

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Children's  
Environmental  
Literacy  
Foundation

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# MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At the time of writing CELF's Annual Report, we can see glimpses of relief in our field as schools have re-opened for the final month or weeks of the academic year, and as teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents breathe a sigh of relief that this year is nearly over. Breathing is at the forefront of our collective consciousness as never before. Literally for survival, and as a recognized practice for mental health that was challenged in every school.

While this year has been fraught with despair, complexity and conflict, this moment also provides a clear opportunity for change. Many are talking about a return to normal, but if we do that, we will be doing a disservice to students, educators and learning communities. **Normal isn't good enough. It never was.**

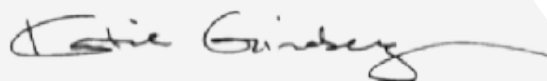
The nature of CELF's work with teachers is deeply rooted in focusing on the purpose of education. What IS the purpose of education if not to shape our collective future? The future of learning needs to be equitable, learner-centered, flexible and resilient. It must meet the needs of each student, and **hold up and value the teaching profession as the means to get us there.**

Districts are now gearing up to address learning loss from the pandemic this summer and beyond. They are also rethinking what the "great catch-up" should look like. School leaders are looking at this moment as an opportunity to think about what's working and what's not and how they can transform. At CELF, we are reflecting on how our programs boosted learning and engagement during an incredibly turbulent time, and strategies to accelerate accessibility and scale to benefit more teachers and more students.

**Our most successful strategy?  
We meet schools and teachers where  
they are, wherever that is on their  
sustainability journey.**

This past year this meant instructional and leadership coaching, systems-level change thinking, and supportive classroom teaching experience. We did this through 1:1 sessions; professional learning series such as CELF Civic Science: Inquiry to Action, Summer Institutes Intensives and new Teacher Environmental Literacy Series (TELS); and other new programs: Green Careers Speaker Series, CELF Membership and the Student Symposium, all offered in dynamic virtual environments.

As for so many others, our work with schools this year surfaced the heart of sustainability: well-being. We are proud of the educators across our country - and our CELF team- who endured for the sake of our children. Our hope is that this Annual Report serves as a recollection of the perseverance, community and fortitude that arose during this time and continues to carry us all to a brighter, more sustainable future.



*Katie Ginsberg*  
Executive Director and Founder





## Mission

The mission of the Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation - CELF - is to establish sustainability as an integral part of every child's K-12 learning experience.

## Core Values

During FY 2020, CELF's Board of Directors and staff defined the organization's core values, which will serve as a guidepost during our continued expansion and growth:

-  COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & SYSTEMS THINKING
-  COLLABORATION
-  INNOVATION
-  INTEGRITY
-  RESILIENCE AND TENACITY
-  DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES
-  CONTINUOUS LEARNING



# OUR GROWING EDGE



With the challenges brought on by Covid-19, came solutions that accelerated our learning, growth, and impact as an organization. Guided by our Core Values, the CELF team continued to innovate, inspire and inform in new and exciting ways throughout 2020.

## INCLUSIVITY & DIVERSITY

We connected topical and transformative learning to the most timely issues surfaced by the pandemic. Our Civic Science: Inquiry-to-Action program supported over 70 teachers and 2,500 students in learning about air pollution and its implications for health, equity and policy, allowing for students in all settings —cities & suburbs, hybrid & remote, under- and highly-resourced schools— to contribute their data, ideas and voices to the greater movement toward environmental equity.

## MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE

We introduced new digital resources and technology such as portable air quality monitors, and guidance in outdoor and distance learning. We launched the **Teacher Environmental Literacy Series** to offer brief-but-impactful evening workshops that would allow educators to continue their learning despite the challenges of scheduling professional learning in a quarantined world.

## COLLABORATION

With well-established and new strategic partnerships in the public sector, CELF's work has grown with teacher centers (e.g., Region IV in TX; NYS BOCES, Mid-Hudson and TC Central Westchester in NY); University partners (NYU; Manhattanville College, Rice University; Columbia Teachers College; UH Clearlake; UTMB; Mount Sinai School of Medicine); and zoos and nature centers (such as the Greenburgh Nature Center and Houston Zoo). All amplify CELF's work and mission through their vast networks and content knowledge expertise.

We also formed CELF's Leadership Circle (CLC) to engage private industry leaders in CELF's key markets to support the sustainable growth of our mission and operations, and galvanize a network of CELF ambassadors committed to systemic change in K-12 education.

# 2020 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: BY THE NUMBERS

# 245

## TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS

engaged via professional learning workshops, Summer Institute programs and classroom support services.

# 5,000+

## STUDENTS

impacted by CELF programs directly —via Green Careers workshops and in-class support— or indirectly.

