

GETTING READY FOR THE TRAIL



2018 ANNUAL REPORT



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WHO IS AORE?

The Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE) is the premier association in the outdoor profession. By bringing together individuals and organizations, AORE contributes to a global community that fosters a culture of learning, collaboration, research and innovation, and environmental stewardship. Through AORE, student and professional members are able to connect and support each other, exchange insights, develop effective strategies, explore resource-sharing, and work collectively to advance issues that shape the industry as a whole. We provide a variety of offerings throughout the year with deep-dive education sessions, interactive networking experiences, and expanded access to helpful tools and 1:1 feedback available for members during AORE's annual conference.

MISSION

AORE's mission is to provide opportunities for professionals and students in the field of outdoor recreation and education, to exchange information, promote the preservation and conservation of the natural environment, and address industry issues common to colleges and universities, for-profits, military agencies, and non-profit organizations.

AORE supports members in four areas: advocacy, networking, career advancement, and professional development.



CHARTING THE NEW FRONTIER

AORE's greatest future challenge will be staying relevant within a highly dynamic and evolving outdoor space. Our board's strategic planning efforts in 2018 focused on how to keep our association ahead of the curve and nimble enough to leverage the many opportunities for growth that exist within this rapidly changing field. Through this process, the Board brought attention to the constituent

base that we collectively represent 1.5 million participants annually and explored ways to deepen its reach with these individuals. We recognize that the outdoor industry is much larger than many of AORE's member programs might recognize. As we look to the future, AORE has positioned itself to play this role for members, helping them to stay abreast of this gigantic industry.

BY THE NUMBERS

7.6M in Direct National Jobs
\$887B in Consumer Spending

OUTDOOR RECREATION

\$65B in Federal Tax Revenue
\$59B in State/Local Tax Revenue



As the Director for Utah's Office of Outdoor Recreation, I've witnessed first-hand how the recreation economy is impacting Utah and the nation. In recent years, the outdoor industry has gained the attention of everyone from local state leaders to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA). This surge in popularity is confirmed by the BEA and OIA, which have found that outdoor recreation contributes over \$700B to the economy and more than four million jobs. This spotlight has resulted in great potential for expanding the job market and broadening the impact of our work.

As one would guess, these jobs are as diverse as the industry, presenting our nation's colleges and universities with unique challenges and opportunities as they prepare students for successful careers post-graduation. Here in Utah we already have eight universities that offer a range of four-year degrees dedicated to the outdoor industry. But these programs, as well as those around the country, need more resources and support to succeed in their goal of educating the next generation of leaders in our field. There is no better place to make those connections and find continued education than through AORE.

**Tom Adams, Director of Utah's Office of
Outdoor Recreation and AORE Board Member**



BOARD PRESIDENT STATEMENT

Dear AORE Members,

What a great year for AORE! We initiated the steps to define our next strategic plan, built relationships and collaborated with our industry partners, executed an amazing conference in cooperation with WEA, and set the stage to advance our mission of nurturing a close connection to all of our members, vendors, and partners.

We kicked off the year with the Board initiating strategic planning for 2020-2025. This process was a great example of how we, as a group, have shifted and elevated the Board's work to address the needs of each of our members and partner organizations, to dream big while keeping our feet on the ground, and to develop key action items and metrics necessary for sustainable growth and maturation of our mission.

Throughout the year, the realization came that we, AORE, can better serve you through establishing ourselves as the place to come to connect with all aspects of outdoor recreation and education. Our working statement was for AORE to be "the intersection between the industries of outdoor recreation and education and the greater outdoor industry." As with any aspirational statement, this is something that will take a great deal of work to achieve and it will help move us to the next step of the strategic planning process in 2019.

At the heart of all that our association is doing, is our members--YOU! As we look back, many strides have been made for others to see all of us as a key contributor, partner, and leader in the national landscape. Our focus is to support college and universities, Military MWR, for-profits, and nonprofits. We use our presence in the larger field to advocate for member issues and also, make an impact on the industry as a whole.



Your Executive Director, Board, and volunteer members of AORE's working committees hold seats at the table on national scope initiatives to ensure that your voice is being heard as it relates to: access and permitting; policies and standards; diversity, equity and inclusion; and more. Our Board is made up of a diverse range of skills and backgrounds representing college and university programs (Westminster College, University of Minnesota, Boise State, Humbolt State, University of Northern Iowa), for-profits (REI, Avid 4 Adventure, Shimano), state offices of outdoor recreation (Utah). This is a group that embodies our mission and is helping set the course of AORE and beyond.

Of course, there will always be more work ahead, but thanks to the dedicated efforts of our staff, members, and volunteers, AORE continues to serve as a way for sharing the voices that make up such a key part of this amazing industry. As a member, if you have a passion for our industry, you should consider joining this team to ensure that those we serve after us have a place to enjoy, learn, and recreate in the wonders of the great outdoors. We're excited for the collaborative work ahead as AORE enters the next chapter of its inspiring story.

See you on the trails!

JEREMY OYEN
Board President

PRESIDENT ELECT STATEMENT

Greetings AORE Community,

For those of you who I have not had the opportunity to meet, my name is Kellie Gerbers. I'm an Assistant Professor of Outdoor Education and Leadership at Westminster College in Salt Lake City, Utah. I currently serve as President Elect on AORE's Board of Directors. One of the strengths of our association is the high level of investment from our membership. AORE is best able to serve our outdoor community when we receive feedback from members who are industry experts in a variety of outdoor education contexts. I am proud of what we have accomplished together so far and am excited to see the next chapter unfold.

Thank you for taking the time to engage with our association's 2018 annual report. It was a busy year! The Board partnered with La Piana Consulting to strengthen our association's sense of identity, priorities, and focus. Through our partnership, we identified four core audiences that we want to serve: colleges/universities, military MWR, non-profit educators, and for-profit educators. We also identified association governance as a key area of focus and with the help of our membership, we have made significant improvements already. Furthermore, we are working with AORE's national office to improve and expand methods of communicating with our membership. We have also developed new webinars, utilizing new technology (including an enhanced website), and streamlining when and how members receive electronic communications from our team.

On behalf of the Board, I'd like to recognize the incredible contributions of our AORE365 Alliance Partners: G Adventures, Marmot, and Osprey. Their support has helped AORE advance programs such as Global University, fund awards and scholarships for students and professionals, and deliver high quality programs throughout the year—particularly as a part of our annual conference. As AORE members, I encourage you to please support our AORE 365 partners as they continue to advance our work. Additionally, I'd like to thank those of you who you gave to the association through a financial gift or as a volunteer.

