



**YEARS  
OF  
IMPACT**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**







## LETTER FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

*Exploring New Horizons' 40-year legacy is a testament to the timelessness of our mission to offer experiential learning opportunities to students in the outdoors. We take a "Whole Child Approach" to environmental education that ensures dramatic social and emotional learning gains, creating the future leaders of our society and stewards of our environment.*

*This approach cultivates empathy and responsibility in all our students and often uncovers unexpected strengths in underperforming students. Each year, over 7,000 participating students learn how to better express self-esteem (98%), have strengthened relationships with peers and teachers (99%), and are more comfortable being outside (100%). This transformation of our youth at scale is the long-term impact ENH has on Bay Area and Northern California school communities.*

*Help us get ready for the next 40 years so we can transform the next generation.*



**Colin Sullivan**  
President





# LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*When I first worked as a naturalist at ENH in 2003 I knew I had found an educational model I would spend my life trying to promote. Students are empowered, having fun learning in the redwoods and on the coast, high school counselors learn to be leaders and role models, classroom teachers see how their students excel in an outdoor environment, and naturalists perfect their teaching skills.*

*I have worked for over 10 years in environmental education as a program director, naturalist, and classroom teacher at county and non-profit programs in California, Arizona, and Oregon, and what I love about ENH is the emphasis we have always had on students' social emotional growth and environmental stewardship. Program directors, naturalists, classroom teachers, and counselors or parent chaperones all work together during the week to help students gain self-confidence, self-esteem, and place-based ecological knowledge.*

*The outdoor experience we all work together to provide greater San Francisco Bay Area communities is missing in so many people's lives and has such an incredible impact. I believe deeply in the power a week of outdoor school has to change lives and am honored to return to ENH as its new Executive Director.*



**Jacob Sackin**  
Executive Director



# 40 YEARS OF IMPACT

Exploring New Horizons (ENH) empowers students, builds environmental literacy, and strengthens school communities through residential, environmental education programs. Our knowledgeable and experienced naturalists engage over 7,000 San Francisco Bay Area students annually in hands-on learning in a variety of ecosystems, taking a whole child approach focused on social emotional learning, ecology, environmental stewardship, conservation, health, and the arts. Founded as a non-profit in 1979, ENH partners with over 100 schools from Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Francisco, Monterey, and other central California counties, empowering students to better succeed in college and career and to work together to create a healthier and more sustainable world. ENH has two program models operating from September to June at two different sites: Loma Mar and Pigeon Point, and over our 40-year history we have served over 200,000 students.

## LOMA MAR

*Multiple schools of up to 200 5th and 6th grade students attend 4 and 5-day programs in the redwoods, 7 miles inland from the Pescadero Marsh. Students, their classroom teachers, and high school counselors explore the redwood forest, oak woodlands, salt-water marsh, tidepools, and organic garden.*

## PIGEON POINT

*Up to 43 3rd-8th grade students attend 2, 3, and 4-day programs at the 3rd-7th grade students attend 3 and 4-day programs at the historic Pigeon Point Lighthouse, south of Pescadero. Students, their classroom teachers, and parent chaperones explore the redwood forest, tidepools, and coastal ecosystems, and observe northern elephant seals at Año Nuevo State Park.*

## EVERY STUDENT IN THE U.S. SHOULD EXPERIENCE A WEEK OF RESIDENTIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION BEFORE ENTERING HIGH SCHOOL

as participation can lead to both academic and social-emotional gains, including:



Increased motivation to learn and achievement in school



Better conflict resolution and problem-solving skills



Greater self-esteem, attitudes of respect and responsibility



Decreased stress, depression, and symptoms of ADD

However, in the state of California, less than 10% of 4th–6th grade students attend a multi-day environmental education program. At the same time, few schools have incorporated hands-on environmental education into their curriculum and children play less outdoors than they used to, spending up to 7 hours a day staring at screens. As spending time in a natural setting during the critical period of middle childhood can be the catalyst for so much emotional and intellectual development, it is imperative that all students have equitable access to a week of outdoor school.





ENH naturalists lead students in place-based learning, concentrating on interdependence, cycles, ecology, and more, deepening students' ecological knowledge and interest in science and environmental stewardship. School groups also engage in cooperative team building activities, including family style dining, designed to build trust within and between the hiking groups and participating classes or schools. Learnings are reinforced through quiet, reflective nature journaling, drawing or nature art, and fun, participatory group songs, dances, puppet shows, and skits, where cabin groups act out a concept they have learned during the week. Conservation is also an essential part of the experience, as students weigh and graph their food waste at the end of each meal, take their composted food scraps to the garden, and try to take a 3-minute shower.

