

New ‘Part of our Nature’ Campaign Provides Mental Health Resources for Mountain Communities

Though living in the mountains can be incredible, residing in a remote area can bring unique challenges when it comes to mental health. For many residents, there’s a lack of access to services and increased stigma on the topic. Now, due to the impacts of COVID-19, there’s even more need to connect people with support. At Vail Resorts, mental health is a topic we prioritize, and we’re committed to raising awareness for “Part of our Nature,” a new campaign and website that aims to normalize the topic of mental health and connect mountain town residents with the resources they may need.

Mental health challenges are a “part of our nature.” That’s the message of a website and campaign recently launched by the Katz Amsterdam Foundation—founded by Vail Resorts’ CEO, Rob Katz—as mountain towns continue to contend with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. Thanks to support from nonprofit partners, PartOfOurNature.org provides local mental health resources in multiple communities where Vail Resorts operates—Summit County, Colo.; Summit County, Utah; Tahoe-Truckee, Calif.; and Whistler, British Columbia—to connect people with support.

“It’s always a bluebird day for me...but that doesn’t mean I always feel sunny.”

This phrase, featured next to a bright photo of a bluebird, is available as one of 12 downloadable e-cards to send to family, friends, and coworkers directly from the website. Alongside these cards, which highlight various animals and scenes from nature, mountain town residents are provided with a list of local mental health services specific to their community, aiming to normalize the topic of mental health and reduce stigma while encouraging people to utilize resources as needed.

“One of the very real, very unfortunate impacts of COVID-19 on our mountain communities has been a dramatic rise in mental health and substance abuse issues, amplified by the already limited access to local services and stigma that existed in these unique communities,” said Beth Ganz, executive director of the Katz Amsterdam Foundation. “We are committed to raising awareness and connecting people to the support they need during this challenging time. We are grateful to have such strong partners in many mountain communities, who collaborated to create this campaign, and are passionate about ensuring mental health is prioritized alongside physical health.”

Made possible thanks to Building Hope (Summit County, Colo.), CONNECT SUMMIT COUNTY (Summit County, Utah), Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, and Whistler Blackcomb Foundation, PartOfOurNature.org lists resources for each region. In partnership with CB State of Mind, resources will soon be available in Crested Butte, Colo. as well. E-cards and information are available in both English and Spanish.

Founded by Vail Resorts’ CEO, Rob Katz, and his wife, Elana Amsterdam, New York Times bestselling author and founder of [Elana’s Pantry](#), the Katz Amsterdam Foundation believes that emotional and physical wellness is essential for people and their communities to thrive. Since 2016 the Katz Amsterdam Charitable Trust has donated nearly \$6.5 million in mental and behavioral health grants and, recently, \$2.5 million to provide immediate COVID-19 support to both Vail Resorts’ employees and mountain towns where the company operates.

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