



COOPER CENTER

for ENVIRONMENTAL
LEARNING

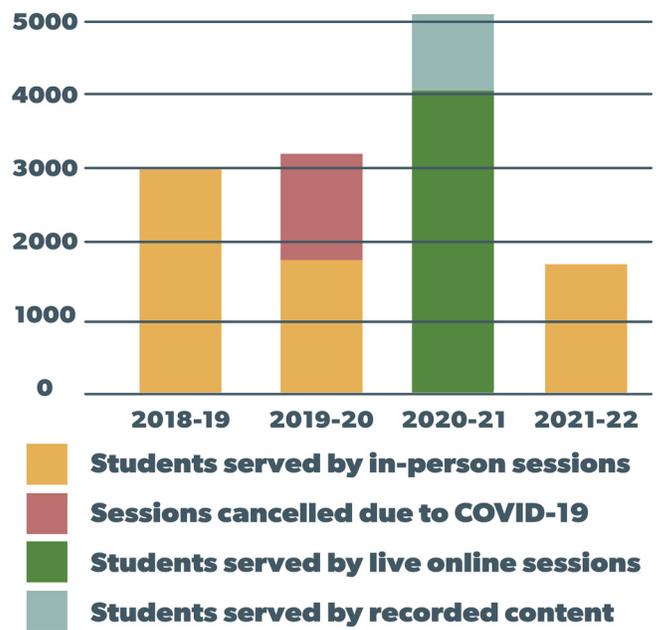
ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



FIELD TRIP PROGRAMS

After more than 18 months, we welcomed field trip groups back to Camp Cooper in October. While our restart was slow as teachers continued to battle the challenges of the pandemic, we hosted 1,639 schoolchildren during the 2021-22 school year, about half of what we would expect for a “normal” program year. Our goal is to serve more than 3,200 students with in-person field trips during the 2022-23.

You may remember that we were wildly successful with virtual field trips during the pandemic, and we’re excited to officially add these to our program options for the coming year. We will also be adding a select number of school visits to our plans. Please contact us for more information if you are interested in these options.





TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers have been some of the hardest hit by the challenges of the pandemic, so you can imagine our excitement at being able to host three in-person workshops for 35 teachers this year.

We collaborated with Partners for Equitable Science Instruction (PESI) on two sessions. The first focused on interrelationships between living and nonliving things and plant and animal adaptations for survival. These understandings are a critical part of upper elementary science. PESI also hosted a workshop focused on the intersection of science, literacy, and art in moon journals. Participants explored the value of using moon journals with their students, looked at interdisciplinary ways of including it in their curriculum, and enjoyed stargazing with guest speaker and rockstar astronomy educator, Dr. Larry Lebofsky.

Cooper Center also worked with graduate student Andrea Bennett Gutierrez to host a workshop on multiliteracy in education. Andrea is a graduate student in the Language, Reading and Culture master's program, with an emphasis on bilingual education. She has worked in informal education in nonprofit and museum settings and strives to implement biliteracy in education and community engagement. She'll be returning to work with us again this year!



Up next? We've got a LOT of ideas for teacher workshops for the coming year. Possibilities include kindness and the environment, more work with multiliteracy, outdoor learning with differently-abled students, early childhood environmental learning, and more! If you have an idea for teacher professional development, let us know!



FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

The pandemic has had some catastrophic impacts on construction projects in Southern Arizona and around the world. There are many delays, too many projects for the number of workers available, and not enough of some key materials.

Phase I of facility improvements at Camp Cooper focuses on the construction of new, sustainable bathrooms with showers. The original price tag of this project in 2020 was \$550,000. When it was put out for bid in 2021, the price had climbed to \$825,000, surpassing our budget. We raised additional funding to get us to \$1 million, only to have our spring 2022 bid come in at more than \$2 million. Sadly this project is on hold once again while we raise more money and hope that construction industry costs will normalize.



In the meantime, we're completing designs for renovating our six sleeping cabins and beginning to look at expanding our indoor classroom space. We've also got a few smaller scale projects in mind, including accessible pathways and new solar panel installations.

For more information on facility improvements at Camp Cooper, visit [our website](#). If you are interested in contributing to our construction projects, visit www.coopercenter.arizona.edu/donate!



