2017 was a year of growth for Thorne Nature Experience.

Not only did Thorne connect a record 11,830 youth to nature through school programs and summer camp, but we also significantly expanded our efforts to both deliver programming to underserved youth and to work in collaboration with other organizations to advance environmental education within Boulder County. Our NATURE FOR ALL Initiative, expanded by 33%, providing more than $400,000 in scholarships to ensure that all youth, regardless of their school or family’s financial situation, have the opportunity to connect with nature.

On the collaborative front, Thorne launched the Nature Kids/Jovenes de la Naturaleza Lafayette (NKJN) program. Thorne is the backbone agency for NKJN, and is leading more than 30 organizations in a collective impact project to provide backyard to backcountry, pre-k to high school, and family integrated environmental education and outdoor recreation experiences for underserved youth living in Lafayette. During the summer and fall of 2017, NKJN programs reached 9,805 participants. Of course, none of Thorne’s 2017 accomplishments would have been possible without the generous support of Thorne’s contributors, the leadership of Thorne’s Board of Trustees, the guidance and wisdom of Thorne’s Founder, Dr. Oakleigh Thorne II, and the hard work and dedication of Thorne’s staff, led by Executive Director Keith Desrosiers.
SCHOOL PROGRAMS
Thorne’s school-year programs reached 9,012 students. The majority of these youth (5,962) participated in Thorne’s In-School program, which provides students with a three class series of lessons that involves interactive explorations, inquiry-based experiments, and writing a picture book. Another 2,670 youth received a full-day nature field trip. A record 280 students also participated in our most immersive school program, a 12-week after-school program that allows participants to grow their connection to nature by exploring in and around their schoolyard with mentors.

SUMMER CAMP
Thorne’s summer camp reached 2,818 youth through field-based classes for youth ages 3-15 (double the number of campers we reached 5 years ago). Popular classes like Mud Mucking, At Home in the Woods, and Bird Banding utilized local prairie grasslands, evergreen forests, and wetland habitats as a classroom and enabled youth to connect with and learn about nature.

NATURE FOR ALL
Thorne awarded more than $400,000 in scholarships for summer camp and school programs. These scholarships enabled 484 youth to participate in summer camp and allowed Thorne to deliver its Nature Immersion Program (NIP) at nine Title 1 schools. NIP ensures that every student at our community’s lowest income elementary school receives a minimum of 23 hours of nature programming during grades 1-5 and the opportunity to participate in an additional 198 hours of summer camp and after school programming if they want to further expand their connection to nature and the outdoors.

2017 PROGRAM FACTS
• 96% of parents felt their child is more connected with nature after attending Thorne’s summer camp.

• 17% of Thorne’s summer camp participants received tuition assistance.

• 97% of teachers felt the In-School Program had “a lot of value” in correlation to school district science standards.

• 55% of In-School Program students participated in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program and 59% were students of color.

2017 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

- Field Trip Program: 18%
- In-School Program: 40%
- Summer Camp: 19%
- Other Programs: 23%