



OUTWARD BOUND
CALIFORNIA

Board Prospect Information

To spark lifelong growth through challenge—outside. We facilitate adventurous learning, rooted in the outdoors, to unlock confidence, curiosity, and the skills to thrive with purpose.

As members of the Board of Directors of Outward Bound California, Directors play a critical role in the organization and our mission.





Board Overview

Thank you for your interest in learning more about Outward Bound California's (OBCA) Board of Directors. This document will provide you with a look into OBCA and a summary of the role of the Board of Directors.

2026 Board Members

Ed Colloton
Board Co-Chair

Glen Tripp
Board Co-Chair

Emily Ketchen
Secretary

Ron Will
Treasurer

Winn Ellis
Immediate Past Chair

Board Emeritus

Founder Douglas Levick
Rajen Dalal
Veronica Arthur
Woody Scal

Abraham Simmons

Alan Nguyen

Claudia Lewis

Fernando Sucre

Greg Yap

Jonathan Schmidt

Katie Fast

Kendra Frisbie

Maggie Bove-Lamonica

Michael Gaines

Paul Danielsen

Steve Hagler

Topher Solmssen

Tristam Brown

If you are interested in learning more,
please contact: communications@obca.org

ABOUT

MISSION

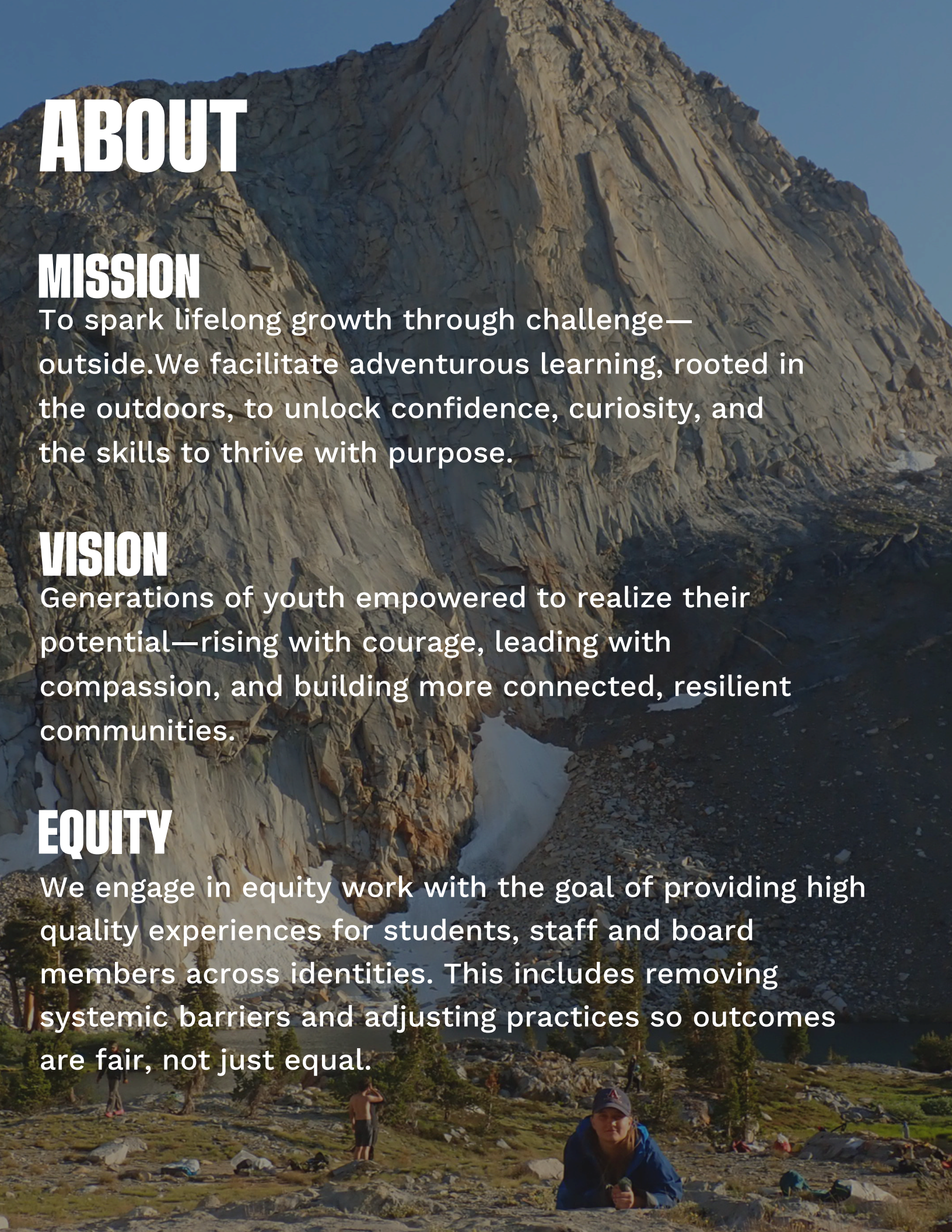
To spark lifelong growth through challenge—outside. We facilitate adventurous learning, rooted in the outdoors, to unlock confidence, curiosity, and the skills to thrive with purpose.

