



# ANNUAL REPORT







## Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

There are many reasons why the Hitchcock Center is important to the health and well-being of our communities, but one resonates deeply with us—getting people outside!

We are in the midst of one of the most profound and rapid societal shifts in history. Today’s generation of children is the first to grow up indoors. Their plugged-in lives are largely devoid of exploring the natural world and we are just beginning to understand the impact is not benign. There are costs to the health of our children: attention difficulties, hyperactivity, childhood obesity, diminished use of senses, disconnect from things that are real.

If children are detached from nature, how will they learn about, understand, and value nature? How will the next generation care about the land and be stewards of its resources?

The Hitchcock Center helps get thousands of preschool, elementary, middle, high school and college students, along with their teachers, parents, caregivers, neighbors and friends, outside exploring and discovering the wonders and mysteries of our natural world.

Through our programs, people gain greater understanding and connection to their local environment and learn how transfer their knowledge into positive environmental action in their own schools and communities.

If you are reading this report, thank you for being one of those people. We are here to help you in your search for greater meaning in the natural world.

Sincerely,  
  
Julie Johnson, Executive Director



“Thank you for bringing us to the vernal pool. The tadpoles [were] my favorite.”  
—Haley, R.K. Finn Ryan Road School, Florence

## BUSINESS PARTNERS



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**Hitchcock Center for the Environment at Larch Hill Conservation Area**

525 South Pleasant Street  
Amherst, MA 01002  
413-256-6006  
Hours: Tuesday–Friday  
9:00 AM– 4:00 PM  
hitchcockcenter.org

“Going outside and hiking in nature was an adventure. Seeing the fox habitat, birds, weasel hole, a squirrel and a bunny was wonderful. I hope I can go to the Hitchcock Center again.”  
—Morgan, Westhampton Elementary School





## Hitchcock at a Glance

Founded in 1962, the Hitchcock Center’s mission is to foster greater awareness and understanding of the environment and to develop environmentally literate citizens.

### FY15 HIGHLIGHTS

**7,141 total** children, youth and adults participated In our environmental education programs.

Of those:

- 4,384** K–12 students gained greater scientific understanding through inquiry-based learning experiences steeped in our local environment.
- 1,783** Children, youth and family members found greater connection and commitment to the natural world through hands-on nature discovery programs
- 690** Adult participants strengthened their environmental skills and advocacy through our naturalist history, citizen science, and sustainability programs.
- 284** Professional development participants developed the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to promote environmental literacy in their classrooms.
- 60** Rural and urban communities throughout western Massachusetts and beyond were represented.
- 364** Volunteers dedicated 3,740 hours to support Hitchcock programs and operations.
- 755** Donor households made generous contributions to keep our environmental education programs strong.



Franklin County: 18%  
Hampden County: 12%  
Hampshire County: 66%  
Other: 4%  
Numbers on the map reflect the K–12 schools served within each community. A total of 46 K–12 schools were served.



“Our fifth graders had a wonderful time doing hands-on, inquiry-based science and are all excited about learning more! The Hitchcock Center’s Energy Literacy unit is fantastic and led to some really meaningful conversations about energy and the environment. I am so glad that I was able to attend the workshop for teachers last fall. ... I look forward to working with you again in the future.”

—Kristin Pisano, fifth grade teacher, Selser School, Chicopee





## Program Highlights

Our values are centered on six fundamental aspects of environmental education: teaching principles of ecology; place-based learning; knowing the whole story; promoting resilient communities; demonstrating sustainability in the built environment; and educating for active citizenship. FY15 highlights include:

### Hitchcock Gains National Recognition Through *Science & Children* Magazine.

Hitchcock Center educator Ted Watt co-authored a feature article published in *Science & Children*, a peer-reviewed journal for elementary teachers. “Our Garden Plot Thickens” by Ted Watt, Judith Herbert and Gini Traub provides a step-by-step guide for teachers to engage their students in learning experiences about soil properties that formed the basis for students’ choices of soil types that they predicted would achieve maximum crop harvest in the garden. In the process, students learn about the engineering design process and develop a deeper understanding of the scientific process by investigating a question connected to local food production. Last year, Ted published an article in *Green Teacher*, another nationally recognized peer-reviewed journal for K–12 educators, and has authored an important chapter in a soon to be published book on the best practices of environmental education. Thank you, Ted, for not only being such a highly skilled Hitchcock educator and naturalist, but also for your dedication to promoting the field!!

