

# FRIENDS



Welcome to *Friends*, a newsletter for people committed to helping NOLS provide the world's best education in wilderness and leadership skills. This publication aims to provide useful and interesting information on charitable gift planning and the people who support NOLS.

SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE AT NOLS • SEPTEMBER 2004

## A New Gathering Place For NOLS Students

By SUSAN BRAME

Suraya DeSorrento and her brother, Justin, planned to attend simultaneous NOLS semesters in Patagonia in the fall of 1997. Tragically, Justin died in a car accident just eight weeks before the semesters began. With encouragement from her parents, Suraya courageously traveled to South America without Justin and completed her semester.

"Suraya knew Justin would have been disappointed if she hadn't gone on the course," explains her mother, Karen. "So she went as much for him as for herself. It was a difficult fall, but Suraya learned so much and grew a great deal."

With similar determination, the DeSorrentos founded the DeSo Foundation in Justin's memory shortly after Suraya's return from Patagonia. Through the foundation, the DeSorrentos honor Justin's life by supporting people and organizations that embody his ideals and interests.

Since 1998, the foundation has supported eleven NOLS Patagonia scholarship students, and beginning in 2003, they have supported four Instructor course scholarships. "This program has been one of the foundation's most successful undertakings," says Suraya. "Expanding the program to include Instructor course students makes sense, as we believe Justin would have loved to be a NOLS Instructor were he given the opportunity."



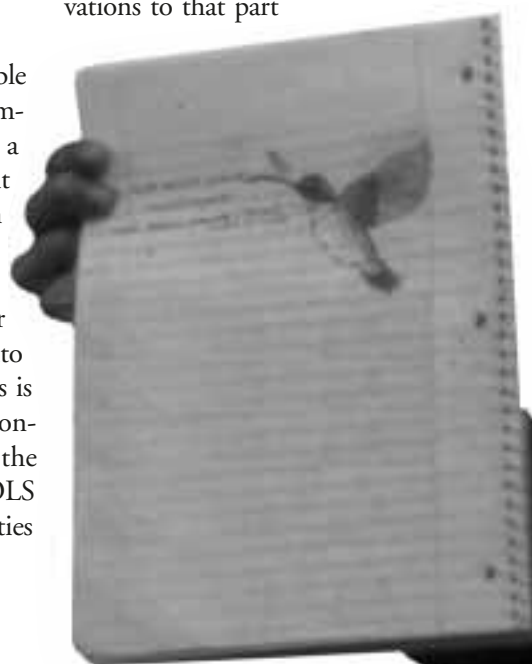
*Executive Director John Gans welcomes Suraya, Karen and Jim De Sorrento to the Noble Hotel, where the new student commons will be located.*

of the historic Noble Hotel, the new commons will include a display to highlight DeSo Foundation scholarship students and a memorial to Justin. The vision for the Justin DeSorrento Memorial Commons is to create an environment that unites the core values of NOLS with all of the qualities Justin embodied.

*Continues on page 4*

In June, the DeSorrentos further expanded their commitment to NOLS with a leadership gift to the NOLS International Base Camp Initiative. Specifically, their gift will fund renovations and new furnishings in the Noble Hotel student commons in Lander.

"We are proud to be part of commemorating Justin's life and values in this new student commons," says NOLS Executive Director John Gans. In addition to basic renovations to that part



### NOLS LEADERSHIP QUOTE



**"Our commitment to the NOLS mission began with our individual student experiences in the 1970s and hasn't wavered since then. Though our terms on the school's volunteer board of trustees just ended, we are pleased to continue to serve as co-chairs of the Base Camp Initiative. Working together with our exceptional community of NOLS staff and volunteers, we'll achieve this important milestone for NOLS—and ensure that NOLS will remain the best teacher of wilderness skills and leadership in the world."**

Kurt Petersen and Frank Pisch each have personal histories at NOLS that go back nearly 30 years. Though both have successful professional careers in other fields—Kurt is an attorney in Denver and Frank leads a national fundraising consulting firm near Washington, D.C.—they continue their involvement with NOLS as volunteers. In addition to co-chairing the NOLS International Base Camp Initiative, Frank and Kurt just completed six-year terms on the NOLS Board of Trustees.

## SUMMIT TEAM PROFILE

### Carole Forgan

“My son, Andrew, took a NOLS course in Alaska in 2000 that changed his life,” recalls NOLS parent Carole Forgan. “He was very impressed with his instructors, one of whom first came to NOLS with the help of a scholarship. Consequently, when Andrew got home, he was an ardent supporter of both NOLS and its scholarship program. I have been a supporter of the school since then.”

