

Outdoor CEO Pledge Report

Prepared by Claire Smallwood, Executive Director & Co-Founder



Summary

Since signing the Outdoor CEO Pledge, SheJumps has:

- *Provided 43 avalanche education scholarships to Women of Color (\$6,800 of scholarships)*
- *Recruited five new board members who identify as Women of Color*
- *Invested 2% of annual budget to professional Equity & Inclusion training and seminars to all volunteers*
- *Invested in long-term community partnerships with organizations led by Communities of Color*

1) What efforts have you made to promote inclusion and representation for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color at your organization?

This can include internal training, external initiatives, personal growth, metrics, partnerships, grants, etc.

Introduction

A great way to begin this report is to simply address the origin of its need. Our small nonprofit is one of many pieces in a multi-billion dollar business known as the Outdoor Industry. State and federal laws (current and previous), in addition to dominant cultural norms and practices, have built and maintained barriers which have not only excluded Black, Indigenous, communities of color from equitable participation in this industry, but it's prohibited opportunity, visibility, and development for these leaders, athletes, and business-owners.

About SheJumps

SheJumps was founded in 2007 with a mission to increase the participation of women and girls in outdoor activities. Despite making up 50% of the population, participation of women and girls in outdoor activities is far from equal, and our nonprofit set out help young girls from see themselves represented in media, and for adult women—regardless of race, age, backcountry, ability, and socioeconomic status—to understand and appreciate the many benefits that come with a healthy, active lifestyle rooted in the outdoors.

Context for this report

History books taught us that the civil rights era had a start and a stop; that the United States as a society and civilization is an upward trend, and above all else we are taught that there is a good/bad binary of racism in America. Being a group of white girls from the middle class, we

had experienced gender inequities, but we were not yet aware of how we were also actively participating in the perpetuation of inequality when it came to systemic racism in America.

Intentional transformation of mindset—from the backcountry to the board room—must take place to fight for a place for ALL women and girls to belong.

SheJumps signed the Outdoor CEO Pledge in December 2018 shortly after forming our official Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee. Since its formation in July 2018, we have not missed a single monthly meeting. While at first it was very complex to understand what we were undertaking and how to do it, this report distills what we have learned. From transactional to institutional change, we are excited to share our progress but there is still a long way to go for a more inclusive outdoor community.

Part 1. External/Qualitative/Quantitative Measures

Since SheJumps signed the Outdoor CEO Pledge, we have made the following external/qualitative measures to promote inclusion and representation for Black, Indigenous, Women/People of color in our organization and our community:

Inclusivity Statement

Since 2017, SheJumps has included an inclusivity statement on all printed materials and online events. The words in this statement have evolved over time as we continue to learn and unlearn. The current SheJumps Inclusivity statement:

SheJumps is an inclusive organization. We welcome all women and girls (transgender and cisgender) as well as non-binary people who self-identify with the women's community. SheJumps strives to be an ally in the fight against racism and acknowledges that our events and programs take place on traditional, unceded Indigenous lands.

SheJumps publicly announces its commitment to this work on our 'About' page, too:

<https://www.shejumps.org/about>

Snowpack Scholarship - Avalanche Education & Ski Passes for Women of Color

The [SheJumps Snowpack Scholarship](#) was started in 2018 by SheJumps' volunteers Krystin Norman and Yulia Dubinina to provide funding for women to gain access to skiing avalanche certifications. The scholarship program is funded as a collaboration between NWAC (Northwest Avalanche Center), Fremont Brewing, K2 Skis, evo gear, and Montucky Cold Snacks (2020 program). Funding for the scholarship comes from these businesses and SheJumps administers a scholarship program that is available to all women 18 and older, providing full and partial scholarships to obtain an AIARE Level 1 avalanche certification. In its first year, we designated 35% of scholarships for Women of Color and in subsequent years (2020) 50% of scholarships are for Women of Color.