We're also making progress toward the creation of an endowed scholarship fund to financially support students who wish to attend AORE's annual conference. As many of you know, I'm quite the Arby's enthusiast, but I'm pleased to announce that I made the tough decision to reduce my monthly Arby's budget in order to make a small recurring gift each month to AORE (because I realized that the work our association is doing is a worthier cause than a few extra Big Beef and Cheddar sandwiches). Whether or not you share my love of fast food roast beef, I'd encourage you to consider making a small monthly gift as well! It doesn't take much to set up a donation, but the benefits to AORE are immense.

My year on the board in 2018 was full of many teachable moments. I'm inspired by the current direction of our association. 2019 will mark a pivotal year for AORE as we roll out the association's strategic framework, which will guide us into a new chapter of growth. The talent, expertise, and insights we have at multiple levels—board, national office staff, and working committees—has positioned us for future success. I am excited to see what we will achieve together as we continue evolving. Thanks again for your continued support. As always, please reach out if you have questions or feedback to help make AORE even better.

Cheers!

KELLIE GERBERS
President Elect



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER

Greetings AORE Community,

I am an open water swimmer. I willingly swim across large bodies of often cold water for long distances. I'm drawn to this sport for a variety of reasons and I often apply my experiences in the sport to my professional work. For example, open water swimming and being a strategic association are similar. To move towards the finish line in swimming, or to move AORE to a new goal or destination, sights must be set on far off points (in swimming, it is called sighting)—be it the next buoy on the horizon or a benchmark for the association. These points are often hard to see, and it requires deciding to head in a certain direction and commit to that plan. Then the true work begins. We must put our heads down and "do the swim" or in the case of AORE, move staff, board, members, and the industry towards the future destination.

Reflecting on 2018, AORE has continued to build capacity for success. The board and I both knew that if we wanted to deliver different outcomes for our membership, we had to choose different ways to go about association business. In 2018, we completed a substantial staff restructuring, systematically evaluated programs and services, enhanced volunteer recruitment and engagement, created conference action teams, and delivered a joint conference in partnership with the Wilderness Education Association. As we build upon AORE's strengths and become more intentional about our strategic plan I want to honor the tremendous efforts and often unsung advocates of change. The goal for AORE is to truly add value to its members – and if we are successful in delivering the right tools and resources for our members, we know AORE will have a lasting and positive impact upon our those we serve in our outdoor recreation and education programs.

To this end, I want to thank Osprey, Marmot and G Adventures for their 365 Strategic Partnerships. Their financial support and leadership in the industry to support AORE allows us to further expand our influence. At the Fall Outdoor Retailer show, Osprey hosted an event that allowed AORE to access to show attendees to articulate our mission and advance development and membership growth. G Adventures supported the Ecuador Global University which in its second year explored outdoor recreation and global programming for program directors and administrators from the same school.

In swimming we must assess tides and currents that impact direction for the swimmer. Similarly AORE must look at industry conditions as we calculate our next move based on input from trends, politics, and culture. The board hired La Piana Consulting to help AORE approach this work, developing a new strategic framework and identity statement as a key outcome.

La Piana has helped the board see different perspectives throughout this process: The shoreline looks different from the water, just as the association looks different when you work closely with the board or staff, hear from members, or engage with industry partners. Over 2018 the board and staff have engaged in conversations with various stakeholders to ensure that our strategic framework captures these valuable perspectives and we are thankful for the participation of so many individuals along the way who made it possible.





AORE also executed our first Women Leaders Mentorship Institute (WMLI) through a series of webinars and a two-day preconference experience in Snowbird, UT that consisted of volunteer-facilitated field and classroom sessions. We're thankful to continue advancing the development of strong women leaders with the support of the many established women in AORE who have so much learning and advice to contribute to the conversation.

Development has historically been a challenge for AORE, almost feeling as painful as early workouts. But in 2018, leadership from this important board committee has helped us make new headway in this space. In fact, AORE has experienced more success than ever before with fundraising this year through hosting fundraisers, securing personal donations, and engaging members in making a gift to the student scholarship endowment campaign.

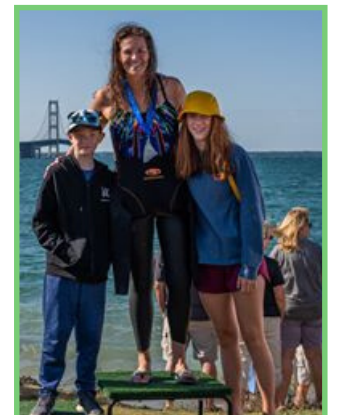
2018 also marked AORE's 25th year as a non-profit in 2018. In celebration of this achievement, we highlighted historic successes and reflected on past board, conference, and volunteer leadership throughout the year. AORE is thriving as it enters our next 25 years. We are truly finding our voice as an association in order to advocate for membership on the issues that affect their ability to lead. Being a part of an association means that members appreciate being part of something bigger than themselves. AORE is about making progress and getting members to a space that individuals couldn't easily reach on their own, but as a community we can.

One of the things I like best about both swimming and leading an association is that, because of the team and because of the effort, you can achieve things you didn't think were possible. I want to thank the AORE Board of Directors for their commitment to governance and the hard work and training they have embarked upon to grow their leadership. I also want to acknowledge the work of Event Garde who continues to bring operational expertise to AORE's daily work in the areas of membership, sponsorship, marketing and communications, programs, and technology. With their insights, we have been able to open our eyes up even more to the potential that awaits us as we craft our bold vision for the future.

But all of this takes preparation. 2018 marks AORE's commitment to planning for sustained long-term association growth and increased member value. Our team has its eyes on distant shores and we feel a rising tide that will lift all boats along the way. I am excited to navigate these new waters with the association and report on our accomplishments

Adventure On!

JEANNETTE STAWSKI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE



LIGHTING THE WAY

Task Force Lead
Brian Karban

Mitch Hoffman
Sarah Harper Burke

In 2018, the board undertook strategic planning for AORE's future work to help our association strengthen its sense of identity and priorities with the goal of advancing AORE's growth, sustainability, and overall capacity to support its members. We also worked to streamline association governance, resulting in a more intentional approach to our work and considerable added value to AORE's members. In April, we contracted with La Piana Consulting to lead our planning work and the board created the Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF) to help drive the process. Over the summer, we tested out proposed organizational strategies with a wide range of individuals to assess whether we got it right. Some of the people we spoke to included former board presidents and board members, the chairs and members of AORE's working committees, general members and vendor members, as well as key stakeholders from the greater outdoor industry. In the fall, we reviewed this collective feedback, clarified AORE's vision as a whole, and drafted a new identity statement to guide us. We closed the year by reviewing this work as a board and providing feedback to guide the conclusion of our efforts next year.