Though she appreciates the concrete wilderness skills taught at NOLS, Carole sees more lasting impact in the transference of those skills to other settings. “NOLS graduates come back believing in themselves,” she observes. “Not just that they are competent in the wilderness, but entirely competent. Their experience at NOLS allows them to take giant strides in becoming who they truly are.”

As a professional financial planner, Carole observes interesting parallels between her work and NOLS’ education. She specializes in financial planning for women, particularly divorce planning. “A lot of the problems some women have during and after a divorce relates directly to a lack of confidence. I simply educate women to take care of themselves financially.”

Andrew returned to NOLS for a second course in 2002, and Carole included NOLS in her estate plan soon after. Of her decision, she notes simply, “The world will be a better place for my children and grandchildren if more people from a variety of backgrounds have the opportunity to take a NOLS course.”



*Summit Team member Carole Forgan's son, Andrew, is a two-time NOLS grad.*

*Carole is a member of the NOLS Summit Team, a recognition society for donors who include the school in their estate plans or establish some other deferred gift to NOLS. If NOLS is in your will, please let us know (800.332.4280 or giving.nols.edu).*

# The Hows and Whys

A charitable gift of property—usually stocks or real estate—frequently makes good sense for both NOLS and for you, the donor. These articles discuss a few considerations for donating property and cover a recent generous gift of land to NOLS Alaska.

## Gifts of Property

**A**s an organization, NOLS is committed to careful planning and thoughtful spending. Planning benefits you, too. You undoubtedly give to NOLS because you believe in the importance of wilderness and leadership education, but there are also benefits to you in charitable giving. One of the great joys of gift planning is that it often allows you to give more than you thought possible—while still enjoying substantial tax savings or increased income.

### Gifts of stock or real estate

A tax-wise gift of appreciated stock or real estate can provide substantial support for NOLS and generate significant tax savings for you. Almost any real property—a home, farm, office building or land—can become a gift.

If you contribute long-term appreciated property, you can deduct the full fair market value. This means you give away the capital gain (the difference between your cost basis and its present value). Therefore, you avoid a penalty capital gains tax and receive a charitable income tax deduction for the gift—you save taxes twice. You can deduct up to 30 percent of your adjusted gross income for gifts of property in the year you make the gift, and you have five years to carry over any excess.

### Depreciated property

If you wish to donate property or securities that have lost value, you should sell the property, take a loss for tax purposes, then contribute the cash received from the sale. In that case, you receive a deduction both from the loss and from the charitable gift.

### Closely-held securities

If you contribute closely-held stock to NOLS, you receive a current income tax deduction for the full value of the gift. Your corporation can often redeem the shares at fair market value, thereby maintaining control of the business. When the corporation redeems the stock, it reduces corporate accumulated earnings and the possibility of a penalty tax.

### More information

Donating property is only one example of tax-smart charitable giving. Whatever form your gift takes, it brings you the satisfaction of knowing you are making a significant contribution that will benefit NOLS students for many years. Call the NOLS development office to learn more about these or other charitable gift ideas.



*Mario Mascari*

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

BY KERRY BROPHY

“I still look at the NOLS catalog and dream,” says Herbie Ogden, whose fast-paced career as an emergency physician in Colorado doesn’t leave him enough time for a month in the backcountry.

Instead, Herbie has found a different way to stay connected with NOLS. He’s the school’s medical advisor, a volunteer position that keeps the memories fresh from his 1975 Semester in the Rockies and seven years as a NOLS Instructor. From applicant medical screenings, to developing field practices for drug kits, head injuries, and even animal bites, Herbie’s advisory role is the perfect blend of his passion and his profession.

In fact, Herbie says his many years as a NOLS Instructor are what led him into medicine at the age of 30. “I once turned to one of my fellow instructors and said, ‘You know, I really should have been a doctor,’” recalls Herbie. “So he just turned to me and replied, ‘Well, why don’t you go do it?’”

