

2023 Annual Report

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

BY MEG SEIFERT

Dear Headwaters Science Institute Supporters,

2023 was a fantastic year for Headwaters. From new programs to new schools to returning programs, it truly was incredible to meet all of the amazing students and hear from our program staff about the fun everyone had exploring science. Our programs grew this year and we saw a 17% increase in the number of students we served.

This means we've provided more students, and proportionally more students from marginalized communities, with hands-on exploration opportunities and life-changing experiences. Around 90% of students say after a Headwaters program that they learned something they would not have learned in school.

And that's what we want to hear. The important thing for Headwaters is the voices of the students, so we listen closely to what they're telling us and what they're interested in studying.

When I had the opportunity over the summer to join the students from Richmond for their camp days at the San Francisco Zoo, and Marin Headlands field trip days, I was inspired by how many smiles there were and how many of the students were having a fantastic time. The curiosity of these third graders warmed my heart and reminded me of why Headwaters' programs are so important.

On the bus across the bay, we talked about how the bridge - which many students had never crossed before - was built, leading to lots of questions about construction, physics, and strength. At the zoo, the students didn't even want to stop for lunch because they were worried they would run out of time to see everything! They were amazed at how big some of the animals were - what do they eat?! - and they didn't want to miss a single thing.

For many of these students, this camp was the first time they'd crossed the Bay, seen the ocean, been to the zoo, or visited an academic

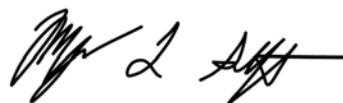
institution, and each of these trips was eye-opening. And that's what I love about what we can provide through our programs - opportunities where we open doors that students didn't even know existed. The core of our mission, our student-driven research techniques, has helped students become more engaged and curious about science.

That's why the support of Headwaters' donors and grant funders is so meaningful. These experiences are truly life-changing. Your contributions to Headwaters' mission mean we are able to work as a community, using a mix of grant funding and individual donations, and serve even more students.

As we look forward to 2024, I am thankful for the growth of our staff team with new staff hired in the second half of 2023 that have truly hit the ground running with the expansion of our program offerings. From the Richmond camps to afterschool programs to a new virtual data and climate science camp, we continue to adapt to meet the needs of our students. Of course, we couldn't have done this without your support, and we want to thank and highlight the contributions of educators and nonprofit stakeholders, board members, and financial supporters for their tireless efforts and continued support.

Every dollar donated helps make a lasting impact on the lives of students. The way students in every program I attend are inspired to be curious and ask questions, no matter if we're in the classroom at the zoo or at a stream behind their school, shows me every day that what we are doing works. Our supporters are a big reason why we are able to accomplish so much. You are champions for science, curiosity, education, and the environment, and we sincerely thank you for being part of the Headwaters community.

Sincerely,



2023

PROGRAM IMPACTS

1,578
students served

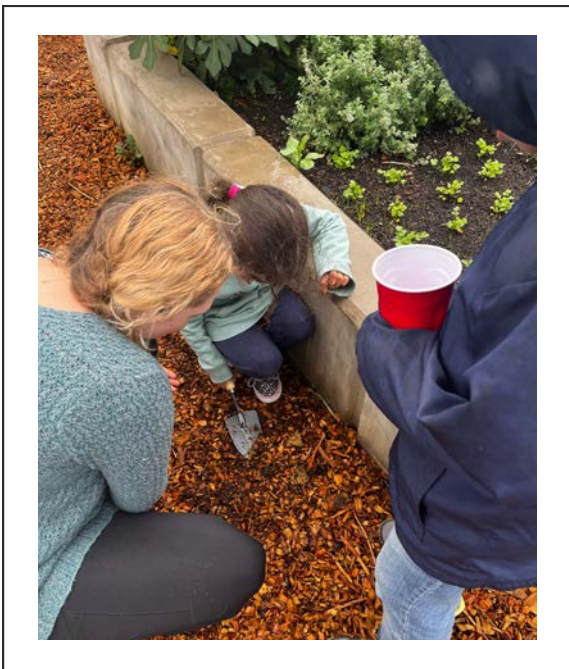
17%
increase in students
over last year

5,204
student days
experiencing hands-
on programs

56
students
participating in
research experience

8
in-depth Lunch with
a Scientist virtual
programs

16
live virtual events



94%
of students gained
new skills in problem-
solving after their
program

90%
of high school
students report
enjoying science more
after their program

94%
of afterschool
students reported an
improved outlook
on nature-related
topics

96%
of summer campers
agreed they learned
something they
would not have in
school

94%
of research
experience
participants gained
new skills in
problem-solving

96%
of summer campers
gained confidence in
science



HEADWATERS SCIENCE INSTITUTE

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Headwaters' programs in 2023 reached students in elementary, middle, and high school and truly showcased the impact student-driven research can have in all age groups and all settings. Students in 2023 really became better decision makers and problem solvers, and we could see that in every program. And we have the opportunity to open doors that students may not have even known existed.

