



OUTWARD BOUND
CANADA

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Outward Bound Canada





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**OUTWARD BOUND
CANADA**

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Welcome!

A Letter From Our Leadership

A message from the executive director, Andrew Young and the chair of the board, Anne Fitzgerald

Dear friends,

As we reflect upon the past year, we are immensely proud of how Outward Bound Canada (OBC) has risen to the challenges and seized the opportunities that came our way. In the face of the far-reaching effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, our unwavering commitment to empowering youth through outdoor experiences has remained steadfast.

As we emerge from the grip of the pandemic, we stand resolute in our dedication to the well-being of our participants, staff, and communities. By forging new partnerships and launching innovative projects and programs, we have expanded our reach and strengthened our impact.

We have increased funding, scholarships, and accessibility to ensure that diverse communities have equal opportunities to benefit from our transformative experiences.

Now, more than ever, we understand the pressing need to nurture the mental well-being of our youth. The disruptive effects of the pandemic have made it crucial to provide a space where young people can rebuild their resilience, develop coping strategies, and foster their mental health. Outward Bound Canada can be that catalyst for positive change.

As we venture into the coming year, we anticipate more challenges on the horizon.

However, we're confident that with your unwavering support, we can continue to make a profound and lasting impact on the lives of young people through our programs.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey.

-Andrew & Anne





What Participants (and Their Parents) Are Saying



Testimonials

“

Last summer I changed schools, so my Outward Bound journey felt like a fresh start. Being in a new environment where no one knew me let me be my true self. We all felt the same way, so the group opened up and grew together.

Being out in nature, free from the distractions of technology, was so refreshing. It allowed us to make real connections, explore our feelings, and learn new things. Spending this pure time with people was wonderful!

I'm grateful for my Outward Bound expedition because it made me grow so much and opened my mind to what my future can look like. I'm more confident and it has improved my daily life. I'm more self-aware, more grounded, and excited about the new skills I've gained."

- Mary, 16 years old, participant, 14-day Northern Ontario flatwater canoeing expedition, 2022



Testimonials

“

The trip was like a total reboot for Mary. It pulled her out of her own world and plugged her back into the big picture of life, especially after dealing with the mental and physical challenges of being a teenager during the pandemic. I was really worried about her well-being.

She was miserable at her school and we had no idea she was struggling so much. Last spring, she was a wreck - definitely not healthy or happy. But when she came back from her OBC adventure, she had this huge smile on her face. It reminded her that there was a whole other side of her that had been locked away. The trip helped her unpack all of that and made her more confident and stronger. She looks back and says, 'Yeah, I can do this. This is who I am, and I can face any situation, embrace it, and find joy and strength at the same time!'

- Anna, Mary's mother





2022 By the Numbers



825

Total Participants

Our year in numbers



529 (65%)

Funded Participants



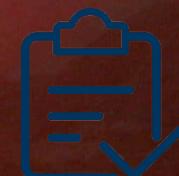
155

Participants in 10 Toronto Urban
Programs



288

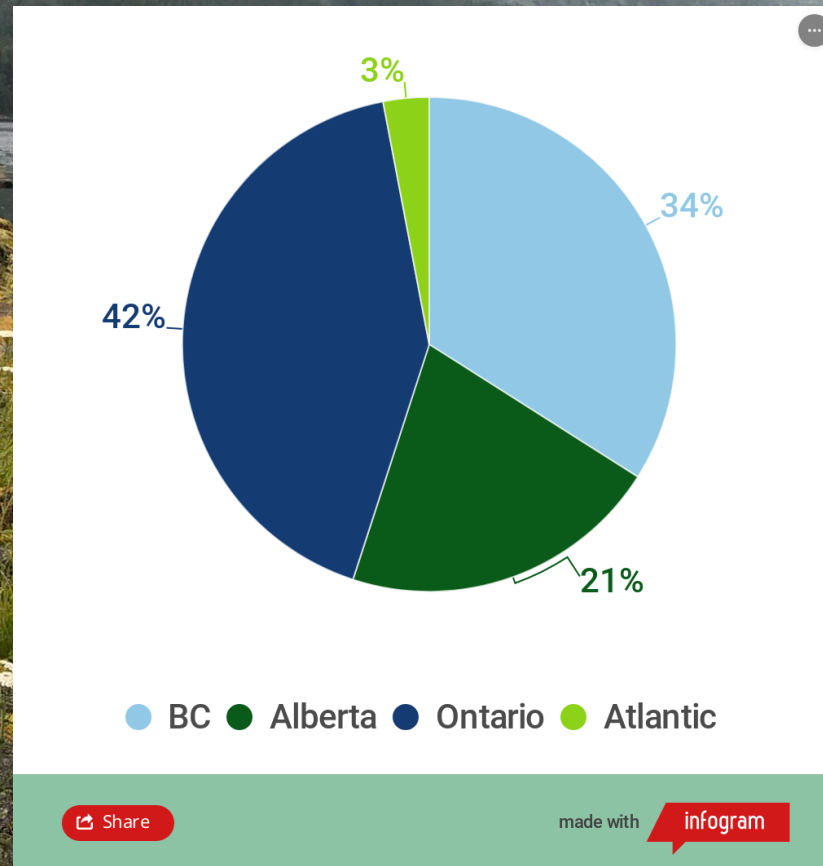
Participants in 25 Vancouver
Urban Programs



