

NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2023

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A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings NYSOEA friends. As I look back over the past year and all our accomplishments I am thankful to our NYSOEA board and our volunteers. The success that our organization has experienced would not be possible without your contributions.

The Annual Report is a time to reflect on our organization's accomplishments and highlight our achievements over the past year. This document outlines what NYSOEA and its members have done, above and beyond our daily work as professionals. It is a testament that we are united in purpose to fulfill a greater vision.

NYSOEA's commitment to equity, access, and inclusion has strengthened over the past year. Our board continues this commitment by providing resources, trainings, fiscal responsibility, outreach, and scholarships. The EAI committee is very engaged and active in their work.

PATHWAYS, our quarterly newsletter continues to produce high quality publications, providing our members with professional content - highlighting regional events, affiliate members, environmental education and natural history.

Our Brother Yusuf Campership fund, which supports our Affiliate organizations by allowing them to offer camp scholarships in their regions, was able to send three kids to summer camp. This fund gives youth the opportunity to experience summer camp with our NYSEOA affiliates.

Winter Weekend was a huge success! Over 60 people joined us for this annual event where workshop presenters shared their passion and knowledge for different topics, all while having fun, and enjoying the outdoors.

Thank you to everyone who supported our annual appeal and donated to our scholarship fund. We were able to provide 18 scholarships this year to our annual conference.

We have much to celebrate and be thankful for. Please consider joining one of our committees or speaking with us about joining the board. Our best tools are each other, and it is important that we continue to support one another and keep creating pathways to the outdoors.

With gratitude,

Rebecca Houser

**"IN NATURE, OUR HUMAN COLORS ARE MIRRORED PERFECTLY TO US,
WITHOUT ARGUMENT OR CONFLICT, BUT WITH BEAUTY AND HARMONY.
ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS TRULY SEE THEM TO DISCOVER OURSELVES AND
LEARN HOW TO LIVE IN THE SAME HARMONY". UNKNOWN**



NYSOEA

17 Liberty Street
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Chelsea, NY 12512

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Metro
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Office Manager
Lily Ropes

CONFERENCE 2022

Success! The in person conference turned out to be a wonderful weekend of learning, sharing ideas, and getting back to our in person conference.

Over 160 people registered, which included many college students, Student Conservation Association members, and first time conference attendees. This year we were able to offer nine scholarships, all of whom were first time NYSOEA conference goers. We also offered a virtual option, for those who could not travel or attend in person.

While the conference is brief with only two and half days of programming, the conference committee fully programmed it. Day sessions included thirty-one workshops (including four virtual), keynote speakers Vanessa Baehr & Briggina Scharf, feature speaker Scott Kellogg, and an EAI Panel that focused on Social-Emotional Learning. Evenings were once again enjoyed warming by the campfire, and other activities. On Thursday night we had a film screening of "Inhabitants" followed by a questions and answer session with the filmmakers.

Friday evening we competed in a game night featuring classic board games, outdoor team "pipe dreams" competitions, and an ice cream social. We included other teambuilding activities at the conference, including Friday's "Foraging for Photos" team scavenger hunt, and the "Community through Connection" teambuilding activity facilitated by Sharpe staff on Saturday afternoon. This year's conference also saw the addition of a peer mentoring option-the Professional Peer Corner, where long time attendees volunteered to be professional peers and met with eager mentees.

So many people commented on how much they enjoyed the conference, and one person said it was the best conference they've been to in decades! It might have been the return to connecting in person, or the mild, sunny summer weather on the first weekend in November, but the 2022 NYSOEA Annual Conference was definitely noted as a wonderful experience!

QUOTE!!!

Mission Statement

The New York State Outdoor Education Association (NYSOEA) is a professional organization that promotes interdisciplinary life-long learning in, for, and about the outdoors and seeks to inspire appreciation of the environment by all people.

Established in 1968, NYSOEA is a New York State non-profit, all volunteer organization supporting outdoor and environmental education, outdoor recreation, and interpretive services. Members make up a broad network of students and professionals working and learning together from classroom teachers and college professors to naturalists and interpreters, from students and youth leaders to parents and outdoor recreation specialists. All of us are dedicated to education and the outdoors.



