



## National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) Names Sandy Colhoun as New President

*Interim President elected to President position on October 5 after highly competitive search*

**LANDER, Wyo. – Oct. 11, 2023** – The [National Outdoor Leadership School \(NOLS\)](#) is pleased to announce the appointment of [Sandy Colhoun](#) as its new President. Colhoun brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to the school's mission to this role, having served as the Interim President for the past eight months. Colhoun was awarded the position after a lengthy and highly competitive [search process](#), which included experts in outdoor education, leadership, the sciences, a university president and a dean, writers, Mount Everest climbers, teachers, and senior business leaders.

Colhoun was ultimately selected and unanimously elected by the NOLS Board of Trustees on Thursday, October 5, 2023, and he immediately moved into the role upon completion of the vote.

“With a strategic mindset and a keen ability to assess operations and bring clarity to the School’s complex finances, Sandy met and exceeded these critical requirements,” stated N. Stuart Harris, NOLS Board of Trustees Chairperson. “Sandy has also shown an abiding commitment to DEI, recognizing that the NOLS mission benefits from building a warm, inclusive, diverse, and vibrant community.”

The presidential search committee co-chairs, Jane Fried and Danielle Dignan, also shared their sentiments about the competitive nature of the selection process and echoed their support for Colhoun as the new president of NOLS.

“It’s natural to focus on the appointment as the outcome of the search,” emphasized Fried. “In this case, Sandy Colhoun, with his energy, humanity, leadership in higher education, and unwavering commitment to NOLS, was the best person to lead the school at this moment in its history. In addition, the search committee, through Spencer Stuart, met many admirers of the school who have a vested interest in our success and who are eager to help us extend our reach to more students and institutions.”

Dignan further emphasized the choice of Colhoun as the new president by stating, “We are thrilled to welcome Sandy as the new NOLS President. It was a tough and rigorous selection process, especially with such a diverse and talented pool of candidates. As interim president, Sandy exhibited a strength of character and a focus on the mission that he will carry into his presidency. The future of NOLS is bright.”

Before joining NOLS as the Interim President in February 2023, Colhoun was the chief campaign officer at Colby College, responsible for leading the college's \$750 million campaign, the most extensive campaign in liberal arts college history when it was launched. In addition, he has directed scores of campaigns, raising nearly \$1 billion for non-profit organizations.

Before his fundraising experience, he was the Editor-in-Chief of the *Antarctic Sun* based in McMurdo Station, Antarctica, and a staff reporter for the *Christian Science Monitor*. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Colby

College and his Master of Arts in Journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia Graduate School of Journalism.

Colhoun is a NOLS Wind River Mountaineering graduate. He will continue his work with a mission to inspire and teach leadership and wilderness skills at a time when people are increasingly seeking opportunities for personal growth, adventure, and the preservation of our natural world. In his new role, Colhoun will provide strategic leadership to NOLS and continue its legacy of educating and empowering individuals through wilderness experiences and wilderness medicine.

“Being elected to serve as the president of the world’s preeminent leadership organization is humbling,” said Colhoun. “In the weeks and years ahead, I will look forward to partnering with the community to ensure that our school continues to thrive, that our impact grows and scales to serve evermore students, and that together, we help make our students' lives and the world a better place.”

For more information about NOLS and the courses they offer, please visit [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu) or call 800.710.6657

**MEDIA IMAGES** | [LINK](#)  
**ANNOUNCEMENT LETTERS** | [LINK](#)

###

### **About NOLS**

*Established in 1965, the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) is the leader in wilderness education. What began in a small cabin in Wyoming’s Wind River Mountain range has evolved into a global, multifaceted nonprofit school offering a proven leadership curriculum through expedition courses, wilderness medicine certifications, risk management training, and custom education solutions for organizations. Today, NOLS operates 14 campuses worldwide and provides classroom instruction in over 40 countries. The NOLS community includes over 930 active instructors who teach various outdoor skills, from mountaineering and sailing to wilderness medicine that empower students to step forward in their lives. [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu) | @nols | 800.710.6657*

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

**NOLS Communications Director**

**Kelli Lusk**

**208.309.3793** | [kelli\\_lusk@nols.edu](mailto:kelli_lusk@nols.edu) / [pr@nols.edu](https://pr.nols.edu)