528

Participants in group programs
across Canada

Participants by region - 2022





2022 Highlights

80 skilled outdoor professionals joined the workforce in 2022

The Training Academy for Outdoor Professionals, funded by the Government of Canada under the Sectoral Initiatives Program for a three-year period as an investment in the economic recovery of the outdoor sector, launched its pilot program in 2022.

The Academy aims to address the representation gap in the outdoor sector and provide exceptional training for outdoor leaders. The program trains participants at no cost to acquire the technical skills and strengthen their social and emotional competencies to become Canada's next generation of outdoor leaders.



OUTWARD BOUND CANADA TRAINING ACADEMY

In 2022, the Training Academy ran in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario with 80 participants. Of these, 35% self-identified as BIPOC and/or 2SLGBTQ+. In 2023, the program will expand its reach to four regions across Canada with 10 programs and a goal of 200 participants.



READ THE TRAINING ACADEMY'S IMPACT REPORT



We brought back our urban programs in Toronto and Vancouver

After having to suspend these programs in 2020 due to the pandemic, we were excited to resume our urban programs in 2022, bringing experiential outdoor education to hundreds of youth at our urban centres. These programs are an important stepping stone to introducing youth to outdoor education and facilitating access to nature for those who are developing confidence in their outdoor skills before moving on to wilderness expeditions.



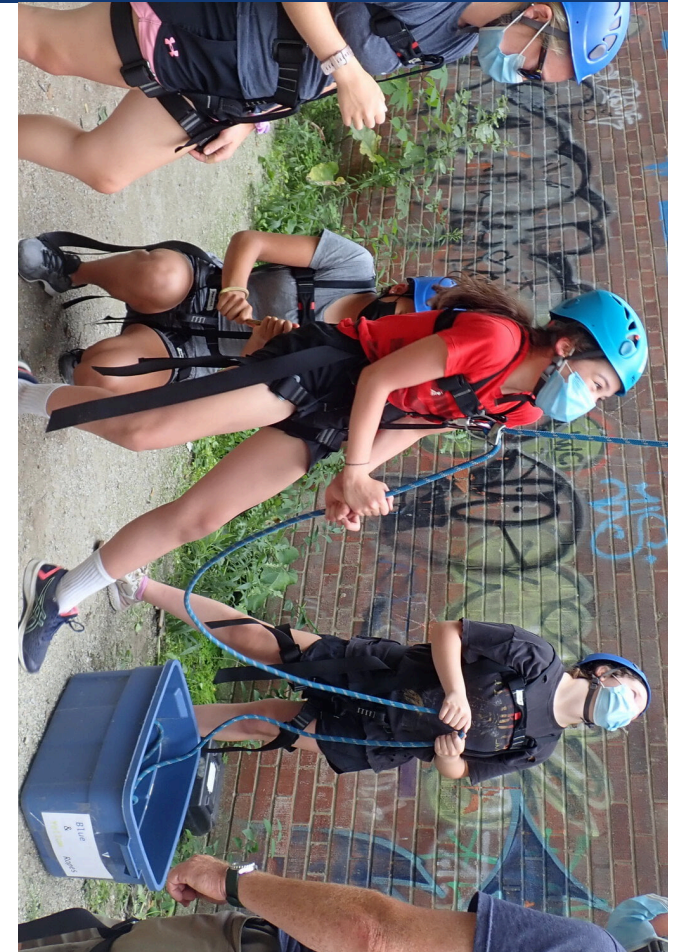
Leaving the pandemic behind

As we move through the last couple years in which our risk management team was busy with COVID-19 protocols, we are still however seeing the legacy of the pandemic on the youth we serve. The effect of the pandemic won't go away anytime soon, as young people struggle with the aftermath of two years of social isolation.

