

## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT







## THE PATRONS OF THE TRUMBULL NATURE & ARTS CENTER

### Letter from the President

Here at TNAC, we are opening doors to the natural world. Through those doors, we bring lessons from nature into the classroom. Through those doors, we bring children outside for an immersive Environmental-STEM experience.

Natural technology is inherently engaging to young minds. The advanced level of engineering in a beehive, a beaver lodge or a butterfly's wing stimulates a child's interest to learn more about the many wonders of nature. Who knew that training our next generation of scientists and engineers could be this much fun for all involved.

In 2022, we were thrilled to bring nature to more people than ever before. In addition to the record number of students served, we reached out to community and senior centers. It turns out that the wonders of nature are ageless.

We are grateful for the support of our champions in the community. We look forward with anticipation and excitement as the doors of opportunity open ever wider.

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

#### Board of Directors:

**President** Kevin S. Malone

**Vice President and Secretary** Pam Hanover

**Treasurer** Maria Bivona

**Assistant Treasurer** D. Scot Kerr

**Board Member** Giovanni Amore

#### Administration:

**Director** Sheryl Baumann

**Business Student Intern** Aya Otorova

#### Instructors:

**Lead Environmental Educator** Mark Ceneri

**Environmental Educator** Kelly Casale

**Environmental Educator** Pam Roman







## ENVIRONMENTAL-STEM EDUCATION STUDENT PROGRAMS

**Whether they observed the tiniest creatures under microscopes, or used binoculars to view birds high in the sky, more people than ever participated in our TNAC programs.**

**Trumbull and Greater Bridgeport metropolitan area elementary school students participated in our Environmental-STEM programs.**

From taking a walk outside for our seasonal changes and weather program, to learning about beekeeping and pollination, Kindergartners and First Graders were introduced to E-STEM topics that they will build upon throughout their school years. Second Graders and Fourth Graders were immersed in environmental education as they became engineers by building beaver dams and exploring ways to save a city from rising flood waters.

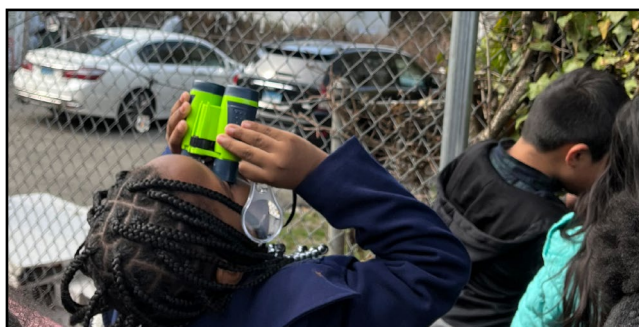
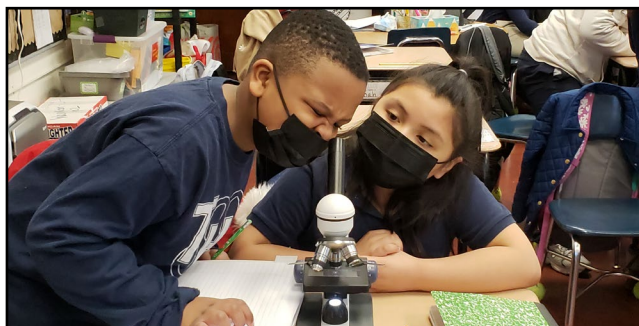
**Grade 3 students explored Pond Ecology close-up in their classrooms and at TNAC.**

The Horizon Foundation funded the development and implementation of this new program for Third Graders. Students were introduced to scientific inquiry using basic lab equipment and observing live creatures including a frog, turtle, and crayfish.

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

**A new Nature Exploration program was provided to Grade 1 students.**

A grant by the Henkel Corporation allowed Bridgeport First Graders to explore the environment in their own schoolyards. Henkel employees assembled nature backpack kits during their "spread the love of science" volunteer day. The students used the kit supplies to make scientific observations of trees, plants, insects, birds, and the sky. They used critical thinking skills to make predictions about changes in seasonal growth.







