

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

VENTURE FREE FOUNDATION

An Overview of Outdoor Adventure!

PREPARED BY EMILY PHELPS DELLINGER

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



OUR MISSION
We seek to empower young people of all backgrounds to foster a connection with the natural world in an environment that promotes healthy physical and mental development, leadership, respect, and a lifelong appreciation for nature.

"We can now assume that just as children need good nutrition and adequate sleep, they may very well need contact with nature."

-Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods

Welcome to Venture Free's 2022 Annual Report!
As a nonprofit organization, we are dedicated to growing a future generation of enthusiastic adventurers who seek new experiences, who are caring and respectful of their planet and peers, and who are eager to learn from the world around them. From adding Outdoor Education as an offered program, to providing our record amount of scholarship funding - 2022 was an exciting year full of new firsts, happy campers, and inspiring adventures! Please read on to see how we are achieving our mission.



Emily Dellinger

Emily Dellinger
Founder & Executive Director



OUR VALUES
Conscientiousness
Responsibility
Positivity
Collaboration
Respect for Mother Nature
FUN!

2022

MISSION MILESTONES & IMPACT

2022



EQUITABLE ENROLLMENT

151 Campers Enrolled

80% Attend multiple programs

This meets our goal of providing equity in the outdoors and continuous and consistent outdoor experiences to successfully empower students to foster positive relationships.

\$67,200

Financial Aid provided

31

Full Scholarships

8

Partial Scholarships

OUTDOOR EXPOSURE

39 Days Camping

255 Days Outside

We strive to offer more than a once-in-a-lifetime experience. We believe the benefits of nature come from **continuous** exposure

17,926

Hours Outside (culminative)

74

Students Participate **7+ months a year**



All of our days at camp are focused around either a tangible skill or intangible knowledge, allowing children to foster a connection with nature in many different ways.

2022

MISSION MILESTONES & IMPACT

2022

EXPLORATION & ADVENTURE

Venture Free aims to familiarize campers with a wide variety of local outdoor locations, but also introduces basic outdoor wilderness and survival skills that help children develop sound judgment skills and self confidence.



53

Unique wilderness spaces visited

206

Trail miles hiked

390

Miles moved

COUNTLESS

Skills taught, lessons learned, memories made



ADVENTURE CAMP

We love our nomadic after school Adventure Camp and our yearlong outdoor adventures! Though we were sad to say goodbye to our Spring 2022 campers, we were thankful to see our Fernando Rivera camp through to the end of its first full school year program since COVID!

As we moved into Fall, Fernando Rivera Administration reported a record number of students referred to our program by school staff as well as parents. We are more excited now than ever to expand these program offerings and increase our reach with continuous outdoor exposure

"I like looking forward to new things to do in fun areas without my phone. I like nature because it smells different, 'fresher' you know!?" -Jocelyne

"We love to play outside in the mud and puddles. Basketball and kickball are also a lot of fun. Collecting pine cones, dirt, leaves and rocks to make ice cream stores and then sell ice cream cones for leaves." -group of vfcr kids

CHILDREN'S RECREATION

Our five day a week, home-base camp located at Kings Mountain Elementary School in the Cabrillo Unified School District aims to incorporate nature interaction into our pedagogy, though the real heart of our program lies in the interests of our campers! A little bit 'makerspace'. A little bit 'summer camp'. A little bit 'a whole lotta' fun!' We want our kids to follow what excites them. We work hard to provide a free flowing space that encourages and teaches our campers to work and play and explore, unstructured.





TERRA TEENS

Combining a completely immersive adventure program with hands-on business experience and enthusiasm driven by the love of learning and exploring outdoors gives our teenagers the skills and confidence to dream big, and follow through!

In 2022 the Terra Teens help X successful events to raise funds for their adventure trips and program planning! All of these events have provided them with incredible opportunities to focus on the development of their adventure management skills.

“It’s like going through a digital detox, I like seeing different new animals and touching grass, doing fun adventures!!” -Hans

“ I like that I get to see new areas, explore new places, do fascinating activities like fire... I’m now looking off my screen for once!” -Alvan

SUMMER CAMP

VFF is on a mission to get kids stoked on outdoor adventure and empowered by their experiences! Our day and overnight camps were geared to helping kids gain self-confidence, a connection to their local natural world, and a great sense of adventure! In 2022 we offered 4 weeks of day camp and 3 separate week-long adventure trips! Campers experienced camping, surfing, climbing, hiking, backpacking, waterfall jumping, river crossing, camp cooking, tough decision making, and a whole lot of FUN!!!





OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Our help our first ever Outdoor Education program in Spring of 2022! Several of our trips took place in Pinnacles National Park where we were able to introduce campers to the interesting wildlife and ecosystem of the area as well as new experiences like rock climbing, wood splitting, camp cooking, and so much more! We feel extremely fortunate to provide these trips, allowing us the opportunity to reach more children with our adventure focused, place-based learning approach!