We extend deep appreciation to everyone who participated in our strategic planning endeavor in 2018. This roadmap for success will allow us to mitigate risk and be proactive rather than reactive, outlining a clearly articulated vision for what we want to achieve as an association---both for our members and for the larger industry of outdoor recreation and education. Together, we will be able to take advantage of emerging industry trends, build additional capacity (financial, staff, volunteers, and partners), better demonstrate our impact as an association, and ensure AORE's sustainability.



The laws of nature are the skeleton of the universe. They support it, give it shape, tie it together. Taken as a whole, they embody a vision of our world that is both breathtaking and awe-inspiring.



James Trefil, American Physicist

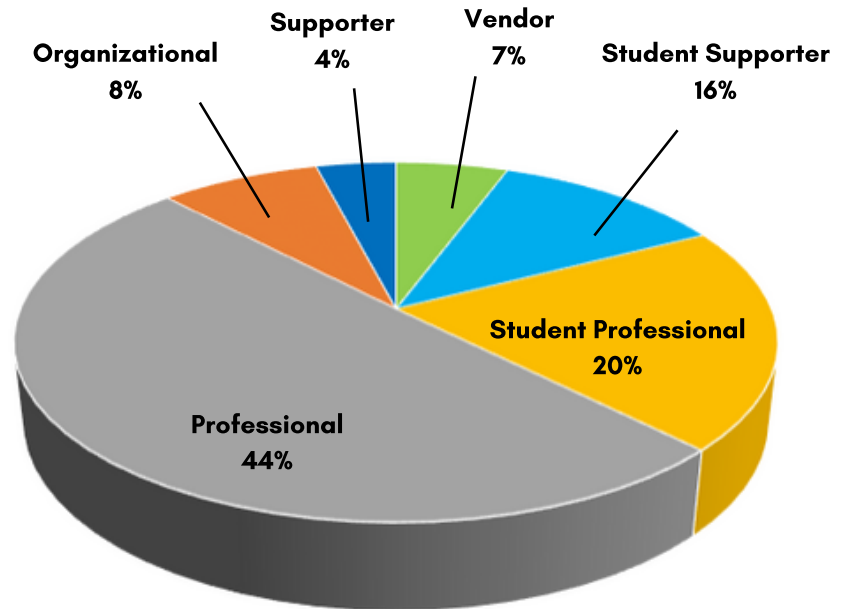


MEMBERSHIP AT-A-GLANCE

MEMBERSHIP AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018

AORE serves several different types of members. Each one of them brings a unique set of strengths, ideas, and perspectives to our vibrant community!

At the end of the year, we had a total of 741 members engaged with the association. We're thankful for the chance to bring these exceptional individuals together through the programs and services we deliver.



741
MEMBERS



AORE is contributing to the evolution of the outdoor industry by connecting our programs, and their participants, to this greater network that extends far beyond field based and academic outdoor programs.

We have participants from all walks of life using our member programs and facilities. As they develop a love for the outdoors, AORE can connect this diverse next generation of professionals to employment opportunities where they can explore how their career path can be a part of this greater industry. We know the industry is looking to cast a wider net to diversify its workforce and AORE's members and programs touch over 1.5 million participants annually.



Mitch Hoffman
AORE BOARD MEMBER

AORE IS A PLACE FOR MEMBERS TO CONNECT. LEARN. GROW.

Professional Development: AORE connects members to high quality programs, tools, trainings, and certification opportunities in a wide range of learning formats, ensuring that current and aspiring professionals have access to the education and resources they need to be relevant in their current job and achieve their goals.

Career Advancement: AORE provides a nurturing space for members to ask career questions and access the tools, education, and support needed to choose a focus area, navigate the job market, advance within the profession, and find the right environment that will allow them to flourish and become their best selves.

Networking: AORE offers opportunities for members to engage and form authentic relationships in a variety of different settings that are inclusive and accessible in order to grow a thriving, supportive community of diverse voices that will help enrich the field of outdoor recreation and education as a whole.

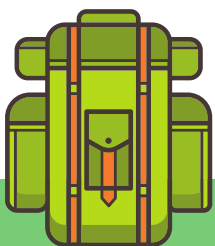
Advocacy: AORE leverages its national influence to advocate for critical issues impacting membership and ensures that current and aspiring professionals are informed on the latest industry news, research, best practices, and funding opportunities with the goal of advancing the outdoor recreation and education industry.

AORE's programs and services are overseen by our national office staff with the support of many dedicated members who volunteer their time and expertise. We'd like to thank Amanda Preperato, Lisa Lemler, and Liz Roger (Women Leaders Mentorship Institute); Rick Dawson (Global University); Brent Bell (Outdoor Orientation Program Symposium), and Deidre Goodwin (Emerging Leaders Program). In the following section, we highlight the successes of our work in 2018.

“ As a strategic board, we're helping to clarify AORE's value, helping to both legitimize our work and support the professional standards held by our members. By communicating who AORE serves and what AORE does, we will be able to open our doors to new markets and bridge the gap that sometimes exists between our current members and other segments of the outdoor industry. As a professor, I see these changes as a way of also helping AORE to become better positioned to support the needs of young professionals who will soon work in various segments of the outdoor recreation and education field. ”



GENEVIÈVE MARCHAND
AORE BOARD SECRETARY



OUTDOOR ORIENTATION PROGRAM SYMPOSIUM

OOPS has hosted 36 professional development events since 2002.

OOPS convenes program directors, school administrators, student leaders, researchers, and land managers in one place to discuss strategies for supporting students in wilderness pre-orientation programs. Through a series of events hosted throughout the year, members are able to connect with peers and experts in the field to share best practices, access new research, discover program management strategies, and gather critical information designed to help established and aspiring programs reach their goals and ensure their sustainability.

OOPS hosted two day-long symposiums last year. The first took place on April 20, 2018 at the AEE Northeast Regional Conference in Becket, MA with a total of 60 attendees participating in a combination of breakout sessions and a keynote presentation. The second happened on October 23, 2018 in Snowbird, UT as a part of the AORE-WEA Joint Conference, marking the first time our national staff organized an OPPS event.

Since OOPS began there has been a tripling of peer-reviewed research, a growth in the number of outdoor orientation programs overall, and sustained research demonstrating how outdoor orientation programs act as a powerful retention strategy for colleges and universities. The Outdoor Orientation Benchmarking Survey (TOOBS) is one tool that OOPS uses to expand research for AORE members and the larger industry. To date, TOOBS has collected 6,000 surveys in total, making it one of the largest data sets compiled on outdoor education.

