



COMMUNITY

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Big Sky Weekly

BYEP wins \$10,000 from Toyota

Bozeman-based nonprofit wins social media contest

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Bozeman-based nonprofit group Big Sky Youth Empowerment recently received a big PR bump when it won \$10,000 from the Toyota Halftime Handoff contest.

Here's how it happened:

In October, a social media marketing group contacted BYEP about participating in an online contest. BYEP—which introduces at-risk youth from Bozeman, Belgrade and Big Sky to snowboarding, ski-

ing and a rigorous character development program—was up against three other (national) nonprofits in a weeklong voting competition.

By scoring the most votes on the Halftime Handoff Facebook page, BYEP won \$10k and a 15 second spot on NBC Sunday night football (aired 11/27, watch at youtube.com/watch?v=tIe38FJRXT0).

The funding is a step in helping the program meet its \$600,000 annual budget, said Pete MacFadyen, BYEP's Founder and Executive Director.

"We're humbled we were chosen to be part of the competition. We're excited and re-energized that our constituency went out and voted for us. It's a testament to the communities belief and support in our program."

What's larger, but also harder to measure, is the PR the campaign generated. There's been a buzz around BYEP in the week since they won, MacFadyen says, with people in the community talking about the award, and analytics way up.

Become a Snow Sponsor

It costs \$125 to take each BYEP student snowboarding or skiing 10 times over the winter. New this year, BYEP is inviting community members to sponsor a BYEP kid. For \$125, you put one local at-risk teenager on the snow for the entire winter. In return, you'll get a full day transferable lift ticket to Big Sky Resort for the winter 2011-2012. To participate, text "Deep Powder" to (406) 538-0399. Only 100 sponsorships available.