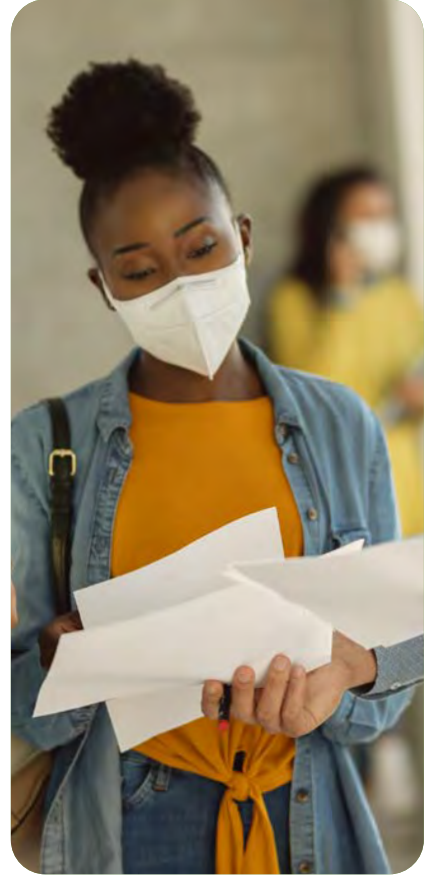


# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



**Cultivating an  
environmentally  
conscious and  
responsible public**



NEEF partnered with the Teaneck Creek Conservancy, Samsung, and Benjamin Franklin Middle School in Teaneck, New Jersey, to engage 7th-grade students in a water quality monitoring project and 8th-grade students in a macroinvertebrate and biomonitoring study at their local watershed.



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# A Message from the CEO

## Dear friends,

Now that we are well into 2021, it feels as if we have finally achieved enough distance to reflect on the challenging year that was 2020. Distance was—and still is—a fitting word for that time, when the global COVID-19 pandemic forced us out of our schools, our workplaces, and our public spaces and into our homes. However, as you will see in this year's report, the physical distance between us proved to be no match for the ingenuity, resiliency, and commitment of our staff, board, and partners.

Between adapting our programs for a virtual environment while balancing Zoom meetings, homeschooling our children,

managing our (suddenly very needy) pets, and responding to worldwide protests against racial inequality, I am overflowing with pride at how our team remained committed to NEEF's guiding principles.

### **Our Purpose**

To cultivate an environmentally conscious and responsible public

### **Our Vision**

That people's everyday actions are guided by an understanding and concern for the well-being of people and the planet

### **Our Mission**

To make the environment more accessible, relatable, relevant, and connected to the daily lives of all Americans



While COVID restrictions impacted our work with in-person volunteers, students, and educators, I am particularly proud of the work we have done to provide more opportunities for virtual engagement. Through online educational projects, interactive exhibits, informative webinars, and other resources, we have connected even more people to our work and the outdoors.

Like many organizations, we experienced our share of setbacks. Delays in our ability to execute on government awards due to the aforementioned COVID restrictions delayed our ability to execute school based programming and impacted our financial statements.

Despite these challenges, NEEF's robust staff culture helped us weather the worst of the storm. We are now well-positioned to redouble our efforts to support students, teachers, public lands managers and visitors as well as healthcare providers as we adapt to a post-COVID world and to deepen our engagement with our partners as we work together to cultivate an environmentally conscious and responsible public.

Before we highlight some of our recent successes, I'd like to take a moment to thank Megan Reilly Cayten, our Chair of the Board of Directors, for her tireless dedication and commitment to NEEF over the years. Megan's term ends in May 2021.

Megan has served on NEEF's board since 2013, and from the very beginning has leveraged her extensive network and professional expertise to share the important work we do with potential partners, funders, and leadership. She has followed admirably in the footsteps of her father, William K. Riley, EPA's administrator when the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 was drafted and created NEEF. We will miss her boundless enthusiasm for environmental education and will keep her close as we move towards the future.

Sincerely,

**Meri-Margaret Deoudes**  
*President and CEO*



*NEEF Board Chair  
Megan Reilly Cayten*



*NEEF President and CEO  
Meri-Margaret Deoudes*

# Leadership

## Governing Board

### Megan Reilly Cayten

*Chair*

Senior Advisor, Javelin Capital

### Kevin Butt

*Vice Chair*

Regional Environmental Director,  
Toyota Motor North America Inc.