Katie Cannon, Program Manager, Bay Area, is always encouraged by the students who are surprised about having fun. "On our first Saturday Field Day at Nystrom, one of the student participants was clearly nervous about attending. She sat by herself and said she didn't know anyone since she wasn't from that school. But when she was picked up that afternoon, she told me that she was so glad her parents made her come. She had the best day and wanted to convince her parents to let her come to our next one!"

Bryn Anderson, Program Manager, "has so many favorite moments from the year that it's hard to choose! One of my favorite moments from 2023 was working with the students from a school in Sacramento that didn't have the opportunity to leave campus to collect data. These students truly made the most of the opportunity they had, which was to collect meaningful data in the ecosystems directly surrounding their school. I also get so excited when students work to collect data in harsh conditions. I had a group of students in Davis who braved severe mud and rain in order to collect data."

We are always watching for students who are excited about things clicking for them. Whether that's in the classroom, the field, during the Research Experience, or at summer camp, there are little moments we see in each program. A student from this summer shared with Courtney Kurdera, Research Experience Manager, that because



of the work he did during the Research Experience, he wants to pursue a career as a conservation biologist!

Because of the success and reputation of Headwaters, there are so many schools and organizations that want to work with our exceptional staff. We are able to be flexible, adapting to the needs of different student populations and school curriculum. In the fall, we had a group of Sarasota County High School students participate in the Research Experience to get professional mentorship and a jump start on their science fair projects in a collaborative program. And in the Bay Area, working with Richmond Schools, we started new programs for summer camp, afterschool programs, and field days and served almost 250 students in the first year.

From the high schoolers who participate in the Research Experience on down through elementary school after school students, one of the most inspiring things each session is when the students start to take ownership of their ideas and projects. Once students realize that they are able to explore their own interests and curiosity in our programs, they often get really excited about that ownership, and watching that is really cool to see.

“Watching the students in the after school program start to feel ownership over their experiments was a great example,” says Katie Cannon. “They went from not wanting to look at the plants to getting excited to see if any had grown in height, or, in some cases, had grown mold because they had tested if orange juice was a good liquid to use for watering. And students who were more adept at ruler measuring started helping students who needed more assistance, eager to share what they learned!”

And sometimes, the experience itself, seeing students come together over a week of shared time and interest, is the most rewarding. Morgan Long recalls the last night of the Environmental Science Overnight Camp at Webber Lake, when everyone was sitting around the final campfire: “Groups had just finished up data analysis for their projects, and I think there was a really great sense of accomplishment from the groups. During our talent show evening, it was so fun to see the friendships between the students after camping together for a week.”



2023

FINANCIAL REPORT

With the 17% increase in students served in 2023, it was imperative to grow our revenue to cover the growth in programs. Many of our programs are at least partially grant-funded, but to continue to keep costs low for schools and parents, bring in the best mentors to work with students, and create and distribute curriculum to teachers for free, we rely on donations as well.