### Commonwealth Award

The Hitchcock Center, in partnership with Enchanted Circle Theater (ECT), received a prestigious 2015 Commonwealth Award. Presented every two years by the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), the Commonwealth Awards shine a spotlight on the extraordinary contributions made by the arts, sciences, and humanities to education, economic vitality, and quality of life in communities across the state. The Hitchcock Center and ECT won the award for an individual,

school, or cultural organization that has successfully fused learning in the arts with science, technology, engineering, and math—STEM to STEAM (the addition of the “A” stands for arts). The award honors a unique collaboration between Hitchcock and ECT to deepen students’ understanding of science and the arts in the Holyoke Public Schools. (see next paragraph)

### Storm Drain Art and Advocacy in Holyoke

In fall 2014, the Hitchcock Center, ECT, and the Holyoke Public Schools, with funding by the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) developed and facilitated an 11-day science and arts integrated program in all fifth grade classrooms in Holyoke. Over 300 students from 16 classrooms in six schools throughout the city of Holyoke participated in hands-on science lessons to explore the water cycle, groundwater, and the Connecticut River watershed with HCE educator Patty O’Donnell. The culminating project—the design of Storm Drain Art creations—flowed beyond the classroom, into an ongoing community-wide citizen science project. The eight most visually effective Storm Drain designs were chosen through a juried art contest, and have been in the process of being rendered and installed by a professional artist on storm drains at various locations in the city of Holyoke.



### Girls into the Wild Afterschool Launched

The Hitchcock Center launched Girls into the Wild, an afterschool program designed to bring girls ages 8–11 together in a supportive environment fostering creativity, nature skills, and inquiry. Designed by Children and Family Programs Coordinator Katie Koerten, the afterschool program was piloted on a monthly basis beginning in fall 2014. Each afternoon consisted of hands-on projects—natural dying, herbal lip balm making, animal tracking, and two overnights including a campout—and free outdoor exploration at the Larch Hill Conservation Area. Through playing games, exploring nearby habitats, and connecting with nature, the program works to develop confidence, build friendships and have a lot of fun learning. In it’s first year, the program served 16 girls.



“At this age, the children were ready for activities and challenges that were both fun and helped give them skills for being leaders at a camp and in their lives.”

—Peter Lamdin, environmental educator and Leadership Training Camp co-counselor

### STEM Early Childhood Programs Engage Children and Parents

Hitchcock Center designed and implemented STEM curriculum in 20 local libraries and three early childhood centers reaching 475 parents, teachers and children. The curriculum engages parents with their children in learning science, technology, engineering and math. It is a valuable model for integrating these fields at the early childhood age level to provide children with a structure that builds upon their natural inclination to explore, to build, and to question. Families loved learning about dinosaurs when they passed around models of different types of dinosaurs (science observations), compared dinosaur sizes (math), made dinosaur track measuring tools (engineering) and then used their measuring tool to find objects the same size as certain dinosaurs (technology).

### Hitchcock Honors Recycling Program Initiated by UMass Students

The Hitchcock Center honored UMass students; Steven Amarin, Eco-Rep Facilitator; Jordan Chan, Secretary of Sustainability for Student Government Association; and Kevin Hollerbach, Eco-Rep Program Manager, for their work to mobilize students on the EPA’s GameDay Recycling Challenge to demonstrate active recycling and reducing university clean-up cost among tailgaters at a UMass football game at McGuirk Stadium. The project, implemented at the UMass game on November 12, 2014, succeeded in collecting 2,170 pounds of recyclables through direct student engagement and clean-up effort. Among other participating colleges, UMass ranked second in both reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Recycling in the Mid-Atlantic Conference. Eighty UMass students participated in the Challenge, in 10 teams. Student leaders were honored at a luncheon sponsored by Hot Table Panini on April 8, 2015.

