



2020
ANNUAL
REPORT



**ENVIRONMENTAL
LEARNING
FOR KIDS**



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to present Environmental Learning for Kids 2020 annual report for your review. The year brought many challenges to our staff, students, supporters, and families. With your help and commitment, we persevered. Our programs never paused, and we stayed true to our mission to provide science-based education and outdoor recreational opportunities to under-resourced youth in Montbello and far northeast Denver. We pivoted to virtual programming and continued to engage students and families in our high-quality science education projects and developed innovative and fun family-oriented programs in the community.

Despite all the challenges presented in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Montbello Open Space Park is open to the community, and we completed fundraising for the ELK Education Center and construction is underway. Thank you all for your dedication to our youth and to ELK's continued growth. We will continue to inspire, educate, and clearly transformation is in our future.

For our youth,



Loretta Pineda | Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM ELK'S BOARD CHAIR

Looking forward...

We are celebrating 25 years in 2021 and looking forward to ELK's continued growth and engagement in the Montbello community. ELK is a solid model in the metro Denver nonprofit sector in environmental education and youth development for under-resourced youth. Further, ELK has taken a strong leadership role in national networks in STEM education, youth development, DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and outdoor recreation. The ELK Education Center, which, along with the Montbello Open Space Park, will become the home ELK students and staff, as well as a neighborhood hub of science education and youth engagement for Montbello and the surrounding community. This is also an opportunity for us to recognize and celebrate the ELK partnerships that made this vision a reality for our dedicated staff and deserving students.

A consolidated effort by the board, executive director, and staff has produced strong, diverse board leadership and a robust consistent program and development staff. We have continued to diversify our funding streams and have developed systems to steward our donors. We are ready to move the organization to the next phase of growth in our community, engage with more community members, and thrive long into the future.

Sincerely,



Ryan Nichols | ELK Board Chair

A young woman with dark hair, wearing a black ski helmet with goggles on top and a bright orange and white ski jacket, is smiling warmly at the camera. She is in a snowy ski resort setting. In the background, other people in ski gear are visible, including a person in a grey jacket and another in a red jacket. The background is slightly blurred, showing snow-covered slopes and a clear blue sky.

ELK MISSION AND VISION

MISSION

Environmental Learning for Kids cultivates a passion for science, leadership, and service in a diverse community of learners.

VISION

ELK envisions a world in which all people are caretakers of themselves, each other and the natural world.

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS 2020

AGES 5-25

50%
HISPANIC/LATINO

25%
AFRICAN AMERICAN

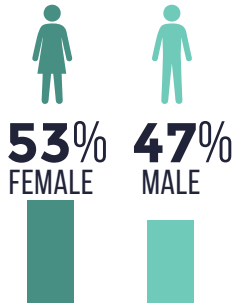
21%
MULTIRACIAL

2%
ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER

1%
CAUCASIAN

1%
AMERICAN INDIAN

DENVER, ADAMS, AND ARAPAHOE COUNTIES



85%
OF ELK YOUTH
QUALIFY FOR
FREE/REDUCED
PRICE LUNCH

IMPACT STATS 2020

126 ELK PROGRAMS:
4,309 YOUTH & FAMILIES SERVED - **2,011** THROUGH
YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMS AND **2,298** THROUGH
COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS / SCIENCE & STEM
EDUCATION, OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES & CAREER EXPLORATION

**87 SCHOOL
PROGRAMS:**
706 YOUTH
3 DISTRICTS
9 SCHOOLS

100% GRADUATES:
100% HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION RATE FOR ELK YOUTH

College Enrollment:
HELPED YOUTH OBTAIN **\$18,761** IN
COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

