

# SOS

OUTREACH







Dear SOS Outreach Family,

As I write this letter to each of you, our family of supporters, it is in the spirit of celebration. This winter, SOS surpassed the historic milestone of 50,000 youth in programs since our founding in 1993. Within these pages, we reflect upon the youth inspired and prepare for new horizons.

From our highest enrollment of 943 year-round youth in our mentorship based University program, to 60+ high school junior mentors coming full circle to mentor their younger peers, to the Detroit program launch at Mt. Brighton in partnership with Vail Resorts, and the trip of a lifetime for a group of SOS' eldest participants on the Grand Canyon with the O.A.R.S. Foundation, this was a year for the books.

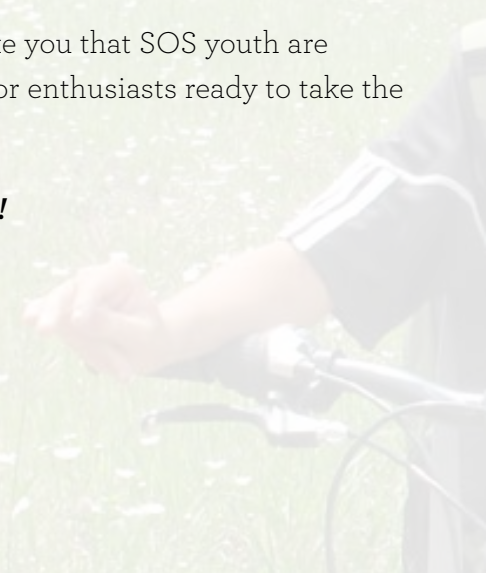
As we near our 25th year of programs across 15 locations, we gear up for an exciting season ahead. This year, over 5,000 youth across the country will experience outdoor adventures alongside positive adult mentors and complete service projects in their communities. For some, these opportunities will be first-time experiences that will spark a new passion for the outdoors. For others, the connections they make with their mentors will empower them as leaders and inspire them to unlock their full potential.

Thank you for making this possible. It is because of individuals like you that SOS youth are emerging as self-confident, stable, and highly accomplished outdoor enthusiasts ready to take the world by storm.

From chairlifts to diplomas, here's to a community **50,000 strong!**

Sincerely,

*Seth Ehrlich*  
*Executive Director*







## History In The Making

In the fall of 2016, Vail Resorts CEO Rob Katz and his wife, Elana Amsterdam, bestowed transformational gifts totalling \$2 million to local community non-pro ts, including SOS Outreach. Their catalytic gift marked the largest individual contribution to SOS in its history, and has fueled our continued program expansion across urban areas of Salt Lake City, UT, Detroit, MI, Chicago, IL, Minneapolis, MN and Reno, NV.

The Katz-Amsterdam family's contribution reinforces their shared dedication and passion for our youth to realize their full potential, both on the snow and in life. As the top executive of SOS' largest and founding partner, Vail Resorts, Rob and Elana's support has allowed over 30,000 of our 50,000 youth to participate in programs on their resorts. Last year alone, Vail Resorts provided the resources for over 3,400 youth to experience adventures across winter and summer activities.

Through Vail Resorts' continued partnership and the generous support of the Katz-Amsterdam family, SOS will expand our Midwest programs to Wilmot Mountain and Afton Alps, double enrollment at Mt. Brighton and increase opportunities for Colorado, Park City, UT and Lake Tahoe youth in the upcoming year.

Please join with SOS in saying **thank you** to Rob and Elana for their leadership and extraordinary generosity to help shape the next generation of our communities.

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EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME™

  
**epicpromise**  
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# Circle of Impact

Offering youth up to 10 years of an intensifying curriculum comprised of caring adult mentorship, outdoor adventure, and long-term life skills development, we empower youth to reach **their full potential** - in education and in life.

211,296

HOURS OF OUTDOOR ADVENTURE



22,500

HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

500

VOLUNTEERS



280 POSITIVE ADULT MENTORS



SUMMER

931 TOTAL



WINTER

71 MASTERS  
943 UNIVERSITY  
1407 ACADEMY  
1657 SNOWCORE

4078 TOTAL

# Building Grand Futures

This summer, we joined forces with legendary whitewater rafting experts, O.A.R.S., to offer a group of our most senior participants an opportunity to unplug and reconnect on a trip of a lifetime -- a week of whitewater rafting in the Grand Canyon.

For 11-year SOS participant, Kevin, this trip marked his final SOS adventure before heading off to Williams College. Kevin shares, "Every trip [with SOS] has been a unique and amazing experience that I will never forget. This final trip with SOS will test my limits, allow me to practice my leadership, know myself more deeply, and practice being intentional with my actions."

