

# Harvard Outdoor



# First-Year Program

## Annual Report

Dear FOP Family,

This year has been eventful for the First-Year Outdoor Program (FOP)! One year ago, I was offered the directorship. Since then, Steering Committee and I have been working together to ensure that FOP remains a leader at Harvard and a leader in the field of Outdoor Education and Leadership Development. I hope to help carry out the well-loved traditions of the past while hiking into the future. As we continue to share no-bake cheesecakes on the trail, contemplate about what the outdoors looks like from our basement offices, and enjoy consensus decisions for everything but their efficiency, we also are working on leaving a legacy behind us of a program that is increasingly accessible to a wider Harvard audience.

Serving a population as diverse as the Harvard student body, we as a program are committed to nurturing leaders who have the capacity to recognize a diversity of perspectives and backgrounds and who can build community amidst and across this range of differences. Over the past year, Steering Committee began integrating an ongoing Diversity and Inclusion curriculum into the whole year of training. This past spring, we made it easier to sign up for our program by putting our application on-line, and we sent out another successful Intern Trip, making it possible for students with less outdoor experience to become leaders. This summer, we used your Fundraising Gifts to purchase \$20,000 of Rental Gear, including



**Director, Jessica Ross**

85 sets of EMS System III rain gear, 60 new sleeping pads, and 65 beautiful, new Gregory Palisade packs, embroidered with the official FOP logo. As a result of these purchases, this fall, we were able to send 62% of our students out with top-notch rental gear.

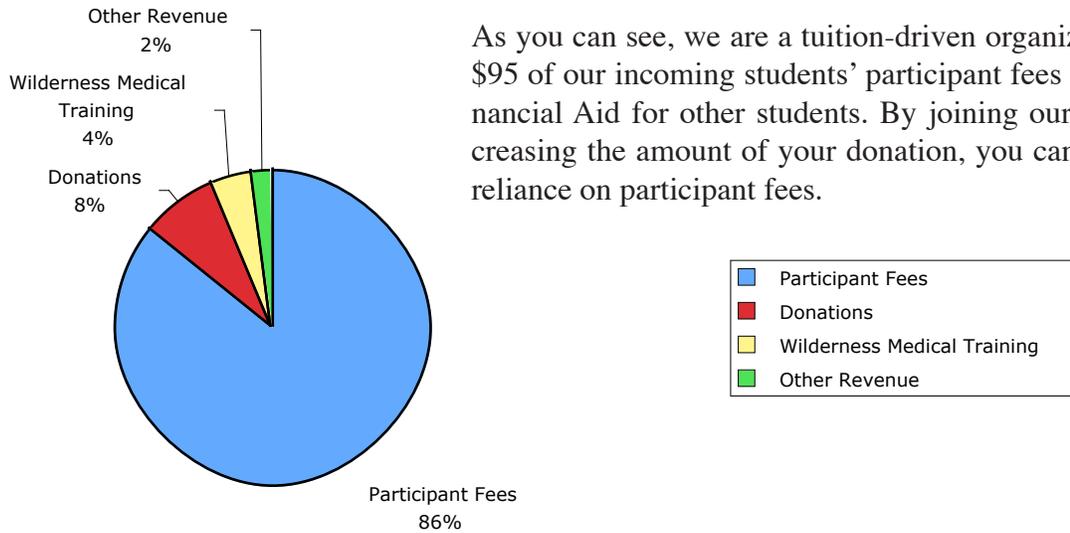
As the Harvard Financial Aid Initiative increases the amount that Harvard students are receiving in Harvard Financial Aid, I hope we can get your support in increasing our financial aid as well. It is important that as our student body becomes more socioeconomically diverse, our campus programs remain financially accessible to everyone. Thank you for your support.

Yours in Adventure,

Jessica L. Ross



## FOP Income FY 05-06



### Goals:

- 1) Raise money to purchase enough gear such that no incoming student has to purchase a new backpack, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, or rain gear to go on FOP. Purchase necessary rental gear to achieve this goal.
- 2) Maintain a fund for Financial Aid so that FOP can continue to provide Financial Aid to any student who is on Financial Aid support at the University.