The significant and potentially long-term impact on adolescent mental health highlights the need for immediate and research-based action. In our June 2022 position paper [Help Me Out: How outdoor education impacts and empowers youth to thrive](#),

we summarized the research on how outdoor experiential learning can help youth develop the resilience and social-emotional skills they need to succeed. The paper also includes recommendations for building capacity in outdoor education to ensure that all youth have access to quality outdoor education.

We discussed these recommendations in an opinion piece we co-authored with the Conference Board of Canada, [Youth outdoor education programs create strong social emotional skills, build resilience](#), published in the Toronto Star in August 2022.



2022 Reach Beyond Expedition in Haida Gwaii

Our youth weren't the only ones who went beyond their limits in 2022: In June, eight OBC supporters journeyed to the Haida Gwaii archipelago in British Columbia to participate in the Reach Beyond Fundraising Expedition. The trip was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our supporters to overcome the physical challenge of crossing the open ocean and learn about Indigenous perspectives on the land. Together, they raised nearly \$40,000 for our youth programs.





Our Impact

Social Challenge

2022 was a challenging year for youth in Canada. From the affordability crisis, to the growing concern about the climate emergency, to the increasing understanding of the pandemic impact on mental health, good news sometimes seemed out of reach.

That's why, here at Outward Bound Canada, we did what we do best: We've focused on helping young people who have been hit hard in recent years get outside and have life-changing experiences in nature. We created new programs and funding opportunities, which allowed us to fund over 60% of our total youth served.

Thanks to your support, hundreds of youth benefited from our courses and support in 2022. They report that their resilience, confidence, leadership skills, and overall well-being have improved, and that they're more engaged with the environment and conservation.



Facts about youth in Canada today

Indigenous youth are at **higher risk for mental health challenges** due to the lingering effects of colonialism, residential schools, and intergenerational trauma.

Depression and anxiety have steadily increased in recent years, with **35% of youth reporting anxiety and 25% reporting depression.**

2SLGBTQ+ youth are significantly more likely to experience **depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts** than other youth.

Lack of access to nature can contribute to social isolation, which is a risk factor for mental illness. In a 2019 survey, **43% of youth reported feeling disconnected** from nature.

Social isolation was a major problem for youth even before the pandemic: in a 2019 survey, **23% of youth in Canada reported feeling lonely or socially isolated on a regular basis.** In 2021, **61% of youth reported feeling socially isolated during the pandemic.**

In 2022, **15%** of OBC participants identified as being within the 2SLGBTQ+ community, and **17%** described themselves as First Nations, Inuit, or Metis.

One in five youth aged 12-24 suffers from a **mental illness** in the course of a year.

A 2020 study found that **youth who reported spending less time in nature were more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety.** The study found that for every additional hour per week that youth spent in nature, they were 8% and 6% less likely to experience depression and anxiety.

Sources available on following page.

Sources

- Canadian Mental Health Association. (2023). [Youth mental health statistics](#).
- Assembly of First Nations. (2023). [Mental wellness](#).
- Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2023). [Youth mental health](#).
- Canadian Paediatric Society. (2023). [COVID-19: Information for parents about mental health](#).
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- University of British Columbia. (2020). [New study links duration of daily outdoor playtime to reduced rates of myopia and mental health issues in children](#).
- Nature Sacred. (2019). [The effects of nature on children's mental health and wellbeing](#).
- Ipsos. (2019). [Spotlight on Canadian youth: A national survey of Canadian youth aged 16-22](#).
- University of British Columbia. (2020). [New survey shows social isolation negatively impacting youth during pandemic](#).

How OBC helps

Outward Bound Canada's programs are more relevant than ever. Our programs provide students with genuine outdoor experiences that promote personal growth, community building, academic progress and diversity. We foster cooperation and respect among participants to build self-esteem and confidence, which are critical to education. Through various opportunities and support systems, we help students reach their full potential in the following areas:

Strengthened resilience

Our programs cultivate physical and mental well-being, equipping participants with resilience that will serve them throughout their lives.

Social and emotional skills for success in school, work, and life

We're committed to helping students overcome their limitations and reach their full potential. They become confident, cooperative, and courageous team players who form meaningful friendships and strong social bonds that last a lifetime.

Environmental responsibility

OBC programs foster a love and appreciation for the environment and instill in youth a sense of responsibility to protect and preserve it for future generations.

