



FINDING JOY IN NATURE



2023 Annual Report



OUR MISSION is to inspire environmental stewardship by giving people the tools to understand, appreciate, and protect nature.

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Students from Latin American Montessori Bilingual Public Charter School dip netting for macroinvertebrates

From the Director's Desk



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Thanks to *you*, the Alice Ferguson Foundation is flourishing!

2023 brought rejuvenation and joy as our calendar was filled with visiting school groups and community events. We welcomed 5,698 students and teachers for day, overnight, and virtual programs. The return to normal operations for schools reopened opportunities for students to experience our STEM-focused outdoor environmental education programs, inspiring them to become stewards of nature, curious explorers, and the seeds of a new generation of scientists.

This past year saw our beautiful landscape overflow with people finding joy in nature, from the first post-pandemic return of overnight stays and the Bridging the Watershed program, to our cleanups, Summer Adventure Camp, and Pinot on the Potomac!

As we look back on 2023 in this report, I hope that you see yourself in each story, each success, and each life transformed by connection with nature. Your support is the backbone of our mission. Without it, we could not provide joyful, quality, hands-on learning experiences for all people through environmental education.

We're excited to be celebrating our 70th Anniversary in 2024, when we'll focus on sustainability and accessibility. We're grateful to you for getting us to this exciting moment, and we're eager for you to continue with us in every step along the way.

All the best,

Theresa Cullen
Executive Director

2023 Board of Directors

Steve Kim, *President*
Dan Jackson, *Vice President*
Michael Berger, *Treasurer*

Daniel Donohue
Kate Johnson
Brian Kane

Michael Lynott
David Sloan, Jr.
Kate Zabriskie

2023 Impact

We're delighted to share the impact you made through the Alice Ferguson Foundation's environmental education programs, cleanups, and community events. The generous support of donors, sponsors, funders, and partners like you makes our work possible, and we are incredibly grateful.

An Accessible & Sustainable Campus

In 2023, our successes were driven by our continued commitment to accessibility and sustainability. We welcomed schools and the community to enjoy our fully accessible Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Living Building, bunkhouses, boardwalk, and newly built Education Pavilion.

Special thanks to all involved in creating the Educational Pavilion!

- Potomac Watershed Study Complex planning charet
- Foundation Board of Directors
- Shirley and Frank Nicolai
- Scheibel Construction

Looking to our 70th anniversary celebrations in 2024, and beyond, sustainability and accessibility will continue to focus our growth and impact.

20,000

students engaged in our curriculum through onsite programs and free online resources



5,698

students learned through 137 outdoor and virtual learning experiences



547

children and community members participated in summer camps and onsite weekend events



PAVILION



LIVING BUILDING



BOARDWALK



BUNKHOUSES

Our environmental campus also features a rain garden, bioswale, demonstration cisterns, native plants, and interpretive signs.

By the Numbers

Your support sparks a love of nature in a child.

As one teacher recently told us:

"You see the joy on their faces, you see the engagement, and so to me there's little question that this is having a positive impact on students loving the outdoors."



2,750

volunteers from 115 cleanups removed 75,000+ pounds of trash from our watershed.



6,673

total followers on social media. The Foundation gained 208 new followers in 2023.



83

teachers and park rangers trained through professional development workshops



Get Involved!

»» SUPPORT



Help keep our programs within reach with a gift today.

»» VOLUNTEER



Connect with friends and neighbors as you give back.

»» LEARN MORE



Visit fergusonfoundation.org

Follow Us!



A Year in Review

In 2023, we were overjoyed by the continuation of our annual events and the return of several programs that had been paused since the beginning of the pandemic. We are proud to share key accomplishments from this past year!



JANUARY

69th Annual Member Meeting Kicks Off 2023

Thirty-three members of the Alice Ferguson Foundation gathered in-person and virtually to celebrate our accomplishments of 2022, share our plans for the future, and honor departing board members.

FEBRUARY

Overnights with Prince George's County Return

Over 370 fifth graders from 14 Prince George's County elementary schools joined us for two-day, one-night adventures in the great outdoors! This program is made possible by the Prince George's County Community Partnerships Grant.



MARCH

Bridging the Watershed Returns to National Parks

In partnership with the National Park Service, Bridging the Watershed field studies returned to seven national parks around the region for the first time since late 2019. We are thrilled to be connecting students to their nearby national parks again!*

APRIL

35th Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup

Volunteers from the community and beyond joined us at our flagship cleanup along the shoreline of Piscataway Park in Accokeek, MD. Cleanup supplies were provided by a grant from the Dr. Scholl Foundation.