The contrast between the scenery, history, rush of the whitewater, and isolation of the canyon created a special community, fostering camaraderie and space for deep introspection. Scott Partan, Eagle County Program Director, elaborates,



"Our kids were totally pushed out of their comfort zones. During the trip, it was reinforced that the combination of learning a new outdoor activity in one of the most amazing geographic regions in the world alongside incredibly experienced guides who sagely relayed the lessons of the river, gave our youth an experience that they will remember for the rest of their lives."

For the SOS Masters students who participated, this trip culminated the many lessons they've learned through SOS over the years. As the Masters program is designed for students who have shown extraordinary commitment to SOS throughout five previous years in Academy and University programs, this trip recognized their dedication and commitment to the core values and program.

***"The river's especially given me hope for life and hope for my dreams. No matter what, the river always keeps moving. If there's an obstacle in its way, it wears at it until it overcomes it. That's extreme determination and that is something that I'm going to keep working on in myself. The river's changed me into who I am now, from who I was back then."***

***-- SOS Denver participant, Brenden***





# ❖ The Power of a Mentor *Jamie & Elizabeth*

## Meet **Jamie**

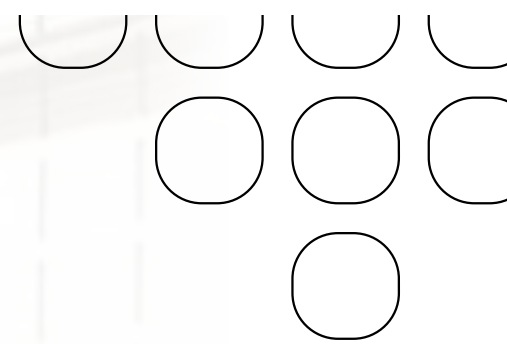
“I’m privileged. I’ve been surrounded by a strong support system my entire life. I’ve been handed numerous opportunities and have been given countless second chances, and I still almost didn’t make it. When I was young, I took for granted some of the things others dream of. These are a few of the reasons I’m a mentor with SOS Outreach. So many children in the world are not provided with the guidance they need, or a “complete” family to help them through life’s struggles. I was, and realize now how important that is.

Where do I even begin? To describe Elizabeth? We have been through so much over the last several years, but man has it been a great adventure! I can honestly say I have never seen such a transformation in such a short time span. Elizabeth is a walking testament to the powers of SOS Outreach’s programming - she is both the first in her family to graduate from high school, and the first to attend college.

I am honored to be a part of her journey and am humbled to say that I had something to do with her success.”

***From all of here at SOS, we thank our 280 positive adult mentors who, like Jamie, give freely of their time and compassion to inspire youth to thrive.***





“Here’s my story. We all know SOS means needing help and that’s exactly how I see it. Before SOS, I didn’t see a future for myself at all. I didn’t even really know who I was. I was constantly putting myself down, and it was hard for me to find a reason to be happy. When my Sherpa [mentor] group first met me, I kept to myself. To be honest, I didn’t want to get close to anyone. I didn’t want to be part of the group, but then I got to know them..

*Alonso* showed me how strong I really am. *Augustin* showed me what family really is. *Alberto* has pushed me to my limits and hasn’t let me give up, even if it’s slowed him down. *Mariah* is my smile when I’m sad and my strength when I’m weak. My Sherpa [mentor] *Jamie* – he’s never given up on me. He is never quick to judge and always tells me the truth.

***My SOS family helped me become a stronger, new me.***

I’ve met so many inspiring people on my road to success, and they have all pushed me to be better. Not only do I smile more, but I’ve found myself reaching out for help when I need it most, instead of keeping it all inside.

***SOS is not just an organization for youth, but a rescue center for most.*** They have watched me grow into the woman I am now, and without them, I wouldn’t have made it this far. Thank you, SOS for giving me my team, my friends, my family.”

# Meet Elizabeth





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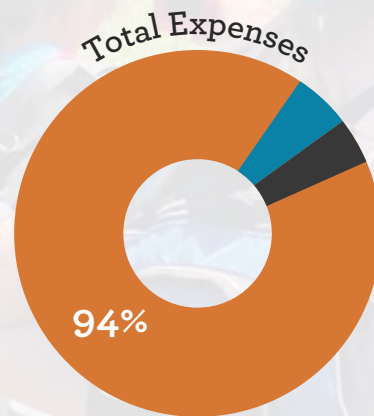
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**YOUR INVESTMENT HARD AT WORK—** SOS successfully leverages every dollar contributed 2.5 times through in-kind support to make our programming a reality.



 Programs	\$4,081,727	94%
 Management & General	\$133,441	3%
 Fundraising	\$106,948	3%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$4,322,116</b>	



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*\*Partners listed provide at least \$5,000 in support.*

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SOS Taught Me...

LOVE







Delivering long term life-skills development to underserved youth, providing value to the communities in which we operate.

**SOS**  
OUTREACH