The Snowpack Scholarship pulled back more layers of information that has helped us to adjust our programs and approach to providing additional aid for Women of Color to gain access to skiing. Many of the applications were Women of Color applying for avalanche education certifications and admitting that they needed more experience learning basic skiing skills prior to exploring the backcountry. These interactions helped us understand that an ideal additional scholarship program to add to the Snowpack Scholarship would include lift tickets and beginner skis for these Women of Color who need to gain more foundational knowledge before beginning their backcountry skiing education.

In 2019 we received a donation of eight Ikon passes. Four of the passes were given to Women of Color who had strong applications to the prior year's Snowpack Scholarship AIARE 1 but needed more experience on skis/snowboards. We hosted a giveaway of three IKON passes for Women of Color. Individuals could apply for these Ikon passes or nominate someone else. We received more than 100 nominations. The final Ikon pass was given to a Women of Color who helped read through all the nominations. Through negotiation with Ikon, we were able to receive 10 Ikon passes to use as a 'scholarship' program in 2020. With additional support from K2, we provided a pair of skis and bindings for each of these recipients. This program and partnership with Ikon drew a great deal of attention from the North American skiing community. In promoting the program, the comments from the community revealed both the encouragement and understanding in the community of the importance of addressing equity and exclusion issues. Simultaneously, promotions also revealed problematic views and openly shared racism of followers. This offered an opportunity for SheJumps to support Ikon Pass with education and open channels of dialogue and also enforce boundary setting and practicing zero tolerance for racist commentary.

- **18** Ikon passes provided to Women of Color
- **10** K2 Skis with bindings provided to Women of Color
 - [2019-2020: 83 Nominations, 8 passes awarded to Women of Color](#)
 - 2020-2021: 333 applications, **10 passes** and **10 pairs of skis with bindings provided to Women of Color**
- **48** Scholarships (\$8,200) for Women of Color provided to gain access to avalanche education since 2018
 - 2018-2019: 30 total scholarships in WA/OR; 50% award to WOC (15 Women of Color)
 - 2019-2020: 30 total scholarships in WA/OR/CO; 37% WOC (11 Women of Color)
 - 2020-2021: 34 total scholarships in WA/OR/NH/CA: 61% WOC (22 Women of Color)

Community Partnerships providing additional funding & resources for immigrant, refugee, and foster families

Since 2009, SheJumps has worked to provide monthly/quarterly outdoor excursions (including skiing, climbing, and camping) for immigrant and refugee girls in Salt Lake City.

SheJumps strives to create and maintain meaningful relationships with community organizations working to serve communities of color. Since 2015, SheJumps has partnered with [Hartland community 4 Youth and Families](#) in Salt Lake City to bring immigrant and refugee girls between the ages of 8 to 17 on 10 annual SheJumps events designed specifically for their benefit and enrichment. (Prior to 2015, SheJumps worked with local Boys & Girls clubs).

Annually, since 2015:

- **65** girls impacted, 100% are low income families or below poverty level
- Provided additional funding and networking opportunities to HC4YF through grant distribution, grant application support for additional funding, and SheJumps volunteers participating in fundraising for HC4YF
- Activities for the girls include 8 indoor rock climbing sessions, 3-day overnight camping trip to Moab, Utah, ski lessons at Alta Ski area, hiking, and participation in two SheJumps Wild Skills youth day camps providing foundational skills such as Leave No Trace, first aid, navigation, shelter building, and the 10 essentials.

Looking forward, SheJumps is striving to build other robust partnerships that follow this same model with groups in Washington state, such as Amara. Amara is a youth service organization that provides support to foster children. We want for SheJumps to provide an additional layer of opportunity and support for these children, specifically the girls in Amara's program.