In our 40th year, ENH is seeking philanthropic support in four areas to accelerate our impact:

1. Increasing **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL EQUITY**
2. Deepening our **EVALUATION EFFORTS**
3. Strengthening our **HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR PROGRAM**
4. Supporting our **INFRASTRUCTURE**

## A WEEK OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

(away from screens and junk food) in a new and emotionally-safe space builds students' self-confidence, empowering them to disrupt their classroom identities and behavior patterns, and solidify relationships.

Survey results from over 650 teachers throughout the last 5 school years show that teachers agree or strongly agree that participating students:

Express more **SELF-ESTEEM** **98%**

Have **STRENGTHENED RELATIONSHIPS** with peers & teachers **99%**

Feel more **CONNECTED TO THE ENVIRONMENT** **100%**

Better **UNDERSTAND THE ECOSYSTEMS** of coastal California **99%**

Are more comfortable approaching **SCIENCE LEARNING** **89%**

Are more comfortable **BEING OUTSIDE** **100%**



# ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

ENH provides scholarships based on the percentage of students eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL), yet each year it gets harder for classroom teachers, students, and their families to fundraise due to the increased cost of living in the SF Bay Area. ENH seeks support to serve more lower-income schools, to continue to provide scholarships to participating schools, and to provide professional learning for our staff on equity, inclusion, diversity, culturally responsive pedagogy, and implicit bias.

## EVALUATION

In open-ended surveys with 350 teachers over the past 2 years, when asked what they see their students doing differently after returning to the classroom, the 3 most common responses were:



**More respect/awareness of the environment**



**Stronger community and more cooperation**



**More self-esteem/  
responsibility/confidence/  
independence**

*ENH currently tracks our impact through post surveys completed by teachers and by analyzing additional feedback throughout the week from students, counselors, and classroom teachers. This year ENH will build our capacity and infrastructure to better measure our impact, including follow up quantitative and qualitative surveys for teachers, students, high school counselors, and parent chaperones one month after they have returned to the classroom, to better understand students' and teachers' experiences and elevate the visibility of our work.*



# HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR PROGRAM



ENH has over 500 high school students volunteer as counselors each year, gaining valuable leadership and communication skills, community service credit, and references for college or job applications. Acting as role models, counselors ensure that their cabin group of 7-10 students are working as a team and getting to meals and hikes prepared and on time. As counselors participate in activities alongside students, they also may gain the same social emotional and academic gains. Juniors and seniors who are in good academic standing are interviewed and trained by our staff before participating in our program, and while attending, spend an hour a day in a professional learning community facilitated by our Counselor Coordinator, sharing challenges and successes from the week. Each year, however, it becomes harder to recruit counselors as both academic and athletic pressure increases, and ENH seeks support to further develop our recruitment efforts and our curriculum so this valuable leadership experience is as impactful as possible.

ENH has operated as a mostly fee-for-service organization for the past 40 years and has focused most of our time and energy on building and growing our program and ensuring it is high-quality and affordable. As many of our staff live on site, it is important to provide them with quality housing and to make sure that the equipment students use, such as binoculars and rain coats, is also high quality, to provide the

best experience for participants. As the ENH at Loma Mar office trailer, and many of the trailers and yurts that the staff live in, are over 20 years old, ENH seeks support to purchase a new office and housing for our staff at Loma Mar and updated equipment for both our programs. As the associated costs from the forced relocation of our third site, Sempervirens, in 2018, led us to temporarily close the program for the 2019-20 school year, ENH is also working to reopen the Sempervirens program during the 2020-21 school year.

ENH is excited to further our commitment to providing high-quality, affordable, residential, environmental education to schools in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Participation in a week of environmental education will increase students' academic performance and their social and emotional well-being, creating positive associations between learning and the outdoors which students, teachers, and high school counselors can take back to their classrooms and home.



## INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT



# 2018 ~ 2019 IN REVIEW



**TOTAL INCOME:**  
**\$2,506,467\***



**TOTAL EXPENSE:**  
**\$2,586,460\***

**STUDENT 96%**  
**FEES \$2,421,510**

**FACILITY 42%**  
**FEES \$1,088,069**

**GRANTS 2%**  
**+ INDIVIDUAL \$47,878**  
**DONORS**

**PAYROLL 37%**  
**EXPENSES \$951,811**

**OTHER 2%**  
**\$37,079**

**SCHOLARSHIPS 3%**  
**\$74,259**

*\* The net deficit is due to unexpected costs related to the forced relocation of our Sempervirens program from its home of 18 years.*

**OTHER 18%**  
**\$472,321**





# OUR LIFETIME DONORS

*ENH would like to thank the following grant partners who have supported our program over the years.*



**BEAR GULCH FOUNDATION**

**BOTHIN FOUNDATION**

**BOYD FAMILY FOUNDATION**

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMISSION**

**CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS  
FOUNDATION**

**CHANGE HAPPENS**

**CLIF BAR FAMILY FOUNDATION**

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ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION**

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