OUR STAFF

As we head into the 2022-23 program year, our team is bigger and better than ever! Cooper Center now has eight full-time, year-round employees, thanks to increased philanthropic support. Our three Program Coordinators - Brittne, Mariah, and Paige - are wrapping up their fourth year with us, and their leadership is taking our programs in new and exciting directions. They are joined by three new Education Specialists - Alexianne, Isaac, and Jennifer - each of whom proved themselves as highly accomplished instructors for our field trips during the past year.



Cooper Center also has its first-ever full-time Marketing Specialist! Kyle Mirzaian joined the team in February and has been busy learning about our work and how best to promote it through social media, our email newsletter and website, local press coverage, special events, and more.

Doing his best to lead the way, Colin Waite enters his twentieth year at Cooper Center. Colin is the longest-serving employee ever at Camp Cooper, from teacher's aide to director, and he's not going anywhere! His passion for growing our work and upgrading our humble facilities is steadfast.



We can't wait to see what opportunities the coming year will bring! For more information on our awesome team, [click here](#).

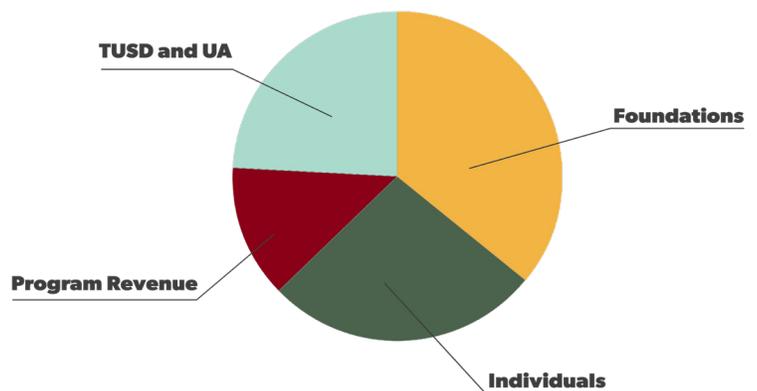


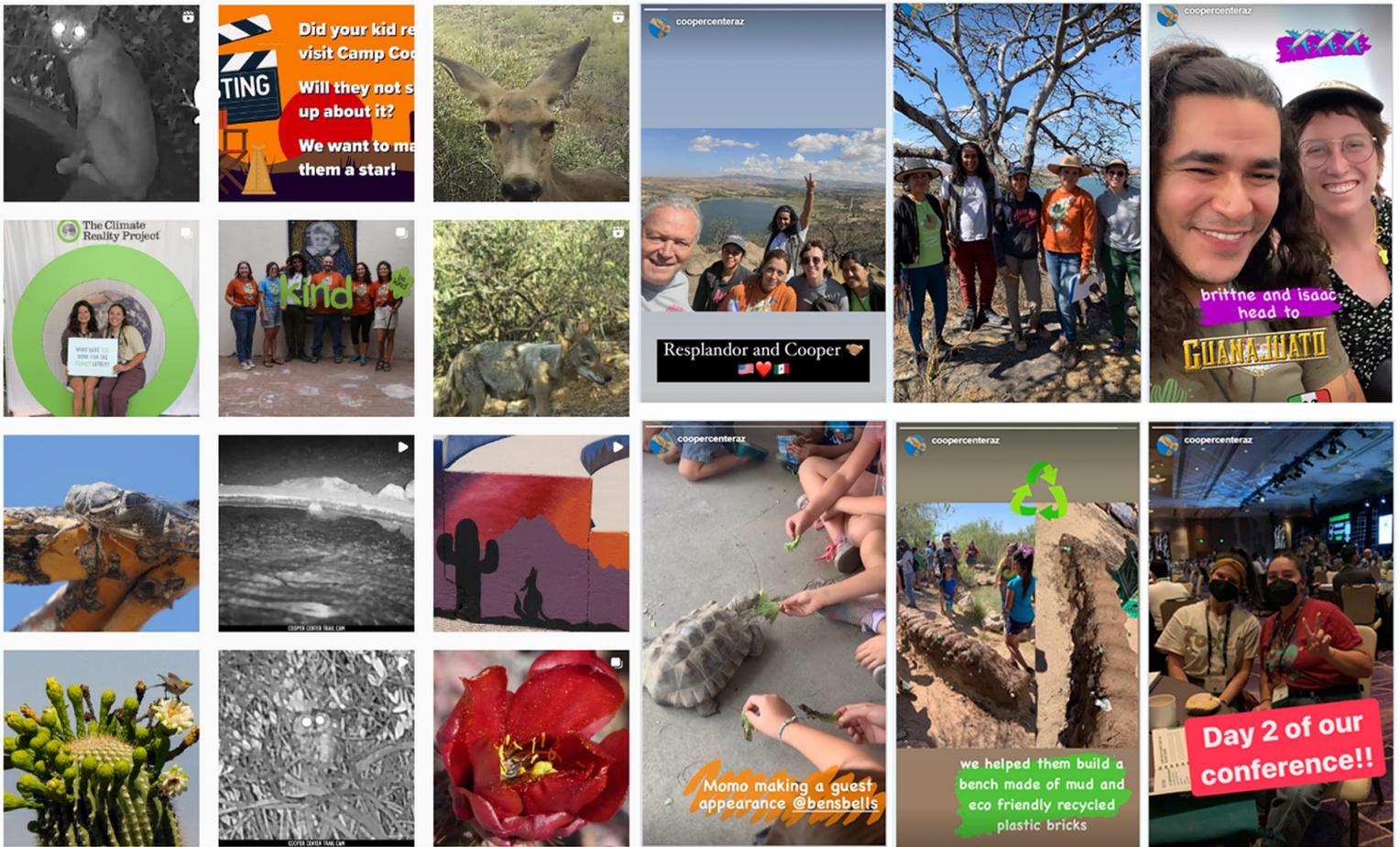
FINANCIAL POSITION

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Cooper Center’s funding has become more stable during the past three years. We are experiencing continued growth in operational and capital fundraising efforts, including more than \$400,000 raised for facility improvements and more than \$400,000 in funding for staffing and operations during the past year.

That being said, Cooper Center is still reliant on your support to ensure its financial sustainability and the growth of its programs and community outreach. Did you know that only the Director’s salary and benefits are covered by the University, and that only facility maintenance and utilities are covered by TUSD? Everything else is fundraised, through gifts from generous individuals and grants and awards from philanthropic foundations and businesses.

Cooper Center Operational Funding





MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