MAY

A Bloomin' Good Time at Spring Fest at Hard Bargain Farm

More than 200 community members and families joined us for hands-on nature activities, live music, locally made art and goodies, and a native plant sale!

JUNE

Prince George's County Summer Teachers' Institute

During the week-long institute, science teachers took a deep dive into STEM and nature concepts through interactive lessons and learning activities that they can use in their classrooms to bring science to life!



**Huge thanks to the Piedmont Environmental and Education Foundation and Youth Learning As Citizen Environmental Scientists, whose generous support enabled us to purchase new water quality testing kits and lab equipment!*

Experiences Make Memories

A special *thank you* to our donors, sponsors, and funders who make memorable experiences in nature possible for the children who visit us. With your help they've gone on nature hikes, had exciting overnight stays, and learned about our shared watershed. *We couldn't do it without you!*



JULY

Summer Adventure Camp at Hard Bargain Farm

Sixty-seven campers embarked on four weeks of unforgettable adventures while exploring and playing in nature. This year's camps were made possible by the Hattie M. Strong Foundation – thank you!

AUGUST

Living Building Architect Visit

Scott Kelly, founder of Re:Vision and lead architect of the Foundation's environmental center, the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Living Building, led a tour focused on the net-zero structure's unique features and cohesive relationship with the environment.



SEPTEMBER

9th Annual Pinot on the Potomac

Sip, sip, hooray! Even in a tempestuous tropical storm, more than 100 guests made our day shine as we raised a glass to environmental education and National Public Lands Day! This fall afternoon was filled with Maryland wines, live music, and great company.

OCTOBER

Overnights with DC Schools Return

Fifth graders visited us for a 2-night, 3-day outdoor education adventure, made possible by the DC Dept. of Energy and Environment. Partners include Casey Trees, Urban Adventure Squad, Anacostia Watershed Society, Living Classrooms, and NatureBridge.



NOVEMBER

Outdoor Exploration with Charles County Public Schools

Two thousand third graders joined us for field trips that included observing wildlife through binoculars, meeting farm animals, and taking nature walks.

DECEMBER

Celebrating Our Wonderful Members

Members and guests of the Alice Ferguson Foundation gathered at the Ferguson Farmhouse for our famous annual holiday party with friends and neighbors, where delicious treats abounded!





7th grade students from Allegheny County learning in nature at the Allegheny Outdoor School at Rocky Gap State Park.

Volunteers Make Incredible Contributions in 2023

The Alice Ferguson Foundation benefits from the time, talents, and professional skills of an astonishing team of volunteers, and we couldn't be more grateful for their incredible contributions in 2023!

There is simply no way for an organization our size to prosper and grow without dedicated volunteers, starting with our board, but expanding to embrace a wonderful community of like-minded people.

We want to thank all of these great volunteers for everything you did in 2023 - and for your dedication to protecting the environment, connecting young people (and everyone!) to nature, and stewarding the land for a sustainable future!

Special thanks to the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation for making Catchafire, a valuable source of skilled professional volunteers, available to the Alice Ferguson Foundation!



2023 Volunteers

Ivy Castro - Events Partner
Lu Chen - Research Partner
Jailyn Collier - Events Partner
David Cremer - Arts Partner
Louise Cullen - Development Partner
Krista Dauenhauer - Development Partner, Catchafire
Tania Doles - Research Partner
Laura Early - Research Partner, Catchafire
Byron Felt - Website Development Partner
Taylor Gorgestani - Research Partner
Arienne Henry-Kroll - Research Partner
LeShone HoSang Navies - Events Partner
Jeremy Johnson - Events Partner
Osman Kivrak - Events Partner
Lara Lee - Graphic Design Partner
Shirley Li - Research Partner
Elise Lumsden - Research Partner
Vivian Nguyen - Research Partner
Christina Nyoseph - Development Partner
Janet Parker - Arts Partner
Patricia Rodgers - Development Partner
Gilberto Rodriguez - Development Partner, Catchafire
Jill Salter - Development Partner, Catchafire
Ayda Sanver - Development Partner, Catchafire
Jalen Stephens - Events Partner
Stephanie Vo - Development Partner
Daniel Wise - Hard Bargain Farm Partner
Lauren Zhang - Research Partner

Impact

- 320** hours of development writing, research & analysis
- 240** hours of Hard Bargain Farm facility maintenance
- 90** hours of graphic design
- 40** hours of event support
- 30** hours of fine arts support
- 30** hours of website development

Special Awards



CHICK-FIL-A TRUE INSPIRATION AWARD

To close out the year, the Alice Ferguson Foundation was granted \$200,000 as a recipient of Chick-fil-A's True Inspiration Award. We look forward to using this funding to further share the wonder and excitement of the great outdoors with our community and Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC children.