Herbie’s path to medical school wasn’t direct, but it did give him some skills his younger classmates didn’t have. “I had a more relaxed perspective than a lot of the other medical students,” Herbie says. “Regardless of what happened academically, I didn’t have to worry about things like being near an avalanche slope. At times medicine can get very stressful, but being calm under pressure and having

# of Donating Property

## Room to Grow for NOLS Alaska

**"The world will be a better place for my children and grandchildren if more people from a variety of backgrounds have the opportunity to take a NOLS course."**

**-Carole Forgan, NOLS parent and Summit Team member**

“The farm at NOLS Alaska is and will continue to be part of an exceptional educational process for thousands of NOLS students,” says former NOLS trustee Joan Chitea. “Through their time at the branch and in the Alaska wilderness, I hope students will learn to love the land and be inspired to safeguard wilderness everywhere.” Joan and her husband, Andy Chitea, recently made a generous donation to underpin that vision. At the June 2004 meeting of the NOLS Board of Trustees, Joan presented the deed to 20 acres of fields and woods adjoining the current NOLS property.

Joan was elected to the NOLS board in 1981 as the first woman trustee, and she occupies a unique place in NOLS Alaska’s history. With then Alaska director Jim Ratz, she found the land the branch sits on today, and she and Andy issued a challenge grant to the board to come up with the money to purchase the property. The Chiteas also found a house in Anchorage—now the director’s house—and had it moved to the property and paid for the installation.

“While Joan is modest about the part she played in developing NOLS Alaska,” says NOLS trustee Pete Colhoun, “she and Andy made a huge contribution. Joan has tremendous energy and gets things done.”

### *Expanding the dream*

In addition to her role in establishing NOLS Alaska, Joan bought the land adjacent to the branch at about the same time. Her goal was two-fold: to protect NOLS Alaska from urban development and to secure a beautiful place in Alaska on which to put a small cabin for herself someday. Her full life in Southern California—with four sons, Andy’s demanding career, and her own interests—never quite made room for her dream of a ‘cabin in the woods.’



*Former NOLS Trustee Joan Chitea and her husband, Andy, presented a deed to NOLS Alaska for 20 acres of property.*

“In giving this land to NOLS Alaska, I’m not letting go of my dream,” explains Joan. “I’m expanding on it. I can see the land, visit it, throw a tent down on it. Every single person who takes a NOLS course is changed somehow. I felt compelled to donate this land to NOLS Alaska now, while I am alive to enjoy watching how it is put to use for the benefit and enjoyment of our dedicated staff and present and future students.”

NOLS Alaska Director Don Ford neatly sums up Joan’s contribution. “Her vision and generosity are woven into the fiber of this branch,” he says simply, “and every one of our students benefits.”