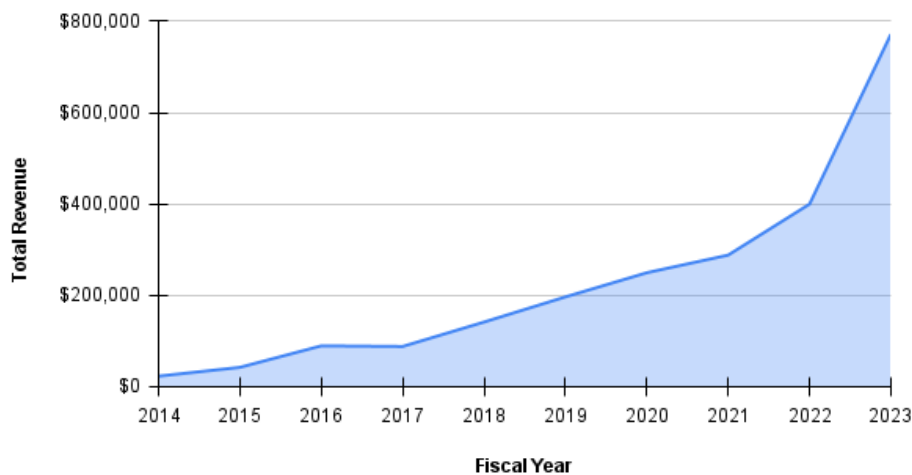
\$156,037

increase in net assets

\$771,506

total revenue

Total Revenue



An important part of Headwaters' programs is partnering with schools to ensure not only that the program runs successfully, but also that it can happen again the following year. In 2023, while we saw programs returning after a pandemic hiatus, we also started new programs with new schools and teachers, and contributed resources towards these new programs. Cost of programs has increased post-pandemic, which includes staff time, travel costs, park permits, supplies, and insurance.

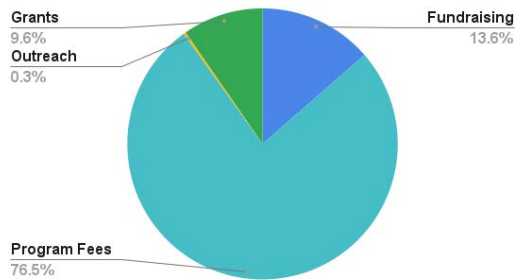
We are incredibly thankful for our volunteers to contribute their time to teaching, chaperoning, and helping Headwaters programs run efficiently and effectively.

Headwaters works hard to keep overhead low and use the bulk of its funds to implement our mission.

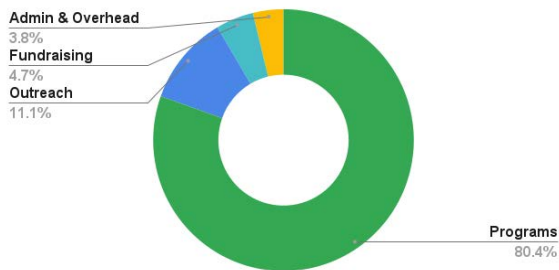
2023

FINANCIAL REPORT

2023 Funding Sources



2023 Expenditures



Fiscal Year ends December 31	2021	2022	2023
Funding Sources			
Donations	\$84,382	\$114,932	\$104,996
Program Fees	\$134,800	\$192,348	\$589,976
Grants	\$67,585	\$92,157	\$74,313
Outreach Income	\$1,305	\$280	\$2,221
Total Revenue	\$288,072	\$399,717	\$771,506
Expenditure			
Programs	\$126,854	\$251,601	\$495,122
Fundraising	\$13,619	\$31,280	\$28,810
Outreach	\$0	\$24,706	\$23,316
Overhead Expenses	\$54,992	\$78,351	\$68,221
Total Expenditure	\$195,465	\$385,938	\$615,469
Increases in Net Assets	\$92,607	\$13,779	\$156,037



HEADWATERS SCIENCE INSTITUTE

2023

STUDENT QUOTES



"I have never done something like this for a school project before!"
- Head Royce Student

"I thank you for the opportunity to show me part of the world that I have never seen."
- Gudelio

"It is so unique to use real science equipment."
-Jihae

"There is more to life than grades. It is amazing to just focus on a meaningful project."
-Hanna

"This was an incredible and somewhat daunting undertaking for me, but I couldn't have loved it more. Making my way down creek beds, with my supplies, pencil, and notebook in my backpack, I felt like I'd found my calling; I could feel my sense of environmental stewardship and responsibility expanding with every water sample I logged. This project ignited my passion for pursuing environmental science and highlighted the role it will play in my life and future career as a research scientist."

- Ryan Wisk
Headwaters Research Experience Student





STAFF

Megan Seifert, *Executive Director*
 MaryEllen Benier, *Program Assistant*
 Katie Cannon, *Bay Area Program Manager*
 Rian Fried, *Program and Fundraising Assistant*
 Courtney Kudera, *Data Analyst and Research Experience Manager*
 Hailey Levin, *Bay Area Program Coordinator*
 Morgan Long, *Program Manager*
 Tara Webster, *Outreach and Fundraising Coordinator*

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2023

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HEADWATERS SCIENCE INSTITUTE

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Monthly donors provide a sustainable revenue source and allow us to take a long-term approach to funding ongoing projects and rolling out new programs.



Science Stewards receive: shoutouts in our newsletters, early access to summer camp registration, an end of year Thank You Gift, invitations to exclusive donor events, and endless appreciation.

www.headwatersscienceinstitute.org/donate

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We're always looking for volunteers who want to get involved in bringing science education to students! Let us know if you are interested in getting involved!



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