### Meri-Margaret Deoudes

*Secretary*

President and CEO, NEEF

### Katharine Emerson

Director, Public Policy & Political Strategy,  
National Corn Growers Association

### Carlos Alcazar

Co-Founder, Culture ONE World

### Todd Greenwood

*from August 2019*

Chief Development Officer,  
Purdue Research Foundation's Discovery Park

### Jeniffer Harper-Taylor

Head of STEM Education, Siemens Foundation

### Katie Hogge

Digital Outreach Specialist, Ocean Conservancy

### Jennifer Love

*from January 2020*

Chief Security Officer, Senior Vice President  
of Safety, Environment, and Health,  
Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.

### Wonya Lucas

*through December 2019*

President and CEO, Public Broadcasting Atlanta

### Don Mattingly

Manager, Miami Marlins MLB Team

### Lori McFarling

*from January 2020*

President, Corporate Partnerships,  
Discovery Education

### Shannon Schuyler

*through December 2019*

Principal-Chief Purpose Officer,  
Corporate Responsibility Leader, PwC;  
President, PwC Charitable Foundation

### Stephen Sikra

*from June 2020*

Vice President and Chief of Staff,  
Alliance to End Plastic Waste

## Ex-Officio Board

### Elizabeth "Tate" Bennett

*through December 2019*

Associate Administrator, Office of Public  
Engagement and Environmental Education,  
US Environmental Protection Agency

### Tinelle Bustam, PhD

Acting Director, Conservation Education Program  
USDA Forest Service

### George Etheridge V

*from January 2020*

Special Advisor, Office of Public Engagement  
and Environmental Education,  
US Environmental Protection Agency

**Kenneth W. Harding**

*from August 2020*

Regional Director of the Central Region,  
National Weather Service

**Louisa Koch**

Director of Education,  
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

**Matthew Lyttle**

Branch Chief, Partnership and Engagement,  
Individual and Community Preparedness Division,  
FEMA—Department of Homeland Security

**Sara B. Newman, DrPH, MCP, CAPTAIN**

United States Public Health Service;  
Director, Office of Public Health,  
National Park Service

**Ericka L. Reid, PhD**

Director, Office of Science Education and Diversity,  
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences,  
National Institutes of Health

**Nora Savage, PhD**

Nano Program Director, Chemical, Bioengineering,  
Environmental, and Transport Systems (CBET),  
Engineering Directorate,  
National Science Foundation

**Shannon Steinbauer**

Special Assistant to the Director,  
Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes,  
US Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Christopher S. Strager**

*through June 2020*

Director, Central Regional Office,  
National Weather Service

**Sharunda D. Buchanan, MS, PhD**

Director, Office of Priority Projects and Innovation,  
Office of the Director, National Center for  
Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances  
and Disease Registry (NCEH/ATSDR),  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

**Maureen Sullivan**

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense  
(Environment, Safety, & Occupational Health),  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense,  
Energy, Installations, and Environment,  
US Department of Defense