2022 NYSOEA AWARD RECIPIENTS

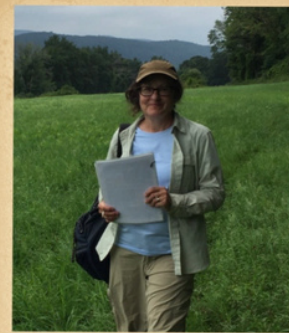
2022 NYSOEA Award Winners



Tim Stanley
Leadership



MaryLynne Malone
Harlan "Gold" Metcalf



Jill Eisenstein
Appreciation



Conrad Baker
Outdoor Educator



Sunny Corrao
Service

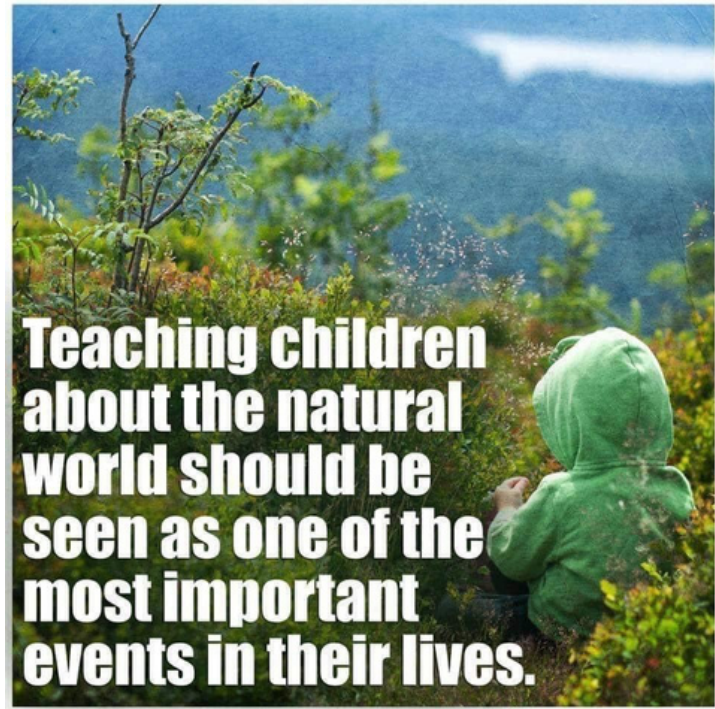


Majja Niemisto
Environmental Impact

A VARIETY OF AWARDS ARE PRESENTED BY NYSOEA EACH YEAR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR EDUCATION.

BROTHER YUSUF CAMBERSHIP

NYSOEA has a dedicated scholarship fund providing youth an opportunity to experience summer camp. The scholarship honors Brother Yusuf, past NYSOEA member and friend. Money for camperships is raised at the annual conference and regional events through raffles, as well as personal donations. NYSOEA's Equity Access & Inclusion Committee, along with the NYSOEA regional board of directors, award the scholarships for campers.



2023 Summer Campers

Levi was the recipient of the NYSOEA camp scholarship for the Friends of Reinstein Woods Kids in the Woods 2023 camp season. Levi was able to attend camp two weeks out of the summer thanks to the scholarship. Levi was a model camper both weeks. She was a friend to all, a good team player, and was always ready for whatever the day had to bring! During her time at camp, she got to do catch-and-release fishing in Flat Tail Lake, explore critters that live in Flat Tail Lake and in Spring Pond, build forts, dissect owl pellets, play countless games, and bring home some very cool tie-dye!

The campership program helps bring kids into nature, explore new outdoor areas, have learning experiences, and make friends they may not have been able to otherwise. Summer camps can be an expensive necessity for many working parents. We are so proud to be able to offer their children this opportunity. We want to give a big thank you to NYSOEA for helping us with this mission!



Northern Forest Canoe Trip: Matt Burnett Guiding



I would like to start by thanking you for allowing me the opportunity to go on this trip as a guide in training. This trip has given me the chance to experience leadership among new campers, as well as working along with others. I was able to learn how to understand others needs, and work around things that some may struggle with. Things like rearranging the route of the trip, or taking breaks to do other activities when some people are tired are a couple of ways I learned to be mindful of others' needs. During the trip there were many things that needed to be done, from cooking, to setting up tents and tarps, and even firewood gathering. I was able to see how to organize people's efforts so everyone can help each other by doing tasks like these. Overall, I believe this trip was a great experience for me to better learn how to work with others, as well as how to better comprehend and cooperate with what other people's strengths and needs are. ~ Noah Bozak

EQUITY, ACCESS, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

NYSOEA's Equity, Access & Inclusion (EAI) Committee is committed to providing educational programming for the NYSOEA membership with the mission to increase diversity, accessibility, equity and inclusion in the field of environmental education.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The EAI Committee is small in size but mighty in impact. We continue to promote the expansion of knowledge of diversity, accessibility, equity and inclusion in the field of environmental education.