2018 TOOBS STATS:

18
PROGRAMS

1,000
STUDENTS



OPPS offers exceptional opportunities to network with other program directors, exchange ideas, and learn from each other's successes and mistakes. While there are other outdoor educational conferences, they tend to be too large-scale and not specific enough for me to glean takeaways that are directly applicable when I get back home. Additionally, TOOBS research has greatly benefited my work with first-time students. Being positioned at a small college, I don't have the time or resources to conduct my own field research. The TOOBS survey is free and robust in scope, allowing me to easily evaluate our freshmen orientation program in comparison with a large number of other college orientation programs around the country. This tool is invaluable for our institution.



Tom Zimmer, Wyoming Catholic College

**OVER 25,000 STUDENTS BEGIN THEIR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE
WITH AN OUTDOOR ORIENTATION PROGRAM EACH YEAR.**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TAKES ROOT IN THE WILD

GLOBAL UNIVERSITY EQUADOR

Global University is made possible with the support of our AORE365 partner G Adventures. Through this unique platform, AORE is able to curate an international outdoor expedition that imparts knowledge, encourages relationship-building and mentorship, inspires personal reflection, and more, all while on a truly unique global adventure. GlobalUniversity kicked off on May 23, 2018 when eight (8) participants representing four university recreation departments convened in Quito, Ecuador for a nine-day learning expedition. This in-depth professional development opportunity was intentionally created to facilitate a collaborative and supportive working environment for AORE professionals with an emphasis on networking, organizational development, and program evaluation.



Through a series of strategic planning and visioning exercises that included a SWOT analysis of their individual outdoor programs, participants analyzed how their work aligns with current trends in higher education, collegiate recreation, and the outdoor industry as a whole in order to identify areas of growth and opportunity. These valuable education sessions also incorporated demonstrations of effective global adventure practices, covering issues like the dos and don'ts of international trip planning, assessing and managing risk for these types of programs, supporting sustainable tourism, and more. Participants also forged valuable connections with each other, engaging in informal industry discussions as well as more structured examinations of professional topics. What truly makes Global University exceptional is its layered curriculum, which is experiential by design, allowing for direct and indirect learning to unfold in real-time. G Adventures coordinated every aspect of this special learning expedition, overseeing on-the-ground logistics for an extensive itinerary that brought Global University participants to the Amazon Basin where they navigated the Jatunyaku River, experienced an overnight adventure in the heart of Llanganates National Park's Cloud Forest, and set out on a high-altitude trek through Cotopaxi National Park to explore the flanks of the Cotapaxi Volcano.

Many thanks to the support, sponsorship, and planning expertise of our AORE365 partner, G Adventures. Together, we are fostering a diverse community of professionals who are committed to raising the bar of practice and performance within outdoor recreation and education.



TARGETED SUPPORT EXPANDED COMMUNITY

MEET OUR EMERGING LEADERS

Ronald Griswell



Alisa Cloutier



Reth Duir



AORE's Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) creates a safe and inclusive environment for historically and currently underrepresented populations in the outdoor recreation and education industry. Participants receive financial assistance to attend our annual conference and are given opportunities to expand their network, build confidence in their ability to lead, and learn how to better navigate the association and the industry as a whole.

Six individuals were selected for ELP in 2018 (*see above*). These talented individuals received mentorship coaching as well as increased engagement with AORE programs and a behind-the-scenes look at the work of our volunteer committees and action teams. The program culminated in a trip to the AORE-WEA Joint Conference in Snowbird, UT where ELP participants sat in on AORE's pre-conference Leadership Institute with the goal of seeing the association in action and deepening connections with key AORE members and industry partners present for the event. These young professionals also met as a group daily during the conference, engaged in sessions together, and more.

After ELP concluded participants stayed in touch, continuing to build a sense of community and camaraderie. It is our hope that through this experience, these emerging professionals will pursue increased responsibilities within AORE and the industry and help to nurture other potential leaders with diverse perspectives and backgrounds who can enrich and advance our work in new ways.



Anahi Naranjo



Jackie Meyer



Bam Mendiola



The most valuable part of my experience of ELP would be that our contributions mattered to those working in committees and also those in senior leadership. They took the time to speak to us and really wanted to know how the ELP program can be improved and how committees could be improved. That speaks volumes for me that my voice matters!

**Reth Duir
2018 ELP Participant**

AORE-WEA JOINT CONFERENCE



AORE's premier professional development program provides a powerful mechanism for outdoor programmers and educators to invest in leadership development, build core competencies, exchange best practices and research, and broaden awareness of challenges and opportunities in the industry. The annual conference also offers extensive networking as hundreds of individuals convene to conduct association business, engage with vendors in our Exhibit Hall, make memories with old friends and colleagues, and forge new connections in the industry. Opportunities abound in our CareerHQ as well where aspiring professionals can explore their next career move--from searching job and internship postings and sitting in on employer presentations to scheduling a 1:1 mock interview.

2018 proved extra special as AORE partnered with the Wilderness Education Association (WEA) to host its first joint conference and celebrated its 25th anniversary as member-driven association for outdoor recreation and education professionals.

9
COUNTRIES

45
STATES

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE (2015 - 2018)

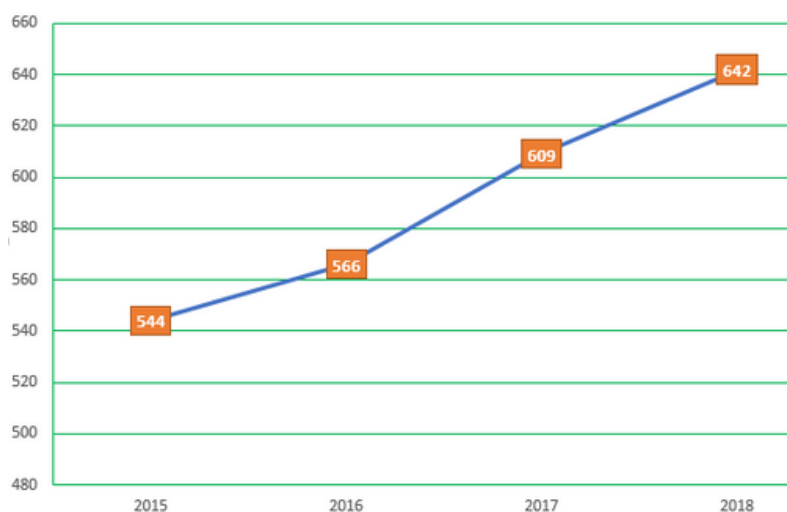


FIGURE 1.