**Staff Leadership****Meri-Margaret Deoudes**

President and CEO

**Patrick Deavy**

Vice President, Organizational Development

**Sandra Dilley**

*through July 2020*

Vice President, Development

**Sara Espinoza**

Vice President, Programs

**Amy Skalmusky**

Vice President, Marketing and Communications

**Nancy L. Smith**

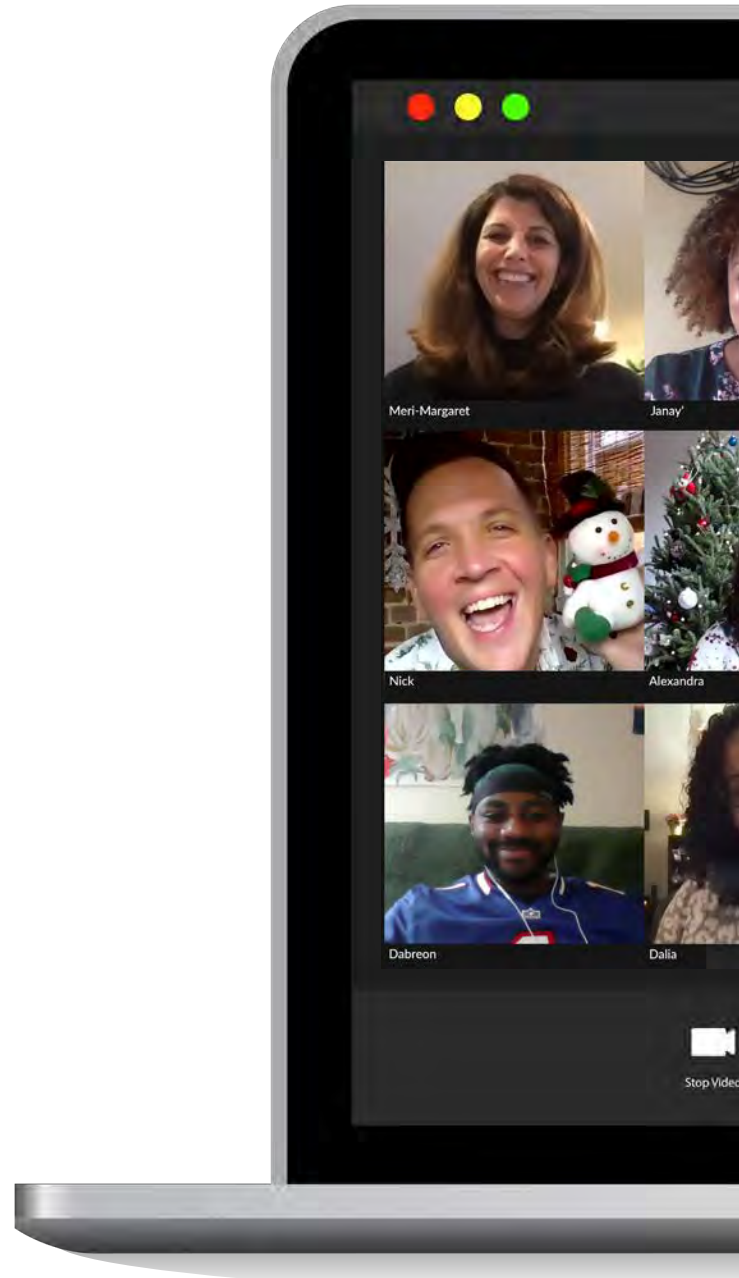
Vice President, Finance and Administration

## Our Work

*As leaders in lifelong environmental learning, the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) is dedicated to advancing environmental education and engagement in the United States. For 30 years, we have worked to cultivate an environmentally conscious and responsible public through K-12 education, environmental health, and conservation-focused programs, grants, and initiatives.*

2020 was a challenging year. It has tested all of us in unexpected ways and forced us to acclimate to a “new normal.” Thankfully, NEEF is uniquely suited to adapt to changing conditions while continuing to serve the public as a resource for environmental education.

This year has helped millions of Americans better appreciate the power of nature and the outdoors to relieve the stress, anxiety, and boredom many of us experienced due to COVID-19 safety restrictions. We’d like to highlight the ways in which we helped make the environment more accessible, relatable, relevant, and connected to the daily lives of all Americans during these challenging times while positioning ourselves to continue this success into 2021 and beyond.









*Diversity, Equity & Inclusion have been a part of NEEF's fabric for many years. While our organization continues to build on this foundation, we realize that we still have much to learn. One thing is certain—to better care for the environment, we need everyone's help.*

**SunWise:** NEEF published its SunWise sun safety education materials in Spanish. The SunWise K-8 activities and sun safety messages have proven especially useful for educators, parents, and caregivers during the COVID-19 pandemic, when people are spending more time outside and also looking for high-quality activities to do at home.



**Racial Inequity:** During the period of public protest in the summer of 2020, our staff came together to condemn the acts of systemic racism that claimed the lives of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other Americans of color.

We decided to channel our grief into a plan for action—to use our platform to lift the voices of underrepresented communities. By shifting the focus of environmental stewardship from a predominantly affluent, white lens to respect and include people from all walks of life, we can make a positive impact that inspires future generations and fulfills our commitment to all Americans.

## DE&I Goals



### Listening & Understanding

**Holding** listening sessions with our audience and partners to understand needs

**Conducting** DE&I and culture surveys and charting progress

**Ensuring** equity in our grant making by establishing baselines and goals per community



### Including & Supporting

**Highlighting** voices from communities of color in our programs and communications

**Providing** funding for grantee projects that increase diversity and inclusion

**Expanding** our existing work that affects underrepresented communities



### External

Create opportunities for people with varied perspectives and identities to experience and learn about the environment in ways that improve their lives and the health of the planet.



View our specific organizational goals by visiting the DE&I page of our website.



## Internal

Maintain a diverse work culture based on inclusion, equity, and respect.