VISION

Generations of youth empowered to realize their potential—rising with courage, leading with compassion, and building more connected, resilient communities.

EQUITY

We engage in equity work with the goal of providing high quality experiences for students, staff and board members across identities. This includes removing systemic barriers and adjusting practices so outcomes are fair, not just equal.



About the Board

The OBCA Board of Directors are responsible for guiding the organization, and overseeing that the organization does the best work possible in pursuit of its mission and goals. Our bylaws state that we can have a maximum of 24 members.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide oversight for the well-being of the organization. This includes budget familiarity and approval, taking an active part in high level organizational decision-making, publicly interpreting the organization's work and values to various communities, and keeping up to date and active in the business of the organization.

The board ensures compliance with legal and financial reporting requirements; raises funds and develops the board through recruitment, board training, self-assessment, and board education.

COMMITTEES/MEETINGS

Attend six board meetings each year, scheduled bi-monthly. A board retreat is held off-site annually. Each member will serve on at least one committee. The board supports and participates in advising and developing the Outward Bound leadership team. They participate in the annual fundraising event and at least two other fundraising/donor cultivation events. And as Outward Bound enthusiasts, they experience Outward Bound programming as much as possible!

For fundraising, the board has a leading role in OBCA's annual unrestricted fund, annually contributing personally or leveraging networks. Board members support key OBCA events such as City Skyline Challenge, Roots 'n Ropes community day, dinners, alumni events, and board-hosted Invitational Expeditions.

On behalf of the organization, the board will outreach new board and staff talent and make new connections to advance the mission of Outward Bound.





Committees

FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Consists of 6-8 members, generally meeting once a month. This committee works with staff to develop fundraising strategies and plans, and will monitor the performance of the strategies developed.

PROGRAM AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Consists of 5-7 members who oversee programs and operations, risk management and safety systems. This includes securing outside industry advisors including medical advisors, psychiatric advisors and program experts. This committee meets quarterly and as needed to approve the annual safety objectives and advise on risk management and programs.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Consists of 3-4 members, who meet monthly, responsible for nomination, recruitment and management of board members.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Consists of 4-5 members who meet monthly who serve as leaders and advisors on financial matters of OBCA including review of the annual audit and budget. The committee will lead the Board in reviewing OBCA's strategy for long-term financial sustainability.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Comprising of Board Chairs and the Executive Director, this committee meets monthly in between board meetings. It monitors the Executive Director's performance and makes recommendations for goals. The committee also supports the ED and provides advice on operating and personnel matters.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

TBD





OBCA HISTORY

OBCA programs draw from an 60-year, global Outward Bound education model and curriculum developed to deepen impact and create lasting, positive student outcomes. In 2008, Outward Bound launched its first West Coast urban-based center in San Francisco.

Expeditions were already running in the High Sierra through the greater Outward Bound network. That programming merged with the urban center in 2012, when Outward Bound California became its own charter of Outward Bound USA. In 2014, OBCA expanded programming to Southern California by opening a basecamp in Joshua Tree.

In 2020, OBCA completed the construction of its Challenge Course at John McLaren Park! And in 2022, OBCA put down roots in Joshua Tree by initiating the purchase of a Southern California basecamp, expected to be fully functional by the 2023 season.