AORE's annual conference grows steadily each year, with an **18% increase in total attendance** since 2015.

Thanks to our partnership with WEA, we welcomed **642 individuals** to the conference in 2018, the largest number in AORE's history. Attendees hailed from all over the world, including the U.S., New Zealand, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Italy, Japan, Germany, China, and Korea.

PROTECTING SACRED LANDS



Diné Bikéyah (pronounced di-NAY bi-KAY-uh) means “people’s sacred lands” in the Navajo language. Utah Diné Bikéyah is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that works toward healing of people and the Earth by supporting indigenous communities in protecting their culturally significant, ancestral lands. Their efforts include support to the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Ute Mountain Ute, and Uintah Ouray Ute tribes who are leading the effort to defend Boars Ears National Monument.

The Executive Director of Utah Diné Bikéyah, Gavin Noyes, moderated the inspiring keynote that marked the tone for our conference and was joined by Angelo Baca (Cultural Resources Coordinator) and Jonah Yellowman (Spiritual Advisor). Their empowering and insightful perspectives energized attendees and brought stronger awareness to the power of natural spaces, the Importance of preservation, and the stewards of that preservation.

96
EDUCATION SESSIONS



22
RESEARCH & POSTER
PRESENTATIONS



50
JOB POSTINGS



“Without opportunities to build upon each other's ideas, the industry becomes stagnant. I can't think of another event that connects so many outdoor enthusiasts with so much collective knowledge. AORE's conference gets you inspired by what else is out there and gives you a safe space to troubleshoot issues your program might be having as well as exchange helpful tips and strategies with peers. It's a great way to recharge!”

WE ARE AS STRONG AS OUR MEMBERS

DIVERSITY IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

In 2018, we strengthened our commitment to creating intentional spaces at the conference for discussion and work related to diversity and inclusion. A total of 13 sessions were presented in the social justice education track, all of which were widely popular, with attendees often spilling out into the hallway. Topics touched on everything from engaging more veterans in outdoor recreation and exploring LGBTQIA2 issues to championing women in leadership, delving into topics of race equity, and increasing ability awareness, including how to integrate adaptive recreation into any program. We are thrilled that AORE members are so dedicated to investing in such an important conversation. This momentum carried throughout the conference as people participated in other focused offerings like our first-ever Women Leaders Mentorship Institute and our second official cohort of Emerging Leaders celebrated the successful completion of a year-long program of mentorship and relationship-building.

WOMEN LEADERS MENTORSHIP INSTITUTE (WLMI)

Our Women's Leadership Mentorship Institute (WLMI) supports members who identify as women, are interested in advancing within the profession, and wish to contribute their insights to AORE and the larger industry. We hosted our inaugural WLMI event on October 22-23, 2018 in Snowbird, UT as a part of the AORE-WEA Joint Conference. The Institute consisted of classroom and field-based sessions that were led by women, for women. The goal of WLMI was to provide an inclusive environment for the **25 women** who participated as they worked to enhance their technical outdoor skills, gain confidence in addressing sexism and gender bias in the workplace, and build supportive mentoring relationships with other women who can serve as role models and share their own experiences as leaders.

WLMI was an instant hit, with the event reaching capacity shortly after it was announced. Participants expressed afterwards how they felt encouraged and ready to take on greater leadership roles within their organization and within AORE. Post-conference, the women of WLMI kept in touch through online "Power Hours" to fuel further support and connection, tackling tough topics together like how to be bold and respectfully challenge what is said in the workplace. We are excited to continue investing in women leaders who will help to enrich and advance the future of outdoor recreation and education in exciting new ways.



AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year, AORE recognizes members who have made a lasting impact on the association and its mission through their programs and leadership. The Jim Rennie Leadership Award and Bill March Student Achievement Award (est. 1996), David J. Webb Program Excellence Award (est. 2002), and Patsy Kott Service Award (est. 2015) memorialize four industry leaders, and recognize the outstanding contributions of AORE members to the field of outdoor recreation and education. We also acknowledge the exceptional work of students with the Bridge Builder Scholarship (est. 2015), Student Researcher Award (est. 2006), and Student Scholarships (est. 2007). These passionate individuals are honored at our annual conference in front of their industry peers.



2018 RECIPIENTS:

Jim Rennie Leadership Award

Guy deBrun

David J. Webb Program Excellence Award

West Virginia University

Patsy Kott Service Award

Amanda Preperato

Bill March Student Achievement Award

Christina Spohn

Student Scholarships

Kathleen McTighe
Abigail Morrissey

Student Researcher Award

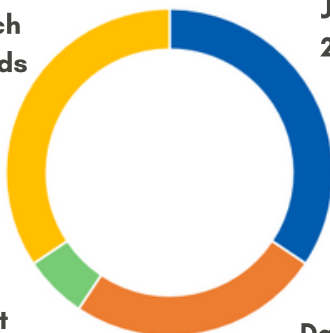
Ryan Brady
Kevin Buchanan

Student Bridge Builder

Anna Hisnanick
Robert Warner

TOTAL NUMBER OF AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS PROVIDED IN OUR ASSOCIATION'S HISTORY

Bill March
22 Awards

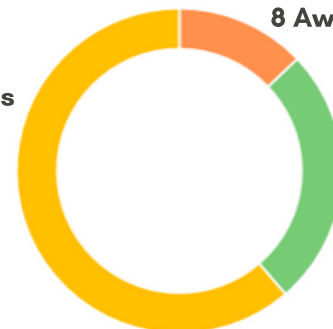


Jim Rennie
22 Awards

Patsy Kott
4 Awards

David J. Webb
16 Awards

Student
Scholarships
38 Awards



Bridge Builder
8 Awards

Student
Researcher
16 Awards

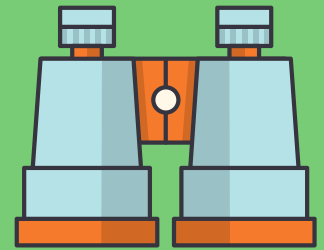
OTHER HIGHLIGHTS



Situated in the heart of it all, our Exhibit Hall is packed with equipment outfitters, training companies, and other vendors. Our conference attendees are able to explore what these organizations have to offer as well as ask questions, compare price points, and use that information to negotiate opportunities for their programs.



Thank you to everyone who participated in the planning and execution of the AORE-WEA Joint Conference, including those who joined a planning committee or volunteered for one (or many) shifts onsite. The tireless efforts of these individuals made it possible for us to deliver an entire week of incredible programming and events for our members and the larger outdoor recreation and education industry. We extend a special thanks to Conference Chairs Lisa Lemler (University of Minnesota) and Catie Miller (Northern Arizona University).