Outward Bound Canada 2022 alumni speak: How our programs catalyzed positive change

Resilience & Self-confidence

“
My experience has helped me realize my own strength and my ability to overcome obstacles. When I think back to carrying more than half my body weight on my back for over 8 kms, it reminds me how much I can do when challenges come. I've found that I'm more resourceful when it comes to my clothes and food. By getting by with just a few pieces of clothing, I'm now more aware of how to dress without being too consumed by consumer culture. Most importantly, I can say that I'm more in tune with myself because of my OBC experience.”

- Outward Bound Canada 2022 Participant

Alumni Report

62%

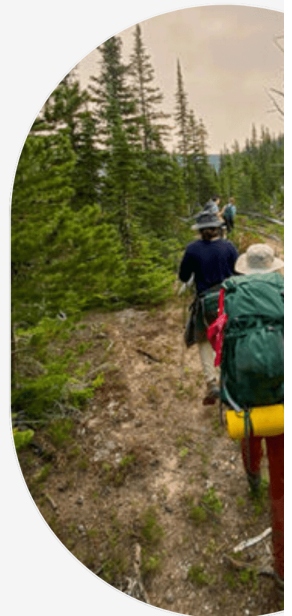
Of participants tend to bounce back quickly after hard times

78%

Of participants believe "when I apply myself to something I am confident I will succeed"

72%

Of participants believe in their perseverance, "I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities"



Outward Bound Canada 2022 alumni speak: How our programs catalyzed positive change

Social Competence



“

I feel that being able to talk, interact, eat, and backpack with a diverse group has made me more intentional about talking to as many different people as possible. I strive to learn more about other worldviews and cultures because the knowledge is so valuable.”

- Outward Bound Canada Participant 2022

Alumni Report

67%

Of participants believe "I am successful in social situations"



Outward Bound Canada 2022 alumni speak: How our programs catalyzed positive change

Compassion for Others

“

It gave me a different perspective on how much we really need to survive. We're constantly bombarded with advertisements that create a sense of lack in us, but we're so privileged to want and then have all these things. Many people don't have the opportunity to experience nature in this way. The adventurous backcountry isn't accessible to much of the world. Many people live in poverty and have no choice but to live in cold tents and boil water to survive. Warmth, hearty food, clean water and toilets are necessities we take for granted. Whenever I'm cold, I tell myself that I've slept in colder places. And then I tell myself that I'm grateful that I've a place to stay warm at night. I'm so privileged to be humbled in this way.”

- Outward Bound Canada 2022 Participant

Alumni Report

80%

Of participants believe "I am able to help others when they need it, without being interested in anything in return"



83%

Of participants believe "I treat others always as I want to be treated"

Outward Bound Canada 2022 alumni speak: How our programs catalyzed positive change

Environmental Responsibility



“

I appreciate nature much more and feel more confident in leadership roles. My time backpacking sparked my passion for the outdoors. Even though I won't be on the front lines, I want to work in environmental policy and do my part to preserve our beautiful natural world.”

- Outward Bound Canada 2022 Participant

Alumni Report

92%

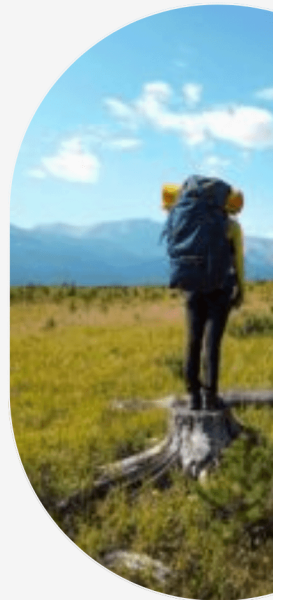
Of participants believe "I always treat nature with respect"

89%

Of participants believe "I take responsibility for caring for the environment"

91%

Of participants believe "I have a connection to nature"



How life changed after their OBC experience

86%

More likely to step outside of their comfort zone and take advantage of new opportunities

77%

Actively make more environmentally conscious decisions in life

75%

More likely to be physically active

75%

Have more of the skills and experiences necessary to thrive in the workplace

“

When I started my trip with Outward Bound, I was at a very difficult point in my life and didn't think anything would work for me. The connection I've made with everyone on my team has given me more confidence than I ever had before. Since the trip, everything has worked out in my favour, I've gotten new job offers, made new friends and am just living a better life.”

- Outward Bound Canada 2022 Participant



JEDI Access Statement



In 2022...