### Opportunities

Exploring ways to ensure diversity in our staff, board, and partners



### Human Resources

Adhering to fair, equitable, and transparent processes and policies



### Accountability

Holding ourselves accountable to embodying our values and creating a culture of inclusion



### Culture

Upholding a learning culture that celebrates our uniqueness and diversity of thought and experiences



*Perhaps no facet of daily life was impacted by COVID-19 more than education.*

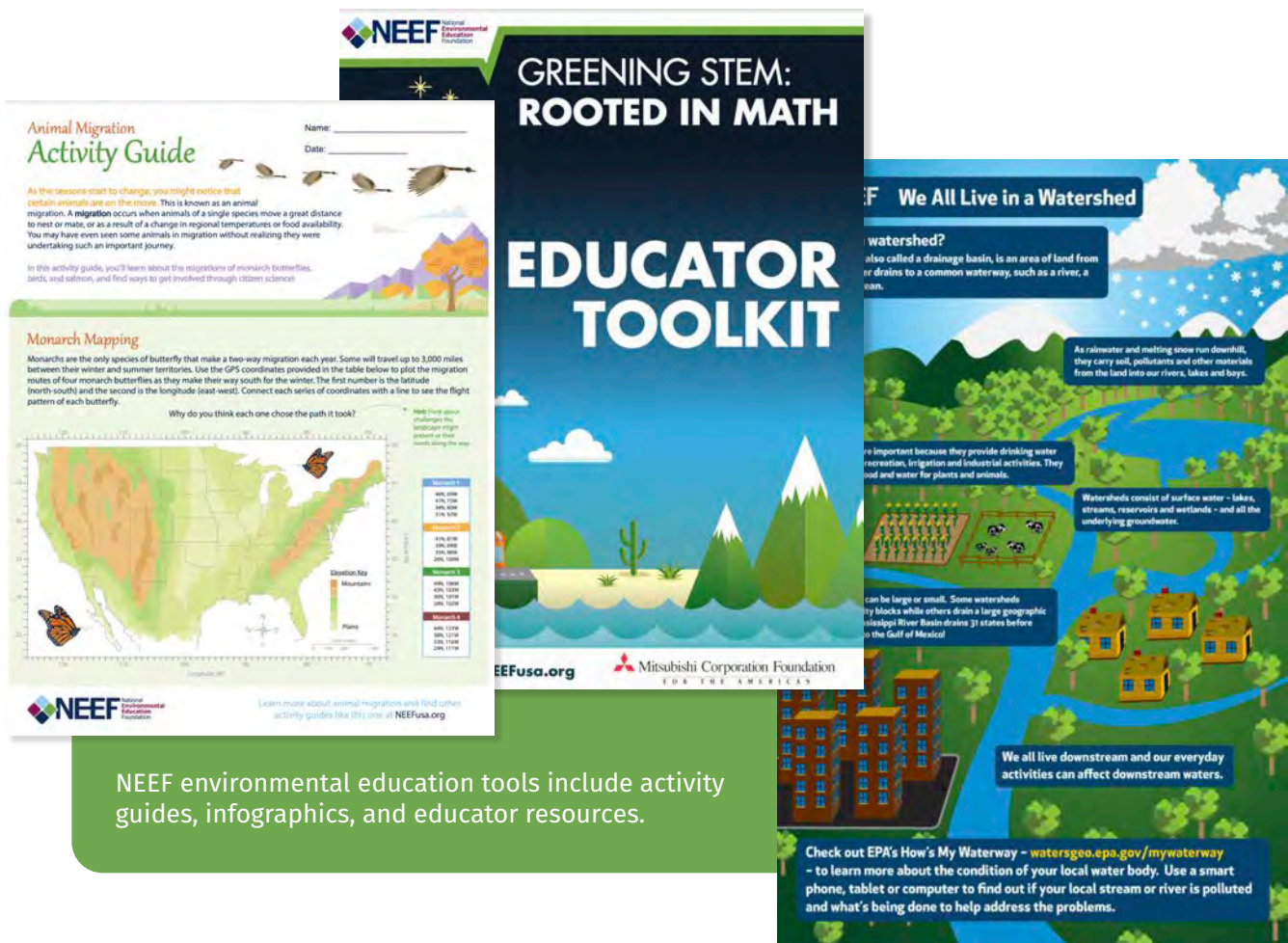
With classes moving online and teachers scrambling to update their lesson plans, NEEF stepped in to help by **compiling a list of educational resources** for parents, educators, and caretakers to use while their children are stuck at home. We also released many of our **National Environmental Education Week (EE Week) resources** early to make them more readily available when teachers needed them most. While

this was our first-ever fully virtual EE Week, we received a lot of positive feedback from educators on the program and how we can streamline the process next year.

Just prior to the lockdowns in March, NEEF partnered with Samsung, the Teaneck Creek Conservancy (TCC), and Benjamin Franklin Middle School (BFMS) in Teaneck, New Jersey, to launch a **Greening STEM project** focused on environmental monitoring at a local watershed. Educators from River Keepers along with TCC staff and BFMS faculty facilitated two days of field work



Students share their excitement about Greening STEM projects in **these short videos**.