With the addition of Marketing Specialist, Kyle Mirzaian, the Cooper Center is positioned to be enter the next year with better branding, higher visibility in the community and more outreach, press and communications. Our monthly newsletter continues to be the best way to stay informed on all of the major news from Camp Cooper with a readership of 2,638.

We've been able to expand our social media footprint and diversify our content across platforms and audiences. Our staff have been creating fun, informative, and engaging Instagram and Facebook Stories. Following and sharing our social media is the best way to see what is happening at Camp Cooper and to help spread the word about who we are and what we do!



2,477
Facebook
Followers



828
Instagram
Followers



12.1K
Youtube
Followers

We need your help to reconnect with the more than 140,000 Camp Cooper alumni that are spread out across Southern Arizona and around the world! We're as successful in our work as we are in large part to our email lists and social media followings. We want to re-connect these alumni with the work we're doing today. Imagine what we could do if our alums returned to Camp Cooper and helped us grow our next generation of environmentally responsible citizens and leaders!



GOALS/PRIORITIES FOR 2022-23

- Return to a full schedule of in-person programs and serve more than 3,200 students.
- Add Virtual Programs and School Visits to reach new audiences.
- Begin new bathrooms and showers construction!
- Expanded professional development opportunities for current and prospective educators.
- Grow new community partnerships to promote and facilitate environmental learning.
- Continue to make Camp Cooper a more inclusive and comfortable space for learners of all backgrounds and abilities, through diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice initiatives.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

Visit us online at:
www.coopercenter.arizona.edu

Follow us on social media:



The Cooper Center for Environmental Learning, an outreach program of the University of Arizona, sits on the traditional homelands of the Tohono O'odham and Pascua Yaqui, who have stewarded this land from time immemorial. Aligning with Cooper Center's and the University's core value of a diverse and inclusive community, it is an institutional responsibility for us to recognize, represent, and acknowledge the ancestors, people, culture, and history our community resides on.

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