## FAMILY AND SEASONAL PROGRAMS

**All year long, families came to TNAC to participate in our outdoor education programs. Highlights include:**

### **We play outside - even in winter!**

We watched the sap flow from our 150-year-old sugar maple tree, then watched as the sap was boiled down into maple syrup. For St. Patrick's Day, families walked the snowy trails to find the colors of the rainbow, and all things Irish.

### **Spring was busy with plenty of family programs.**

Toddlers and their parents attended Tinkergarten weekly programs to play in the mud, and other developmentally appropriate activities. Our Earth Day program was replete with family activities, including a petting zoo, bucket truck lift provided by Bartlett Tree Experts, tree and seed planting, a craft, and the unveiling of the first of two "Trumbull Soars as One Murals" in collaboration with Trumbull student Danielle Haniph.

We launched our "TNAC Trail Tales" program series with the posting of pages from the book "Little

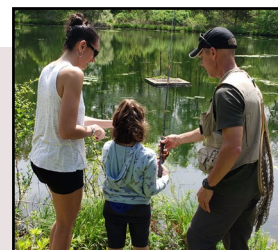
Mole Finds Hope" along our trails. Robin Bieber, MA, LMFT at the Mary J. Sherlach Counseling Center, and Melissa McGarry of TPAUD (Trumbull's Prevention Partnership) were on-hand with information about mental health coping techniques for families with young children. As late spring rolled around, we once again held our popular Fishing 101 and Intro to Archery programs.

### **Summer brought out our Junior Environmental Scientists for more in-depth scientific inquiry.**

Children discovered science and nature in TNAC's meadow, forest and outdoor classroom. They captured paw prints, made take-home aquatic ecosystems and more immersive activities along the trails and stream.

### **In the fall, we harvested sunflower seeds, told ancient folk tales, learned how to backpack, made birdhouses and fragrant wreaths.**

We grew mammoth sunflowers all summer long to be harvested by families in the fall. The birdhouses we made in November will be used by local families to feed birds all winter long.







## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### TNAC collaborated with its community in Trumbull and the Greater Bridgeport Region

**We offered activities at Trumbull Day, the Trumbull Arts Festival, and Trumbull Parks & Rec's Paint-a-Pumpkin Event.**

TNAC added to the fun of Trumbull festivities by hosting a tent and children's activity for local families.



**High School students were at the forefront of our growth in 2022.**

**Danielle Haniph, St. Joseph High School**

When St. Joseph High School student Danielle Haniph approached us with an idea to bring our community together with a collaborative project, we eagerly offered our support. Danielle came to our events where she had hundreds of children paint individual feathers. She then compiled the feathers to make a bird for her, "Trumbull Soars as One" murals. One bird was displayed in TNAC's kiosk, and the other in the Trumbull Library lobby display window.



**Aya Otorova, Trumbull High School**

Trumbull High School student Aya Otorova passed a rigorous interview process to become the Patrons' student business intern. She tracks our grant-funded expenditures, filmed and edited a video for our website, and has volunteered at our events. Aya has become a valuable part of the TNAC team.

### TNAC Goes Mobile

This past year we packed up two of our most popular programs and took them on the road. We visited the Trumbull Senior Center, plus libraries and assisted living facilities in multiple towns.



### Bridgeport Youth Engagement Collaborative (BYEC)

TNAC is a member of the BYEC, an initiative of State Senator Marilyn Moore. The BYEC is committed to a holistic, threefold approach toward addressing the unmet needs of youth in Bridgeport.







## CORPORATE, FOUNDATION, AND STUDENT VOLUNTEER IMPACT

**Through monetary donations and community action days, corporations and community partners have contributed to TNAC's success.**



### **Henkel Corporation**

A long-time supporter of TNAC, Henkel's 2021 grant funded our Grade One Nature Exploration program. Additionally, Henkel employees donated their time on 3 separate occasions in 2022. During their "Spread the Love of Science" day, they packed Nature Exploration kits that were used by Grade One students. They planted in the spring, and in the fall they painted our picnic tables, installed educational signage, and renovated our outdoor chalkboard.



