



**2021
ANNUAL
REPORT**



Making “the best place ever” even better

When a young child at a TNAC Summer Fun Day exclaims “This is the best place ever!”, we get inspired. Inspired to bring that level of joy and wonder to ever more children throughout our community. Thankfully, our efforts are paying great dividends.

We are most fortunate that TNAC continues to grow so robustly. Our E-STEM programs and field trips are bringing real-world science and nature experiences to students throughout the greater Bridgeport area. Henkel, the Horizon Foundation, and others continue to strengthen their support of TNAC programs. Add to that a major new two-year grant from the State of Connecticut and we are now on a trajectory for even greater growth.

With this support, our vision of a nature-benefited community becomes more real every day. As these opportunities present themselves to us, we give thanks to all of you who are making this dream a reality.

Kevin S. Malone, President
Patrons of the TNAC, Inc.

Patrons of TNAC Board of Directors and Staff

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Mark Ceneri

**Environmental Educator/
Outreach Coordinator**

Pam Roman

E-STEM Education Student Programs

Inside and outside the classroom, TNAC provided environmental science programs.

As schools and classrooms began re-opening to in-school instruction, they also started welcoming us once again to provide enrichment programs for their students. Through a combination of indoor visits and outdoor activities, we were delighted to supply students with the hands-on science lessons that were sorely missed during virtual learning.

Though Trumbull Kindergarten classes did not hatch their own chicks this year, TNAC still was a big part of these students' life cycle curriculum. Students viewed the chicken videos that we had produced in 2020, and Lead Environmental Educator Mark Ceneri brought live chicks to the classes for students to interact with.

“The children’s exposure to nature was up close and personal.”

*- Jonathan Brown (Site Coordinator
Columbus Lighthouse)*

We visited multiple Trumbull and Bridgeport classes, including grade 4, and we were delighted to once again provide all Trumbull second graders with our grade 2 curriculum-aligned program. In spring 2021, we worked with Trumbull K-5 Science Director Liz Doherty, school principals, custodians, and teachers, to safely bring this program directly to students at all six Trumbull elementary schools—right on their own school grounds. For the first time all year, students could participate in a “field trip” that allowed them to have a unique science enrichment experience.

Summer fun while learning E-STEM.

In the summer, we visited Bridgeport Early Reading Success programs, The Goddard School, and Ansonia schools for in-person programs.

Generous donations from both the Horizon Foundation and Henkel Corporation allowed us the opportunity to bring students from underserved communities to TNAC for a half day of nature fun and exploration during the heart of the summer break.



Family Programs

In 2021, local families turned to TNAC as their source for outdoor fun and learning.

TNAC is known for its outdoor programs, and this year we learned that being outdoors is a safer place to gather. In response to this need, we added new programs to join our popular offerings. For the first time this year, we presented a St. Patrick's Day "Rainbow Search and Clover Pot" program, complete with leprechauns, rainbows, and a live performance by a tin whistle musician.

During the winter months, we headed out in the snow to discover tracks and learn survival techniques of the animal species that live at TNAC. We looked for our resident groundhogs in the burrow near the pond. We once again tapped our magnificent maple tree for sap. When spring rolled around we gave away dogwood tree saplings, and as fall blew in, families and friends came together to cut their own sunflower heads, roast marshmallows, and create beautiful, aromatic blue spruce wreaths.

Summer E-STEM programs encouraged nature investigation and problem-solving.

We offered two new summer programs this year, designed to engage elementary school students in learning through craft-making and nature exploration. Our Artists are Scientists and Junior Environmental Scientist programs invited elementary school-aged children to ask the questions, "I notice, I wonder, It reminds me of" as they observed nature, created their own aquatic ecosystems, baited animal tracking stations, viewed "hidden nature" through microscopes, and engineered solutions to the problem of rising seas.

The hidden nature E-STEM programs were made possible with support from the Henkel Corporation



Community Collaborations

TNAC was proud to work with like-minded local partners to provide family programs.

We were pleased to once again partner with the Trumbull Health Department in providing community programs. We took an interpretive nature walk at Beach Memorial Park in late summer, where we learned about local plants and wildlife. In the fall, we teamed up to host our Spooktacular Trail Walk with the help of local teens and their families.

A highlight of our year was our Families in Nature program. This program was a tri-collaboration with TNAC, Trumbull Community Women, and the Sustainable Trumbull Team. Each

organization offered an activity, including a plant walk and talk, a discussion of the Pollinator Pathway and sustainable lifestyle practices, and a planting activity for children.



