

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

October 1, 2017-September 30, 2018



20
YEARS
1998-2018

KIDS NEED NATURE
NATURE NEEDS KIDS



“This program is so wonderful because it meets more than teacher educational goals. It meets the needs of children—they all feel challenged and then successful. It is so gratifying to see the smiles and pride.”

2018 Board of Directors

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Dear Friends and Supporters,

Together, we celebrate **20 years of a bold commitment** to a more sustainable future through innovative environmental education! Thank you for being a part of Dunes Learning Center's history and vision for the future.

Looking back on 20 years of exploration and investigation in nature's classroom, Dunes Learning Center is **proud to be at the forefront of environmental education** in the Indiana dunes.

Our nature-based, lifelong learning model has evolved over time. Teachers can now choose from a wide range of hands-on science and environmental stewardship options to meet their classroom goals. Students see how their actions **impact the world** around them and take steps to **improve the local environment** as they connect textbook lessons with memorable outdoor adventures.

You can learn more about this model inside, including how **your support helps ensure students from diverse backgrounds** have access to all the steps along the continuum from change in knowledge, to change in attitudes, to change in behaviors.

For the record, **nearly 10,000 kids plus another 2,500 teachers, parents, chaperones, and adult learners** participated in a Dunes Learning Center program last year. With your generous support, students from low-income communities throughout Northwest Indiana attended residential programs thanks to **more than \$150,000 in scholarship funds** to bridge the gap between a family's ability to pay and program fees.

As we look toward the future, it is with deep gratitude that **we acknowledge your investment in kids and a more sustainable future**. Your support ignites our ability to reach even more students with remarkable outdoor learning adventures.

We invite you to join us on campus soon!

Geof Benson
Executive Director

Deb Backus
Board Chair

**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO INSPIRE
LASTING CURIOSITY AND STEWARDSHIP WITH NATURE SINCE 1998**



DUNES LEARNING CENTER'S LIFELONG LEARNING MODEL

A more sustainable future starts with outdoor adventure.

INTRODUCTORY

Family Learning Programs and Open Houses: Young people get outdoors to explore the world around them.

1

INTEREST



PLANTING SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

Open houses celebrate the natural world with guided hikes, live animal encounters, water quality investigations, and more for kids of all ages.

TEACHER-CENTERED

Nature-Based Science Connected to the Classroom: Students learn about biodiversity and how their actions impact the environment.

2

KNOWLEDGE



MEMORABLE MOMENTS BRING TEXTBOOK LESSONS TO LIFE

Frog in the Bog is an immersive overnight camp that focuses on team building and personal growth as students explore the natural and cultural history of the dunes.

YOUTH-CENTERED

Summer Camp: Campers build self esteem and resilience as they live and explore together in a National Park.

3

ATTITUDES



CAMP CHANGES LIVES IN SO MANY WAYS

Campers meet new people, discover new interests, develop confidence and learn to appreciate differences.

YOUTH-DRIVEN

Internships: Interns develop skills for future employment and a passion for environmental education.

4

BEHAVIORS



COLLEGE GRADUATES & STUDENTS ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE EDUCATION TEAM

Interns receive professional training and development to lead programs and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.

LEADERSHIP

Careers: Adults work to create healthy, vibrant communities.

5

ACTIONS



PROFESSIONALS COMMITTED TO PROTECTING AND CONSERVING LAND, WATER, AND WILDLIFE

Emerging community leaders pursue a wide range of career paths including agriculture, biology, education, geology, wildlife management, and more.



Education Partner of
Indiana Dunes National Park

HIGHLIGHTS

LANDSCAPE RESTORATION

If you have been on campus recently, you have seen the big changes to the landscape! The National Park Service is removing invasive species and dead trees, and will be planting native species as the land is restored to a more natural state. This effort is funded by NIPSCO along with a Chi-Cal Rivers Fund grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.



A DUNES AFFAIR

The annual gala celebrated our 20th anniversary in fitting style. Nearly 200 people generously supported the auction, along with a “paddle raise” to support scholarships.



Green Apple Award winner Jeannette Melcic spoke about the lasting impact of Dunes Learning Center programs on young learners. Jeannette, a teacher from Hammond, said, “Many students who I brought to Dunes Learning Center have never walked in the woods or even seen Lake Michigan.”

“The experiences at Dunes Learning Center engage each student and connect them to nature in a special way that stays with them their whole lives.”

SUMMER CAMP

The 2019 Summer Camp season was sold out! The new Chellberg Farm Day Camp offered a new option for younger children, ages 5-8.