MARYLAND GREEN CENTER RECIPIENT

The Alice Ferguson Foundation was named a 2023 Maryland Green Center recipient through the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education. Green centers are recognized for implementing environmental education programs, best management practices, and community engagement. Centers also support schools working towards achieving Maryland Green Schools status.



WASHINGTON PARENT PICKS WINNER

Thanks to our supporters, the Alice Ferguson Foundation was named the 2023 winner in the Maryland Day Camps, Hikes & Nature Discovery, and Fairs & Festivals categories in Washington Parent's prestigious annual Parent Picks competition and a finalist in the STEM Programs and STEM Camp categories.



5th grade students from Indian Queen Elementary School while on a nature hike along the Potomac River

In The News

OVERNIGHT PROGRAMS REBOUND FROM PANDEMIC TO MAKE EXCITING RETURN TO HARD BARGAIN FARM

This year marked a huge milestone for the Alice Fergusons Foundation:

We welcomed fifth-grade students from Prince George's County Public Schools back to our Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Center for overnight programs for the first time since the pandemic shutdowns of early 2020.

Hearing the voices of our overnight friends was music to our ears. It has been *nearly three years since our last overnight programs*, and we were so thrilled to see children out exploring, rolling down the hill, and finding joy in nature!

During their two-day, one-night stay, students were immersed in the natural world, expanding on the STEM concepts they learn in their classroom and building their connection to the environment.

Activities included a habitat hike through a wet meadow and along wooded trails to observe wildlife and identify native plants, a hands-on investigation of pollinators and decomposers hard at work in the children's garden, team-building challenges, stories by the campfire, and much more.

After the stress and disruption from the pandemic, field trips give students some sense of normalcy. Students look forward to this special experience year after year, so the return of these overnight programs allowed students the opportunity to enjoy this coveted adventure in the great outdoors.

Allowing children to touch, hear, smell, and see the natural world empowers them to explore future STEM-focused careers, and to become good stewards of the environment.

Environmental education programs at the Foundation guide students to develop a lifelong appreciation of nature that will expand their physical, social, and emotional well-being.

"I absolutely love these types of field trips because you get to see how much students change in one day," Ms. Shanna Fletcher-Williams, fifth-grade teacher at Doswell E. Brooks Elementary School, told us. "They become more inquisitive and feel more confident by the time we head home. These experiences are life-changing."

Ms. Fletcher-Williams visited Hard Bargain Farm herself as a student in fifth grade and is one of the more than 3,000 teachers and park rangers who have been trained by the Foundation.

The Alice Ferguson Foundation, along with the William S. Schmidt Outdoor Education Center, are primary providers of Overnight Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for students in Prince George's County, a requirement for high school graduation.

We're grateful to our Prince George's County Public School partners and appreciate the administrators, educators, and dedicated parents and family chaperones who make this possible for every child in our county. And we are grateful to every one of you, our supporters, who keep the Foundation's programs and landscape as a haven for people who love nature, and want to pass that value on to the next generation!



Above: Ms. Shanna Fletcher-Williams (back row, second from the left) and her students pose for a group photo during a tour of the Foundation's environmental campus.



Learning in Nature's Classroom





Thank You!

PARTNERS & SPONSORS



Markon Solutions
Rodgers Consulting

Accokeek Artists Alliance
American Engineered Solutions
APG Media
Atlantic Seaboard Wine Association
Charles County Charitable Trust, Inc.
Charles County Public Schools
Chesapeake Bay Trust
Community Bank of the Chesapeake
Crescent City Charities
Curtis and Edith Munson Foundation
DC DOEE
Dr. Scholl Foundation
Eagle Hill Consulting
Faith2Felicity
Global Advisor Group
Hattie M Strong Foundation
Mary & Daniel Loughran Foundation
Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation
Maryland Department of Agriculture
Maryland Dept. of Housing & Community Development
Maryland State Department of Education
Maryland Wine Association
MGM National Harbor

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MOM's Organic Market
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Silver Diner - Waldorf
Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative
The John G & Jean R Gosnell Foundation, Inc.
Washington Gas
Wegman's - Woodmoor
WesBanco Bank, Inc.
Youth Learning As Citizen Environmental Scientists

