



# ANNUAL REPORT



**156** hours spent by Mt. Ararat Honors Biology students collecting data on the Preserve.



**1** new CREA StoryWalk® location at 179 Neptune Drive in Brunswick



**5** E's - How we teach students:

Engage  
Explore  
Explain  
Elaborate  
Evaluate

**13**  
CIT's received leadership training.

**2100**

students benefited from CREA's collaboration with local teachers to pilot new hands-on science units.



**9** Headstart teachers trained in outdoor learning.



**208** children overjoyed to attend camp.

**180**

students experienced hands-on learning during K - 5 field trips to the CREA Ecology Center

**1367**

households, students, and classrooms watched original CREA video content online.

teachers supported in delivering new hands-on inquiry based science.

**70**

CREA Members

**311**

**35**  
community programs

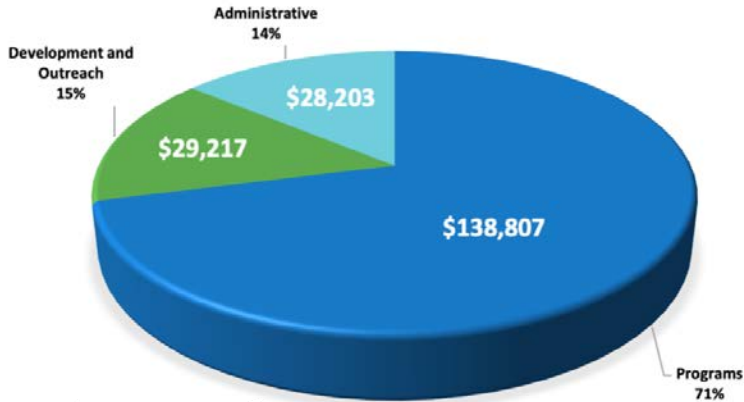


# OUR MISSION

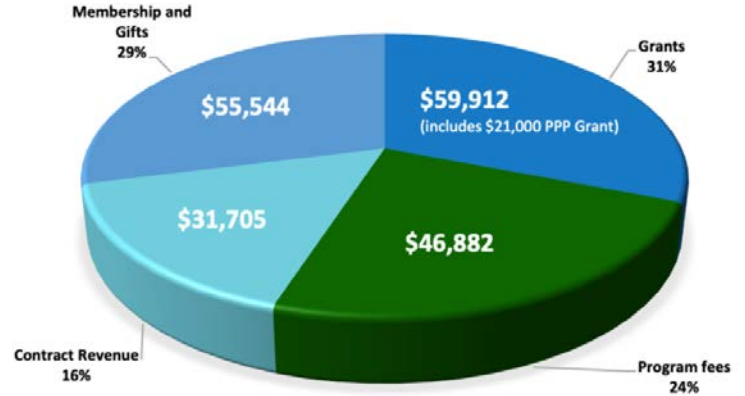
To deepen ecological awareness through nature-based learning among students, educators, and the public; to promote environmental stewardship; and to foster wise use of the Cathance River Nature Preserve.

## FINANCE

2021 EXPENSES



2021 REVENUE



**In CREA’s universe, 2021 felt like a bud slowly unfurling.** The re-opening of the Preserve was the initial cause for celebration, enabling us to host in-person guided walks at the Preserve once again. In the summer, every week of camp was full and the joy of our campers was palpable as they explored the natural world with their peers – something most had not experienced for over a year.

In the fall, CREA Educators Sarah and Carey were overjoyed to welcome classes back to the Ecology Center and Preserve for hands-on science and nature-based discovery. Mt. Ararat honors biology students spent weeks collecting data at the Preserve to analyze and then share with the community. Guided walks were full and our new kiosk chalkboard was loaded with sightings of everything from ‘a big old snapper’ to ‘baby merganser in pond chased by an otter’ to ‘an excited 3 yr old!’

Experiential learning in nature is where CREA shines. So, the return to in-person programs was truly a joy for all involved. Along with our newfound respect for the natural world’s ability to soothe and engage, we have a heightened appreciation for the experience of exploring it in community with others.

In 2021, we approached our work equipped with new tools and insights. Our educators delivered discovery-based science to local students via short virtual lessons and field trip videos, at home outdoor activities, outdoor and virtual teacher trainings, and collaboration with teachers to develop hands-on science units. With our support and professional development, local teachers gained the skills and confidence to bring more discovery-centered learning to their students, including taking them outside to learn.

At camp, we increased staffing and moved camp fully outdoors. Campers thrived outdoors, rain or shine (we do bring them inside for heavy rain and thunder!), because that was the expectation and the norm. And they are likely more resilient for it.

The online program registration created for our virtual programs continued to be used for all events, saving staff time and enabling us to send follow-up resources to attendees. Recognizing our ability to access more speakers and reach more people virtually, we continued our speaker program using Zoom. We also continued to post written summaries, relevant resources, and video links on our website, where many access them at their leisure.

In summary, with your support in 2021, we carried out our mission using a combination of old and new tools and ideas. Together, we provided many different ways for people to explore, connect with, and learn from the natural world. Together, we are working toward a sustainable future!



# THANK YOU

CREA thanks the following community members, foundations and organizations for their steadfast support during calendar year 2021.

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Your membership and legacy gifts keep CREA strong. Together, we are inspiring a sustainable future by engaging people of all ages with the wonders of the natural world.

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"Just wanted you to know that Richard loved CREA camp. When his Dad asked him how he would rate it overall 1 to 10, Richard said five infinity trillion, which as you know is a very large number."

Lisa Durrell



"Thank you so much Jenny, Sarah and Carey! We LOVE your program and having you come into our classroom! The children have been busy working in their outdoor science museum and decided to create an art museum too! You've brought so much enrichment into their lives! Thank you again!!"

JJ Parker, Headstart Teacher

"Thanks for a great week. Teddy had a blast and is jonesing to bring Ben and I to the clay river sometime. We really appreciate the experience - it was so good for him!"

MW - 2021  
 Camp Parent



"Look Carey! When my cheeze-it fell on the ground and broke, it looks just like feldspar because they both break with flat edges!"

Student,  
 CREA Geology Field Trip



"Thank you so much for both your presentation regarding CREA at Thornton Oaks as well as our wonderful walk and tour of the Ecology Center today! The chatter on the way home was filled with many compliments to you and the organization (I wish I could have taped them!). Your easy going manner while imparting so many aspects of nature made for a totally lovely experience."

Deb O'Neill, Health and Wellness Coordinator

## CATHANCE RIVER EDUCATION ALLIANCE

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