With the mission in mind, the group has stayed committed to the Safe Space Commitment as an "Ally" and the agreement has served as a backbone to keep the committee activities going through the year. Since the last Annual Conference, the EAI committee has been creating learning spaces for educators and have come together eight times to discuss ways to absorb new perspectives, adopt new practices, and/or reflect on topics related to environmental education. If you haven't already read some of the reflection articles in Pathways, you should get a sneak peek into one of the conversations from this past year.

Social and volunteer activities like Maple Celebration and Cookies & Cocoa remain a tradition. We raised \$600 for the Brother Yusuf Scholarship at this year's Maple Celebration at Sharpe Reservation - thanks again to the team at this site for their constant support. Come join us this year to celebrate this community and play some Holidays themed games with fellow Earthlings like yourself at Cookies & Cocoa - it will be on Monday, December 18th.

Pammi Price and Shinara Sunderlal stepped up as co-chairs for the EAI committee this year. We've been keeping the carefully built boat afloat and hope to continue providing reinforcements to keep the boat (committee) swimming for years to come! But the biggest challenges for us remain the same - low attendance of members and of new recruits, and limited bandwidth of members. Have recommendations for how we could get more folks involved? Join us. You could help create educational resources, flyers, organize events and/or just help us by being timekeeper at meetings. Many of different ways to get involved.

Other accomplishments this year - Book Club at Winter Weekend where *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis* by Ayana E Johnson and Katharine K Wilkinson was discussed. We also hosted a workshop showcasing EAI committee's work so far, serving as a case-study for the Safe Space Commitment outcomes. Stay tuned for a Bystander Training coming up this winter.

We would be remiss to not pay homage to Marylyne Malone this year for cultivating the EAI committee for what it is today. As most of you know, she had been keeping the spirit of the EAI committee alive for years, before folks came together at the Annual Conference in 2019 to rename the group and to light a fire under Marylyne's guidance and understanding of NYSOEA. As she is going through a year of big changes, we send her all our love in her new journey and gratitude for everything she has given to this community. She will always remain a member of the committee, even from a different state. So you definitely don't have an excuse to not join us anymore.

Contact us at eaicommitee@gmail.com

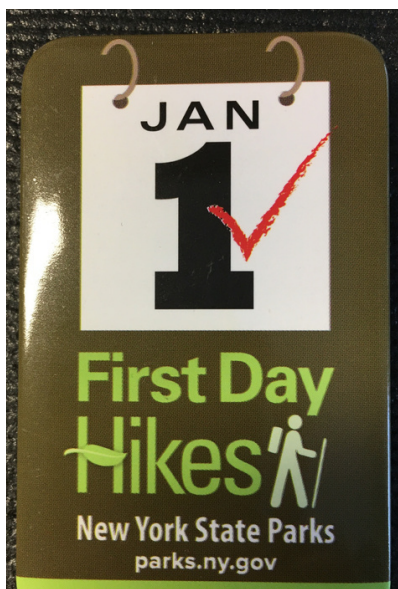
The EAI committee finds ways to increase the equity, access, and inclusivity of our membership by identifying avenues to bring greater diversity to NYSOEA through speakers, workshops and collaborating with organizations that promote the outdoors to diverse audiences.

REGIONAL EVENTS

Central Region

The Central Region kicked off the year once again by teaming up with NYS Parks to host one of many national First Day Hikes at Taughannock Falls State Park in Trumansburg. This year we had a total of 1275 hikers and one Peregrine Falcon!

The Cornell Raptor program came to the event to teach about raptors and to help dedicate a new Peregrine Falcon interpretive sign. Hikers of all ages and abilities came out and hiked the trail, warmed their hands by one of the many fire rings along the gorge trail. Twelve hikers won prizes; 10 of which were supplied by NYSOEA that will help them spend more time outside! If you have questions about the hike or want to volunteer for part of the day reach out to the Central Region rep, Josh Teeter.



