

A photograph of a woman in a grey hoodie and a young boy with glasses looking at a small black container outdoors. Other children are visible in the background, some wearing masks.

ISLANDWOOD™ DONOR IMPACT REPORT

Summer 2022

Dear Friends,

If environmental education was ever considered a nice to have, now more than ever, I'm certain it's a must have. Our children need it, our communities need it, and our planet needs it. And with your support, we've been able to ensure that our must-have programs could not only survive, but thrive, throughout the region this past school year, directly reaching over 9,000 children, educators, and community members! I invite you to read about all that you've helped us achieve this school year and all that we have our sights set on for the coming school year.

Thank you for your support of immersive, inclusive, intentional learning experiences that spark future scientists, marine biologists, naturalists, educators, and stewards of our communities and the planet. Together, I know we are changing the world for good!

With immense gratitude,



Megan Karch, CEO
ceo@islandwood.org



What We've Been Up To

School Overnight Program: After an almost two-year pause, our School Overnight Program resumed in February! We were thrilled to have over 1,000 students back – sleeping and waking for full days of learning and exploring on our campus again.

Graduate Program: This spring we launched a new graduate course – Climate Change, Climate Justice & Emotionality – about teaching and learning in a time of climate crisis. And then in June, we celebrated 32 amazing human beings graduating from the program!

Schoolyard Programs: In the spring of 2021, with most children unable to take field trips, we piloted Schoolyard Programs, bringing our lessons and educators directly to schoolyards. We significantly expanded the program for this school year, reaching over 3,000 children across the region with experiences exploring stormwater and wastewater science on their own school grounds.

Teacher Professional Development: Teachers were more taxed than ever this school year, and yet over 100 teachers from all over the region attended our professional development courses, most of which span several months' time. The courses are designed to give teachers strategies to deepen students' climate literacy, inspire environmental stewardship, and connect science learning to students' lives. These teachers reach approximately 2,500 students each year!

Rising Star Elementary School: This year we piloted providing intensive teacher professional development support for one school, for the entire school year, to explore how focused efforts can create systemic and sustainable change in a single high-opportunity school. We look forward to the second year of this pilot continuing this fall!

Ecosystems Restoration Field Study: This spring, we launched a new field study to support Seattle Public School's 5th grade spring ecosystems science unit. The pilot, which included almost 200 students and three different schools in Seattle, was a great success and we'll be expanding the program to more schools in the spring of 2023!

Community Waters Program Expansion: Community Waters, a 4th grade science unit originally developed in partnership with Seattle Public Schools, began rolling out to Tacoma Public School teachers this school year. The unit engages students in solving real community environmental problems through engineering. We spent this school year training Tacoma teachers on the unit and expect to reach up to 2,200 students with the curriculum in the 2022/2023 school year!

Community Education Programs: It made our hearts so happy to be able to open our Bainbridge campus again for the community... and open it up we did! We offered over 30 programs, including annual favorites such as Mushroom Mania, Amorous Amphibians, and the Bainbridge Island Environmental Conference. We also hosted 10 community events at the Brightwater Education Center in Woodinville, with popular annual events such as Forest to Fork and Festival of Frogs making their comeback!

Community Stewardship Projects: In partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we facilitated stewardship projects with teachers and community-based organizations that addressed issues affecting watersheds in our communities. It was our honor to support teachers, students, and other local organizations in making a positive impact on their communities through some really amazing projects!

Advocacy: On March 23rd, the Washington Legislature passed historic legislation (House Bill 2078) establishing, for the first time, a statewide Outdoor School program. We were proud to work in collaboration with other organizations in this effort as part of the Washington Outdoor School Consortium. IslandWood CEO Megan Karch serves as the Legislative Co-Chair of the Consortium.

Working Towards Racial Equity: IslandWood was accepted into the two-year Working Towards Racial Equity workshop series led by UC Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science and Justice Outside and began participation in the workshop in February. Funded by the National Science Foundation, the series was developed to support environmental and outdoor science organizations in building capacity to foster equitable, inclusive, and culturally relevant work environments and organizations.



What We're Looking Forward To

Summer Camp: Summer camps for preschoolers through 8th graders are in full swing on our Bainbridge Island campus and at the Brightwater Education Center in Woodinville through August!

School Overnight Program: It's wonderful to have a jam-packed schedule of schools from all over the region registered for the 2022/2023 school year. We are expecting 4,000+ students over the year and can't wait!

Day Programs at the Brightwater and South Treatment Plants: Due to King County restrictions, we couldn't get our four-hour, project-based day programs at the Brightwater and South Treatment Plants running this school year as originally expected. But, we are on for the 2022/2023 school year, with our entire fall schedule already fully booked. We are planning to reach 5,250 children with these programs!

Amplify Working Group: In August, we'll kick off a year-long working group with experienced K-8 teachers and district science leads that will develop materials to support local connections to the Amplify Science curriculum used throughout the state.

Teacher Professional Development: We'll have another full schedule of courses for teachers this coming school year, including Schoolyard Learning for K-2 teachers, Community-Centered Climate Action for K-5 Teachers, Community-Based Climate Change Instruction for K-8 Teachers, and What Makes a Weed a Weed for 3-5 Teachers.

Duwamish River Program: In 2020, we launched the Duwamish River Program and are excited to be bringing it back this fall for schools located in the immediate area of the river. Students sail on an Argosy boat and learn about the social and ecological history of the river that lies at the heart of their own communities.

Community Education Programs: There will be many more programs for the community coming up this calendar year, including once a month open trail days from August - December. And, save the date for our first-ever Community Campfire dinner and s'mores event on December 10th! Keep your eye on our events calendar at islandwood.org/events for all the upcoming fun.

Advocacy: While we're thrilled with the passage of House Bill 2078, establishing a statewide Outdoor School program, there is more work to do, and we will do it! Currently Washington State funded the program at \$10 million dollars, but it's estimated to cost \$50 million a year to send all Washington students to a week of Outdoor School during their 5th or 6th grade year. We will continue to stay highly engaged in this effort as we believe every child should have access to experiences like IslandWood's School Overnight Program.

Community Camp: Join us for Community Camp – a new event we're excited to launch this October 7th – 9th. The weekend will include all sorts of IslandWood learning experiences, tours, music, delicious food, and optional overnight accommodations. More to come soon, but this is a great one for people of all ages!

Dinner in the Woods: It's never too early to save the date for our annual fundraiser supporting environmental education! Get Saturday, May 6th, 2023 on your calendar. Like this year's event, it will include programming for the kiddos in your life and the option to stay overnight on our Bainbridge campus.





Inspiring the Next Generation
of Environmental Stewards

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