42
EXHIBITOR
BOOTHS

400
VOLUNTEER
HOURS



OUR WORKING COMMITTEES ENRICH OUR MEMBER BENEFITS

AORE's working committees are chaired by volunteers and overseen by staff. Guided by our Executive Director and national office team, these dedicated individuals help to operationalize the work plan through a variety of annual and standing projects that are designed to advance the association toward its strategic goals. Their collective efforts play an integral role in supporting our staff as they develop and outline AORE's next chapter of growth within the outdoor recreation and education space. We appreciate the diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and expertise that each one of our committee volunteers brings to the work. They truly enrich our community, allowing AORE to extend even more opportunities, information, and resources to members.

Access & Permitting

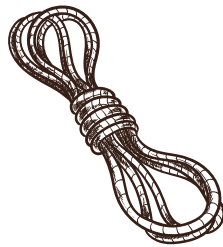
Levi Dexel & Pat Langendorfer

Awards

Steven Whitman & Sasha Griffith

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Liz Rogers & Deidra Goodwin



Environmental Stewardship

Elise Clausen & Dylan Blaskey

Research & Publications

Andrew Szolosi & Erik Rabinowitz

Student Development

Chris Hendricks & Andrew Lyburn

Presenter Relations

Kenny Williams



I am constantly inspired by our members' passion for students and advocacy for how the AORE can best serve the future leaders of our organization. I value the work that we do together and the close friendships that we have built along the way. I am indebted to the past chairs of the SDC for creating an environment for professional and student members to come together, network, and grow personally and professionally and look forward to continuing their work in the year to come.

Andrew K. Lyburn
Student Development Committee Chair



Access and Permitting: Volunteers worked to revamp our Advocacy and Access and Permitting toolkit, represented members on the Coalition for Outdoor Access, and delivered two presentations at the AORE-WEA National Conference. One provided a deep dive on the current state of public lands and the other featured representatives from the Bureau of Land Management and National Forest service, highlighting modernization efforts and constraints with public lands access.

Awards and Presenter Relations: These committees worked to restructure their efforts around the annual conference and began the shift toward focusing on AORE goals throughout the entire year. They also helped to review and select award and scholarship recipients as well as curate the list of education sessions offered to conference attendees.

Environmental Stewardship: Volunteers provided recommendations to the Board of Directors and national office on matters relating to environmental stewardship as well as driving sustainability efforts at our annual conference, advocating on environmentally-related public policy issues that affect the operations of AORE member programs, and promoting member engagement in AORE's National Service Day.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Volunteers began assembling and sharing a wide range of resources on topics that fall under the DEI umbrella. Members also created and launched a new DEI message board in the private AORE member portal with the hope that it provides folks with a place to start conversations about DEI and share resources with others. They also helped to increase DEI programming and tools at AORE's annual conference.

Research and Publications: Volunteers began the process of identifying core values and goals that align with the broader mission and vision of AORE. They are also developing a means by which AORE can collect valuable data that can serve both its members and the industry. A census questionnaire is being created first to offer descriptive picture campus outdoor programs that members can use as a point of comparison and for potential leverage to recruit additional program support.

Student Development: Members can access career counseling through our resume review service and 1:1 mock interviews as well as mentorship program and in-depth learning and networking sessions at AORE's annual conference. In 2018, committee volunteers supported fourteen year-long mentorship pairings and delivered four education sessions at the AORE-WEA National Conference that focused on a combination of networking and skills-building.



MEMBER IMPACT

PAUL DREYER
AORE BOARD MEMBER



I am excited that our new mission statement is simpler and even more inclusive than before. The message is easy for existing members to share with others and it is welcoming for perspective members to hear and understand. bold because it shows that AORE can support ALL individuals who are wanting to be leaders in the outdoor industry. From someone who is looking to enter the industry as a new leader to someone who wants to take their next steps into higher levels of leadership in the industry to someone who is a seasoned veteran and wanting to find mentorship opportunities, our AORE strategic framework gives you a glimpse into the advantages that could be unique for you and your needs.



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**TOPICS DISCUSSED ON
AORE MESSAGE BOARD**



99

**MEMBER, PARTNER,
AND AORE EVENTS**

New knowledge and new perspective helps the industry grow and develop. When financial access is a barrier scholarships are a great way to help increase that access. Definitely apply, your voice matters. Through AORE I've been connected to individuals who create and deliver affinity programming, and I decided in 2018 that I wanted to start women's specific trips in my role at the time. This trip series and the lessons learned through that are what lead to my scholarship in 2019 and allowed me to continue to expand on the knowledge and ideas I had about equity and inclusion in outdoor recreation and education.

Earning an AORE scholarship in 2019 allowed me to attend the AORE/WEA conference in Snowbird, UT. While at the conference I was able to network and foster both new and long-standing relationships while learning about how other organizations are doing their work.

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JOB POSTINGS

**Anna Hisnanick, AORE member
and 2018 scholarship recipient**



Year in Review

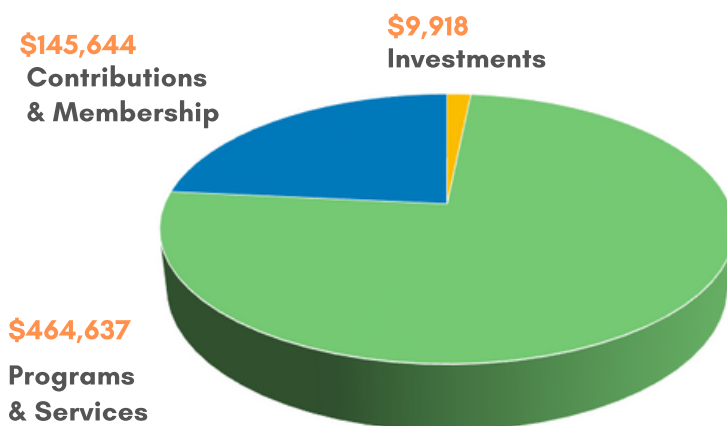
We are extremely grateful for the generosity of AORE's donors and sponsors in the fiscal year that ended December 31, 2018. We continue to cultivate a culture of philanthropy for the association, celebrating the impact of first-time and cumulative donors. Fundraising income nearly doubled in 2018 and AORE was able to leverage over \$10,000 in donated goods.

For over 25 years, AORE has created high-quality professional development and networking experiences for outdoor recreation and education providers. We are excited to advance our membership and provide more value for those we serve in the industry as we turn to the next 25 years. Supporting financial information for this year can be found on Page 9 of the 2018 990 Form.