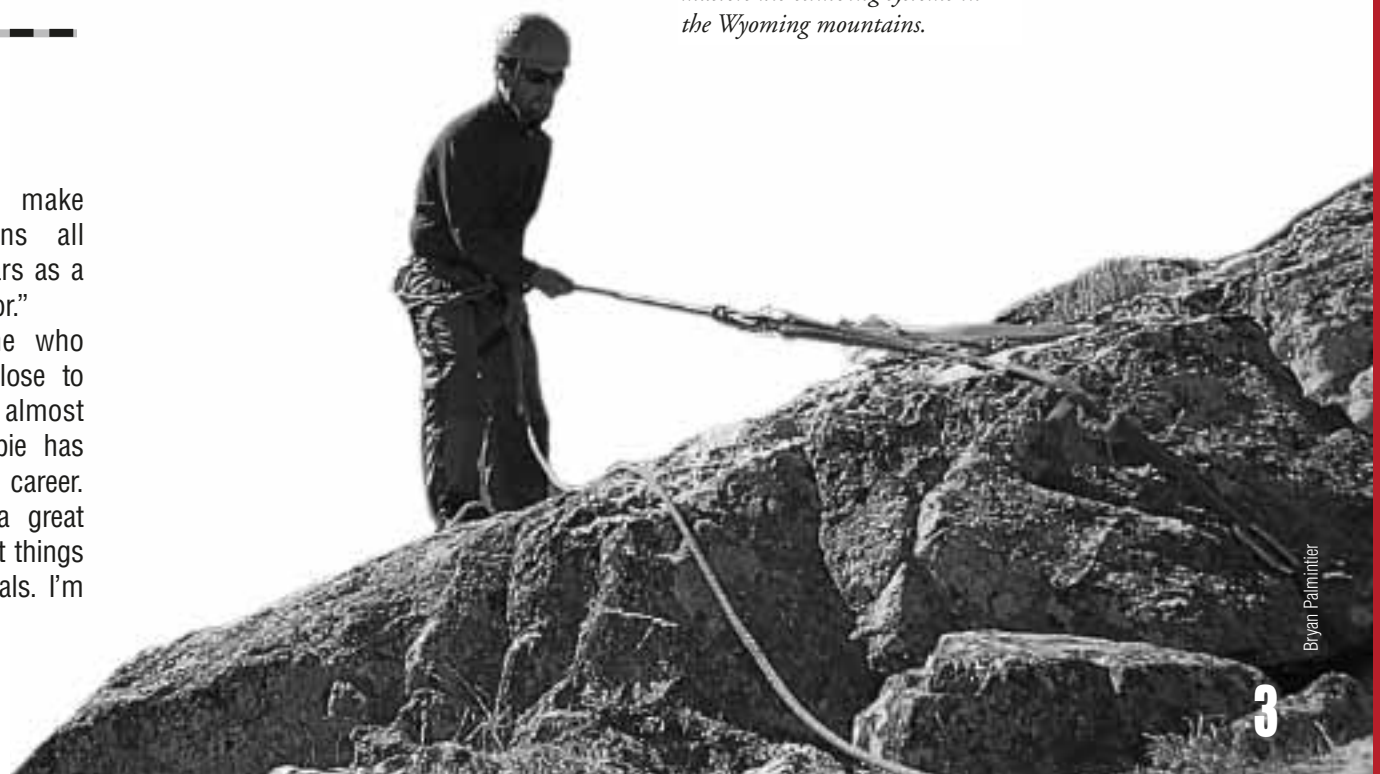


*NOLS Medical Advisor Herbie Ogden and his son Luke.*

confidence to make quick decisions all came from years as a NOLS Instructor.”

As someone who has stayed close to NOLS for almost thirty years, Herbie has seen the school evolve along with his own career. “I’ve worn many hats at NOLS. It’s just a great organization with incredible people doing great things for the environment, wilderness and individuals. I’m very happy to contribute to that.”

*A NOLS Rock Climbing student masters his climbing systems in the Wyoming mountains.*



## Collaborating for Wilderness Education

By ANNIE DALLAS

In the spirit of teamwork so evident on NOLS courses, the school partners with several organizations to send qualified scholarship students, otherwise outside of our reach, on a wilderness experience.

Among the 27 organizations that NOLS worked with in 2004 is Summer Search. With branches in San Francisco, Napa-Sonoma, Seattle, New York and Boston, the program takes a comprehensive approach to instilling high school students with tools for success. Beyond challenging summer programs, selected Summer Search students have access to year-round mentoring, SAT tutoring, college financial aid counseling and internships. NOLS is one of many organizations that Summer Search collaborates with in pursuit of its mission to “build leadership in young people by focusing on the development of resiliency, altruism and potential for performance.”

Last summer, Summer Search Boston sent 17-year-old Carlos Villa on a NOLS backpacking course in Alaska—an experience he says gave him the opportunity to change for the better.

“My friends at NOLS taught me that the best experiences in life occur when you share them with others,” says Carlos. “When I came home...I started making many more friends than before and performing a lot better academically.”

NOLS is equally thankful for the opportunities provided by partner programs, for it is largely through these partnerships that NOLS diversifies its student base—an objective that is mutually beneficial to students and the organization. With ongoing support from donors, NOLS will continue to form beneficial partnerships and help form tomorrow's strong leaders.

## A New Gathering Place For NOLS Students

*Continues from page 1*

“For us, the student commons represents an opportunity to remember and celebrate Justin's values and interests,” explains his father, Jim. “Justin dreamed of going to the Patagonian wilderness, but he wasn't able to. We certainly hope that each student who steps into the commons will be moved to make the most of their NOLS course.”

“Justin had a great attachment to the mountains and the outdoors,” adds Karen. “NOLS is just the sort of organization where he would have thrived, so we're confident he would approve of this project.”

# Gifts At Work

## Training Wyoming's Nonprofit Leaders

By JAMES MOSHIER

**F**or years in Wyoming, nonprofits have struggled to provide high-quality, in-state training for their managers. As nonprofit leaders develop skills, many network outside of and then leave the state. To address those

concerns, Michelle Sullivan, then vice president and director of the Daniels Fund in Wyoming, envisioned a program to provide nonprofit leadership training and promote local networking. With a generous grant from the Daniels Fund, NOLS recently collaborated with Michelle to launch a comprehensive leadership training program for Wyoming's nonprofits.

