



A PUBLICATION OF THE NOLS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

FRIENDS

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

SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE AT NOLS • JUNE 2009

Prudent Steps Toward an Enhanced Student Experience

BY COOPER FRITZ

Unless you've been in the wilderness on a NOLS course for the past year or two, you know that the nation's economy is struggling mightily. Among other symptoms of the recession, the markets are all trading far below their peak. This is a frustrating point for many of us who invested in 401(k)s and IRAs, the value of which we've all watched dramatically fall with each successive statement of account.

NOLS' endowment fund has also suffered losses. While its performance has fared well compared to others, it has not been immune from the overall drop in the market. At the end of April, the school's eight-year-old endowment was still worth more than its corpus, which is the amount originally invested. But the margin above the corpus is not as much as we would like. Because of this, NOLS has chosen a prudent course for the year and will not be releasing monies from our endowment in FY09.

Releases from the endowment fund often go toward providing scholarships to worthy students. Despite this year's lack of an endowment release, the school is committed to funding all scholarships provided through the endowment that were originally budgeted for this fiscal year. We do not undertake this effort lightly. Rather, we endeavor to keep our commitment to the goal of diversifying our student body. This goal is prominently laid out in Expedition 2013, the school's five-year strategic plan.

Scholarships allow us to offer tuition to a wide array of students, which in turn increases the number of perspectives and worldviews on our courses. We believe that this diversity has the effect of enhancing every student's experience. Among other wilderness education components in our curriculum, NOLS provides team building skills and leadership training. Incorporating a variety of differing perspectives on courses strengthens these components. Working as part of a small, diverse team in which opinions often diverge requires a more thoughtful and ambitious approach to teamwork. This thoughtfulness, in turn, requires enhanced communication skills and empathy, skills that increase students' ability to lead others.

The U.S., as well as the world, is diversifying quickly. NOLS strives to do the same. We believe that leadership skills learned in a diverse setting have a greater applicability in our students' lives back home than do leadership skills learned in a homogeneous environment. We intend for our alumni to be comfortable taking a leading role in diverse groups, whether that be in the classroom, the boardroom, or teaching friends the value and importance of environmental ethics.

Many of you are doubtless wondering how the school is going to fund this endeavor. In tight times such as this, some nonprofits find themselves inclined to borrow from their endowment. The intent

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is to repay the loan, with interest, once their books are again balanced. Because we place a high priority on maintaining the integrity of our endowment, NOLS does not consider this a wise or prudent option. Instead, we are relying on our Annual Fund. During this fiscal year the majority of Annual Fund donations are being directed towards funding scholarships. Funding all of what was originally budgeted is certainly a fiscal sacrifice in this rapidly changing economy, but we believe that the return on the investment, in terms of an enhanced and more relevant experience for our students, makes this endeavor more than worthwhile.



NOLS LEADERSHIP QUOTE

“NOLS gives every Summer Search student the opportunity to recognize hidden strengths and develop the confidence to lead—it is transformational. Staying committed to providing scholarships now shows that NOLS has its priorities in order. As the director of a partner organization, I am grateful for this sustained commitment. As a NOLS alumnus, I am incredibly proud.”

Jay Jacobs is a NOLS grad and former instructor. He is currently CEO of Summer Search, a nationwide organization that seeks to come alongside low-income high school students and inspire them to become altruistic leaders. Summer Search is a Gateway Partner for NOLS, providing dozens of qualified scholarship students each year for our programs.

The Hamptons: An Important Example of Giving Back

BY DAVID COWLES

Molly and Bruce Hampton recently established a planned gift to NOLS by naming the school as a beneficiary to their 401k plan. We sat down with Molly and asked her a few questions about their decision and the process they went through.



Molly and Bruce Hampton with daughter Kaili.

What prompted you to make this decision at this time and why did you choose NOLS?

There is no organization that has shaped my life like NOLS. Bruce and I both worked there—me, for the better part of three decades. Now, as the director of philanthropy for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in Wyoming, I asked my board to consider making a planned gift to TNC. So I figured I should model a similar commitment to NOLS.

I trust you found a way to list both The Nature Conservancy and NOLS in your estate plans?

Yes, Bruce and I agreed that both of these organizations have missions that we value, so listing them both as beneficiaries made sense.

How did the process of establishing a planned gift go?

It was more difficult than we expected. When you and your spouse have busy schedules it's hard to find time to discuss what's important to you, and there were a number of questions to answer. For example, what do we want to leave for our two daughters? There were enough stumbling blocks that without the strong conviction that this was important, we might have dropped it.

We're grateful that Molly and Bruce took the time and energy to follow through. They certainly have a legacy to be proud of.

