



May 12, 2008

## WELCOME TO SPLORE'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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[CHECK OUT OUR BLOG!](#)

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### Life Elevated

SPLORE's mission is to *provide life-changing outdoor recreation and education experiences to children and adults with disabilities and special needs*. While many recognize our impact on individuals with disabilities, what are "special needs?"

To be sure, "special needs" includes the hundreds of at-risk youth we serve annually; from reading SPLORE's Blog, we also serve the special needs of families, volunteers, students, care providers, schools, and recreation venues.

For example, families increase their children's abilities, connect with other families, and gain awareness of Utah's tremendous active recreation opportunities. Volunteers gain extrinsic and intrinsic reward from rejuvenating active recreation and personal fulfillment of helping others. Our student intern program is so popular we turn many requests down. By introducing tens of thousands of individuals to outdoor recreation products, services, and venues, SPLORE makes a significant contribution to Utah's economy.

In short, by meeting "special needs," SPLORE's broader mission positively impacts individuals, families, communities, and commerce. SPLORE's mission - to quote the Utah's Office of Tourism - is truly "Life Elevated."

Enjoy,

*John Librett*

John Librett, Ph.D., M.P.H.  
Executive Director

## "EXPERIENCE YOUR ABILITIES PROGRAM" HAS ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR

The Experience Your Abilities Program (EYAP) is an innovative program for children both with and without disabilities. EYAP started three years ago, with a grant from the Governor's Council for People with Disabilities, to create an inclusive environment for children in special education and general education classrooms.

Completing our third year, hundreds of EYAP students enjoyed recreation activities including: rock climbing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, and hiking. The EYAP helps elementary school children find common ground with one another, realize their own abilities, learn about a variety of recreation activities in the community, be active and have fun!



This year, 6 schools and 14 classes enjoyed EYAP activities. One teacher, Joni Willis of Pleasant Green Elementary, reflects on the impact SPLORE's Experience Your Abilities Program:

"The activities were well planned and organized by the SPLORE staff, as well as tons of fun. I would like to tell you some of the great things that happened within my class that is a direct result of SPLORE.

The snowshoeing trip was amazing. I saw many relationships develop because of the friendships formed that day. Rachel is a girl in my class that struggles with social situations, who had a great experience with the girls in our snowshoeing group. Since this trip she has made more friends and is now playing jump rope with these girls at recess.



Kyle is a young man with Autism who is often in his own world with no social interaction. He was drawn into throwing snowballs and interacted in social ways that he rarely does. He was laughing and enjoying relationships in a way that we encourage, but don't always get from him.

Many regular students we took with us were unsure of the situation they were getting into. A few of them backed out, some were pulled from going with us by overly cautious parents. However, the students who went had a marvelous time and came back to tell everyone else. We were bombarded by requests, from students we did not know, who wanted to be part of the fun. I would walk through the lunchroom and kids I did not know would stop me and say "When are you going again and can I come?"

Our students learned about making friends in new situations. Our students with Autism were excited with new experiences that increased their awareness of others. Terry and Aaron loved their new experience with horseback riding and talked about it for days.

All of our students loved the experience and are asking about next year. We have benefited with an increased friendships within our school. Even other teachers have approached me to learn more about your program."

[LEARN ABOUT SUPPORTING SPLORE AND INCLUSIVE RECREATION](#)



## SPLORE PARTNERS WITH YOUTH IN CUSTODY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR ALL

We are always looking to make a difference in the lives of our participants through partnerships that benefit individuals, families, community, and commerce.

Last fall SPLORE started a Youth-in-Custody program to help adjudicated youth become more active physical recreation as well as community participation. Salt Lake's Observation & Assessment program is one of SPLORE's Youth-in-Custody groups.

In January, SPLORE was involved with the Chili Open Golf Tournament, a fundraising event organized by the Sugarhouse Rotary Club. This event needed help setting-up the winter golf course and the youth from Salt Lake Observation & Assessment program stepped up their participation - helping with course set-up on a chili Saturday morning. The following week, the youth participated in a snowshoeing program up Millcreek Canyon. For many youth, this was their first time snowshoeing and/or visiting Millcreek Canyon. These participants benefited from the experience of giving back to the community through their Chili Open volunteer work, as well as the adventure of snowshoeing in Millcreek Canyon, trying something new and having a better awareness of their ability levels.