# 5

**CIVIC  
SCIENCE  
GRANTS**

CELF was awarded five grants to directly support our Civic Science program, including Linde PLC, McMac CX & three separate awards from the National Geographic Society

# 100%

Summer Institute attendees reported increased student engagement after implementing CELF's approach in their classrooms

# 100%

program participants report increased environmental literacy knowledge and systems thinking skills

# 7

**STATES AND  
THREE  
COUNTRIES**

were represented in programming this year, a silver lining to our pivot to digital programming

# VIRTUAL SUMMER INSTITUTE

After 15 years of hosting immersive, in-person Summer Institutes for educators, CELF transitioned our 2020 Summer Institutes to the virtual world. As the pandemic continued to magnify issues of environmental injustice and inequity, we knew that it was imperative to maintain the growth of our programs and dedication to education for sustainability.

The first Summer Institute session focused on integrating the Big Ideas of Sustainability into classroom curricula, while the second aimed to enhance participants' understanding of project-based learning and place-based education. The participants applied these fundamental principles and practices to the context of their school communities.

## GUEST SPEAKERS INCLUDED:



Kate Raworth  
Economist, Author



Dr. Maida Galvez MD, MPH,  
FAAP, NYS Children's  
Environmental Health Center



Tammie Lang Campbell  
Activist, Founder, Honey  
Brown Hope Foundation



Jaime Gonzalez  
The Nature Conservancy



Tyler Knowlton  
Plume Labs



Susan Kaiser Greenland  
Author, Mindfulness &  
meditation teacher



Dr. Bertie Simmons  
Author, Educator, Visionary  
& Change Agent



Jaysa Hunter-Mellers  
Student Activist

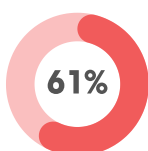
## OUR IMPACT

- 89% of participants planned to use the digital tools and strategies provided by CELF in the upcoming school year.
- Many participants reported that they distilled an immense amount of insight for their own virtual instruction practice by observing the way in which CELF delivered and facilitated its program.

## SUMMER INSTITUTE: QUICK STATS

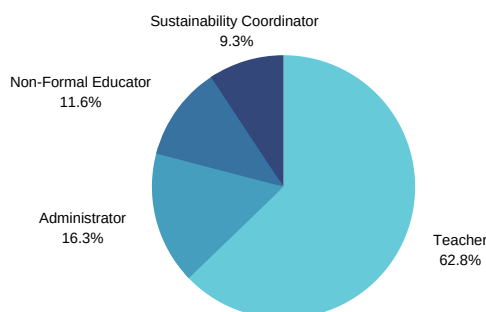
**5,000+**

K-12 Students engaged by  
teacher participants

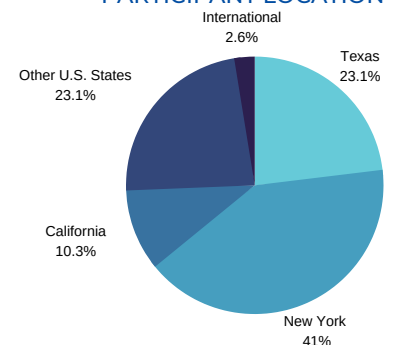


Participating  
teachers at  
Title I  
Schools


### ROLE IN EDUCATION



### PARTICIPANT LOCATION







I am inspired to empower students to use their voices and to appreciate the value of their actions. I also feel I am leaving CELF's Summer Institute with a network of support and a new learning community.

**Melissa Brady**

John Jay Middle School, Katonah Lewisboro School District, NY

CELF provides teachers with tools and guidance to effectively motivate and engage students as they become environmental stewards. I came away from CELF's Summer Institutes with the confidence to support my students as they learn, that within them lies the ability to lead the charge on sustainability and conservation.

**Tara O'Gorman**

5th Grade teacher, Yonkers Public Schools, NY



# CIVIC SCIENCE: BRINGING EQUITY TO THE FOREFRONT

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought renewed attention to air quality and community health, as well as the imperative to improve access to and support for students learning virtually when schools are physically closed.

Programs like CELF's Civic Science: Inquiry-to-Action engage educators and students in project-based STEAM learning outside of the classroom, empowering them to investigate and better understand the impact of environmental issues like air quality as it relates to their neighborhood and community health.


Often, it is communities of color who are most affected by the negative health outcomes of poor air quality. Providing access to the technology and skills needed to collect and understand air quality data becomes a powerful tool that can empower students and teachers to advocate for real, systemic change in their local communities.

## NEW PARTNERSHIPS TAKE SHAPE

In 2020, CELF announced a new partnership with McMac Cx and Plume Labs. As part of this collaboration, every participant in CELF's Civic Science program this year received a Flow - a personal pollution monitoring device; by incorporating the portable Flow into our program -in tandem with online open source datasets- air pollution data has become more transparent and navigable for our young people.