TOTAL INCOME

\$620,199

AORE's income includes membership, donations, conference, and interest.

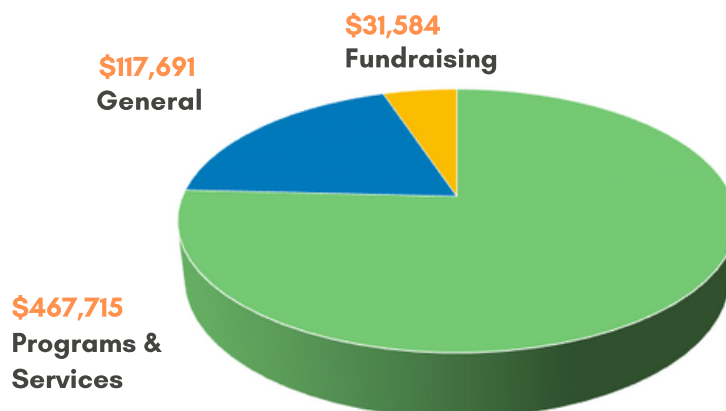


Increasingly AORE is able to leverage our existing infrastructure (financial, staff, volunteers, and partners) to secure and build additional capacity to fulfill our mission consistent with our values.

TOTAL EXPENSES

\$616,990

AORE's expenses include staff, infrastructure, direct costs related to programming, and operational costs.



Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS

JANUARY 1

DECEMBER 31

Cash	\$167,858	\$196,903
Savings	\$157,457	\$157,424
Accounts Receivable	\$11,728	\$5,000
Prepaid Expenses	\$14,526	\$12,765
Depreciation	\$1,046	\$349
Investments	\$230,256	\$218,971

Total Assets

\$582,871

\$591,412

LIABILITIES

JANUARY 1

DECEMBER 31

Accounts Payable	\$13,561	\$19,741
Other Liabilities	\$0	\$16,596

Total Liabilities

\$13,561

\$36,337

NET ASSETS

JANUARY 1

DECEMBER 31

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$569,310	\$555,075
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Total Net Assets

\$569,310

\$555,075

Total Liabilities & Net Assets

\$582,871

\$591,412

View AORE's
990 Form for 2018:
aore.org/governance.php



A big thanks to our AORE365 Alliance partners!

AORE365 Alliance Partners enjoy special benefits, including a distinctive presence at our annual conference and invaluable access to AORE members throughout the year. This unique opportunity is a **two-year commitment designed to help industry leaders develop genuine, lasting relationships with AORE members and the outdoor recreation and education community as a whole.** Contact our national office at aore.org to learn more!



G Adventures



**Our programs and services would not be possible
without the generosity of our 2018 partners!**

OUR VENDOR MEMBERS STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY

When vendors maintain a strong and consistent presence within our community, they foster authentic connections with members and build loyalty for their brand over time. We extend our deepest thanks to the loyal vendors we've partnered with for many years and are humbled to also welcome so many new faces into our AORE family in 2018. We couldn't do it without you!

Acadia Mountain Guides
Adidas
Adventure Cycling
ALPS Mountaineering
American Alpine Institute
Asana Climbing
Backpacker's Pantry
Bay Area Lyme Foundation
Bending Branches
BIC Sport
Big Agnes
Black Diamond Equipment
Brewer's Ledge
Camp Chef
Cascade Designs
Deuter
Eldorado Climbing Walls
Evolv Sports
Farm to Feet
G Adventures
Glide SUP
Gregory Mountain Products
Haro Bikes
Head Rush Technologies
Keen
Kelty
Landmark Learning
Liberty Mountain
LOWA Boots
Marmot
Medical Student Missions

Misty Mountain
Mountain Hardwear
MTI Life Jackets
National Outdoor Leadership School
National Park Service
NAUI Worldwide
NRS
Osprey
Petzl
Professional Climbing Instructors
Association
Proforce Equipment
R&W Enterprises
REI
Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance
Rocky Mountain Outdoor Center
Rocky Mountain Rafts
Rocky Mounts
Sailing Adventures in the Bahamas
SnowSports Industries America
SOLO
Sterling Rope Co., Inc.
Teton Science Schools
Wilderness Medicine Training Center
Wilderness Medical Associates

Conference Sponsors: Adidas, Black Diamond, Deuter, National Association for Search and Rescue, National Park Service, and Visit Salt Lake.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR BOARD'S DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

AORE Fundraiser with Patagonia - Winter Outdoor Retailer Show

In 2018, we held a fundraiser in Denver during the Winter Outdoor Retailer Show. In total, 50 people joined us for an evening of socializing, live music, shopping, and fun! Many thanks to Patagonia Denver for hosting an exciting raffle during the event to benefit AORE's Student Endowment Fund. Together, we raised an estimated \$1,300 to provide scholarships for individuals who have limited access to outdoor experiences. A special thanks to Development Committee Chair Austin Dyer for arranging this wonderful fundraiser!

Spotlight on Development Chair Austin Dyer

2018 was a great year to be involved with AORE as the student representative on its Board of Directors. We worked on developing the future direction of the association and also hosted several events that raised unrestricted funding for investing in this process. While our vision is bold and the path might not be easy to get there, we have the right leadership team in place and the right attitude for the work ahead. I feel honored to serve alongside such knowledgeable people who have

welcomed my input. Running for the board was not a light hearted decision. After quite a few conversations with my mentors, some who had served on the board prior, I decided that this was my chance to give back to an association that had played such a large role in my life. During my time as a member, I was hired on as a graduate assistant at Auburn University and now work as a professional at the University of Colorado Denver. These successes can be attributed to the connections and knowledge I've gained through AORE.

As the 2018 chair of the board's development committee, I have had the opportunity to engage with our generous donors and sponsors directly to share firsthand how their contributions are helping our association cover new ground within the industry and enrich our offerings and benefits to members overall. From my own personal experiences and through my conversations with other members, I truly believe that AORE is the number one place for professionals and emerging professionals to gather and learn from one another, both in person and using the association's online resources. Our association wouldn't be able to achieve this vision without you!



We appreciate all of the donors, vendors, and paying members—no matter how big or small your contribution—who have helped us achieve our vision and goals in 2018. Our work is not done yet and your involvement will continue to be vital to the process. I look forward to accomplishing even more together in 2019 and beyond.

Finally to the student professional members, thank you for voting me in to the Student Board of Director position, you have changed my life and I only hope to continue to work with AORE to change yours.



"Development is not a one-person job. As an association, we can work together to raise funds to support the actions and duties that make AORE what it is. Are there ways you could run fundraising events in your area? All it takes is asking the right people to help or host your event."