10 YOUTH EMPLOYED:
SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT VIA
URBAN RANGERS & PARTNERSHIPS

\$0 TO PARTICIPATE:
100% OF ELK YOUTH
PARTICIPATED AT NO COST

“THE OUTDOORS IS
A PLACE TO FORGET
EVERYTHING; I FEEL MORE
CALM, PEACEFUL AND
INDEPENDENT. I LOVE IT!”
— ELK YOUTH



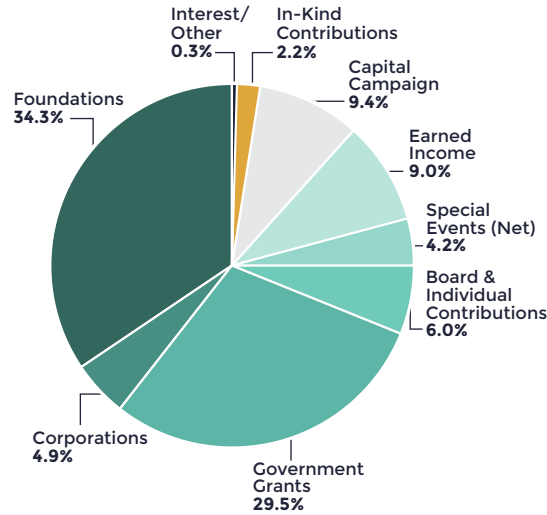
“I REALLY BEGAN TO LIKE
THE OUTDOORS WHEN
I REALIZED IT WAS SO
GOOD FOR MY MENTAL
HEALTH. BEING OUTSIDE
IS FREE THERAPY.”
— ELK YOUTH



2020 FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

REVENUE

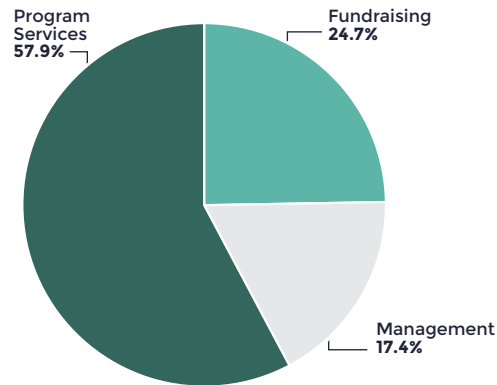
REVENUE	AMOUNT
Foundations	\$372,647
Corporations	\$53,532
Government Grants	\$320,742
Board & Individual Contributions	\$65,194
Special Events (Net)	\$46,115
Earned Income	\$97,716
Capital Campaign	\$102,600
In-Kind Contributions	\$23,779
Interest/Other	\$3,770
Total Revenue	\$1,086,096



“THE FIRST TIME I EVER WENT CAMPING IT WAS WITH ELK. I THOUGHT I WOULD HATE IT. NOW IT’S MY FAVORITE ACTIVITY! ELK FIRST TOOK ME IN 6TH GRADE AND I JUST GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL.”
— ELK YOUTH

EXPENSES

EXPENSES	AMOUNT
Program Services	\$481,814
Management	\$144,361
Fundraising	\$205,457
Total Expense	\$831,632



CHANGE IN NET ASSETS \$254,464

ELK PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

SCHOOL-BASED AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS, provide a wide selection of science and natural resources programs to community groups and public schools from grades P-12, correlated to Colorado State Academic Standards, in nine (9)* schools within three (3)* school districts.

DENVER YOUTH NATURALLY (DYN), a year-round, multi-year program, immerses youth in hands-on science and exploration of natural resources. With mentoring by science professionals, DYN youth find the support necessary to succeed in school and life.

YOUTH IN NATURAL RESOURCES (YNR) offers college mentoring, career exploration, and work experience in the field of science and natural resources, including college campus visits, leadership development, one-to-one scholarship and college entrance application support and summer employment.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES (LEAF) involves families of DYN and YNR youth in their children’s science learning, service projects, and outdoor experiences, encouraging quality family time side-by-side in nature.

*School district participation numbers affected by COVID-19 protocols.