Central & Western Region

On Saturday, May 20th the Western and Central Regions of NYSOEA teamed up to host a professional development day at Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, NY. Ganondagan was a thriving village of the Seneca tribe in the 1600s, and today the Historic Site offers some of the best historical, cultural and contemporary information and resources about the Haudenosaunee people.

The day got off to an early start, with a handful of members joining Western Region Chair, Elijah Kruger, for a breeding bird survey in the grassland areas that make up Ganondagan State Historic Site. The group was able to practice professional survey techniques, picked up some bird identification tips, and learned about the unique grassland habitat management of the site using controlled burns.

The main event of the professional development day was a guided tour of the Seneca Art & Culture Center and life-size longhouse replica. Participants were led around the site by interpretive staff member Kalen Fontanelle, Seneca tribe, Heron clan. Kalen shared historical context relevant to the site and communicated first hand experiences of the Haudenosaunee way of life. Being aware that he was leading a group of educators through the site, Kalen also shared tips and insights to best practices for teaching about Native American history and culture.

Western Region

The rain held off for the Western Region's event on Sunday, September 10th. A small but very engaged group was treated to a private, behind-the-scenes tour of the Autism Nature Trail at Letchworth State Park by one of the Trail's founding members, Loren Penman. Aside from being able to experience the trail for themselves, attendees were able to learn from Loren some of the design principles and seemingly small but hugely important details of the Trail that help to make it a first of its kind "Trail For All." The group intends to bring some of what they learned back to their sites to find ways to introduce similar ideas for inclusion and accessibility in the outdoor spaces where they work.



Northern Region

The Nicandri Nature Center had a very busy year. From December 2022 through March of 2023 we welcomed over 4000 cross country skiers and snowshoers. We welcomed and visited more than 4500 school children, teachers and guests. We partnered with Indian Creek Nature Center, Cornell Cooperative Extension and Nature Up North to bring a series of programs on animals in flight and also partnered with the Massena Drug Free Coalition and hosted 450 people for a family fun and movie night. We started the Northern New York Bat Project and trained several individuals to observe and record local bats.



Metro Region

Metro Region had a lot of fun in the sun during the month of July! At the beginning of the month, educators met up at Mount Loretto Unique Area in Staten Island for a Friday evening pizza picnic, walk along the beach and, most meaningful, a visit to the young dogwood tree planted last year in memory of our dear former EE colleague, River DiLeo. We enjoyed great wildlife sightings: rabbits, deer, groundhogs, great egrets, oystercatchers, night herons, and the sweet sounds of turns and bullfrogs. We were pleasantly surprised by a glorious sunset to top the night off.



Near the end of the month NYSOEA members joined educators from NYC Environmental Education Advisory Council (EEAC) and NYS Marine Education Association (NYMEA) for a whale watching trip! It was an unforgettable day on the water, and even us educators learned a new fact or two thanks to the Gotham Whale guide aboard, Celia Ackerman. New York City's lower harbor is teeming with dolphins and whales! Celia counted 150 bottlenose dolphin sightings for our trip, as well as several great moments of lunge feeding by humpback whales.



Celia Ackerman- American Princess Cruise

Eastern Region

Ashawna Abbot, VP human resources, participated in the Taproots Festival held in Beacon, NY, which was organized by Beacon Climate Action Now (BCAN). The primary goal of this event was to enhance community awareness regarding the climate crisis in a family-friendly, music festival atmosphere. During the festival, Ashawna represented both Mohonk Preserve (affiliate organization) and NYSOEA, engaging attendees in creating seedballs to support pollinator habitat conservation. This gathering drew approximately 225 participants who actively took part in diverse activities like crafting seedballs, learning about composting, and registering to vote!



About BCAN: In the face of the climate crisis and the related crisis of care, BCAN aims to create systems of democracy, resilience, and regeneration, resulting in a hopeful, joyful future of collective flourishing.

Eastern & Metro Region

Winter Weekend 2023 took place February 10th-12th. Approximately 50 educators gathered to share their knowledge, learn new skills, and share stories around the trade blanket and campfire. The Weekend is hosted at the Taconic Outdoor Education Center (TOEC), run by New York State Parks, in Cold Spring, NY. Like the annual NYSOEA Conference, but on a smaller scale, Winter Weekend offers more opportunities for skill and craft education that can be incorporated into lessons, whether in the indoor or outdoor classroom. With workshops ranging in topic from Terrarium Building to Wilderness Survival, to Environmental Education for Individuals on the Autism Spectrum there was no shortage of opportunities to learn. While a warm spell meant the pond wasn't frozen, and thus no broomball, it did allow for workshops to take place outdoors and opportunities to enjoy the beautiful trails that TOEC has to offer.