Molly and Bruce are former NOLS instructors. Bruce was very active in the Leave No Trace program and co-wrote NOLS Soft Paths. Molly led many new initiatives and held several senior management positions in town. They are both members of the NOLS Summit Team, a recognition society for the donors who include the school in their estate or other long-term plans. If NOLS is in your plan, please let us know. Contact us at (800) 332-4280.

Charitable Bequests

Donating a Major Gift Doesn't Necessarily Require a Large Cash Donation

BY COOPER FRITZ

As many of us face the fact that the world will go on long after we're gone, we search for a way to leave our unique mark on it. One way to do this is through leaving part of your estate to NOLS or your favorite charitable non-profit organization.

Gift Options

There are many options available when leaving assets to charities in your will. At NOLS, these options include outright gifts, residuary gifts, contingency gifts, and memorial gifts. All unrestricted assets left to NOLS in estate plans are placed into our endowment fund. In addition to establishing your legacy, many of these options are beneficial to your estate and your heirs as well.

Outright Gifts

Many donors simply leave an outright dollar amount to NOLS in their will. A similar option that donors utilize is donating a certain percentage of their estate. Leaving a percentage amount can blunt the effects of fluctuations in an estate's value, ensuring that the gift is neither larger nor smaller than originally anticipated.

Residuary Gifts

When utilizing this type of gift, donors distribute assets to their family first. Once the needs of the family have been satisfied, the remaining assets (also known as residual assets) go to NOLS, or another charitable nonprofit organization of your choice. Many donors find that this is a great way to avoid excessive taxation on their estate.

Contingency Gifts

Donors who utilize a contingency clause start by naming a primary beneficiary or beneficiaries to their estate, then they name a charitable nonprofit as a secondary beneficiary. If the primary beneficiary or beneficiaries do not survive you, the assets intended for them will go to the secondary beneficiary, NOLS. This type of designation shelters your estate from government coffers, which are the default final contingent beneficiary.

Memorial Gifts

Memorial gifts are designated in your will for a specific amount. This gift will endow a named fund in honor of yourself or a loved one and help further wilderness and leadership education in perpetuity.

How Your Gift is Used

All unrestricted gifts left to NOLS in an estate are placed into our endowment fund. Only the interest the gift earns will be utilized. Unrestricted endowment funds enable NOLS to place money where it's needed the most, including scholarships, curriculum advancement, and capital improvement projects. Throughout the years, your gift will have a continuous positive impact on NOLS' mission.

Tax Saving Advantages

Tax-savings really are a wonderful byproduct of philanthropy. In many cases, careful planning ahead can increase the amount of your estate that your heirs will receive.

Sample Bequest Language

The language that you put into your will, will vary somewhat depending on the type of gift that you wish to pursue. The following examples of bequest language may be helpful to you and your estate attorney. It is important to note that in your estate, the acronym "NOLS" (as written in these samples) should be replaced with the full name of the organization, The National Outdoor Leadership School.

Outright, Unrestricted Gift

I give to NOLS, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, located in Lander, Wyoming, the sum of \$____ (or % of my estate) for its general purposes.

Residuary Gifts

All of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, both real and personal, I give to NOLS, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, located in Lander, Wyoming, for its general purposes.

Contingency Gift

I devise and bequeath the residue of the property owned by me at my death, real and personal, and wherever situate, to my [husband, wife, son, daughter], [if he/she] survives me. If my [husband, wife, son, daughter] does not survive me, I devise and bequeath my residuary estate to NOLS, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, located in Lander, Wyoming, for its general purposes.

Memorial Gifts

I give to NOLS, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, the sum of \$____ (or % of my estate), the same to be known as "The ____ Memorial Fund," the income therefore shall be used for NOLS' general purposes.

Wrapping Up

Naming NOLS as a beneficiary in your estate is a win for NOLS, a win for you, and a win for your heirs. Your gift allows NOLS to offer scholarships to deserving students and fund curriculum advancements. Your gift allows your legacy to live on, long after your will has been executed. It may also allow your heirs to gain access to more of your estate through the tax-saving benefits associated with estate-based donations. It's truly a win-win-win situation.

NOLS In the Big Apple: NYC Alums Spread the Word

BY RICH BRAME



Lori Liberty a NOLS grad? We wouldn't be surprised!

There are lots of ways to support NOLS—philanthropy is an obvious, ongoing need, but creativity, enthusiasm, and action go a long way too. NOLS' loosely organized New York City alumni group is an outstanding example of consistent volunteer networking and camaraderie that keeps NOLS in the hearts and minds of far-flung communities.

Lori Bukiewicz (SAF 1999), Tobey Ritz (WRW 1976, ICS 2006) and Gint Rimas (WRW 2007) head up our hyperactive NYC alumni group. They consistently organize reunions, day and weekend hikes, social events, ski outings, book club dinners, holiday parties, and water adventures on the Bronx and Hudson Rivers. These fun, diverse activities keep grads connected to NOLS and give the school a real presence in the Big Apple's large outdoor-oriented community.

