

Waypoint Adventure



FOUNDED: 2010

CURRENT ORGANIZATION BUDGET: \$350,000

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Waypoint Adventure provides outdoor adventure learning opportunities to youth and adults with intellectual, developmental, physical, and sensory disabilities, whether congenital or acquired. Waypoint uses adaptive equipment, custom program curricula and teaching techniques to make adventures accessible, and combines those elements in a structured, experiential learning process. Through its programs, Waypoint Adventure transforms lives by instilling hope, confidence, and a sense of belonging in participants. This transformation is especially important for youth transitioning to adulthood whose horizons have been limited by fear, isolation, over-protective caregivers, and the absence of opportunities.

- Thirty-five percent of youth with disabilities are completely uninvolved in their community, and 23 percent fail to complete high school, substantially limiting their potential for self-sufficiency;
- Compared to other educational programs, research shows that outdoor adventure programs are particularly effective at providing participants with increased confidence, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and improved health, outcomes particularly important for participants with disabilities.

Investment Opportunity

Waypoint Adventure is seeking a \$500,000 investment in order to double its programming to 200 adventures and 2,200 program slots per year in order to reach new schools and organizations. This funding will also enable Waypoint to offer additional scholarships to programs and participants with financial need. To achieve this goal, Waypoint plans to expand its program and administrative team, increase its inventory of adventure and adaptive equipment, and deepen its fundraising.

Two-Year Goals

- Double the number of program participants served each year
- Expand the community of schools and organizations able to access adventure learning programs by increasing scholarships from 30% of program costs to 45% of program costs
- Build organizational capacity by hiring two program coordinators and an administrator to handle scheduling and logistics
- Pursue a partnership with a recreational facility to serve as home base for Waypoint

Ways to Invest

FINANCIAL

- \$40,000 funds a van to transport staff and volunteers to adventure learning program sites
- \$6,200 funds a trail rider off-road wheelchair
- \$1,950 funds additional adaptive seats for kayaks and canoes

IN-KIND

- Provide new equipment such as kayaks, canoes, snowshoes, tents, sleeping bags, and rock climbing gear used on Waypoint adventures
- Offer access to a recreational facility in the Boston area to serve as a home base for Waypoint programs
- Serve as a volunteer on a Waypoint program



Leadership & Governance

Dan Minnich holds a BS in outdoor education and has over nine years experience designing and leading adventure learning programs for people with disabilities. Adam Combs holds a BS in outdoor education and MA in special education and has extensive experience designing and facilitating outdoor learning programs for people with disabilities and at-risk youth. Julia Spruance serves as program coordinator.

Board of Directors

Jeff Alderson, *Eduventures*
 Ronald Goode, *The Narrow Lane Landscape Company*
 Richard S. Helstein, *Creative Focus*
 Bill Levin, *Levin Realty Group, LLC*

THE WAYPOINT ADVENTURE MODEL



WAYPOINT provides a new path to self-discovery for people with disabilities.

“

I have seen students go from being afraid and anxious to students who are confident and able to take safe risks in their education and in their own personal lives.

MARK WILSON

Special Education Teacher,
 Mario Umana Academy, Boston
 Public Schools

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EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Waypoint Adventure’s vision is for everyone, regardless of ability, to experience adventures that enable them to realize their personal value, discover their strengths, and contribute those strengths to the community.

The foundation of Waypoint Adventure’s programs is David A. Kolb’s experiential learning cycle. Experiential learning is a structured process of setting goals, undertaking an activity or experience, reflecting on the experience, and then determining how the lesson learned might be applied—either in undertaking the activity again, or in addressing some other challenge.

Waypoint encourages program participants to move from their **comfort zone** to their **challenge zone** and uses outdoor adventure—and the metaphor of “waypoints” on a journey—to promote experiential learning.



Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle and the Waypoint Challenge Zone





Waypoint Adventure sets the standard in the field of outdoor education for programming adventure activities for people with disabilities. Their use of current best practices in outdoor education and disability rights make them one of the premier organizations offering opportunities for people with disabilities to access outdoor adventure.

DEB SUGERMAN, PH.D.

Senior National Trainer, Playworks



ENABLING SELF-DISCOVERY THROUGH CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT

Waypoint works with schools and social service programs serving individuals with disabilities, in addition to offering open-enrollment adventures. Because learning happens at the intersection of challenge and support, Waypoint’s adventures create opportunities for self-discovery in all of its programs by bringing together three things:

- **Community:** Trained staff and volunteers create a welcoming environment so that program participants feel a sense of belonging in the group.
- **Access:** Custom curriculum and adaptive equipment and techniques are used to ensure that adventurers, who often represent a wide range of abilities, can participate fully.
- **Preparation:** Waypoint builds trust by carefully preparing both the group and each individual, setting expectations and goals, and then checking in with participants throughout the adventure.

Through these transformative experiences, adventurers discover their purpose, talents, strengths, and their place in the community. They also have fun! For youth transitioning to adulthood, problem-solving and teamwork learned on adventures can be applied to real-life challenges like finding a job or seeking housing.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Waypoint Adventure has operated conservatively, ensuring earned income is a significant element of the business model. In order to meet demand and serve more people, the organization plans to expand fundraising, and offer subsidized or tiered pricing, so that a much broader range of organizations may access Waypoint programming.