In July, we hosted a tent at Trumbull Day. In August, we provided local seniors with a birdhouse craft at the Trumbull Senior Center, and in September we staked our tent at the Trumbull Arts Festival. This event was the launch of our Community Mural Project, led by St. Joseph High School student Danielle Haniph. In 2022, we are looking forward to exhibiting the completed artwork which will be comprised of over 100 feathers created by local children. Two “soaring bird” pieces will be created and displayed both at TNAC and the Trumbull Library.

This year, TNAC welcomed volunteers from Goodwill of Northern and Western CT. These eager helpers performed meaningful work at TNAC to gain real-world vocational experiences. This venture has proven beneficial to both the volunteers and TNAC.



Connecticut Dept. of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts 2-year Grant Award.

The Patrons of the Trumbull Nature & Arts Center were awarded a Directed Local Funds grant from the CT Dept. of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts for the fiscal years 2021 - 2022 and 2022 - 2023 in the amount of \$75,000 per year. These funds are to be used for operational expenses. Over these next two years, TNAC plans on implementing projects that will provide an upgraded visitor experience as well as opportunities for increased visitation to the Center. These plans are focused on four main areas:

Rehabilitating the TNAC meadow.

TNAC's meadow is one of its most important assets and environmental education resources. However, like many Connecticut natural areas, TNAC's meadow is being overrun by non-native and invasive species. We plan on using over \$5,000 of funding to help return the meadow to its native origins—a place where local plants and their pollinators can flourish.

Building upkeep and garden refurbishment.

Although this grant does not allow for capital expenditures, there are allowable projects that we are undertaking to enhance visitor experience. These include power-washing the building facade, replacing the sunflower garden fence and installing educational signage. We also plan on overhauling our monarch waystation and pollinator pathway to create an interpretative garden. This garden will educate visitors on best practices, in the hope that they will create a similar native garden in their own backyards.

Bolstering our programs and environmental education outreach.

Trumbull, Bridgeport, and other local schools continue to turn to TNAC for our hands-on, environmental education programs. With the assistance of grant-funding, we are developing more Next Generation Science Standards learning activities so that we can provide a wider range of E-STEM-based opportunities for students during the school year. Additionally, we are broadening our fun and educational weekend family programs to reach more of our community. While the majority of TNAC program attendees are Trumbull residents, we are now attracting visitors from other Connecticut towns including New Canaan, Fairfield, Monroe, Milford, Middletown, and Norwalk. This newfound awareness is shining a light on Trumbull as a destination for nature education. With that in mind, we will be initiating a publicity campaign aimed at boosting our program attendance.

A renewed focus on grant procurement.

Expanding our funding pipeline will ensure that TNAC continues to be a vital environmental education resource for years to come.



Financial Report

Unprecedented financial growth in 2021.

The Directed Local Funds (DLF) \$75,000 grant award was deposited into TNAC's coffers in October of this year. Because we received these funds in fourth quarter 2021, much of that funding has yet to be spent, causing our financial picture to show a large gap between income vs. expenses. The DLF contract terms state that these funds are required to be depleted by the end of the state's fiscal year, June 30, 2022. Future annual reports will illustrate a pattern of spending that more closely aligns with revenue receipts.

In addition to the State of CT grant, TNAC was awarded grants and received donations from several corporations, foundations, and individuals. Several donations were made by individuals in memory of Ruth Mohr, founder of TNAC's butterfly garden and long-time instructor.