NEEF environmental education tools include activity guides, infographics, and educator resources.

before COVID-19 disrupted the project. A series of short videos captured the enthusiasm of everyone involved. There are plans to continue the project in the coming academic year.

Finally, NEEF again partnered with Samsung and the EPA's ENERGY STAR® program for the Climate Superstars Challenge. This year, NEEF provided additional resources to help educators better incorporate the Climate Superstars Challenge into their daily lesson plans whether in-person, online, or in a hybrid learning environment.



This year, we launched an interactive eLearning course: ***Environmental Management of Pediatric Asthma: Guidelines for Healthcare Providers.***

This 1.5-hour course consists of eight educational modules rooted in approaches for achieving asthma control. NEEF received approval from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Training and Continuing Education Online (CDC TCEO) to offer free continuing education credits for individuals who complete this course, making us the first CDC-funded program in the National Asthma Control Program to apply for and receive credentials through the CDC CE.

↑ **3,000**  
Resources downloaded

↑ **300**  
Course enrollments



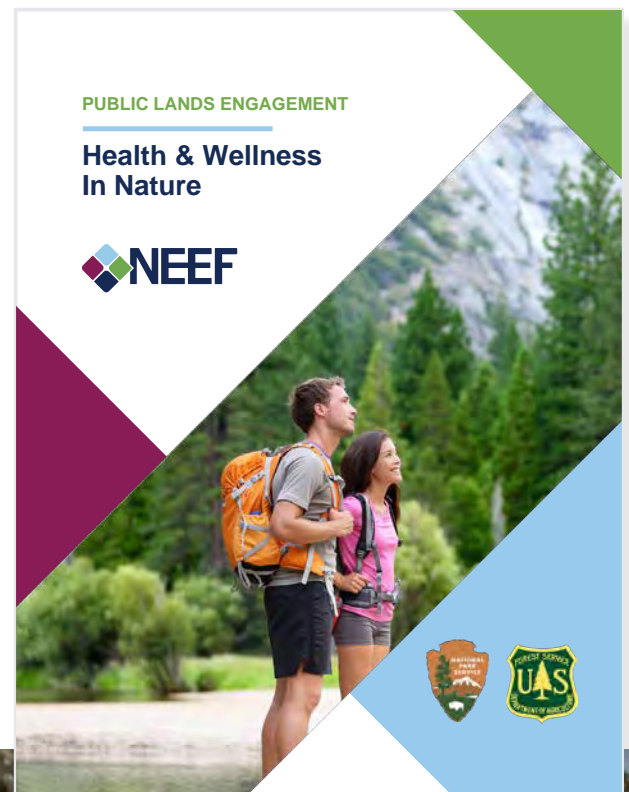




This February, NEEF released the **Public Lands Engagement: Health & Wellness in Nature** community guide to the public. Developed in partnership with the National Park Service and US Forest Service, it is packed with information to help local communities organize successful outdoor health and wellness activities through real-world examples, recommendations, and related resources. Since its release, the guide has been downloaded over 600 times!

The annual National Public Lands Day (NPLD) celebration each September is the largest single-day volunteer effort for America's public lands. In 2019, **over 2,000 public lands sites** across the US hosted NPLD events, and together they engaged more than 150,000 volunteers in hands-on conservation activities.

This year, NPLD needed to look a little different. While public land sites were still able to register socially distant in-person events, NEEF focused on **supporting innovative virtual events** designed to engage volunteers and connect people to public lands from the safety and comfort of their homes. With generous support from Toyota Motor North America, NEEF sponsored **38 innovative virtual events** during this year's NPLD celebration as part of our "More Ways to Connect to Nature" campaign.





**108** Virtual events

+

**188** In-person events



**296**  
NPLD events



**77,267**  
Participants across  
the country



We also held our very first virtual signature event to kick off NPLD this year! With help from our friends at **Corazón Latino**, NEEF hosted a virtual musical tour of some of America's most scenic public lands sites, from Joshua Tree National Park in California to Kenilworth Gardens in Washington, DC. You can watch a full [replay of the event here](#). Check out the impact of this unique NPLD.

*With social distancing regulations in place and recreation centers closed throughout the year, people turned to the outdoors more than ever for exercise and rejuvenation. Many public lands have seen a surge in usage—two to three times as many visitors in some areas—as well as a sharp reduction in staff and volunteer projects that keep them open and available for all Americans to enjoy.*

As one of the nation's leading supporters of public lands engagement, NEEF is dedicated to helping America's public lands recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. With help from our corporate partners at Toyota Motor North America and International Paper, NEEF established the **Restoration & Resilience Fund** to distribute resources and mobilize volunteers to help restore these special places.