In addition, Plume Labs experts provided direct technical assistance to our teachers, ensuring that they felt confident in supporting their students with data collection, analysis and interpretation.





The idea that children and non-specialist adults can actually contribute to scientific research in a meaningful and sometimes progressive way is very powerful. Teachers struggle with connecting scientific ideas to real-world applications. CELF's Civic Science has the potential to close that gap.

**José Eduardo Alemán**

Glassell Park Elementary S.T.E.A.M. Magnet, LAUSD, CA

## SPOTLIGHT ON...



Making our world  
more productive

“At the end of 2020, long-time advocate in education for sustainability Linde and CELF entered into a multi-year agreement. Financial commitments that span multiple years help to sustain CELF's programming and operations, and deepen our impact through long-term engagement with school partners.

Through 2025, Linde's annual grant through its Global Giving Program will support CELF programming for K-12 teachers and students in public schools in the Greater Buffalo, NY region, Danbury, CT, and Houston, TX. It will have a particular focus on Civic Science and outcomes related to increased student agency and civic action, project-based learning, and increased teacher and student understanding of the interconnections between human behaviors and environmental health.”





# FAMILY NATURE CHALLENGE

In June 2020, our Houston Educator team ran a 3-week Virtual Family Nature Challenge for families across the Houston-Galveston region as a way to engage parents in their new role

as at-home educators. Each Monday, participants were sent an outdoor challenge to explore as a family accompanied by a mini-lesson and CELF challenge guide. They ended each week with a live Zoom Show and Tell!

This self-paced learning experience introduced key concepts of CELF's Big Ideas of Sustainability -including place, interdependence, biodiversity, and every individual's ability to make positive change- to 60+ families with children in grades K-8, using engaging social sharing tools like Padlet and Flipgrid to build a virtual community of nature lovers across Houston.



## Statement of Activities

### January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

## Revenue & Support

Contributions & grants	\$475,157
Program Income	\$21,679
Investment Income	-
Net assets released from restrictions	-
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Support</b>	<b>\$496,836</b>

## Expenses

Program Services	
Summer Institute	\$156,655
Civic Science	\$155,129
Professional development & training	\$124,908
<b>Total program services</b>	<b>\$436,692</b>
Support Services	
General & administrative	\$94,449
Fundraising	\$52,932
<b>Total support services</b>	<b>\$147,381</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$584,073</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>(\$87,237)</b>
Net assets, beginning of year	\$320,216
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$232,979</b>



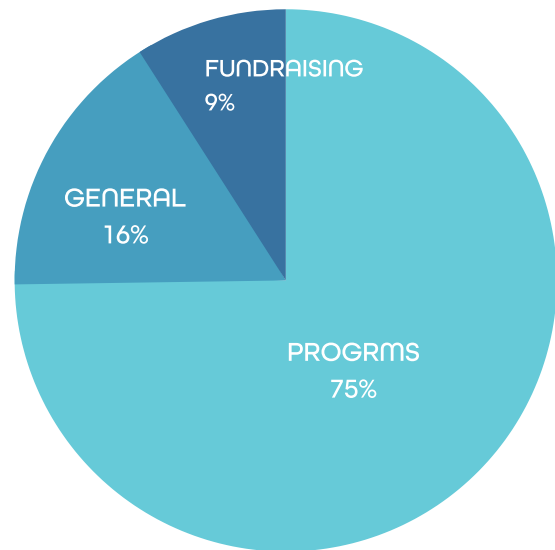


## Expenses by Department

Programs: \$436,692

General & Administrative: \$94,449

Fundraising: \$52,932

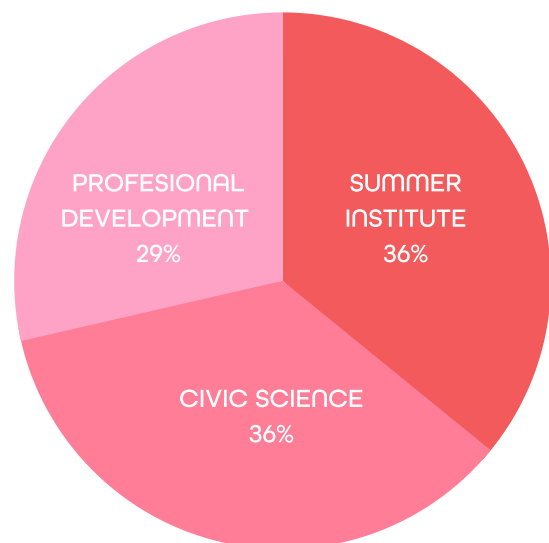


## Investments by Program

Professional Development: \$124,908

Summer Institute: \$156,655

Civic Science: \$155,129





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all of our supporters that help to sustain CELF's programs and operations!

