Mountains Matter to Millennials:
A Public Session to Hear from Our Region’s Young Professionals

This session will focus on millennials’ engagement with the outdoors and celebrate the role “mountains” play at personal, group, and regional levels.

Thursday, September 8, 2016
4:30pm – 5:00pm – Happy Hour Reception
5:00pm-7:00pm – Presentation & Discussion
Penrose House Conference Center, 1661 Mesa Ave

Purpose:

The Pikes Peak region has recently been faced with the question: Is the region attractive to young professionals? This concern was succinctly covered at a December 2015 brainstorming session with Elevated Insights, and covered by The Gazette “Springs employers brainstorm workforce solutions” on December 19, 2015.

Colorado Springs is well known for its quality of life: featured as the No.1 city for singles seeking romance (WSJ Feb. 14, 2014); No. 2 on the "Fittest City in America (Men’s Fitness 2009); best "Big City to Live In" (Money magazine 2006); and "Best Town" (Outside Magazine 2009). The city is beautiful. The climate is great. And the outdoor recreation opportunities are boundless. The cost of living is lower than in most cities, as is the price of real estate, and Colorado Springs is a great place to raise a family. However, many millennials think Colorado Springs lacks the cultural and social amenities of towns like Denver and Boulder, even with its natural backdrop. As a response, many voices have suggested a community campaign to attract and retain millennials.

Our “Mountains Matter to Millennials” Session will explore the attitudes of millennials in the Pikes Peak region. What can we learn from this generation of citizens in our community? What role does our natural backdrop play in attracting young talent and how can we tap into the knowledge of young leaders to strengthen the quality of life for all? This meeting seeks to engage our young professionals, celebrate the important role "mountains" play at personal, group, and regional levels, and challenge our communities and organizations to play useful roles that include healthy uses of our outdoors.
Summary Agenda

4:30-5:00pm: Social Hour/Perimeter Host Table Conversation

This provides an opportunity to learn about career opportunities, unique stories and products/services being offered by invited experts and adventurers.

5:00 - 5:05pm: Introductions; Thayer Tutt, Walt Hecox

5:05-5:30pm: Keynote Speaker: Luis Benitez, world-class mountain guide and Director of the Colorado Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry

“Can the Outdoor Industry Save the World?”

In an era where obesity is on the rise, time away from a screen is a never ending battle, and top tier business schools are clamoring to understand how to teach grit and tenacity, can an industry once thought only to be filled with seasonal recreationalists, become not only a health conscious economic engine for the country, but also a moral compass for the world?

Luis is one of the more experienced, respected and busiest professional guides and leadership development consultants in the world. He has summited the top of the famed "Seven Summits" 32 times, including being a six-time summiteer of Mt. Everest while serving as the Director of Operations for Adventure Consultants, a New Zealand based international guiding company. Luis’s first summit of Everest was to climb with the blind athlete Erik Weihenmayer on his historic 2001 Everest summit. He works to tie the lessons available from the mountains and carry them back to the everyday challenges of life and business. In this regard, he also manages and leads critical thinking/situational leadership seminars in Chile for the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business. This has led to the creation of an innovative consulting group - Endeavor Consulting - which focuses on experiential leadership development at the executive level. Currently he is also Director of Colorado’s Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry.

5:35-5:45pm: Results of Pikes Peak Outdoors Leisure and Recreation Survey; Moderated by Robin Roberts and James Rajasingh

- Summary of Purpose, Results from Survey as they relate to Millennials
- Sponsors:
  - Colorado College Innovation Institute, El Pomar Foundation’s Pikes Peak Heritage Series, Springs Insight Exchange

5:45-7:00pm: World Café Roundtables and Refreshments; Moderated by David Leinweber, Angler’s Covey and Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance

Roundtables will provide attendees face-to-face interaction with other attendees and invited experts while discussing selected topics/challenges related to outdoor recreation in the Pikes Peak area, especially from the perspective of Millennials. Table Moderators will initiate discussion and record salient results; Every 15-20 minutes attendees can rotate to other tables and new topics.

7:00pm Gift Card Drawing and Event Conclusion

Questions? Contact Walt Hecox, Senior Program Advisor whecox@elpomar.org