We began collecting specific data to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion at OBC. We found that:

- **10% of OBC staff identify as 2SLGBTQ+**
- **15% of our staff identify as Black, Indigenous or People of Colour**

We also formed a **Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee (JEDI Access Committee)** to improve overall diversity, equity and inclusion, making the following progress:

- After analyzing the gaps in OBC culture and systems, we began to work collaboratively within the organization to address these issues - the JEDI Access Committee is a result of this work.
- Thanks to funds donated by Gore Mutual, we've hired three youth advisors who have made significant contributions to our DEI initiatives.
- Our Human Resources team revised OBC's hiring practices to be more inclusive of marginalised groups, and the feedback from applicants has been encouraging. Of 15 key positions filled in 2022, seven identified as BIPOC and four identified as members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community.
- We established a 2SLGBTQ+ Task Force to increase the number of students in our affinity courses through various initiatives and strategies.
- The People & Operations team has identified a lack of clean data to make decisions and understand workforce trends, so in 2022 we developed a robust onboarding survey package for new employees to complete. This survey will allow us to capture demographic data, religious and cultural holidays, and dietary needs for group events.
- We have reinstated our weekly anti-oppression discussion group, where staff can share ideas and insights on topics related to anti-oppression.



There's much more to come in 2023, such as the introduction of affinity groups where staff can support each other and have access to specific resources, an access center for information and digital resources to raise awareness and support underrepresented groups, and many other initiatives.