### **Unilever**

On a sunny October day, two teams of energetic Unilever employee volunteers prepared our gardens for the winter by weeding, mulching, and clearing our trails of overgrowth.

### **Goodwill of Western CT**

Participants in Goodwill's vocational program came to TNAC again this year to help with operational tasks including assembly and maintenance projects.



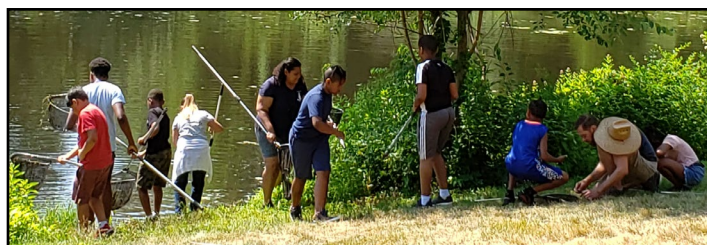
### **Amazon and Community Volunteers**

In May, Amazon employees and community volunteers came to TNAC to plant and mulch our gardens. The flowers they planted bloomed beautifully throughout the spring and summer.



### **Sacred Heart University Student Volunteers**

This fall, students in Professor Pat Walker's HS 314, Intro to Epidemiology course learned about tick-borne diseases as they cleared our trails to mitigate transfer of ticks to humans.



### **Horizon Foundation**

The \$15,000 grant donated to TNAC by the Horizon Foundation funded E-STEM programs for Bridgeport youth during the school year and in the summer.