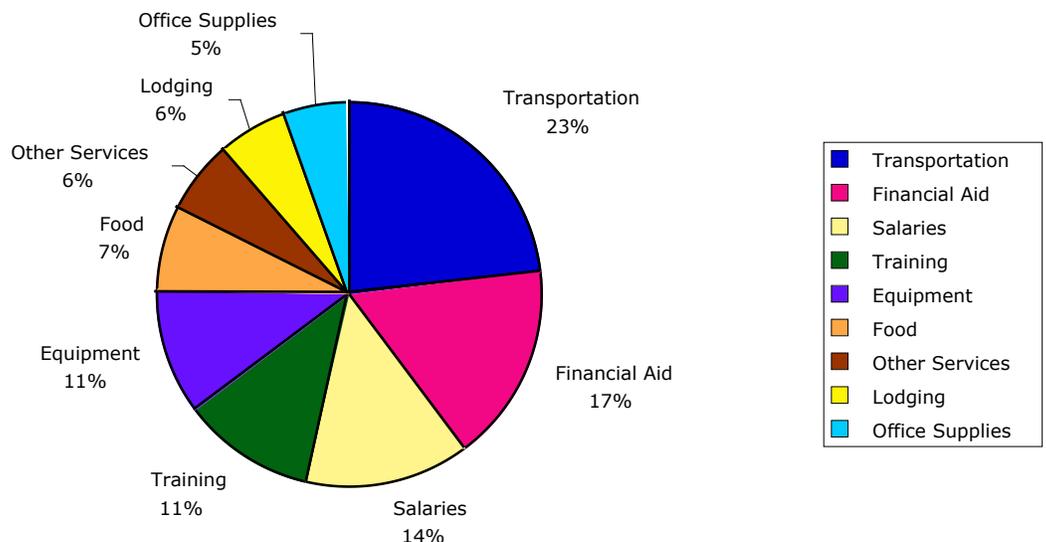
Year	No. of Participants	% on Financial Aid	Amount of Financial Aid	% with Rental Gear
2005	263	27%	\$17,571	59%
2006	283	36%	\$23,815	54%
2007	248	34%	\$24,700	62%

## FOP Expenses 05-06

In the last Fiscal year, over 75% of our expenses were spent on program areas, with less than 25% of our expenses devoted to administrative costs.

Our second largest expense was Financial Aid.

In totality, FOP devoted 28% of its expenses to Financial Aid and Equipment.





## **The Harvard First-Year Outdoor Program**

### **The Program:**

The First-Year Outdoor Program (FOP) is the oldest and largest pre-orientation program for freshmen and transfer students at Harvard. Every year, FOP sends approximately 18% of the incoming first-years on six-day backpacking, canoeing, and camping trips at the beginning of the school year. Housed within the Freshman Dean's Office, FOP was developed in 1979 by the Freshman Dean to provide students with a stronger support network upon entrance to college. Since then, over five-thousand students have begun their Harvard experience by living with 8-10 peers in the backcountry, under the leadership of 2-3 trained upperclassmen leaders. In 2000, the Association for Experiential Education (AEE) granted the program accreditation, a professional certification shared by only nine other college outdoor programs in the country.

### **Why Support a Pre-Orientation Program?**

A significant body of research indicates the significance of the first six weeks of the college experience in adjusting to college life in the long-term. In a survey performed at Harvard in 2005, students indicated that an involvement in a pre-orientation program significantly improved their introductions to Harvard.

### **Why Support FOP?**

FOP is one of only 46 AEE-Accredited Programs in North America, joining other well-known programs, such as the National Outdoor Leadership School and Outward Bound. Research has demonstrated that, among Harvard orientation programs, the First-Year Outdoor Program is the most successful at providing social support networks to students upon entry to Harvard. Research has also documented the positive impact of college outdoor orientation programs well beyond college. Other studies have found that college outdoor pre-orientation experiences are correlated with higher academic achievement throughout college.

### **The Mission:**

The First Year Outdoor Program's mission is to provide group adventure-based experiences that promote the development of social support and self-awareness for first-year students and leadership development for members of the Harvard community.

### **Central Values:**

- Compassion
- The equality and intrinsic worth of all people regardless of gender, age, race, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic or socio-economic background
- Responsibility to community
- Care and responsibility to the environment

### **Why We Fundraise:**

The First-Year Outdoor Program endeavors to provide financial aid and gear to anyone who needs it in an effort to minimize and ultimately to eliminate any financial barriers that might prevent students from participating in the program. Your donation will help us reach this goal.

# Thanks to our 2006 Fundraising Drive Donors!

## FOP Summit Team (\$500-\$4000)

JoAnn and Walter Beh  
Lawrence A. Darby III and Mary W. Darby  
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation  
Tom Garwin  
Alex B. Livingston  
Jeff and Carol Miller  
Peter and Molly Ross  
Meredith Trim

## FOP Climbers (\$250-\$499)

G. Rees Cosgrove and Karen A. Roche  
Michael R. Epstein  
Amy Justice  
Merck Company Foundation  
Thomas Platz  
Julie W. and Nicholas J. Sakellariadis  
Max Steuer  
Wesley K. and Kathryn C. Tanaka  
Susan Truman

## FOP Trailblazers (\$100-\$249)

Craig A. and Francesca B. Bestwick  
David C. and Julie A. Boch  
Chantal Z. Buchanan and Robert M. Buchanan, Jr.  
John C. and Jan H. Burruss  
John and Nan Carroll  
Joel L. and Jeanette B. Clinkenbeard  
Brenda and John Costa  
JoAnn Doblecki  
Catherine Hornby  
Sarah Kimball and Bryan Mazlish  
Sarah MacDonald  
James H. and Joan O. O'Keefe  
Jad Sami and Maha Daniel  
Howard and B. Jill Comins Stein  
Kathy and Tak Takvorian  
Diane Umstead and Rex D. VanMiddlesworth