NYC stalwart Gint Rimas illustrates one example in particular of the NYC group's success. Before he ever took a course, Gint's outdoor interests lead him to become involved with area alumni activities. From there, he learned more about the school, rubbed elbows with our interesting grads and ultimately enrolled in a NOLS course in Wyoming. And now, he's part of the area alumni leadership team.

See <http://tinyurl.com/dy3295> for an update of the NYC alumni group's ongoing activities. Please consider ways that you can be a NOLS advocate in your community.

Alumni are some of NOLS' greatest resources. Graduates support the school by organizing local NOLS events, networking, cultivating students, and organizing regional chapters. Please contact the NOLS Alumni department (alumni@nols.edu) with your interests and ideas to be a volunteer in action.

Expanding Understanding

A New Partnership Brings NOLS Closer to Its Neighbors

By COOPER FRITZ

The Wind River Indian Reservation is a 2.2 million-acre parcel of land adjacent to Lander, Wyoming, NOLS' home and headquarters. A significant portion of the reservation encompasses land in the Wind River Range. For many years NOLS desired to work with and serve the tribes that live on the reservation but had only limited success. In 2007, that began to change.

Two years ago, NOLS Professional Training and the Fort Washakie Charter High School, which serves students from the Shoshone and Arapaho tribes on the reservation, began laying the groundwork for a new relationship based on the tribes' desire to enhance their youths' leadership skills and wilderness ethic. Given NOLS' desire to serve the Native American community, a growing partnership emerged and NOLS made a commitment to design and implement two unique, eight-day wilderness courses for students from the charter school.

After the first course ran in the summer of 2007, both NOLS and the charter school noticed a gap in cultural understandings between instructors and stu-

dents. In an effort to bridge that gap, both parties agreed that some cultural training would be useful prior to the following year's course. The tribes brought together a group of their elders to provide the workshop training, and the NOLS grant-writing staff sought out the funds to pay for the training.

A grant of \$8,500 from the Wyoming Humanities Council was soon awarded to the Ft. Washakie Charter School, and plans began to take shape. The training workshop, titled Native Ways of Knowing, would take place in the frontcountry. Its aim would be to provide an opportunity for NOLS instructors, local classroom teachers, and members of the local community-at-large to learn from tribal elders and tribal members.

By the time the summer of 2008 rolled around, the Native Ways of Knowing workshop was packed with NOLS instructors and staff, including the field staff that would instruct the Fort Washakie students that summer. The evaluations of the training were very positive, and the outcomes were a smoother, more relevant course for both parties.

Beyond getting to know our neighbors, our partnership with the Fort Washakie Charter High School is also beneficial because it fits well with NOLS' strategic goal of increasing the diversity of our organization. Now, in 2009, NOLS looks forward to again venturing into the Wind River Range with another group of young Native American student leaders.

NOLS' Fort Washakie Wilderness Expedition courses bring local Native American students closer to their land and closer to their classmates.



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NOLS is not engaged in rendering legal or tax advisory services. State laws govern wills, trusts, and many charitable gifts, and these laws vary from state to state. While NOLS welcomes and encourages inquiries about the material in this publication, individuals should consult with their professional advisors when planning their will or a deferred gift.

Pending Bills Favor the Philanthropist

IRA Rollovers Could Get Even Better

On March 2, the Public Good IRA Rollover Act of 2009 was introduced. This legislation would make the IRA Charitable Rollover permanent, remove the \$100,000 annual limit on donations, and provide IRA owners with a planned giving option starting at age 59½. The current IRA Charitable Rollover law allows individuals age 70½ and older to make outright charitable donations of up to \$100,000 from IRAs and Roth IRAs without having to count the distributions as taxable income. That provision is set to expire in December 2009 unless this current bill passes.

Estate Tax May Become Permanent

Recently, legislation was introduced that would make current estate tax levels permanent. The bill, called the Tax Certainty and Relief Act of 2009, would maintain the estate tax at 2009 levels in continuity, doing away with the 2010 repeal. The current law is set to expire at the end of year, and estate tax levels that applied years earlier would go back into effect, unless Congress takes action. Under the new act, heirs could exempt \$3.5 million from taxes (\$7 million for couples). Any larger amount would be taxed at a rate of 45 percent. The exemption threshold would be adjusted for inflation in the future.

Tired of the same ol' Friends?

Tell us what you think!

Visit www.nols.edu/giving and take our *Friends* survey. Completing the survey will give us a better idea of how to serve you through this newsletter and will give you a promotion code good for 20% off items purchased through NOLS' online store! Not to mention continued quality advice on planned giving to organizations that mean the most to you.



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