This year also saw NEEF partner with the Department of Defense (DoD) Legacy Resource Management Program to sponsor its first National Park Service's Park Rx Day funding opportunity for military installations. National Park Rx Day celebrates spending time in nature for improved health.



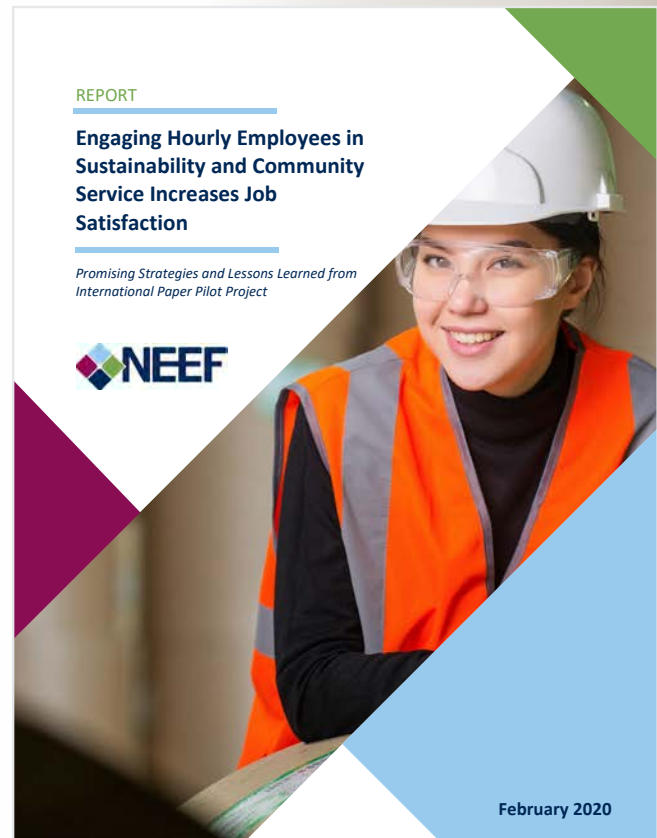
Led by healthcare providers and health professionals, National Park Rx Day commemorates the importance of people connecting with natural environments to improve their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Despite unforeseen challenges and delays that resulted from the COVID-19 crisis, many installations are excited about potentially hosting Park Rx events in the future.



*In February, NEEF and International Paper presented “Engaging Your Hourly Workforce in Your Company’s Community Sustainability Efforts” at the 2020 GreenBiz Conference in Phoenix. This presentation was based on an employee engagement pilot project for the company’s hourly workers.*

Employee engagement programs focusing on the environment and sustainability have demonstrated the potential impact on company savings through reduction of environmental costs (energy, water, waste, etc.) and costs related to employee recruitment and retention, as well as community impact through employee volunteerism and pro-bono activities. The **International Paper pilot effort** provides an example of how companies that give hourly employees a voice and develop sustainability and community engagement activities inclusive of the hourly workforce can increase job satisfaction and retention within this group.

*NEEF also kicked off an exciting new*







OVERVIEW

TIPS

VOLUNTEER

RESOURCES



Together, we have the power  
to change the world.

Small Changes = One Big Healthier World

Join millions of iHeartRadio listeners who are taking smarter, greener steps in their everyday lives to help protect the planet - while saving time and money!

To commemorate Earth Day 2020, NEEF partnered with iHeartMedia to launch **iHeartRadio Earth**.

This new sustainability initiative is designed to inspire millions of iHeart listeners to take simple actions that positively impact the planet and help save money. Over the course of the year, iHeartRadio Earth evolved to include a series of local environmental events, social media contests, and exclusive content for new and existing iHeart podcasts. To date, the campaign has received over 225 million impressions!