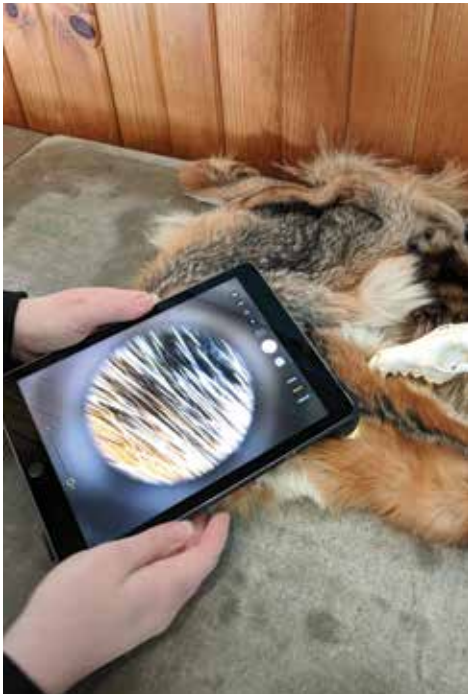


“Camp is an amazing place with no worries.”
“It was the best time of my life.”



NEW BUS

Thanks to multiple grants and partnerships, DLC has a new 72-passenger, propane-powered bus, which is in service transporting students throughout the National Park.



HIGH SPEED INTERNET AND SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

Thanks to a Resilience Project Grant from ArcelorMittal, we now have fiber-optic technology and high-speed internet access throughout the Dunes Learning Center campus. With new iPad microscopes funded by the Porter County Community Foundation, plus a 4K camera and projector, trail groups can share their hiking finds on the big screen.



YOU MAKE IT POSSIBLE!

In 2018, Dunes Learning Center celebrated 20 years of providing opportunities for students to connect with nature, regardless of socioeconomic status. Thanks to you, contributions to the need-based scholarship fund exceeded \$150,000. You gave more than 2,100 students plus 60 summer campers the extraordinary opportunity to spend the night in a National Park as part of their unforgettable outdoor learning adventure with Dunes Learning Center. These young people are the future. How they learn and develop their attitudes and behaviors will determine how they make decisions throughout their lives. Your support inspires the next generation of environmental stewards.

FINANCIALS

2018 Financials

Year ended September 30, 2018

Operating Revenue and Support

Tuition and Fees	\$414,435
National Park Service Operating Funding	\$116,941
Grants (Program/Education Support)	\$428,190
Individual/Sponsorship Support	\$158,081
Endowment Investment Income (Scholarships)	\$9,191
	\$1,126,838

Educational Programs	\$880,920
General and Administrative	\$259,236
Fundraising	\$93,722
	\$1,233,878

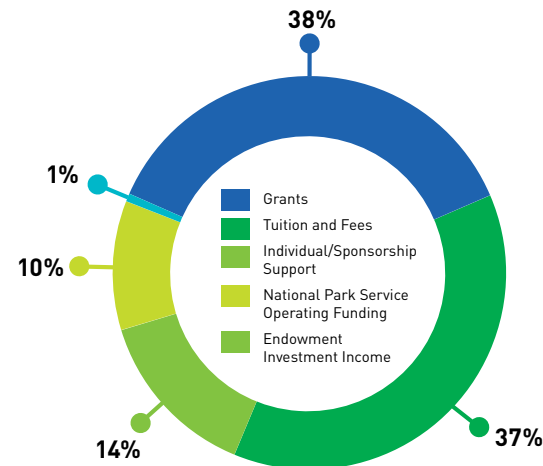
Special Projects Income and Expenses

National Park Service Special Projects	\$245,904
NPS Habitat Restoration Partnership	\$121,000
Endowment Assets, held at Community Foundations	\$250,810
NPS In-Kind (Facilities and Service)	\$237,000

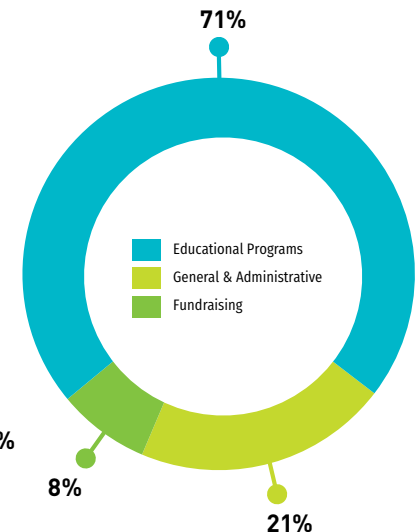
DUNES LEARNING CENTER BY THE NUMBERS

Total Participants	12,479
Events	3,605
Students	7,287
Teachers	309
Chaperones	620
Summer Camp	449
Internships	26
Continuing Education	183
Hours Outdoors	92,905
Meals Served	27,951
Nights in a National Park	8,903
Stewardship Hours	7,640
Acres Restored	18

Operating Revenue & Support



Operating Expenses



Thank you to the many generous supporters who contributed to Dunes Learning Center between October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018. Your donations help to fund our outdoor science education programs, and we are tremendously grateful for your support.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

\$10,000+

Susan Eleuterio and Tom Sourlis

\$5,000-\$9,999

Monica Conrad and Chris Hoham

\$2,500-\$4,999

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INTRODUCING THE NEW ANNUAL GIVING SOCIETY

At the end of 2018, we introduced a new way to recognize our leadership donors. Through the giving circles, donors enjoy great benefits, including recognition, updates, and invitations to unique events. Look for these new listings in next year's annual report. For more information or to join, please contact us or visit DunesLearningCenter.org/giving-society.