Students from Graham Park Middle School gather macroinvertebrates for a Bridging the Watershed field study at Prince William Forest Park in Triangle, Virginia





Financial Overview

Statement of Activities

For the Year Ending December 31, 2023

REVENUE

Grants	\$1,067,361.64
Investment & Interest Income	\$317,019.82
Program Income	\$213,757.03
Capital Income	\$413,021.34
Corporations	\$38,393.74
Individuals	\$71,229.71
Rentals & Events	\$11,902.65
Total Operating Revenue	\$2,132,685.93

DONOR REVENUE

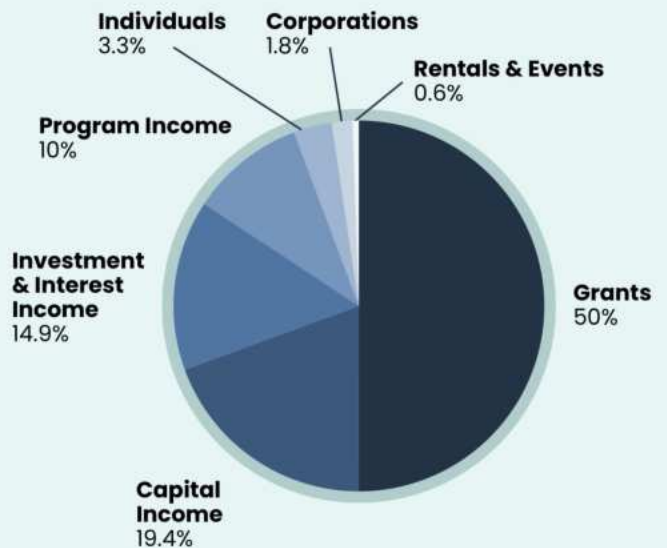
Without Donor Restrictions	\$981,254.62
With Donor Restrictions	\$1,123,782.98
Total Donor Revenue	\$2,105,037.60

EXPENSES

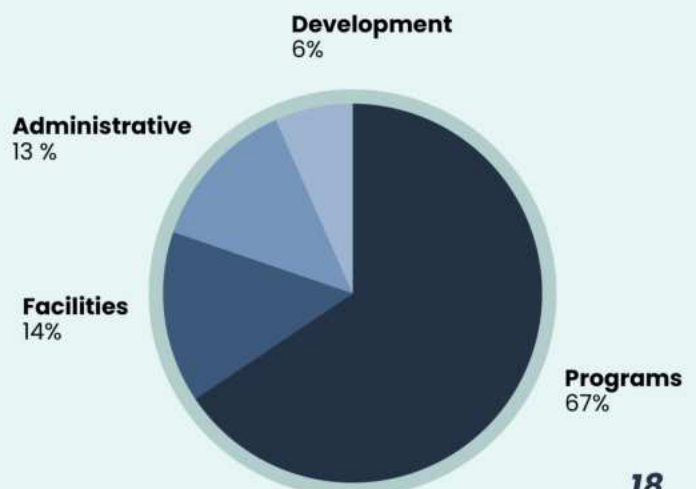
Education Programs	(\$1,013,276.87)
Development	(\$90,741.21)
Facilities	(\$211,729.50)
Administrative	(\$196,605.96)
Total Operating Expense	(\$1,512,353.54)

Change in Net Assets from Operations	\$620,332.39
Capital Reimbursement	\$8,090.00
Net Assets, <i>Beginning of Year</i>	\$10,641,154.76
Net Assets, <i>End of Year</i>	\$11,253,397.15

FY 2023 Operating Revenue



FY 2023 Operating Expenses



Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2023



ASSETS

Cash	\$612,365.89
Receivables	\$8,562.50
Total Current Assets	\$2,169,111.59
Property & Equipment (Net)	\$8,559,896.53
Total Assets	\$11,349,936.51

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$6,922.60
Accrued Expenses	\$10,208.97
Accrued Payroll, Benefits, & Taxes	\$39,094.17
Accrued Leave	\$40,313.62
Total Liabilities	\$96,539.36

Total Liabilities & Net Assets \$11,349,936.51

These preliminary statements for FY2023 are prepared according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Final, audited statements for FY2023 will be available on our website and by written request after Board approval of the audit in July 2024.

Campers and counselors during the
2023 Summer Adventure Camp



**ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION
ON THE
POTOMAC**

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