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS 2018 DONORS!

“

Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much.

”

Helen Keller

Ambassador (\$10,000)

Patsy Kott

Advocate (\$2,500)

Matthew Marcus

Tim Moore

Jeannette Stawski

Sustainer (\$1,000)

Mackenzie Brady

Austin Dyer

Karen Dyer

Jason Gosch

Kent Grier

Todd Grier

Sasha Griffith

Gregory Hawkins

Eric Neumann

Jeremy Oyen

Abigail Rowe

Paul Sanford

Jim Wall

Friend (\$500)

Elizabeth Andre

Todd Bauch

Evan Bollig

Silvia Chan

Guy deBrun

Mike Doyle

Mitch Hoffman

Bryan Karban

Genevieve Marchand

Heather Martin

Tim Mertz

Bill Pierce

Brian Shirley

Erin Rausch

Jenn Velie

Russ Watts



**Bold text denotes AORE Board Members who have given to the association in 2018.*

WE ARE PARTNERING FOR A PURPOSE

Vendors and Sponsors

AORE is a leader in supporting professionals and students who work in outdoor recreation and education with professional development, career advancement, networking, and advocacy. With its diverse membership, our association has a strong voice on issues related to the larger industry. We leverage this national influence to advance critical improvements in areas where we feel there is potential to deepen the benefits for our members and who they serve. This established presence also allows us to provide immense value to companies who wish to invest in long-term, multi-faceted partnerships with AORE and take their own visibility to the next level within this growing field.



Our vendors and sponsors are an important part of AORE's framework. We collaborate with companies to tailor opportunities so that they meet their varying needs. This might be as simple as promoting special deals to our membership and exhibiting at our annual conference or it could develop into something more robust like sponsoring specific events and programs, broadening access to opportunities for members through the funding of scholarships, or investing in AORE's institutional capacity so that it can strengthen operations and infrastructure. We also partner with organizations who wish to help advance the association's strategic initiatives because they see direct alignment between our respective missions.

Vendors have personally told us how much they value the face-to-face interaction they are able to have with members through our programs and how loyal those individuals are to the brands they know. It is an exciting time to engage with our vibrant community. We look forward to exploring new partnerships in the years to come as AORE continues to expand its reach in the outdoor community.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIP AT [AORE.ORG](https://aore.org)!

DONORS DRIVE AORE'S VISION TO NEW HEIGHTS

Unrestricted donations are critical for AORE's continued success. Funding of this nature allows us to invest in organizational health and encourage growth—from adopting new best practices, identifying new skillsets and perspectives to seek out in future board candidates; and streamlining association governance. We're also able to advocate for critical industry issues through research, advancing diverse perspectives, and strengthening connection and communication between national practitioners. Donors are also helping us to establish endowed funds to increase access to industry-specific learning and development opportunities for professionals and students.

SMALL EFFORTS ADD UP!

Has AORE helped you professionally? Consider making a small gift to help other members experience the same success. Our donors fund a variety of goals and initiatives, including:

- Support AORE's Board in furthering the mission and vision of the association, including the rollout of its new strategic framework.
- Support AORE's programming on issues of public lands access, permitting, and environmental stewardship.
- Maintain endowed funds for student and professional development and a general contribution fund for distribution to various projects and campaigns as determined by the association.
- Contribute to a Memorial Fund that provides scholarships in the name of past members who have made a lasting impact on AORE and the industry as a whole.



**VISIT [AORE.ORG](https://www.aore.org) TO MAKE A ONE-TIME GIFT
OR SETUP A RECURRING DONATION!**



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In 2018, AORE's Board of Directors took stock of increased interest in the outdoor industry and determined that the association must evolve as an association to remain relevant and leverage the immense opportunities out there for engaging more members and making an impact. While still honoring AORE's rich history as a grassroots organization, we moved to modernize our governance structure, aligning with what best serves our organization size, mission, and future aspirations. Our board has shifted from an operational to a strategic model where our volunteer leadership sets AORE's high-level priorities and the Executive Director and national office staff then determine the best tactics for achieving those priorities. AORE's Board of Directors consists of an executive team, regular board members, and three specialized internal committees that are chaired by a current board member and advise the Board Chair on matters relating to Financial Advisory, Governance, and Development.

Our Board of Directors is elected by AORE's membership. These volunteers are practitioners, academics, and supporters who represent a range of skills, perspectives, and backgrounds that have been identified as critical for achieving our association's goals for future growth within the outdoor recreation and education space. We are thankful for all that these committed volunteers have done to help AORE embark on a bold new path with a strong vision for leading the industry.

EXECUTIVE TEAM

President

Jeremy Oyen

Treasurer

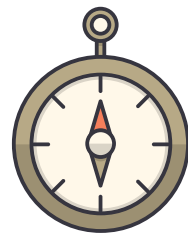
Bryan Karban

President Elect

Kellie Gerbers

Secretary

Genevieve Marchand



Immediate Past

President

Lance Haynie

BOARD MEMBERS

Tom Adams

Austin Dyer (Student)

Jason Gosch

Sarah Harper Burke

Mitch Hoffman

Rodo Leone

Eric Neumann

Steve Robinson



MEET OUR TEAM OF NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF

In 2018, AORE continued to mature as an association and build upon its rich history as a grassroots organization. How the association goes about its work is evolving. We're making better use of available resources in order to leverage growing interest in outdoor recreation and education and do more for AORE members and the industry as a whole. As a small not-for-profit, we must be intentional with how we deploy staff and manage volunteer capacity to ensure our organization remains effective and sustainable. Our national team is responsible for the development and delivery of AORE's programs and services as well as day-to-day operations, marketing and communications, member engagement, volunteer management, and taking the lead on aligning stakeholders around concrete strategies and goals. There is much to celebrate as we look to the future and it wouldn't be possible without the dedication of these passionate individuals who advance AORE's strategic goals!



Executive Director
Jeannette Stawski



Director, Strategy
Aaron Wolowiec



**Director, Meetings
& Technology**
Kate Pojeta



**Director, Marketing
& Communications**
Jennifer Amin



**Manager, Marketing
& Communications**
Jessica Mitton



**Manager, Member
& Partner Relations**
Lisa Aukward



**Manager, Finance
& Administration**
Jenny Hill



**AORE
Bookkeeper**
Amy Stevens

**LEAD
OTHERS.
JOIN TODAY!**



26 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

**EMPOWERING LEADERS IN OUTDOOR
RECREATION AND EDUCATION**

**100 North Main Street, Suite 108
Ann Arbor, MI 48104**

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(810) 299-2782

nationaloffice@aore.org