### New Youth Leadership Camp Launched

New to Nature Summer Camp this year, the Leadership Training session for youth ages 11–16, held June 30–July 3, attracted a group of 10 young people desiring to gain an understanding of leadership and through direct empowerment, reflective conversations, and skills practice. Peter Lamdin, one of Hitchcock Center’s first counselors in the 1970s and recently retired sixth grade teacher from Fort River School, returned to Hitchcock to provide focused curriculum and activity planning direction. Joining him during the session was returning camp counselor Courtney Dyson. Participants engaged in group challenges, a guided rock climbing field trip, learning opportunities to increase knowledge of the environment, discussions and reflections.









Gary & Linda Donnelly Charles Donovan Michael Dover & Rebecca Reid Steven Dunn & Jessica Plaut Easthampton Savings Bank Timothy Farnham & Ellen Alvord Laura Fitch & Lyons Witten Five Colleges Learning in Retirement David Foster Dorothy & Hugh Friel Helen Gibson & James Uguccioni Tom & Janine Giles Kathleen Gormally Asheley Griffith & Marcia Curtis Ellen Grobman & Vandy Bollinger Louise & Ron Grosslein Mary Hall Hampshire Bird Club Corina & Mark Hankowski Bill & Vickie Hart Frances Haynes Nancy Hazard Anne Hazzard Peter & Margaret Hepler Bob & Eugenia Herbert Doris Holden Justine G. & John Holdsworth Patricia Holland David & Katherine Hoopes Margaret Horsnell Betsey Howlett Institute For Training & Development Scott Jackson & Chris Sarfaty	Benjamin James & Oona Coy Betsey Johnson Marianne Jorgensen & David Foster Maryanne Kampmann & Nicholas Gotelli Christopher & Mary Kiely Jonathan Klate & Carlotta Willis Dietrich Klimetzek Richard & Rosemary Kofler Mary Kohler Rhett & Susan Krause Susan Landau & Neil Immerman Henry Lappen Louise & Michael Lavine Ellen Leuchs & Diane Curtis Ruth Kane-Levit & David Levit Renee Lieberman- Bachman Peter & Maija Lillya Bridgit & Jerry Litchfield Anne Lombard Chuck & Polly Longworth George Loring Nancy Lowry Jane Luff Ellie Manire-Gatti & Frank Gatti Michelle Markley Elizabeth Marshall Tom Mason Carolyn & Richard Mathews Keith McCormick John & Emily McDermott Eli & Katie McKenna-Weiss Jeni McKenna & Gerry Weiss Will Millard Maureen Millea & Erik Zimmerman Corky & Carolyn Miller	Karl Moore Charles & Kay Moran Monica Moran & Bill Wehrli James & Suzannah Muspratt Suzanne Newby Estes William Newman Annie Nugent Melissa O'Brien & Oliver Doisneau Deborah Oakley Jan Odwazny Carol Owen & Michael Posner Laura & Martha Patrick Tom Peacey Thomas Pelletier & Barbara Fox Ronald Pipkin Marcia Plant-Jackson & Bill Jackson Lisa Plantefabar & Steve Fischel Kinga Pluta Lindsay Read & Gerald Guidera Jr. William & Theresa Rock, Arrowwood Design & Construction Kenneth Rosenthal Carol Ryan Jessica Saalfeld Nathan Sanders Camil Shaheen Jeffrey Shaw Jessica Sidman Stephanie Silverman Barry & Nancy Simon Wendy & John Sinton Mary & Dana Snyder Mark Spiro Steve Stanne James Staros & Alice Harris Diana Stein Lynn Stein	Pam Stone & Jim Humphrey Sandra Sumner Scott Sumner & Valerie Miller Elaine Tucker John Van de Graaff & Marylee Bomboy Hans & Judy Van Heyst Kevin & Jennifer