What our DEI committee and organization as a whole has realized through this process is that it's necessary to build deep and lasting relationships with community leaders to understand what support they need as opposed to assuming, for example, that everyone wants to go skiing. In many cases, what SheJumps can provide as an organization might be simple curriculum support or networking to aid funding and grant possibilities. We were pleased to introduce the brand evo Gear to HC4YF so that evo could make a direct donation to HC4YF's needs. We are also looking to build a pen-pal support network for Women of Color to support and interact with youth of Color. In this way, SheJumps can facilitate change and emphasize the ongoing need to cultivate affinity spaces. Affinity spaces can provide transformational healing from the overall exclusion that the outdoor industry has ultimately cultivated.

SheJumps is also currently working with Big City Mountaineers and the Service Board in Seattle to share resources, curriculum, funding, and program opportunities with youth of color.

Land Acknowledgement

SheJumps provides ongoing volunteer training and blog content around land acknowledgement purpose and connection.

SheJumps is working with Renée Hutchins to establish a series of trainings for our volunteer team members on what land acknowledgement is and why it is important. We met Renée when she was one of our first Indineous scholarship recipients through the Snowpack program. As a Diné woman (Navajo), we have hired Renée for this work to not only learn from her lived experience, but to also amplify her voice on social media. Being able to listen and learn from a

Diné woman about what the land means for her personally has been really well received by our team and our supporters. By acknowledging the original inhabitants of the land, we are striving to understand complex issues of public land use and the Land Back movement.

In addition to Land Acknowledgement, we are building a foundational messaging document which describes the complex definitions of the land, and we train our Regional Coordinators to discuss this with their volunteers, encouraging them to dig deeper into their own local land connections and deeper understanding.

Open Call for Board Nominations

Through an equitable review process of more than 200 applicants, we recruited seven new board members, five of whom identify as Women of Color. 42% of SheJumps' board members identify as Black, Indigenous, or people of color.

Through the journey of digging deeper into DEI work, we started to realize that the age-old method for nonprofits to recruit board members through 'word of mouth' was a damaging and destructive practice that did little to actively support our commitment to radical inclusion and equitable diversity in the outdoors.

In May 2020, we did an open call for nominations and made a financial commitment to magnify the nomination process even on paid sites such as "In Solidarity" and also with ads on job posting sites and LinkedIn. Our goal was to have an equitable process through which we can identify candidates who would be a good fit for our organization's needs and who would be a better representation of the communities we serve and the communities we *strive* to serve.

We had more than 200 nominations from all over the world! Through this process, we started with an internal board matrix to identify the areas of lived identities that we were lacking. Then, we applied the same scoring model developed for the Snowpack Scholarship to select candidates who not only had professional experience which aligned with our needs, but also those who had lived identities which would foster a more diverse board. In the end, we selected 7 new board members, 5 of whom identify as Women of Color.

Other External-Facing Initiatives

- We've developed an entire section of our blog dedicated to Diversity and Anti-Racism Blog Posts on SheJumps.org
 - <https://www.shejumps.org/blog/categories/diversity>
- Added a specific donation option to give to BIPOC-led initiatives. shejumps.org/donate (select "JEDI" for donation destination)
- Social Media amplification of #amplifymelanatedvoices and specific initiatives/fundraisers:
 - Inclusive Outdoors Project, #NotMyTribe initiative, regular social media takeovers from Women of Color ([Annette Diggs 2019 blog post](#) recapping Ikon 2019-2020 Ikon pass, [Doris 2019 Ikon pass recipient](#), [Theresa Silveyra blog post](#) and social takeover #30before30)

- August 2020: Panel event featuring all Women of Color called: “Creating a Community Culture that Welcomes” a conversation around thinking critically about exclusion, inclusion and community

Part 2. Internal Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion initiatives for SheJumps

Since 2018, SheJumps has spent 2% of the annual budget to facilitate the evolution and success of DEI work in our organization.