LOOKING FORWARD



BUILDING THE FUTURE

Fostering the next generation of environmental stewards should not have to wait until the children are in elementary school! In fact, we believe the benefits are even greater the earlier that children begin exploring the outdoors. We believe that empowering early learners to explore in an unstructured outdoor group setting critically develops the emotional, social, and cognitive skills needed to thrive and grow while creating a fun and supportive learning experience.

By developing a strong place-based connection to the outdoor world early in life, children will build the foundation for a lifelong love and stewardship of nature.



THE PROBLEM WE'RE SOLVING

DIVERSITY IN THE OUTDOORS

Underserved youth and/or youth of color do not have access to meaningful experiences in nature, to support their growth or improve their mental and physical health.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Many of our youth are tuned out, stressed out and over-scheduled. If deprived of time spent regularly outdoors, youth are not able to enjoy priceless benefits to their mind, body and spirit. Our planet needs immediate help. By giving our children the opportunity to build meaningful connections to the natural world, they will be more inclined to respect it and protect it.

SCREEN TIME

Excessive screen time may inhibit a child's ability to observe and experience the typical everyday activities they need to engage with in order to learn about the world, leading to a kind of “tunnel vision,” which can be detrimental to overall development. Children are missing out on very important parts of development; outdoor exposure and unstructured play.

HOW WE'RE SOLVING IT

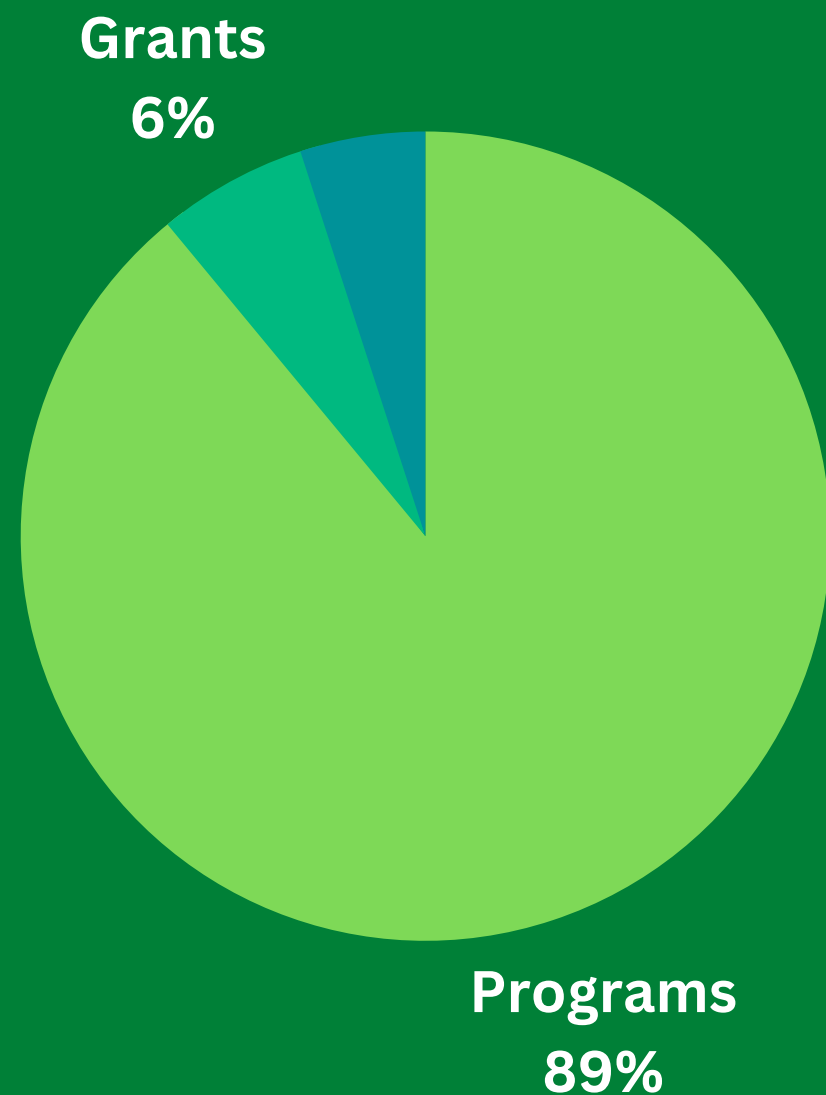
Outdoor exposure and free play improves cooperation, flexibility, and self-awareness. Children given unstructured time outdoors learn to interact on their own terms. They can encourage each other, plan, prioritize, negotiate, multitask, and use their imagination to problem-solve and entertain themselves.