# FINANCIAL REPORT

## 2022 Finances Show the Impact of State of CT and Foundation Income.

### State of CT grants, donations, and earned income bolstered our organization in 2022.

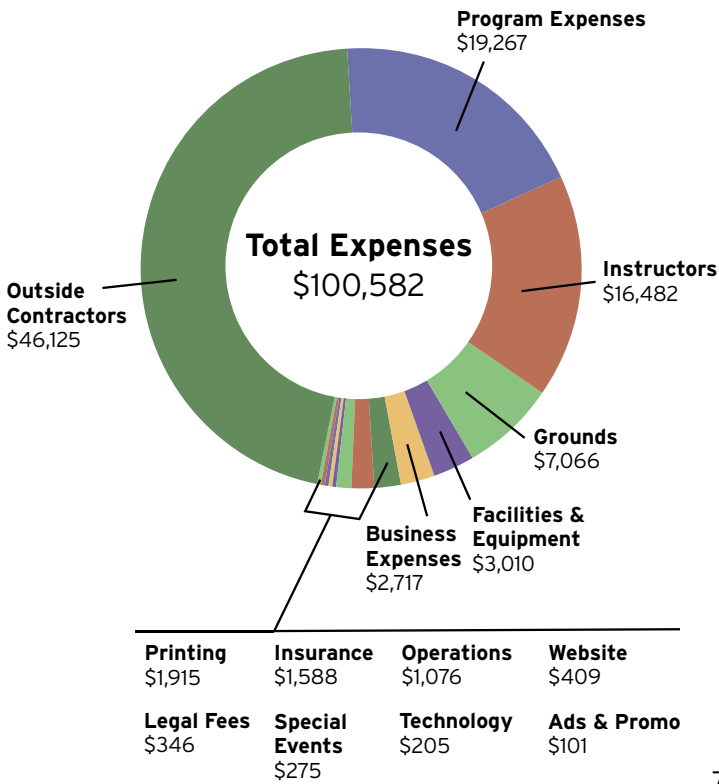
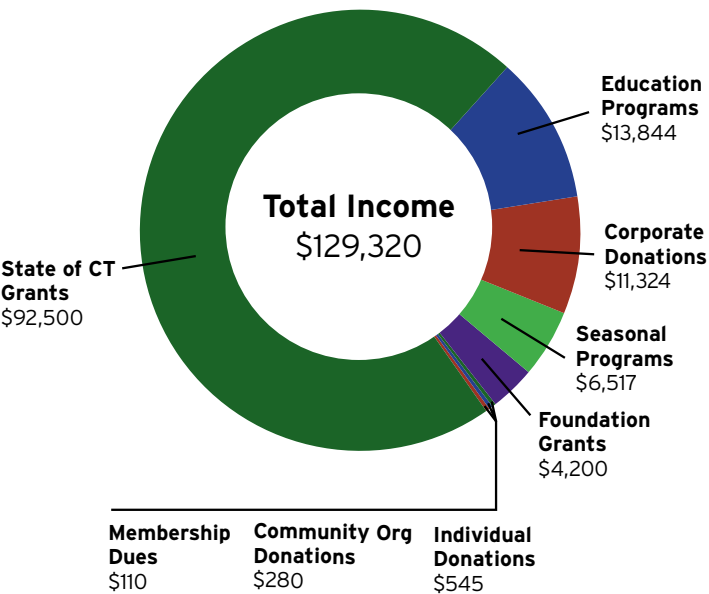
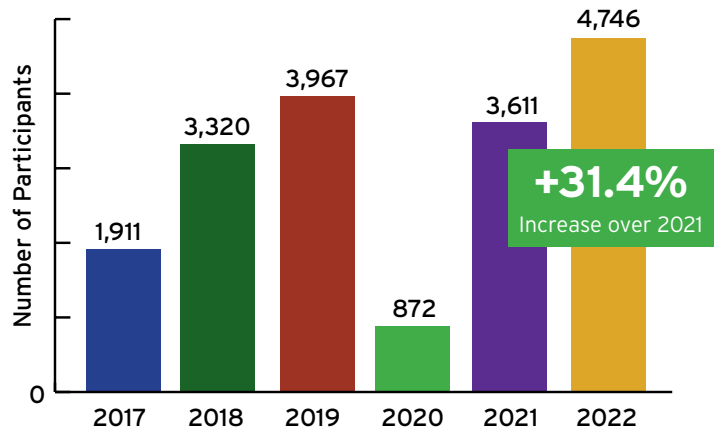
The second year of our CT Dept. of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts grant was a major factor in the stability of our 2022 income. This grant helped to sustain and grow our operations, and allowed us to complete projects that enhance the TNAC visitor experience. These projects included a new street sign with interchangeable message boards, an overhaul and new fence for our butterfly garden, and re-organization of our building.

In 2022, we were awarded a State of CT Judicial Department Youth Services Prevention grant. This grant is allowing us to provide E-STEM programs to students in grades 5 through 8.

Income from our education programs increased this year due to broader outreach, including implementation of our mobile programs initiative.

### Participation rates are at their highest ever.

From toddlers through senior citizens, more people than ever benefited from the environmental education programs TNAC provides.







## 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 Trumbull community and Greater Bridgeport region. 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 students and families, 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. We are grateful to the Town of Trumbull whose support with in-kind services allows us to provide programs at low or no cost to participants.

### **Sharing our love of E-STEM makes a difference.**

Our vision is a community in which everyone has access to the benefits of nature, as we aspire to become the destination for environmental education in Trumbull and the Greater Bridgeport region.

The positive feedback from the students, teachers, and families we serve is our driving force. This past year, students and teachers told us,

*"Are you coming every Tuesday? I've never seen a turtle before. It's so cool!"*

*"I never had a teacher that liked plants and animals like me. Now I do!"*

*From a third grade teacher in response to our post-visit survey, "The hands on experience with the pond water and microscope was great! The kids loved this! Thank you so much for this experience! We would love more things like this!"*



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For more info about TNAC:



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Department of Economic and  
Community Development

Office Of The Arts