Dunes Learning Center is deeply grateful to all of its donors. If your name was inadvertently omitted or incorrectly listed, please accept our apologies, and contact us at 219-395-9555 or friends@duneslearningcenter.org so that we may correct it in the future.

PROGRAM SUPPORT

\$100,000+

ArcelorMittal
National Park Service

\$25,000-\$49,999

Alphawood Foundation Chicago
Flora Richardson Foundation
Foundations of East Chicago
Indiana Department of Natural Resources/
Lake Michigan Coastal Program/National Oceanic
Atmospheric Administration

\$10,000-\$24,999

BP America Inc.
Friends of Indiana Dunes, Inc.
Indiana Housing and Community Development
Authority
John W. Anderson Foundation
Legacy Foundation
Porter County Community Foundation
US Environmental Protection Agency
US Forest Service

\$5,000-\$9,999

Cargill
Dr. Scholl Foundation
Duneland School Corporation
Illinois Department of Natural Resources Coastal
Management Program
Lakeshore Public Media
NIPSCO
South Shore Arts/Indiana Arts Commission/
National Endowment for the Arts

\$2,500-\$4,999

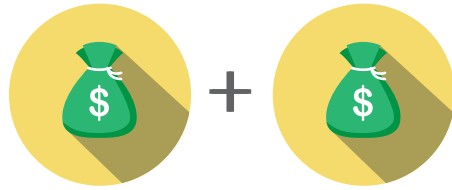
Alliance for the Great Lakes
Herman and Katherine Peters Foundation
National Park Foundation
Patagonia Chicago

Under \$2,500

Indiana Dunes Tourism
Ogden Dunes Women's Club
Portage Zeta Mu - Tri Kappa
Questers
Safety Kleen/Clean Harbors
South Shore Roller Girls
Sunnybrook Education Foundation
Urschel Laboratories
Westminister Presbyterian Church, Mission Giving

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ArcelorMittal
NIPSCO
Vertex Pharmaceuticals



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In Memory of the Bistolfo-Marshall Families

Donna Marshall Attinello

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Michael Cane Trustee
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Judith Gaskell
Nancy Moldenhauer and Sharlene Livesay

In Memory of William McLaughlin

Susan Calvert
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In Memory of Dr. Mark Reshkin

Catherine and Calvin Bellamy
Barbara E. Plampin
Myrna Newgent

In Honor of Lee Botts' 90th Birthday

Mylinda and Michael Cane
Mary Ann and Ronald Smith

In Honor of Donna Resetar's Retirement

Library Colleagues

In Honor of Joan Solbeck

Jean Rudd and Lionel Bolin

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Silver

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NIPSCO
Shell Lubricants

Bronze

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Friends of Indiana Dunes
Pratt Industries

Supporter

Cargill
Franklin Pest Solutions
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Family Dentistry

A Dunes Affair

1st Source Bank
Law Offices of Canalia & Clark

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ArcelorMittal Burns Harbor
ArcelorMittal Global Research
& Development
Boy Scout Troop 929
Boys & Girls Club of NWI
Challenger Learning Center
Chicago Public Schools
City of Gary
City of Hammond
City of Hobart
City of Lake Station
City of Michigan City
City of Portage
Davey Tree Service
Discovery Trackers 4-H Club
The Field Museum
Friends of Indiana Dunes
Gabis Arboretum at Purdue
University Northwest
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Annette Hansen
Humane Indiana Wildlife
Indiana Audubon Society
Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
Indiana Dunes State Park
Indiana Dunes Tourism
Indiana University/Indiana
University Northwest

Lakeshore Public Media
Lightning Bug Music Festival
National Park Service
The Nature Conservancy
NIPSCO Environmental Action
Team
Northwest Indiana Paddling
Association
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US Forest Service
US Geological Survey
Virginia Tech & Clemson University
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Wilderness Inquiry
Wildlife Habitat Council
Kyle Wilson
The Wilder Family

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Memorial Opera House
Nature's Remedies
NiSource
Northwest Indiana Paddling
Association
Josh Olson
Zella and Roy Olson
Patagonia Chicago
Bill Payonk
Sand Creek Country Club
Sawyer Home & Garden Center
Joan Solbeck
South Shore Brass Band
Teamsters Local Union #142
Third Coast Spice Cafe
Maureen Turman
Union League Club of Chicago
Suzy Vance
Wilderness Inquiry
Kyle Wilson
Wittenberg Village
David Wright
Annette Young

“I DIDN'T THINK I COULD KEEP UP AND STILL HIKE BUT I DID. IT MADE ME FEEL PROUD. I LEARNED THAT I CAN DO ANYTHING IF I TRY. I MIGHT STRUGGLE, BUT IF I TRY, I CAN ACHIEVE IT.”



Education Partner of
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