



Wim & Nancy Pauw Foundation
PO Box 1070, Banff, AB T1L 1H8
PauwFoundation.com (403)762-2642

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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KEEPING OUTDOOR LEARNING PROGRAMS FUN AND AFFORDABLE

Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation pledges \$175,000 to four area organizations

Banff, AB --- The Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation is pleased to announce exciting new partnerships with four local organizations. The Foundation will be donating \$175,000 for programs that support outdoor and land-based learning, wellness, outdoor pursuits, and ensuring financial barriers do not impede participation.

“The Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation is about building a more vibrant, active and healthy community. We are thrilled to support these programs that breakdown barriers, enrich learning opportunities and bring communities together, all in the great outdoors” says Cathy Geisler, Executive Director of the Foundation.

The four organizations receiving funding for local programs include Take Me Outside, Ecole Notre Dame des Monts, Nakoda Elementary School (NES), and Spirit North. While each program is unique in design and purpose, their common these is a focus on active, outdoor living that promotes mental and physical wellness.

Take Me Outside is slated to receive \$50,000 to further their mandate of ensuring students regularly spend time outside learning, playing, and exploring. The donation will support the promotion of several industry leading outdoor learning programs.

For Canmore’s Ecole Notre Dame des Monts, the grant of \$15,000 will allow them to expand their outdoor pursuits and wellness program, providing an enhanced physical learning experience for students at minimal cost to families.

Nakoda Elementary School will receive \$40,000 to support their NES Wild program that has grade 4 students spending each afternoon outside of the classroom in an outdoor learning space. Focused on land-based, intergenerational learning opportunities, a portion of the donation will go toward a transportation solution to ensure community Elders can travel to the outdoor classroom regardless of the season.

“Without the help from the Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation, we would not be able to grow (NES Wild). These programs strengthen communities, build positive relationships, and help students thrive. We’re overjoyed to have the financial support to grow this program in Mîni Thnî” says Emily Parkin, NES teacher.



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With the goal of empowering Indigenous youth to be “unstoppable in sport, school and life,” Canmore’s Spirit North will receive \$70,000. Spirit North has experienced exponential growth with increased participation. These funds will provide immediate help to fund this growth, eliminating financial barriers, and to support the development of a new Youth Leadership pilot program for young adults from Stoney Nakoda Nation.

“This funding will provide youth the opportunity to participate and feel a sense of belonging and connection to other youth, community members, and to the entire Bow Valley through sport” says Ken Beatty, Chief Operating Officer at Spirit North.

“Our communities face unique challenges when it comes to affordability and access to programs that foster positive mental and physical wellness. Financial assistance for programs like these provide healthy experiences and help promote positive outcomes at the community level” says Geisler.

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About The Wim & Nancy Pauw Foundation: Since being established, 2021 marked the first time the Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation exceeded \$1 million in grassroots donations to organizations in the Bow Valley. For 2022, a budget of \$1,400,000 was approved for disbursement to community initiatives that meet one of 3 pillars: Active Lifestyles, Education, and Community Building.

For more information contact:
Cathy Geisler
Executive Director
Wim & Nancy Pauw Foundation
403-760-7584
cgeisler@pauwfoundation.com