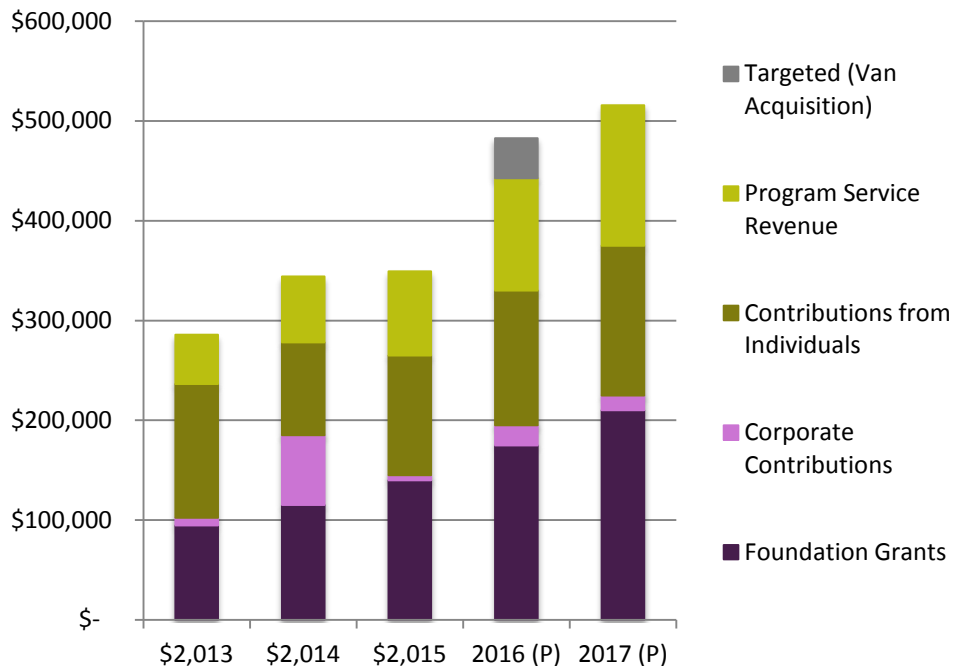
Key Investors

- BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD
- CUMMINGS FOUNDATION
- DEUTSCHE BANK
- JOHN W. ALDEN TRUST
- LENNY ZAKIM FUND

Partners

- BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- MA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION
- MASSACHUSETTS DOWN SYNDROME CONGRESS
- MAY CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT
- SPAULDING REHABILITATION HOSPITAL
- PERKINS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Revenue by Source





Success Story: Jason

Jason did not walk until he was five because a sensory problem made him unsure of the surface below his feet. Unfortunately, his education and regular involvement in day programs as a young adult never introduced him to the magic of learning through adventures in the outdoors.

Jason loves exercise, and Waypoint opened the world of the outdoors for him. In the past three years he has participated in hiking, rock climbing, kayaking, and snowshoeing, embracing the challenge of the hike and paddle, and enjoying the beauty all around him.

Though Jason also has Down syndrome and autism and needs extra help to reciprocate the warmth Waypoint staff and participants have shown him, he has made real buddies who are always happy to see him. Jason has gained confidence in his ability to navigate his world day-to-day. He takes walks in his neighborhood and greets people when he would have remained silent before. His mother Dotty says, "We live in a great big, sometimes overwhelming world. For Jason, who has limited skills in verbal expression, gaining this confidence is huge."



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Waypoint Adventure plans to build capacity over the next three years in order to serve more people. Waypoint plans to increase program staff and acquire additional equipment. In addition, the organization will pursue fundraising growth in order to offer subsidies and scholarships to make Waypoint adventures accessible to a greater number of schools and social service programs with limited financial resources to access these kinds of programs.

	FY 2015	FY 2016 (P)	FY 2017 (P)
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE			
Increase number of programs offered annually	100	150	200
Increase available program slots	1,100	1,600	2,200
Increase the rate of program subsidization	25%	35%	45%
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING			
Expand staff	1 program coordinator, part-time office support	1 program coordinator, additional grant-writing support	Assess need for additional staff
Invest in adaptive & program equipment	Kayaks, canoes & off-road wheelchair	Transport van	Hiking & camping equipment
Seek recreational facility partnership	Identify viable sites	Select site for operational base	Evaluate benefit
Total Budget	\$350,000	\$480,000	\$515,000

SOCIAL IMPACT

Because Waypoint Adventure serves individuals with a wide variety of physical and intellectual disabilities, it is challenging to specify impact measures that may be applied universally. Success for each program and each individual participant may be vastly different. Waypoint will focus its attention on pre- and post-program evaluations from participants where available, and teachers and caregivers where necessary, to gauge impact.

INDICATOR	MEASUREMENT
Maintain percentage of schools/service programs seeking follow-on engagement	>75%
Maintain percentage of program participants reporting that they stepped out of their comfort zones and challenged themselves	>80%
Maintain percentage of parents reporting that they observe increased confidence in their child subsequent to Waypoint programs	>90%
Maintain track record of positive participant evaluations regarding overall program impact	>95%