# NEEF extends heartfelt appreciation to our family of supporters.

## Corporate

3M Foundation  
American Dawn, Inc.  
Faith Technologies, Inc.  
International Paper  
Nexceris  
Samsung Electronics  
America Inc.  
Toyota Motor North America  
VF Foundation

## Foundations

Alpin J. and Alpin W. Cameron  
Memorial Fund  
AmazonSmile Foundation  
Anonymous  
The Alisann and Terry Collins  
Foundation  
The Vidda Foundation

## Government

Bureau of Land Management  
Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention  
Department of Defense Legacy  
Resource Management  
Program  
National Park Service  
US Environmental Protection  
Agency  
US Forest Service

## Individuals/Other

Iman Abdullah  
Carlos and Duly Alcazar  
Anonymous (6)  
Decker Anstrom and  
Sherry Hiemstra  
Kevin Butt  
Margaret Chang  
Meri-Margaret Deoudes  
Bethany Dickson  
Katharine Emerson  
Sara Espinoza  
Edgar Evangelista  
Alexandra Funk Olmstead  
Arthur Gibson  
Elena Good  
Todd Greenwood  
Jacob Gruener  
Emily Guimont  
Jeniffer Harper-Taylor  
Helen Hearn  
Katie Hogge  
Cary Jones  
C Kulhanek  
Jennifer Love  
Andrea Lum  
Felicia and Kaiheem Mason  
Karen Matsuyama via  
Toyota4Good Fund at  
California Community  
Foundation  
Lori McFarling  
Kimberly McKinnis  
Kai Medina

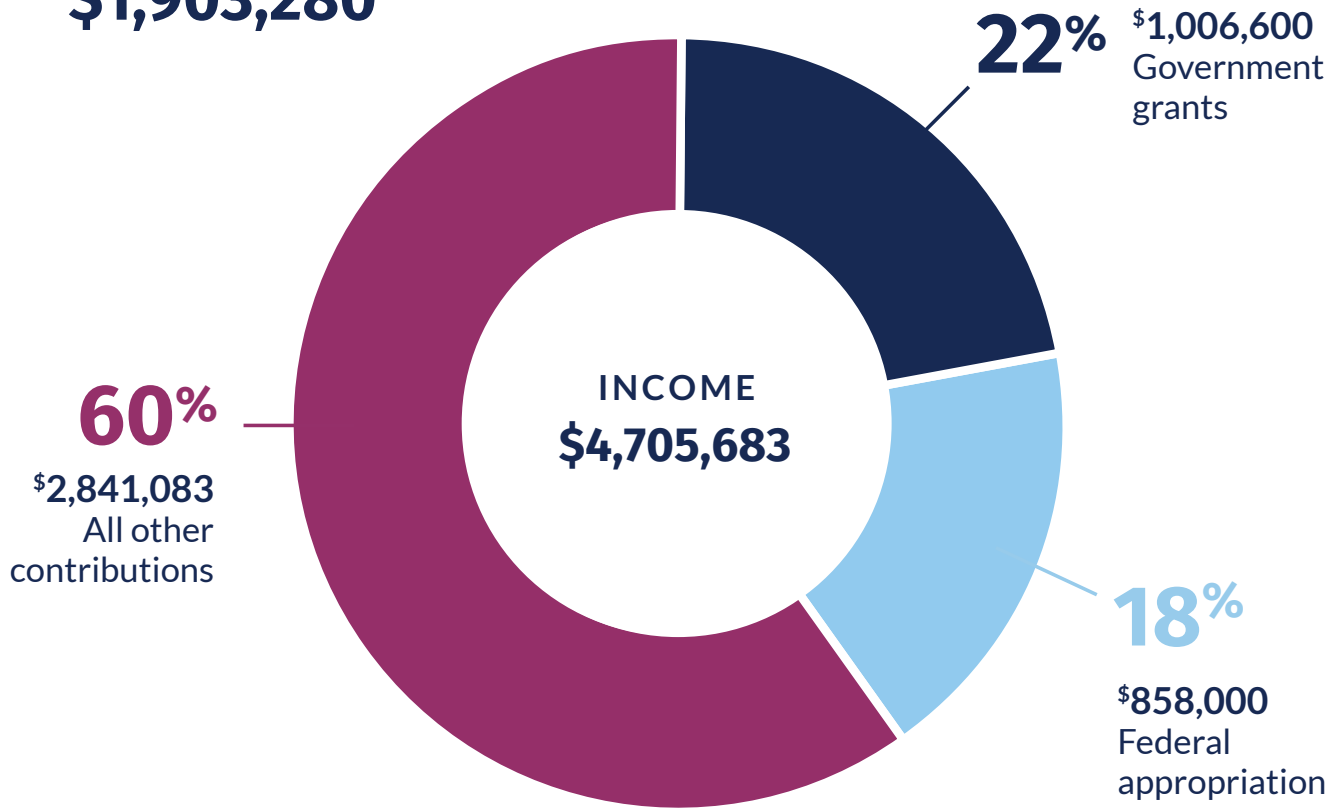
Loraine Miller on behalf  
of Danny Miller  
Adam Niederpruem  
in honor of educators:  
Bailey, Chris, Cheryl,  
Mary Kate, Monica,  
Scott, and Steph  
Xi Pan  
Lydia Parnell  
Hozefa Patrawala  
Keith Principe  
Megan Reilly Cayten  
William K. Reilly  
Jacqueline Seaberg  
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Rosalie Vaneck  
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Campaign Donors