Vanderleeden Russ & Lydia Vernon-Jones Donald Verrastro & Heidi Dollard Susan Waite & Todd Tripp Bill & Lee Warden Pete Westover Priscilla White & Liz Windhover Dyan Wiley & Tor Smith Josef Wille & Suzanne Parker Beth Willson & Fred Steinberg Brayton & Mary Alice Wilson Kim Wolfson Wistar Wood	Judith Bannister Audrey & Jeremy Barker-Plotkin Mira Bartok Ralph & Mildred Beals Carla Becker Monte Belmonte Donald Benander & Rona Rothenberg Michael Berins Ezekial & Sara Berlin Glen & Clare Bertrand Russell Billings Linda Bisailon Janet Bissell Emily Bloch Reid Blynn Charlie & Epi Bodhi James & Paris Boice Amy Boisjolie Annique Boomsma Steven Botkin & Joan Levy Karen Bourque & Robert Horton Dennis Bowen & Elizabeth Pyle Audrey Bozzo Caryn Brause Kathleen Bredin Andrea Breen Patty Brennan Ginny Brewer Steve & Alisa Brewer Alice Briggs & Josh Lombard Suzanne Bros-Pitchko Steve Bruner & Leah Schmalzbauer Jill Bubier & George Stone Nancy & Bill Buchanan Sarah Buttenwieser & Hosea Baskin Elizabeth Cahn Charles & Carole Ann Camp Elisa Campbell	Vivienne Carey & Roger Webb Katherine Cell Jon Child & Liz Rosenberg Christina Cianfrani Tom & Sandy Clark Pearl Claunch John Clayton Joanne & Sean Cleary Susan Cleary Ethan Clotfelter Raul Clouse Cathy & Joseph Cohen Leah Cohen Ann Collacchi Louise & Sam Colligan Roger & Shirley Conant Rachel Conrad & Tom Rooney Deborah & Brian Cook Carla Cooke Sara Cooper Lorraine Cordeiro Janet Cornell Cheryl Cote & R.T. 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Julie Richburg & Michael Perusse	Judith Smith & Kenyon Fairey	Richard & Margit Tracey	Nancy Wilson & Nicholas Simms	.....	MEMORIAL GIFTS		HONORARY GIFTS	
Margaret & Bob Riddle	Rob Snyder	Kimberly Tremblay	Mark Wineburg	SCHOLARSHIP GIFTS	<b>Given By</b>	<b>In Memory Of</b>	<b>Given By</b>	<b>In Honor Of</b>
Lon Riesberg & Deborah Fryer	Judith Solsken	Susan Triolo	Mark Wineburg	Amherst South	Carol Owen & Michael Posner	Brent Beebe	Audrey Bozzo	Gerry Bozzo
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Rothenberg	Charles Stevenson	Viridian Energy	Peter Ziomek	.....	Joyce Thatcher	Jules Wiener	Rebecca Miller & Thomas Randall	John Kowaleski
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& Rebecca Matthews	& Bruce Bagdasarian	Weisbord	Community Foundation					
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Beryl Singer	Pam Tinto	Alice Wilder	Hampshire Bird Club					
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			Foundation					
			Thursday Club of South					
			Amherst					
			Unitarian Universalist					
			Society of Amherst					





## FY15 Living Building Project in Review

The Hitchcock Center completed design development and broke ground on our new 9,000 square foot “living” building on May 1, 2015! One hundred fifty guests came together to celebrate this momentous occasion. Special guest speakers included Senator Stan Rosenberg, Representative Ellen Story, Hampshire College President Jonathan Lash, and Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Judy Judson along with Julie Johnson, Hitchcock executive director, Jaana Cutson, Hitchcock board president, Annie Leonard, Hitchcock board member, and Hannah French, Hitchcock intern.

