

NOLS Receives \$3.25 Million Gift from Anonymous Donor to Expand Access to Wilderness Education

Endowed scholarship to expand financial aid for students to experience outdoor leadership education

LANDER, Wyo. — Sept. 18, 2025 — The [National Outdoor Leadership School \(NOLS\)](#) is pleased to announce a historic \$3.25 million gift from an anonymous donor, a supporter of the leading outdoor education school. This is the second historical gift that the school has received this year.

The heart of this investment — an **endowed scholarship of \$2.75 million**, with **\$500,000 allocated to the NOLS Fund over the next five years** — will significantly expand financial aid for students enrolling in NOLS courses, extending the chance for potential students to experience leadership development in the wilderness, regardless of their financial means.

“As NOLS continues to grow and adapt to the needs of its students, this significant gift in support of financial aid and ultimately, access to NOLS and wilderness, marks a pivotal moment in the school's history,” said Sandy Colhoun, NOLS President. “We are excited to see the impact this funding will have on future generations of outdoor leaders.”

With this new funding, NOLS aims to increase the number of scholarships available, allowing more students to participate in its renowned wilderness expeditions. These programs not only teach essential outdoor skills but also emphasize personal growth, teamwork, and leadership.

"This generous gift will enable us to reach more students than ever before, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent future leaders from experiencing the transformative power of wilderness education," stated Cody Kaemmerlen, NOLS Vice President of Advancement. "We are incredibly grateful to our anonymous donor for their commitment to an accessible outdoor education for all."

NOLS has long been a pioneer in outdoor education, providing students with the skills and confidence needed to lead in challenging environments. The endowed scholarship will help to further NOLS' mission by supporting a diverse range of students, fostering a new generation of leaders who are equipped to tackle the challenges of the future.

To find out more about how the impact of giving to NOLS continues to elevate the leaders of tomorrow, please visit <https://www.nols.edu/en/giving/impact/>

NOLS FUND + WAYS TO GIVE | [LINK](#)

Contributions can be made [online](#) or by mail: NOLS, 284 Lincoln Street, Lander, WY 82520

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About NOLS

Founded in 1965 in a small cabin in Sinks Canyon, Wyoming, by Paul Petzoldt, the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) is a nonprofit global wilderness school that seeks to help individuals step forward boldly as leaders. We believe that anyone can be a leader; it's our role to provide the environment and training to help them discover their full potential. We do that in classrooms close to home and remote wilderness areas worldwide. The scope of NOLS' mission and impact is broad, with 14 campuses across six countries and educational opportunities worldwide. The school enrolls over 28,000 students and employs more than 1,000 full-time and part-time staff and instructors, with an annual budget of approximately \$40 million in a typical year. NOLS currently has more than 366,000 active alumni. For more information, visit nols.edu | [@nolsedu](https://twitter.com/nolsedu) | 800.710.6657

MEDIA CONTACT

NOLS

Kelli Lusk

Communications Director

208.309.3793 | kelli_lusk@nols.edu