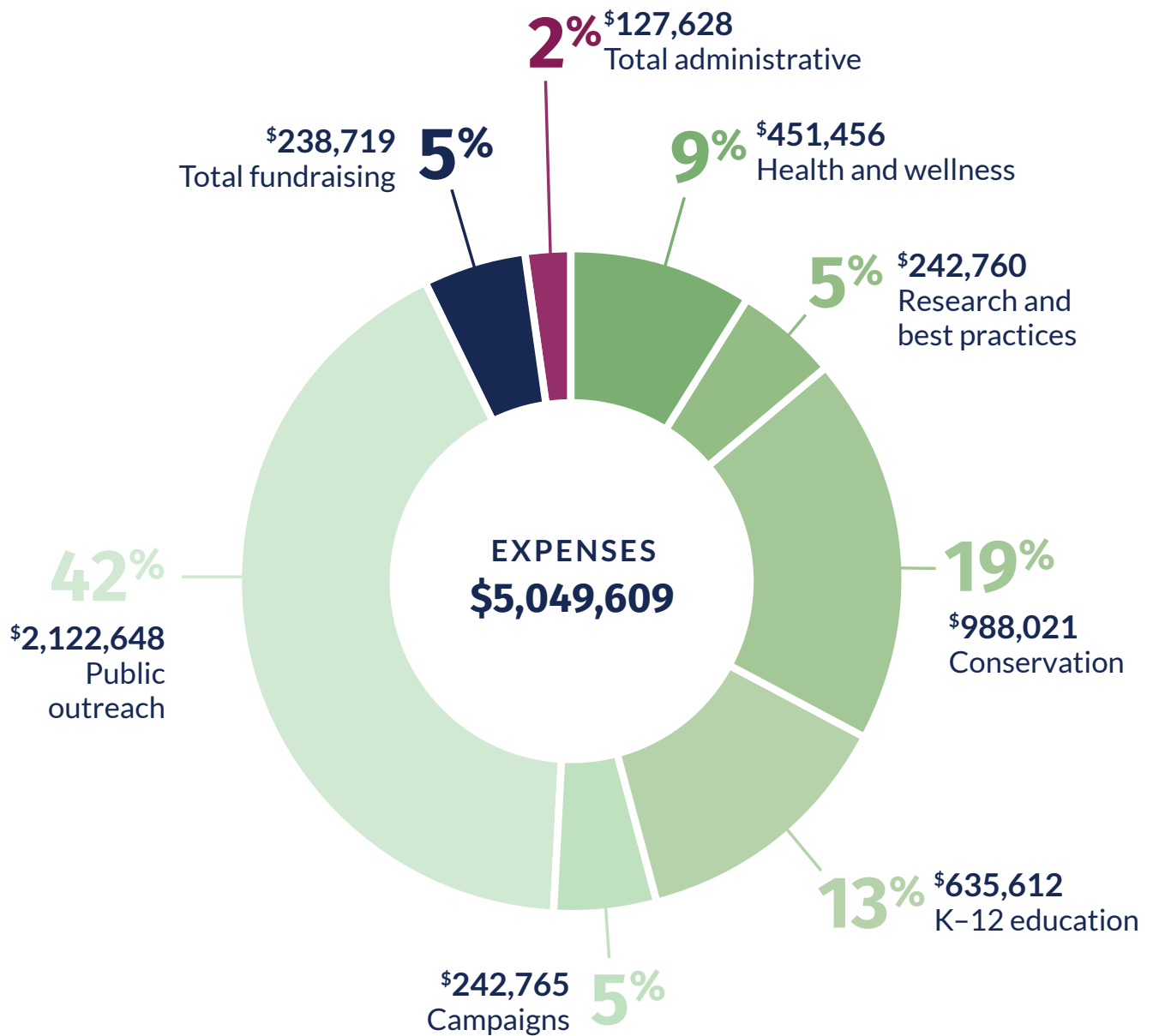
## In-Kind

Beveridge & Diamond, P.C.  
Cisco Systems, Inc.  
iHeartMedia, Inc.

TOTAL END OF YEAR NET ASSETS

**\$1,903,280**





**TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES**

**\$4,683,262**



# National Environmental Education Foundation

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