Headquartered in Denver, the Daniels Fund focuses its programs in Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming and Utah. The NOLS Nonprofit Leadership Development program is an excellent fit with the fund's mission to “partner with individuals, organizations, and communities to recognize inherent value, develop abilities, and provide opportunities in order to fulfill our collective potential.”

NOLS is uniquely positioned to train nonprofit leaders. The program's expedition component removes students from the traditional classroom setting and focuses on actual outcomes

and hands-on leadership experience. This experiential element differentiates the NOLS program from others available in Wyoming.

On June 10, eleven leaders from six Wyoming nonprofits came to NOLS to begin their leadership training. Over a seven-month period, these individuals will complete four classroom modules and a field expedition. They have come to NOLS from a diverse array of organizations, including the Teton Science Schools and the National American Indian, Alaskan and Hawaiian Professional Development Center.

“The training I am receiving from this program is invaluable and unique,” says Rhonda

Watson of the Teton Science Schools in Jackson, Wyoming. “The opportunity to become acquainted with so many other Wyoming nonprofit leaders is reassuring, as they face many of the same challenges that I do.”

The NOLS Nonprofit Leadership Development program is creating strong nonprofit leaders for Wyoming. Increased networking among these professionals will promote stability in the state's nonprofit community. With sustained funding, the program will continue to address the acute need in Wyoming for this type of training, and the model will be available for replication in other states with similar needs.



Brad Christensen

*Employees from nonprofit organizations throughout Wyoming work through an exercise to hone their leadership skills.*

## PHILANTHROPIC TIDBIT— MORE DONORS GIVING ONLINE

Online giving to charities surged in 2003, according to *The Chronicle of Philanthropy's* fifth annual survey of online fundraising (June 10, 2004). According to *The Chronicle*, online gifts rose by 48 percent that year for the 146 organizations that provided figures. Most nonprofits have seen similar annual gains for the past four years, as donors have become increasingly comfortable with online financial transactions.



Andy Tyson

If you are or would like to be part of this growing trend, come have a look at NOLS' updated, improved online gift form. The form includes a new, easy-to-use section for designating tribute or memorial donations. As this year's gift-giving season approaches, consider a gift of wilderness education through a donation to the NOLS Annual Fund. Friends and family will remember and appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Come visit us: [giving.nols.edu](http://giving.nols.edu)

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# International Base Camp Initiative

A campaign to update and strengthen the international headquarters of the National Outdoor Leadership School in Lander, Wyoming through renovation and new construction.

Dear NOLS Community:

I first came to Lander in 1973 to take a NOLS course in the Wind River Mountains. At the beginning of the course, I was a 17-year-old without a clue about what was next for me. After the course, I was confident and inspired about finding my way in the world and have been in leadership roles ever since. Without a doubt, NOLS has been the most valuable educational experience of my life.

Thirty years later, I am a NOLS parent and spouse. One of my daughters has completed two courses and she too has had life changing experiences. After her course, my wife has become an avid environmental activist and sea kayaker. I have seen again how a NOLS education changes lives in a meaningful and powerful way, and I am committed to securing that education for my grandchildren.

Ten years ago, it was apparent that if NOLS was going to maintain its leadership position in the outdoor education industry, then something would have to change about our small-town, grass-roots style of doing business in downtown Lander, Wyoming.

After a wide-ranging, extended discussion about how to address the school's needs as a worldwide organization, the board voted unanimously to remain in Lander. A timely gift of real estate next door to our Noble Hotel facility sealed the decision. There was also strong interest in preserving the Noble and expanding our in-town classroom space to support our acquisition of the Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI).

What came out of all the planning was the International Base Camp Initiative—a five-year capital campaign to build a campus for staff and students that will support our mission around the world. The price tag for the campaign is \$10 million, and we have a strong volunteer cabinet and development staff working to meet that goal. This is the largest financial investment we have asked of our faithful NOLS community to date and the most important.

We know it is achievable but it will take the support of many of you, the school's friends, to make it happen. The school is in the leadership position it is today because of its outstanding staff and your support for them and the power of what we offer our students.

I ask you to join us in completing this very important campaign. Our International Base Camp will serve as the foundation for NOLS' growth over the next 40 years. There is plenty more for us to accomplish; we only need the sound footing from which to do so.

Sincerely,



Peter Roy  
Chair, Board of Trustees

## Campaign Leadership

A volunteer steering committee is leading the NOLS International Base Camp Initiative. Each member of the Steering Committee is a donor to the initiative, provides guidance to NOLS staff, and perhaps most importantly, they are out talking to other NOLS parents and graduates across the country.