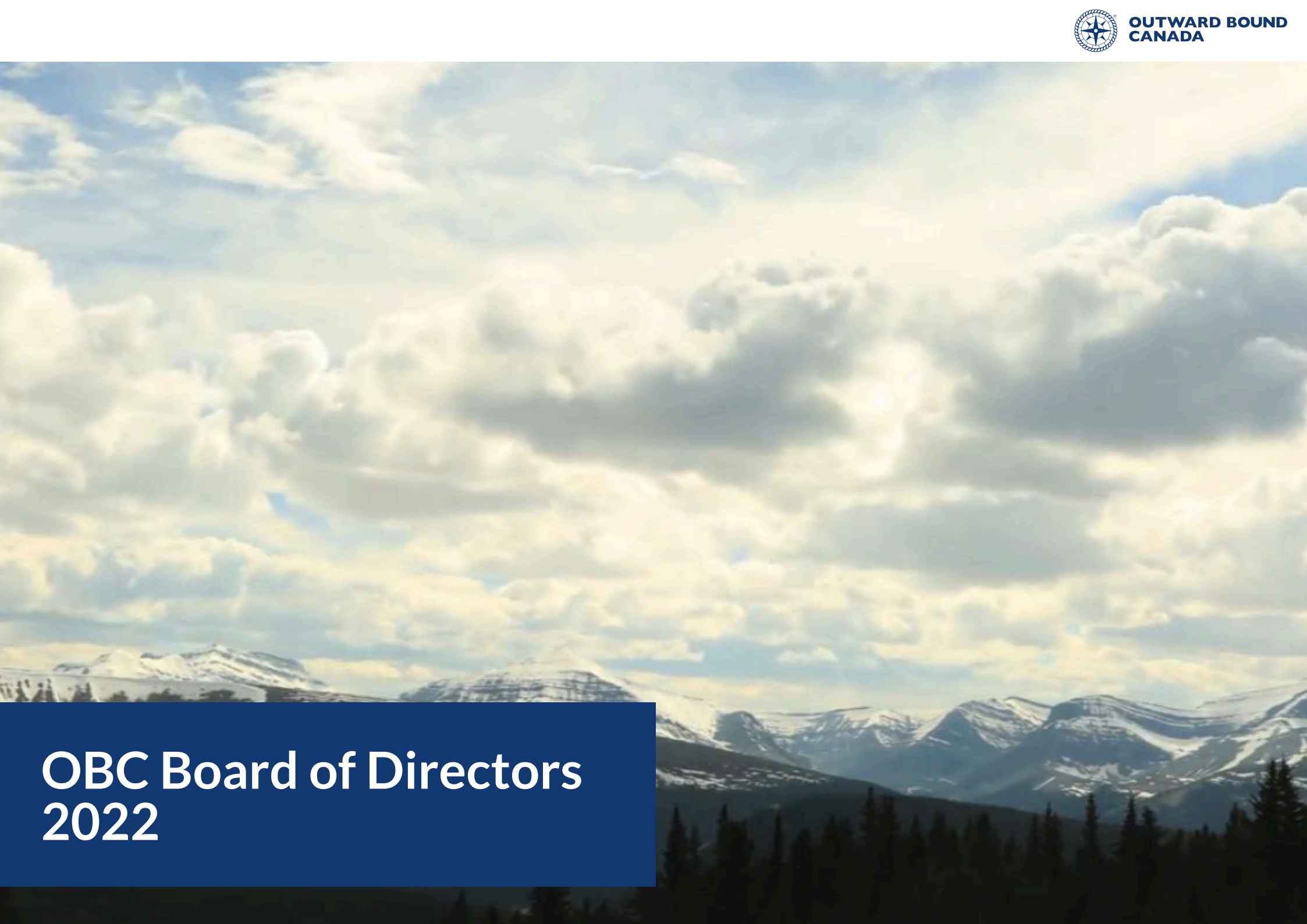


“

The best part about being a BIPOC female outdoor instructor is knowing that I can bring in my own experience and see things from a different perspective. That's why I love working with BIPOC affinity groups or with urban groups.”

- Shams Ben Temessek, OBC instructor





OBC Board of Directors 2022

Board of Directors



Anne Fitzgerald
Chair of Board;
Fundraising Cabinet
Chief Legal Officer,
Cineplex Inc.



David Reeve
Past Chair of Board;
Fundraising Cabinet
Founder and President,
InvestorCOM Inc.



Tahir Ayub
Director; Finance
Committee
Executive Vice
President and CFO,
Open Road Auto
Group



Chris Benedetti
Director;
Principal, Sussex
Strategy Group



Mark Burton
Director; Chair of Risk
Oversight Committee;
Finance Committee
Managing Director,
NINEFOLD Inc.



G. David Cole
Director; Chair of
Fundraising Cabinet
Vice Chairman,
Enterprise Strategic
Client Group, Royal
Bank of Canada



Jeff Horvath
Director;
Principal, Morley
Community School



Paul Nicoletti
Treasurer; Chair,
Finance Committee
Partner and COO of
Altas Partners



Edyta Pacuk
Director; Human
Resources
Committee
President,
MarchFifteen
Consulting Inc.



**Tabassum
Ramhendar**
Director;
Director,
Transformation
Enablement,
Royal Bank of
Canada



Jill Schofield
Director; Chair, Human
Resources Committee
Managing Director,
ZRG Partners



John Terry
Secretary; Legal
Partner, Torsys
LLP

The background of the entire slide is a photograph of a calm lake with dark, mossy rocks in the foreground. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds. On the left side, the dark green branches of evergreen trees are visible. The slide is divided into two main vertical panels by a thin vertical line of the same background image.

Fundraising Cabinet

David Cole (cabinet chair)

Anne Fitzgerald

David Reeve

Chris Benedetti

Jean Marmoreo

Cathy Spoel

Julia LoVecchio

Outward Bound International (OBI) Global Ambassadors

Jamie Anderson

Bart MacDougall

David Reeve

Peter Mortiffee

Mary Thompson



Financials

To download a full report on our condensed financials,
please click [HERE](#)





Thank You!

Thank you!



We want to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of the foundations, corporations, and donors who supported us in 2022 with a gift of \$20,000 or more so that we can continue to fulfill our mission of empowering and transforming the lives of young people through outdoor experiential education.



Thank you for your commitment to Outward Bound Canada and our mission. Thanks to your generosity and unwavering commitment to our cause, we're able to provide life-changing experiences for hundreds of youth across the country.



Thank You to Our Donors

Alectra Utilities
Altas
Anderson Family Foundation
Andree Rheume & Robert Fitzhenry
Anne Fitzgerald
Anonymous (3)
Barb Gosling & Derek Small
Bart MacDougall
Bealight Foundation
Government of Canada
David & Martha Reeve
Eco Canada
Fitzgerald Family Foundation
Frank Heard
Gore Mutual Insurance
Ivari
J.P. Bickell Foundation
Joan and David Burke
John Terry
Jumpstart

Mary Jacqueline Rosevear Fund
Mary Thomson & Jan Ruby
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Ottawa Foundation (anonymous)
Paul Nicoletti and Simone Lumsden
Peter Gilgan Foundation
Project Learning Tree
RBC Foundation
Richard Bird
Somerset Foundation
The Daniel Family Foundation
The Maddie Project
The Peter Cundill Foundation
The Sabourin Family Foundation
Toronto Foundation Trust Collective
Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund
Unit E Investments
Victoria Foundation
William Bamber





Thank you for reading.

Here's to a great 2023