OUTWARD BOUND USA

In the early 1950s, Josh Miner, an American who taught under Kurt Hahn at the Gordonstoun School, was inspired by Hahn's philosophy and teaching model. Over the following decade, Miner founded Outward Bound in the United States, based upon the principles of hands-on learning through outdoor challenge and adventure. It began as a training course for volunteers to the newly founded Peace Corps and then with the establishment of the first Outward Bound school in Colorado in 1961, Outward Bound gave rise to an entire outdoor education industry in the U.S.

PROGRAMMING

OBCA has two programming components: multi-day outdoor expedition courses and community-based group programs.

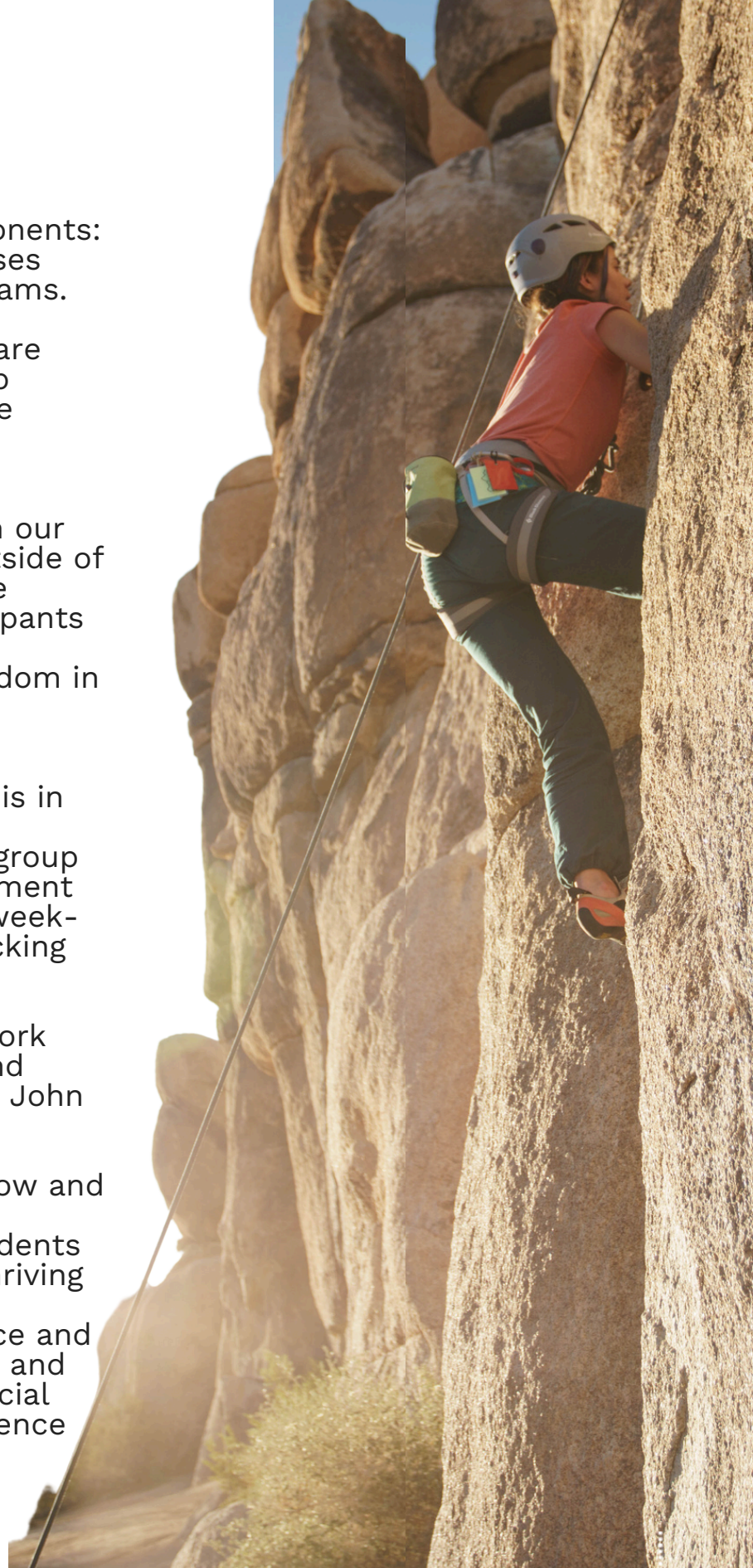
For the outdoor expeditions there are open enrollment courses and group courses. Open enrollment are those courses listed on our website for individuals to enroll.