## In-Kind Donations (Housing for FOP Basecamp & Retreats)

Nan and Eliot Fisher  
Peter and Molly Ross  
The Platz Family

## FOP Explorers (\$25-\$99)

Charles J. and Marilyn S. Adomanis  
George L. Askew and Katherine F. Russel  
Linda F. and Fred Barth  
Ed Robert Blazek and Ann Rudinger  
Horace L. Bowman  
Linda R. and Kurtis K. Bray  
Julie G. and D.S. Brody  
Greg Buckland  
Ann Budreika  
Kate Callaghan  
Elizabeth and Christopher City  
Deborah Cole  
Cutler Cook  
Abby Donaldson  
James Dyett  
Michael Etzel  
Michael D. and Janey K. Evans  
Drew S. Fixell and Victoria T. Hudson  
Eldon Cleef and Emily Raffel Greenberg  
Benedict H. Gross  
Nicole L. Gueron and Carter H. Strickland, Jr.  
Peter J. and Laura M. Haas  
Bernadine Han  
Nina Huber  
Sanjay K. and Varsha K. Jain  
Henry Jampel  
David C. and Kate Kessler  
Ann and Tom Kiely  
D. Collier and Ann L. Kirkham  
Ted and Marilyn Koenig  
Catherine D. Krna  
Lawrence E. and Anne M. Maguire  
Neil and Lisa Hill McDonough  
Mike McKee and Ellen Hiatt  
Zoe McKee  
Margaret and Alexander Mersereau  
Richard A. and Eileen R. Morange  
Gale Munson  
John A. and Mary Margaret Nousek  
Meredith Osborn  
David Renton  
Philip B. Renton  
Antoinette and Dey Rose  
Leigh Rovzar  
Patricia and Daniel Schoor Rube  
Lorenzo A. and Anita Glazer Sadun  
Marc S. and Randice T. Simon  
Martha Smolley  
Joshua I. Schwartz and Eileen J. Solomon  
Diane Stallings  
Mimi and Sam Tilton  
D. Steward Tucker  
Wayne Tyrrell and Karen Browning  
Emily Walker  
Amy Wilsterman  
Jim and Sandy Wolchok  
John and Beverly S. Woodward  
Lee Wooten and Jamie Devol  
Hsushi and Tin-Ling Yeh

**We hope to see you again in our newsletter next year! Thanks for your support!**



# SC '08 Wishing You Happy Trails . . .



Dear FOPpers, Leaders, Friends, and Family,

Since taking over the reins of FOP from Steering Committee 2007, SC '08 has hit the ground running. Aiming to add to the tremendous legacy left to us by Steering Committees past, we have been working faithfully to maintain and improve this phenomenal program. We consider it a pleasure and an honor to have the opportunity to impact the lives of so many people – new and old FOPpers, FOP leaders, and their families.

In just our first month as a Steering Committee, we have tackled a wide range of projects and issues. We organized and presented a slideshow of our trips this past fall to the freshman parents on Parents' Weekend. We have improved and expanded the FOP blog, only recently begun by SC '07, as a means of fostering communication and dialogue between our leaders and SC. We are currently preparing for a risk management conference, which will bring together FOP, Harvard administrators, and various outdoor experts to evaluate and improve upon the manner in which FOP handles risk in the backcountry. We have begun the process of updating the Policies & Procedures section of the leader handbook, and will be incorporating the most recently updated Wilderness First Aid information. Finally, we have put together this first-ever Annual Report, and have spent a great deal of time expanding and improving our fundraising efforts for this fall season.

This last task is particularly important to this Steering Committee, since we are committed to supporting our participants in every way possible, including financially. As stated elsewhere in this report, it

is our explicit goal that no potential FOPper should ever feel prohibited from participating in our program due to financial constraints, or the inability to borrow or purchase gear. Our predecessors have made huge strides toward this goal, and we hope to continue with and expand upon these efforts to make FOP as inclusive and accessible as possible.

Our desire to support our FOPpers is certainly not limited to financial considerations, and it does not end once the hiking is over. Toward this end, we will continue the traditions of FOP-wide events, as well as encourage periodic trip reunions. Moreover, we as an SC realize that we need to better support our



leaders so that they may better support their FOPpers on and off the trail. We are committed to providing more opportunities for leader interaction, to engendering a more cohesive leader community, and to creating chances for continued leader training. By doing these things we hope to build a stronger community and program, and to serve leaders and participants alike.

It is our hope that this letter from Steering Committee, and the letter from our Director, will paint a broad picture of the First-Year Outdoor Program as it operates throughout the year, and will complement the financial information contained within this Annual Report. To read even more about our program and what we will be doing in the coming months (leader applications and trainee selection are right around the corner!), please keep an eye out for the Fuzzy Cheesecake newsletter, which SC will be mailing out in the Spring.

Happy Trails,  
Steering Committee 2008



FOP Leader Trainees and Leader Volunteers, Skills Day 1 2007