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ANNUAL REFLECTION

CHARACTER. CONNECTION. OPPORTUNITY.



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hills_to_climb





At a GLANCE

32 Activities

14 Days

29 Youth

“If you get this letter, please stay open minded. Don’t miss the fun experience of this camp - you do different things. A thing that I feared was rock climbing but I overcame my fears.”

-Timothy, age 12

“You would love the rock wall. You would love the lake. You would love the things we do outside like rock climbing, riding bikes and fishing. You would love the food. You would love the staff members.”

-Tristan, age 13



Summer Experience

The inaugural Hills to Climb Summer Experience commenced on July 9, 2023 by welcoming 29 youth to the camp property at Watonka Outdoor Facilities in Hawley, Pennsylvania. All youth participants were part of a year-round student athlete mentoring program, Next One Up, located in the city of Baltimore. Upon arriving, the campers embarked on a two-week journey of self-discovery, team-building, and overcoming challenges and “Hills” of many kinds.

Campers expressed joy in trying new activities and accomplishing personal goals. Activities included ropes courses, climbing, rafting, fishing, kayaking, carpentry, hiking, navigation, and camping in addition to familiar sports such as biking, swimming, football and a basketball tournament.

When asking campers to reflect on their experience three months after summer ended, 66% of youth indicated that they felt more connected to peers who shared the same summer experience, while 100% of youth continued outdoor recreation, in some form, after summer ended.



Outreach & Engagement

Spring Hike

In preparation for the full summer experience, Hills to Climb leadership and community volunteers engaged future campers in a local hike through Baltimore trails. Introducing our organization to the youth as well as sparking a curiosity and excitement for outdoor recreation was just a preview of bigger things to come.

223

social media followers

18,747

post engagements

41

newsletter subscribers

Hike-A-Thon

In November, Hills to Climb hosted a virtual Hike-a-Thon in celebration of National Hiking Day. Teams from across the country showed their support of the organization with their boots and their miles, while friends and family extended their treks through donations. The event engaged 10 new donors and raised more than \$1,350 for almost 25 miles hiked!



Leadership

Hills to Climb is honored to have passionate and dedicated leadership, staff and volunteers guiding the organization's operations and programming. Without this amazing group of individuals, the 2023 summer experience would not have been possible.



Summer Staff

Summer programming was led by Michael Nelson as Program Director and three Youth Mentors - Kennell Washington, Travon Hicks and Liam Clune. Campers and staff were kept fed and happy by generous volunteers Susan Burgess and Dorinda Tucker. The whole experience was eloquently captured by photographer Kalie Jimison.

Program Advisory Committee

In the months leading up to summer programming, expert volunteers diligently researched, planned and prepared coordinated activities to meet the organization's mission. Committee members included retired educator, Terri Smith, Next One Up leadership, Shel Simon, and two Hills to Climb Board Members.



Board of Directors

In February 2023, Hills to Climb welcomed new Board Member Michael Nelson, joining Donald Hauprich, Robert Smith, and Dorinda Tucker. All Board Members selflessly contributed to the 2023 summer experience through time and talent. In November, the group accepted a fifth member, Caleb McClain.



Finances

Income

Funding Source	Amount
Private Donations (including a large donation made late 2022, intended to support 2023 summer programming)	\$181,605
Corporate/Foundation Grants	\$25,134
Partner Cost-Share	\$29,000
TOTAL	\$235,739

Expense

Expense	Amount
General Operation	\$37,981
Program Staff & Training	\$58,551
Program Facility & Food	\$46,533
Program Equipment & Activities	\$38,412
Outreach & Media	\$2,894
TOTAL	\$184,371



Partners & Donors

Hills to Climb is honored by the support of bountiful partners and benefactors. Our first youth organization partner, Next One Up, Inc., entrusted Hills to Climb with curating a summer experience worthy of their incoming 7th and 8th grade student athletes. This experience was graciously supported by the following individuals and organizations.

Robert W. Smith Family Charitable Gift Fund

Elizabeth Mickey Memorial Fund

Rotary Club of Columbia/Patuxent

Rotary Club of Baltimore

The Engle Family Foundation

Banks Family Charitable Gift Fund

First Fruits Farm, Inc.

Pack-It, LLC

Bass Pro Shops & Cabela's Outdoor Fund

James A.C. & Maureen A. Kennedy Charitable Giving Fund

Spatial Systems Associates, Inc.

Clattenburg Family Fund

Rita Przygocki Giving Fund

Charles A. and Elise D. Morris Charitable Gift Fund

Bill and Lisa Stromberg Family Trust

Mike Ahlers

Lori Anderson

Paul & Linda Brogan

Susan Burgess

Paul Burkholder

Jenn Chlumsky

Corliss Clark

Jen Claus

Paula Curran

Allison Dunning

Nancy Ferrant

Gregg Fitzpatrick

Everette & Sally Fortner

Barbara & Edward Gilliss

Kevin & Rosemary Gilroy

Michelle Golden

Katrina Hauprich

Don & Anne Hauprich

Aidan & Hannah Kelley

Christina Lamour

Michelle Long

Marie Newman

Gonzalo Pangaro

James Perkins

Kristina Robson

Mariana Sierra

Ronald & Jaime Trichon

Dorinda Tucker

Virginia Tucker

Daniel Verbic

Latrese Williams

George Williamson

Letter from the Director

Reflecting on 2023, I cannot help but be proud of what this organization has accomplished in such a short period of time. From planning, prepping and executing the first summer experience, to initiating new outreach and awareness efforts, to gaining numerous new donors and grantors. While we will always have more “Hills to Climb”, I am humbled by this organization’s energy, tenacity, and flexibility in the face of challenges. It is because of the active leadership in our Board of Directors and volunteers that we can call our first full year a success. And while I am proud of our humble start, I am even more excited for the changes to come. Many thanks to everyone who helped us embark on this journey and trusted Hills to Climb with such an important mission.

Christina Lamour
Executive Director