SPLORE is incredibly thankful to Salt Lake Observation & Assessment for their support at this year's Chili Open and looks forward to more Youth in Custody programs such as rock climbing, canoeing, Yoga, hiking and river rafting.

In next month's issue, learn how the Youth In Custody program is helping our community youth.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SPLORE'S PROGRAMS](#)

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT - LAURA GRZYMKOWSKI

Every Fall, SPLORE holds its annual Harvest Moon Benefit Auction (September 27th). The auction is our biggest fundraising event of the year; it's a lot of fun, but it's also a lot of work. There are several months of planning, collecting donations and organizing activities.

Laura Grzymkowski, special events volunteer extraordinaire, has been volunteering for the Harvest Moon Benefit Auction for several years. Laura has been on the auction planning committee, playing a key role helping to plan the live auction, helping organize the decorations and supporting SPLORE any way she can. Even though the auction is several months away, planning is underway and Laura is once again serving on the auction planning committee.



Laura, thank you for all that you do for SPLORE, you're amazing and we're so thankful to have you as a part of our team!

[LEARN ABOUT BECOMING A SPLORE VOLUNTEER](#)

## RAISING THE BAR

There are many ways to support SPLORE and our mission. Help us support our supporters by visiting the corporations that support SPLORE -



[SmartWool](#) recently supported SPLORE's Active Living Program through a \$1,000 sponsorship. *"SmartWool's Advocacy fund was born out of the desire to give back to communities in which our customers and employees work and play. SmartWool promotes environmental stewardship; active, healthy lifestyles choices for youth; and encourages responsible outdoor activity participation."*

[Clif Bar](#) recently supported SPLORE by donating products to use in media kits that promoted the Rock On! program. *Thanks Misty!*



[Eagle Eye Promotions](#) recently donated screening costs and significantly discounted T-shirt and embroidery costs for staff and volunteer shirts. *Thanks Mike!*

[Kuhl](#) significantly reduced the cost of SPLORE visors. *Thanks Ryan and Kevin.*



*Stay tuned for the SPLORE Store!*



Finally, we are thrilled to announce that, during the month of April, Squatters raised nearly \$14,000 for the Rock On! program, an indoor rock climbing program for children with autism. Thank You, Squatter's and all of you who supported this campaign. In the words of Squatter's –

*"This is one of the single largest donations Squatters has ever made!"*

## BOOK A CLIMBING OR CANOEING PROGRAM TODAY!

Summer is almost here, which means it is time for some outdoor recreation activities with SPLORE. Our rafting season is completely booked, but we still have dates available for outdoor rock climbing and canoeing programs.

The rock climbing and canoeing programs take place around the Salt Lake Valley and they can be customized to your participants' needs.) 484-4128 x 6 or [susans@splore.org](mailto:susans@splore.org)



## SAVE THE DATE!

There are always exciting things happening around SPLORE. Here is a list of some things to come. As always, please check our [Calendar](#) for a list of programs, special events and trainings.

**May 29th:** Volunteer rock climbing training  
5:30-7:30 at Storm Mountain  
Please contact Susie at 484-4128 x 6 by May 22nd to sign-up

**June 4th:** Volunteer canoe training  
5:30-7:30 at Little Dell Reservoir  
Please contact Susie at 484-4128 x 6 by May 22nd to sign-up

**July 4-5:** Open enrollment rafting program for families and friends

**August 9:** Open enrollment rock climbing program

**August 23:** Open enrollment canoeing program

**September 27:** The Annual Harvest Moon Benefit Auction  
At the Downtown Hilton Hotel  
Contact Heather Whitesides at (801) 484-4128 x 9 for more information

Check our [Calendar](#) for a list of programs, special events and trainings.



BE OPEN.

Because some visionaries are blind.

Because some communicators are deaf.

Because some movers and shakers are paralyzed.

Because the only true disability is a mind stuck in the closed position.

Thank you for reading SPLORE's Monthly Email Newsletter! Your support, involvement, and connection to SPLORE is important to us. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please visit our website [www.splore.org](http://www.splore.org) or contact us at (801) 484-4128 or [info@splore.org](mailto:info@splore.org)

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