“NATURE MAKES ME FEEL MORE CONNECTED TO MY COMMUNITY.”
— ELK YOUTH



URBAN RANGERS 2020 IMPACT

Despite Colorado's abundance of National and State Parks, opportunities to experience these natural resources are not equitably available in communities of urban youth.

Enter the Urban Rangers. Through a partnership between Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK), National Park Service (NPS), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and Denver Parks & Recreation (DPR), the Urban Ranger program outreached to and provides educational, professional development, and employment opportunities to underrepresented youth from the Denver metropolitan area. In its 8th year, the Urban Ranger program provided summer employment opportunities to ten (10) urban youth and educational experiences to over 1,739 community youth and family members.

Despite the complications and delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020, Urban Rangers continued to make significant contributions in helping ELK, NPS, CPW, and DPR to fulfill their missions to outreach and engage with urban communities about the opportunities available through each organization. Through trainings administered by NPS Rangers, CPW Rangers, ELK staff, and DPR staff, the Urban Rangers were able to work as educational facilitators and ambassadors on behalf of all agencies throughout their urban communities.

2020 URBAN RANGER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Taught **8** fishing clinics to **146** youth and family members
- In-person programs reached **671** youth and family members
- Taught **1,068** youth and family members through vital platforms
- Reached a total of **1,739** youth and family members
- Participated in a total of **98.5** hours of Professional Development, helping the Urban Rangers gain the skills and insights to be successful in the work field, especially in a natural resource career
- Received hands-on work experience and professional development at Golden Gate Canyon State Park and Barr Lake State Park. Project work included: Water quality testing, birding, noxious weed removal (to expand beach access), fire mitigation (brush removal), trail reroute (building bridge and buck and rail fencing)
- The Urban Rangers spent **13** days working a total of **111** hours at four Colorado State Parks; State Park days included a combination of professional development, fieldwork, and participating/leading educational activities;
- Created a film all about the Urban Ranger program and highlighted the various ways in which people can enjoy the outdoors here in Colorado
- Created a design for Smartwool all around honoring Latinx Heritage
- Two Urban Rangers were featured in a TED X talk about Environmental Justice
- Professional Development opportunities provided by: CPW, National Parks Conservation Association, Natural Leaders, Sierra Club and ELK Staff
- Completed the National Association for Interpretation Training Program and Urban Rangers received Certification

“THE OUTDOOR REMINDS ME TO VALUE EVERYTHING AROUND ME.
IT MAKES ME VALUE LIFE MORE, LETS ME DISCONNECT AND BE
AT PEACE WITH WHO I AM.”
— ELK YOUTH



2020 CONTRIBUTORS LIST

NORTH AMERICAN ELK \$10,000+

Denver Active 20/30 Children's Foundation
The Outdoor Foundation
Patagonia
U.S. Bank Foundation
Kristen Venick
Verizon
Ann and Henry Klaiman
Xcel Energy Foundation
Karl & Barbara Friedman
Colorado Nonprofit Development Center
AJL Foundation
The Denver Foundation
National Recreation Foundation
VF Outdoor LLC
Mile High United Way
Suncor Energy U.S.A.
Opus Foundation
The Anschutz Foundation
The VF Foundation
Argosy Foundation
Scientific & Cultural Facilities District

ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIG HORN SHEEP \$5,000-\$9,999

Evo
The Melvin and Elaine Wolf Foundation
The Nature Conservancy
Opus Foundation
Pacific Life Foundation
RevGen
Sierra Club
Turner Foundation, Inc.
Wright-Ingraham Institute
Schlessman Family Foundation
Darcy and Ben Freer of The Gale Foundation
American Academy of Dermatology