Our new living environmental learning center will be built to the highest standard of green building in the world, through the Living Building Challenge (LBC). Less than 10 buildings have received full LBC certification. Ours will be the first LBC-certified environmental education center open to the public in New England. We look forward to welcoming the community to our new living Hitchcock Center in the Fall of 2016.



*“This is a great year to be part of Hitchcock as we begin construction of our new home—a home that represents the forefront of green construction and use, allowing Hitchcock to expand its reach to a wider audience with increased programming.*

—Jaana Cutson, board president, Hitchcock Center

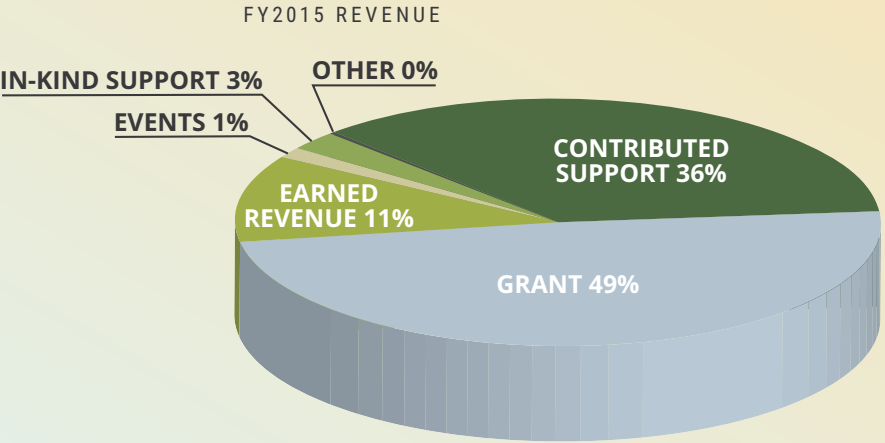
## Financials

REVENUE	FY2015
Grant	\$1,136,300.00
Contributed support	\$832,207.00
Earned revenue	\$262,193.00
In-Kind support	\$61,470.00
Events	\$32,879.00
Other	\$2,034.00
	<b>\$2,327,083.00*</b>

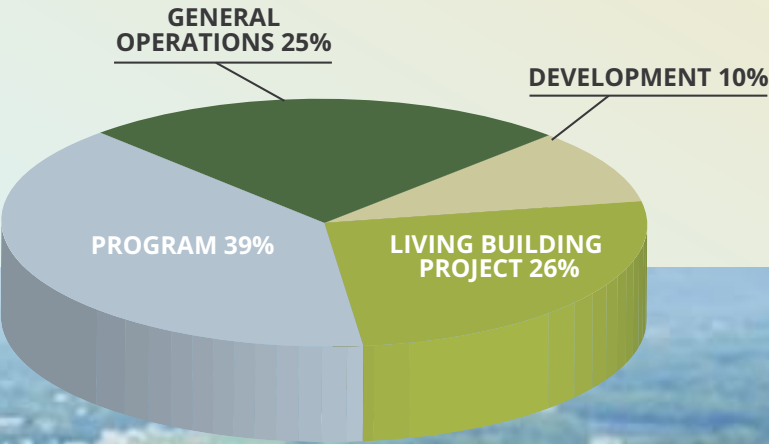
\* Of this total, \$1,818,282 was raised for the Living Building Project.

EXPENSES	FY2015
Program	\$261,011.00
Living Building Project	\$171,142.00
General operations	\$162,921.00
Development	\$64,056.00
	<b>\$659,130.00</b>

Figures based on audited financial statements for FY15.



FY2015 EXPENSES







**Hitchcock Center for the Environment  
at Larch Hill Conservation Area**

525 South Pleasant Street  
Amherst, MA 01002

413-256-6006

Hours: Tuesday-Friday  
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

[hitchcockcenter.org](http://hitchcockcenter.org)



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