In the High Sierra, we operate from our basecamp in Midpines, CA, just outside of Yosemite National Park. We provide opportunities for nearly 350 participants to experience a deepened sense of ability, confidence, power and freedom in themselves through wilderness experiences.

Our Southern California basecamp is in Joshua Tree, where we have long standing partners that experience group expeditions, as well as open enrollment individuals who sign up to attend week-long winter through spring backpacking and rock climbing courses.

Our community-based programs work with youth serving organizations and schools at the Challenge Course at John McLaren Park in San Francisco.

The Challenge Course consists of low and high obstacles in the urban park's treetops designed to challenge students and develop OBCA's Domains of Thriving Social Emotional Learning (SEL) objectives that include Perseverance and Assertiveness, Group Relationships and Teamwork, Self-Awareness and Social Responsibility, and Physical Confidence and Self-Regulation.



OUR IMPACT

Outward Bound is at the center of a fundamental shift in the nation's educational paradigm.

By teaching key social and emotional skills, our programs are helping students outgrow their comfort zones and learn to lead together. The Outward Bound Domains of Thriving (DoT) combines our 80 year history with the latest insight and research on social-emotional development. The DoT highlights the four areas of human development that are impacted on an Outward Bound course: Courage, Belonging, Reflection, and Physical Engagement. The Outward Bound Outcomes Survey (OBOS), designed and validated by the Partnerships for Education and Resilience (PEAR), measures student change in 12 areas critical to the development of these four domains. Students take the survey at the end of their course, and report on each area. We analyze the results and leverage the learnings to improve programming, staff training and ensure we are providing equitable outcomes for all students across race and gender.

Our results showed that students reported statistically significant positive change across all twelve measures on our overnight programs and all six measures on our Challenge Course one day programs. Additionally, there were no statistically significant differences between race/ethnicity groups on any of the 12 scales for either program type.

ON OUR OVERNIGHT PROGRAMS

● Agree ● Neither Agree nor Disagree ● Disagree



of students gained courage to face challenges



of students committed to making a difference in their world after their course



of students felt they learned to work more effectively in a group

ON OUR ONE-DAY PROGRAMS

● Agree ● Neither Agree nor Disagree ● Disagree



I have gained confidence to try new things



I am more aware of how to support those around me



I can work more effectively in a group

**PERCENT OF STUDENTS SELF REPORTING CHANGE USING THE OBOS IN 2021.
TOTAL OF 366 SURVEYS WERE COMPLETED.

VISION FOR IMPACT

By 2030, OBCA is sought after by individuals, schools, and nonprofits as a trusted partner in delivering life-changing outdoor experiential education programs. Building upon Outward Bound's 60-year legacy in the U.S., we harness the inherent power of the natural environment to provide social-emotional learning opportunities for our students. In a supportive group environment, our skilled staff help students embrace physical and emotional challenges, find space for reflection, and cultivate skills like confidence and compassion that enable them to contribute to meaningful change in their communities and the world. We have evolved to center equity throughout our organization, and we increase access to the outdoors for groups who have been historically underrepresented, giving them a sense of inclusion and belonging in outdoor spaces.

[TO READ THE ENTIRE STRATEGIC PLAN, PLEASE VISIT THIS PAGE](#)



JOINING THE BOARD

OBCA keeps its Board of Directors informed with regular financial reports and organizational updates, often including information about programs and the impact Outward Bound is having on its communities. There are also opportunities provided to Board Members for input to the organization's programs, goals, activities and visibility in numerous ways.

If this sounds like a role you would embrace, and you're interested in being a part of a team of influential leaders who are helping OBCA fulfill its mission on a daily basis, please contact: communications@obca.org

We are also committed to reflecting the diverse communities with whom we work and strongly encourage people of color, LGBTQ+ identifying folks, and women to apply.



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