## Sustainability Champions

Lawrence and Maureen Atinsky  
First Reserve  
Mark Gallogly & Elizabeth Strickler  
Linde, PLC  
National Geographic Society  
San Diego Foundation, Diane Fletcher-Hoppe  
Westchester Community Foundation

## \$5,000-\$10,000

William Davis  
Karina Funk  
Humanities NY  
Michael Richman  
Dean Slocum

Satish & Jugnu Mehta  
Tom Murley  
Michael Nash  
Neuberger Berman  
Lisa & Stephen Plavin  
Stance Capital  
Trevor Tamlyn

## \$2,500-\$4,999

Maureen Burgess  
Mary Duncan & Nick  
Gutfreund  
Janet Harckham  
iConnections  
Sally Jeffords, Dobson  
Foundation  
Machiko & Charles Kimball  
McMac Cx  
Jessica Mendelowitz  
David Ross  
Michael Sanzone

## \$500-\$999

Patricia L. Alling  
Samarth Bhaskar  
Gregory Cecere  
Meghan Dockery-Cremins &  
Terence Cremins  
Margaret Davis  
Katie & Peter Ginsberg  
Andrew Goodwillie & Laura  
Steinberger  
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Daniel Metzger  
Melissa Richards  
Rickles Family Charitable Fund  
Ritter Family Foundation  
Rachel Spice  
Melissa & Jeff Tannenbaum  
Anne & Jim Wagner

## \$1,000-\$2,499

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Jackie & Tim Bryant  
Jeremy FitzGerald  
Margot & Stephen Holland



**\$200-\$499**

Elyse & Josh Arnow  
 Christian Beeuwkes  
 Amy & Mark Bogin  
 Walter S. Chandoha  
 Claudette & Vincent Costa  
 Alissa Fasman  
 Barbara & Bob Foley  
 Ken & Sue Furst  
 Cora Ginsberg  
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 Jeffrey Gracer  
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 Vikram & Pallavi Mehta  
 Jennifer & Karen Miles  
 Nina Orville & Edouard Nammour  
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 Ralph Sansone Endowment  
 Thomas Ruffing  
 Kim & Douglas Speegle  
 Andrew Sternlieb  
 William J VonKlemperer  
 Heidi Wendorff  
 Jeffrey Wiseman

**Up to \$200**

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 AmazonSmile Foundation  
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 David Kaback & Stephanie Apt  
 Daniel Kane  
 Martin Koffman  
 Hillary Landau  
 Louise Leffrig  
 Melanie Lester

**Up to \$200**

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 Michael Williams  
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**SPOTLIGHT ON...****FIRSTRESERVE**

In 2019, a multi-year investment from First Reserve funded the launch of **CELf Houston**, helping us to establish a local, highly experienced education team on the ground in a new market.

While we were setting down these new roots, the City of Houston released its Climate Action Plan (CAP) on Earth Day 2020, prioritizing sustainability and environmental resiliency as essential components to the future of Houston's health and economy. Though the CAP includes community action, **historically there have been no programs focused on sustainability or environmental literacy in Houston's K-12 curricula.**

With the support of First Reserve and a growing network of Texas-based partners, CELf Houston's reach doubled in 2020 and continues to grow to meet the needs of a city primed for systemic change.



# LOOKING FORWARD

While COVID-19 has disrupted nearly every life and every system of which each of us is a part, we see the pandemic as a portal: a gateway between one world and the next. For CELF, this means launching a CELF Master Teacher program to acknowledge educators leading the EfS charge, providing them with mini-grants to implement climate and sustainability projects with their schools, opportunities to teach other teachers, and to ramp-up CELF's impact through peer-to-peer training. The Master Teacher program not only creates a legacy and living documentation of best practices, it will sustain these intrepid teachers' impact in their communities for years to come.

CELF's new Membership Model for schools and districts was launched in Spring 2021 to provide a continuum of multi-media resources and "anytime access" for members to meet. It is an exciting platform unlike any other virtual space that inspires collaboration, multiple perspectives and shared resources.

We will build on our institutional Membership Model, increasing to 30 members for the '22-'23 academic year, and deepen our existing education partnerships through our synergies between CELF's proven content and "boots on the ground" impact.

Finally, we are excited to be in the midst of bringing on additional CELF Leadership Circle Members through multi-year commitments, aligned with corporate ESG goals and with CELF's mission to ensure education for sustainability is an integral part of EVERY child's learning experience.

We look toward the year ahead with hope and optimism, and immense gratitude for the support of our donor community, the fortitude of our staff, and the unwavering commitment of teachers across the United States to educating our next generation.



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