SAVE THE DATE

NYSOEA

Winter Weekend

FEBRUARY 2-4, 2024

TACONIC OUTDOOR
EDUCATION CENTER

SAVE THE DATE



FORGET NOT THAT THE EARTH DELIGHTS
TO FEEL YOUR BARE FEET AND THE WINDS
LONG TO PLAY WITH YOUR HAIR."

- KHALIL GIBRAN



**For more
information visit
our website at
www.nysoea.org**

NYSOEA 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Save the Date: November 7-10

The Y at Watson Woods



- Exciting pre-conference activity options, including local museums and Watkins Glen tour
- Hotel-style lodging available
- Live band on Friday evening
- Beautiful location

FINANCIAL REPORT

Annual Appeal

TREASURER'S REPORT-NYSOEA

Jan. 1, 2023 – Sept.30,2023

STARTING BALANCE: \$48,209.85

EXPENSES

	TO DATE	ESTIMATED TO END OF YEAR
OFFICE QUARTERLY PAYMENT(inc. '22 4 th qrt.)	3,779.15	7,549.00
PATHWAYS EDITOR, GRAPHIC DESIGN	1,250.00	1,250.00
PRINTING	918.00	1,299.00
SUPPLIES	604.84	650.00
INSURANCES	1,782.00	1,782.00
WEBSITES	1,097.60	1,097.60
MEETINGS/TRAVEL EXPENSES	360.71	500.00
ADVERTISING (REGIONAL TABLES)	0	0
ACCOUNTING	2,000.00	3,500.00
AWARDS	255.95	255.00
STORE	831.57	1,000.00
CONFERENCE 2022 (pmt. To Fresh Air Fund)	17,899.50	17,899.50
DEC CAMPSHIPS	350.00	350.00
TRANSFER TO CAMPSHIP FUND	600.00	900.00
WINTER WEEKEND	3,336.00	3,336.00
MEMBERSHIPS AND BENEFITS	350.00	350.00
ENDOWMENT ACCT. FUNDS RAISED '22 CONF.	1,868.00	1,868.00
TOTAL	\$37,283.32	\$43,586.10

INCOME

	TO DATE	ESTIMATED TO END OF YEAR
MEMBERSHIPS	4,160.50	4,560.00
WINTER WEEKEND	4,695.18	4,695.18
STORE	146.02	500.00
CAMPSHIP FUND	1,200.00	1,550.00
ANNUAL APPEAL	2,445.28	2,445.28
PURCHASES CREDIT	617.33	617.33
RAFFLE/Donation	687.93	900.00
CONFERENCE 2022	588.75	588.75
CONFERENCE 2023	4,257.76	15,000.00
CAMPSHIP TRANSFERED	350.00	350.00
TOTAL	\$19,148.75	\$31,206.54

ENDING BALANCE: \$30,075.28

CAMPSHIP FUND: \$6,683.52

SCHOLARSHIP FUND: \$2,401.65

INVESTMENT REPORT AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2023:

September 2022

Endowment Fund:	\$121,696.79	\$103,323.67
Memorial Fund	\$ 11,532.59	\$9,636.36
General Fund:	\$38,255.18	\$33,226.69

Thank you to our generous donors for supporting NYSOEA's mission and allowing us to continue to offer scholarships, grants, and other opportunities to get future generations outdoors. \$2515 was donated during our annual appeal.

Frank Benenati
Barbara Bosch
Ethan Cantin
Gary Christenson
Sunny Corrao
Henry Dewey
Meaghan Boice-Green
Brian Herbst
Rebecca Houser
Carolann James
Dan Kriesberg
Sally McCracken
Midge Monat
Jerry Passer
Snapper Petta
Rhonda Pitoniak
Jennifer Rigby
Mary Anna Russo
Timothy Stanley
George Steele
Thomas Stock
Marty Strong
Robert Ward
Anderson Young



Submitted by:

Carol Rogers, NYSOEA Treasurer

10/12/2023