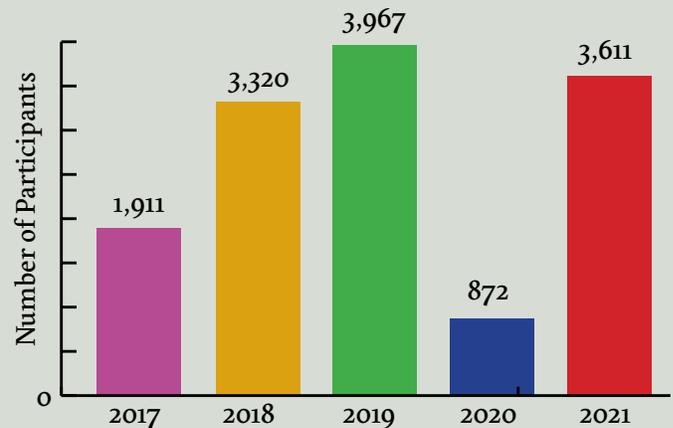
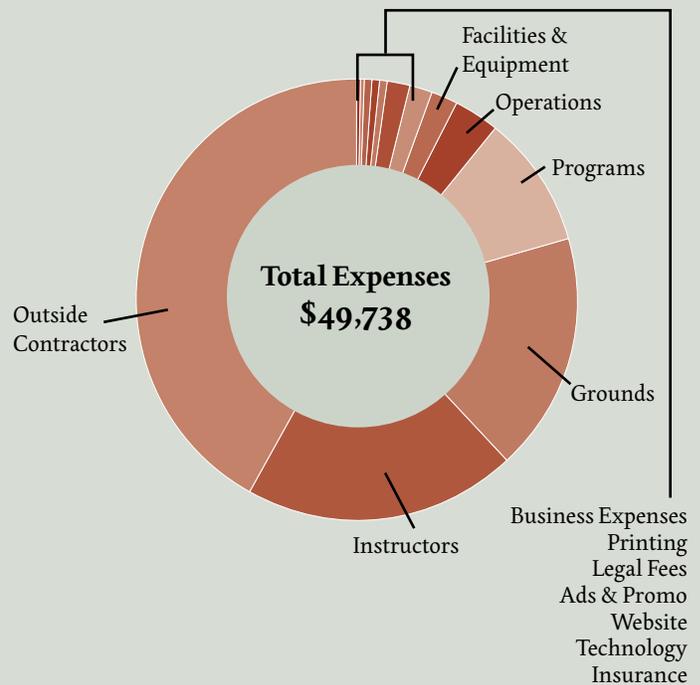
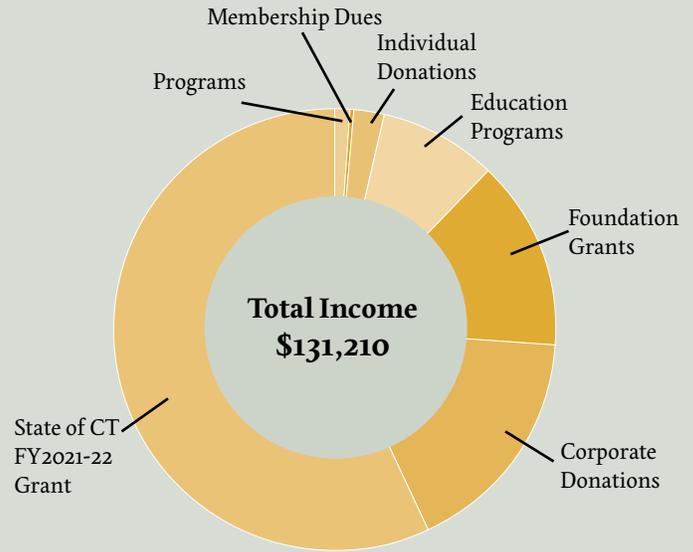
Donations \$400+

CT DECD Office of the Arts:	\$75,000
Horizon Foundation:	\$15,000
Henkel MIT Grant:	\$10,000
Amazon NeighborGood:	\$10,000
The Mallett Charitable Trust:	\$2,100
DK Publishing, Inc.:	\$1,400*
Werth Family Foundation:	\$1,200
Malone Environmental:	\$1,000
Stop & Shop Community Bag:	\$533
Facebook Fundraisers:	\$480**

After 2020's decrease in participation rates due to the pandemic shutdown, rates increased to near pre-pandemic levels as shown on the chart at right.

*Donation of nature and science books for children

**Facebook Giving Tuesday raised an additional \$320, received in 2022



About the Patrons of the Trumbull Nature & Arts Center

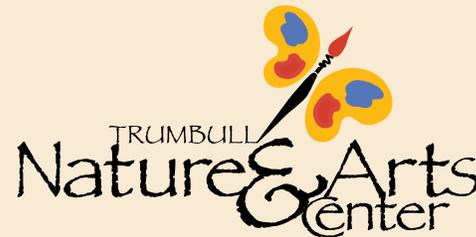
The Patrons of the Trumbull Nature & Arts Center, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization, supporting the Trumbull Nature & Arts Center.

Our mission is to provide nature-rich experiences to the members of our community in Trumbull as well as other Connecticut towns and cities. We are achieving this goal through our innovative, hands-on Environmental-STEM education programs, nature and art programs for children and families, and volunteer opportunities for individuals, nonprofit organizations, and corporations.



Our History and Future.

The Patrons of TNAC was established in 2011 as a non-profit to fundraise and provide programs for the Trumbull Nature & Arts Center. We report to the Trumbull Nature Commission, as we are located on Town of Trumbull property. Our vision is a community in which everyone has access to the benefits of nature, and we aspire to become the destination for environmental education in Trumbull and the Greater Bridgeport region.



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Scan code at left to learn more about our programs and how you can support our mission.



Trumbull Nature & Arts Center programming was made possible with the support of the Department of Economic and Community Development, Connecticut Office of the Arts