person and virtual activities. We've created and launched a series of fun, interactive virtual programs including Adaptive Chair Yoga, BOEC Educational Shorts, and Challenge by Choice Adventures for those living with Brain Injuries and other challenges. We are also offering ropes course sessions, rock climbing, and boating days for local teens dealing with social isolation. We are working with long-time partners to provide day programs and hope to offer short overnight trips by summer's end. I am extremely grateful to our Wilderness Program staff who has worked diligently to create and deliver these program innovations in a matter of weeks and we have received tremendous feedback from the community and our virtual participants.



What the winter program will look like remains unclear; however, we are working on various scenarios that would allow us to operate safely during this upcoming ski season. It is likely that we will not provide the same level of programs and are forecasting a 50% reduction at this time. This too will have a significant impact on our operational revenue this coming year.

Financial Position

Although in spirit we are living up to our mission in adapting to the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have not been unaffected financially. Due to keen organizational and fiscal management, however, we have saved money by not having a full load of program expenses. We've taken the painful steps of laying off program staff, cutting budgets, and delaying much-needed maintenance and capital improvement projects. We have applied for and received additional grants and our long-time sponsors are helping out in every way they can. We are leveraging staff resources to meet local needs and get some program revenue flowing in and continue to evaluate the possibility of a reopening when conditions allow us do so safely.

We continue to work on scenarios and reforecast models that provide us with a picture of what the impact will be due to a sustained loss of program and other revenue including events, grants, donations, programs and other funding sources. We will continue to work closely with our Board, leadership and program teams to monitor expenses and revenues carefully over the coming weeks and months ahead.

Staying in Touch

We all are facing challenges during this unprecedented time, and we extend our thanks to you for your continued support of the work we do. We hope that you will continue to stay connected to us through our [Inspirations Newsletter](#) and social media channels. We promise to keep you updated along the way as, together, we manage this new and challenging reality.

We sincerely hope that all of you, your friends and loved ones remain safe during this challenging time. History has shown us that during times of greatest difficulty, we see the best of humanity. I truly mean this when I say that we can't make it all work without you. Your generosity, words of support, and belief in our cause have helped us thrive and grow.

Wishing you good health,

Sonya Norris
Executive Director
Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center