- Invested in **Avarna Group training** curated for SheJumps and related to inclusive risk management at events as well as describing the intersectionality between being a volunteer for our organization and a personal commitment to understanding what equity and inclusion means in our local communities, not just our organization.
 - This training is mandatory for all team members, staff, and board members
- Each board member signs a **personal commitment** to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- **Internal DEI Assessment, November 2019**
 - In November 2019 We used the D5 Coalition’s guidelines to administer an organizational-wide DEI Self Assessment to better understand the demographics of our volunteers and organization as a whole. This survey has helped to guide our DEI action plan (information below) and identify tangible action steps that would work to improve DEI work across all programs for SheJumps. This survey is administered annually.
- **Created a comprehensive DEI Action Plan, February 2020**
 - Maps out the measures we are taking, guides external changes, and helps us to reflect on our efforts compared with our commitment.
 - We developed this action plan based on reviewing all the ways in which the SheJumps’ mission ‘shows up’ in the world and then creating categories to ensure that DEI is the overarching lens through which all of our activities are viewed.
 - It was built through a collaborative effort of the board, staff, and volunteers and informed by our internal assessment.
- **Monthly DEI Committee meetings (Since July 2018)**
 - Open to full SheJumps staff and volunteer community (Board Members, Regional Coordinators, Ambassadors)
 - Staff/Board Led Action Group
- **Structure every team interaction to have space and intention for addressing conversations related to equity and inclusion**
 - DEI Committee addresses our DEI Action Plan → Staff/board action group institutionalize the need by acknowledging and delegating specific actions/metrics → an update is shared within our internal newsletter paired with an additional reading resource.
 - An example of this would be foundational messaging for DEI work as it relates to SheJumps. The accountability lies with the board/staff to define

this messaging and then the final resource is provided to the team of volunteers across the country with additional media resources to reinforce the message and significance of why we consider it a priority for SheJumps.

- **21 Day Racial Equity Challenge**
 - 43 of our 75 volunteer team members participated in July 2020
- **Winter Equity (WE) workshop series, Jan - June 2021**
 - ED and Marketing Manager to attend an initiative in partnership with [Share Winter](#), [evo](#) and [RiseWithKJ](#)

2) What has proved successful? How do you know?

While this work is far from over, it has been most successful for us to use DEI as a lens for what we do instead of a standalone task, committee, or initiative. Instead of thinking, “Oh we need more social media with racially diverse people in the photos” these steps we are taking are helping to peel back to the layers as to “why do we need photos with more diverse people in them?” “Why is that important to us?” “Why is it not happening?” “What can we do to change this?”

Anyone can purchase photos with diverse (specifically non-white) people/models in it - but we want to have a realistic representation of our community, and address the lack of representation in an honest way that also helps our community learn and evolve.

3) What is still challenging for you? Why? What support do you still need? What are we learning....

We are a very small team (a staff of just three people) managing programs and impact that reach more than 8,000 women and girls every year. While the interest in the outdoors is soaring, the key next step for us lies in recruitment. By focusing on how our programs can be more easily accessed, from the naming convention of our events (i.e. creating more Introductory events and making beginner events clearly described as “Getting Started”) to fundraising more from donors so we can lower the overall cost of each event—we recognize ultimately we need more diverse representation in our volunteer team.

We will continue to strive for this through inclusive recruitment practices such as ‘naming’ what we are looking for. By being vocal about our desire to have more Black, Indigenous, Women of Color on our team—and also highlighting that absolutely zero previous outdoor experience is required, we hope to have better leadership representation of the communities we wish to serve.

We are continuing to learn how to share SheJumps’ values for a more diverse, equitable, and just outdoor industry. We are learning and unlearning as we develop our intersectional framework and our praxis. Our learning and unlearning takes place at the individual level, and at the organizational level. We make this learning and unlearning public when appropriate, and

welcome the SheJumps community into intentional spaces for learning, unlearning. We are continuing to learn and practice interrupting acts of racism and white supremacy; we process these actions so that we can grow from them.