2020 CONTRIBUTORS LIST (CONTINUED)

COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE \$1,000-\$4,999

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Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife
Dr. Keith and Kelsey Connaghan
Denver Health
Scott and Councilwoman Stacie Gilmore
Johns Manville
Keystone Policy Center (Next 100)
VF Corporation
Walmart
Scott and Sara Carpenter
Kirsten Brown
Sara & Rob Bayless
Freeport McMoran
April Denmon
Craig Myles
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Schoelzel Family Foundation
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Jane Klawitter Crisman
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The Edmund and Eleanor Quick Foundation
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Generation Wild Northeast Metro Coalition
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Polar Field Services, Inc.
David L. Bucknam Memorial Scholarship Fund
Quality Community Foundation
Eagle Creek
The Schuster Family Foundation
Emily Thaxton
Community Shares Colorado

RED FOX \$5000-\$999

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Tara Alderfer
Kaspo
Brian Kurzel
Jen McLaren
Montbello Organizing Committee
Trea Nance
Gloria Nedved
Jessica and Gerrit Ostermick
Parsons
Heath & Kelly Port
Jeanne Usher
Patrick Walton
Ray Merenstein & Ilana Steinberg on behalf of RDM Communications
Anne Pogoriler
Community First Foundation
David Russell
Effley Brooks
Holly Sly
Bladimir Urias Martinez
PNC Foundation
Samantha Palladino
Point Seven Group, LLC
Juan Urias
Ryan Lane Nichols



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WESTERN TIGER SALAMANDER \$100-\$499

Taishya Adams
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Susan Anderson
Dee Dee Asten
Maureen Benton
Mercedes Blea-Davis
William Crossen
Mike Dunn
Matthew and Lisa Emerson
Donna Garnett
Brea and Gavin Gilchrist
Laura Rizzo
David Hubbs
Shannon Jones
Ellen Kearns
Karla Maraccini

Chelsea Mutual
Ellen Palgi
Rocky Mountain Center
for Positive Change
Zully Salazar
Linzee Troubh
Robert Wheelhouse
Suzanne White
Ida and Rick Wickizer
Bennie L Williams
Laura Wray
Chris Arend
Green Lady Gardens
Melissa Hinman and
Michelle Sullivan
Lara Hussain
James Lavelle
Matthew Mientka
Gloria Nedved
Linda and Edward
Shapley

Bree Warot
Nordson
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Christina Hoffman
Jonathan Gray and
Kristina Opre
Ross & Kiki Carpenter
Ginny Brannon
Kellen Thomas Baker
Doris Marx Inslee
Mark & Meredith Nichols
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Harriet Crittenden
LaMair
Nancy Walsh
Rodney Jay Bollhoefer
Thomas Glatz
Hunter Borner
Tish Gonzales
Rose Community
Foundation



"THE OUTDOORS IS OPPORTUNITY"
— ELK YOUTH

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Point 6
Amazon Smile
ImpactAssets
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Mikaela Gibson
Popsockets, LLC.
Laurel Palladino

FOR A FULL LIST OF OUR
2020 SUPPORTERS PLEASE
VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.ELKKIDS.ORG

HONORARY AND MEMORIAL GIFTS

Katheryn Carfrae
In honor of Malcolm
Stevenson
Ann Cooper
In honor of Erik and
Michelle Fuller
Alma Winterbotham
In memory of Ernie Dunlap
Odie Fraley
In honor of Taylor Ruffin
Ririko Voelker
In honor of Jacob Gilmore
Eric Godoy
In honor of Vera Raya
Alvarado
Cathleen Hall
In honor of Marci Hladik
Cathleen Hall
In honor of Ben Gregory
Joe Mauro and Hukum
Singh Khalsa
In honor of Jolynn
Crownover
Jennifer B Long
In memory of Malcolm
Stevenson
Lori Winterbotham
Pedersen
In memory of Ernie Dunlap
Betty E. Stevenson
In memory of Malcolm
Stevenson
Laurie Troge
In honor of Cohen von
Troge
Matthew Trone
In honor of Mark Trone
Wendi Van Lake
In honor Christina Hoffman
Alma Winterbotham
In honor Ernie Dunlap



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