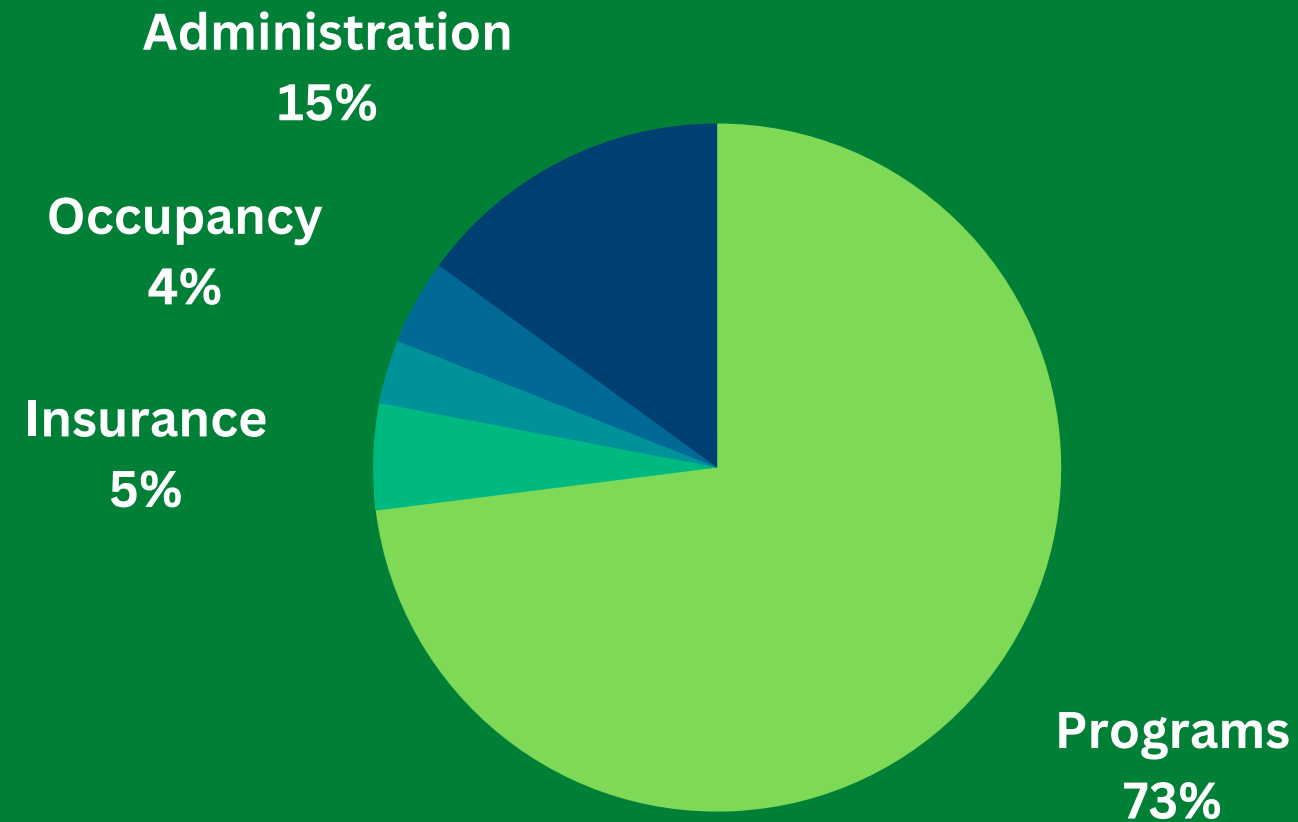
REVENUE & EXPENSES

Revenue

Programs	\$159,000
Grants	\$10,000
Individual Donors	\$9,000
TOTAL	\$178,000



Expenses



Programs	\$127,000
Administration	\$26,400
Insurance	\$9,000
Occupancy	\$6,600
Operations	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$180,554

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

In accordance with our strategic plan, our goals are to focus on the following over the next three years:

Awareness

Build awareness of our programs within our immediate and broader communities

Programming

Optimize our current programs and enrollment

Operational Efficiency

Including board governance, process improvements, and outsourcing support.

Support

Focus on fundraising and gain financial support to grow our programs



VF STAFF

Alyssa Rasis
Julie Pedersen
Sarah Carlson
Taj Poloncheck
Quinn McNamara
Bobby Simmons
Joe Sison

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Jeanine Parish
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Maddison King
Natalie Gerola

OUR DONORS

Drew Taylor
Barbara Young
Ann Ewing
Delia
Mongdeip Nguyen
Sandy Cold
Camille Erskine
Peter Marcovici

Peter Marcovici
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OUR BOARD

Ken Williamson
Edder Diaz
Maria King
Tim Naylor
Emily Dellinger
Paul Barulich