### NOLS International Base Camp Initiative Steering Committee

Frank Pisch, Co-chair  
Kurt Petersen, Co-chair

Gregory Avis  
Judith Heisley Bishop  
Linda Brooks  
Tony Brooks  
Duncan Dayton  
Bert Fingerhut  
Dave Jones

Tommi Joseph  
Trina Peterson  
Bob Reynolds  
Carolyn Rohlen  
Peter Roy  
Michael Schmertzler  
Herman L. Stude

# The Plan for a New Base Camp

Laying the foundation for NOLS' future, the NOLS International Base Camp Initiative is steaming ahead—plans include renovation of the historic Noble Hotel and construction of a new international headquarters.

Built on a downtown lot donated by the late Lander physician Dr. Harry Tipton, the headquarters building is complete and consolidates all international headquarters departments, previously divided among three disparate Lander locations. It also houses the NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute and NOLS Professional Training. Built simply of durable materials, the headquarters has a projected 100-year lifespan. However, NOLS' telecommunications and operational needs are anything but simple, and the new building uniquely addresses those demands.

## A Sense of Permanence

NOLS grad Herman Stude is a donor to the initiative and an active member of the Steering Committee, which is providing volunteer leadership to this effort. "This base camp initiative is part of the natural

evolution of a great organization with an important mission," observes Herman. "As any organization matures, the infrastructure has to keep pace. The updated headquarters emanates a sense of permanence. A few years ago, we raised an endowment for the long-term stability of the school, and now it's time to cement NOLS' position as the world leader in wilderness education."

Since the ribbon-cutting in October, 2002, NOLS staff have settled into the headquarters building and gone to work supporting courses around the globe. A NOLS employee since 1984, Administration and Partnerships Director Molly Hampton lends a long-term perspective to the change in setting. "It's great to see NOLS in-town employees enjoy the improved community atmosphere and work environment, just like we stress in the field," says Molly. "At NOLS, we've always been good at improvising and 'making do' in unpredictable situations, but now I see more of that tremendous creative energy channeled toward our mission—providing the absolute best wilderness education in the world."

# Restoring the Noble Hotel

BY DAVE GLENN

It was September, 1991 when I drove my old pickup into Lander. I was a nervous, excited scholarship student pulling up in front of the Noble Hotel. When I walked in the lobby, I remember taking in the old photos and furniture, the old, stuffed animal mounts, the Italian tiles, and the incredible stained glass. The people were friendly and welcoming. My adventure would begin and end here at the Noble—from the nervous introductions to the tearful good-byes.

This year over 1,200 NOLS students will share similar experiences in the historic Noble. The Noble not only hosts NOLS Rocky Mountain students, it supports students from the NOLS Wilderness Medicine Institute, NOLS Professional Training, and NOLS alumni. It is a foundation for both NOLS and the Lander community.

The 86-year-old Noble Hotel needs our help. The roof is beginning to leak, some restrooms are closed due to corroding sewer lines, the ceiling is shifting, and the steam-driven heating system belongs in a museum. We need new wiring, we need fire sprinklers, and the bottom line is we need to bring this building up to modern standards. We need to make it comfortable and safe for our students.

What excites me is how we're going to do it—nothing fancy. We're making no major changes in design. We're fixing what needs it while leaving the building's historical charm, integrity and warmth intact.



*Adventurous souls have launched wilderness trips from the lobby of the historic Noble Hotel since 1917.*

BRAD CHRISTENSEN

Four-time NOLS grad David Wild has checked into the Noble twice in the last three decades. David is an early donor to the NOLS International Base Camp Initiative, because preserving the hotel is a priority for him. "The Hotel blends history and function," explains David. "It is an ideal place to stage a western adventure and to meet with fellow students after a course. By giving to the Noble Hotel project through the Base Camp Initiative I hope to preserve the unique character of the Noble while helping NOLS improve safety and service for future students."

The Noble is a NOLS landmark. It has sheltered over 30,000 NOLS students, and we'd like to make sure another 50,000 or so have the opportunity to start and end their NOLS courses there. Working together through the NOLS International Base Camp Initiative, we can make that happen.

**CONTACT US:** FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO MAKE A GIFT TO THE NOLS INTERNATIONAL BASE CAMP INITIATIVE, PLEASE CONTACT PIP COE, ALUMNI AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, 307.335.2275, 800.332.4280, PIP\_COE@NOLS.EDU