

Hitchcock Center for the Environment

Annual Report 2017 & 2018



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A Message from Our Leadership

The Hitchcock Center for the Environment is undergoing an historic time of growth and development as we redefine what it means to be an environmental education center in the 21st century.

The complex environmental challenges we face today require us to rethink solutions that support the development of sustainable communities that are environmentally, socially and economically healthy and resilient.

Today you will see a different Hitchcock Center emerging as we drive innovation and realize ambitious goals by developing one of the most sustainable buildings in the world

while deepening our educational focus on the interconnected challenges related to climate, environmental degradation, poverty, inequality, prosperity, peace and justice.

Thank you so much for being part of the Hitchcock Center as we work to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. Though we have many challenges ahead, together we can make a difference. We are glad to have you with us!



Julie Johnson
Executive Director



Jaana Cutson
Board President (2017)



Cynthia Brubaker
Board President (2018)

Mission

To foster greater awareness and understanding of our environment and to develop environmentally literate citizens.

Our hands-on, interdisciplinary environmental education programs give people:

- 🌱 Sound scientific information
- 🌱 Critical thinking skills
- 🌱 Creative and strategic problem-solving abilities
- 🌱 Inspiration to make change

Diversity, Inclusion & Equity

The Hitchcock Center is committed to diversity, inclusion, and equity in who we are and who we work with—our staff, board and volunteers, and the people, groups and partners with whom we work.



Living Building Challenge

On September 18, 2016, we opened the doors to our new living building. Through the [Living Building Challenge™](#), we created a new home that meets the most rigorous standard of sustainability in the built environment.

Only 22 buildings in the world have been fully certified.

Living Building Challenge Certification Status: 2019

Designing and constructing our building to the strict requirements of the Living Building Challenge (LBC) is just the beginning. Once occupied, we must prove that our building consistently meets 20 performance standards over 12 continuous months of operations, including achieving zero net energy through our 60-kilowatt rooftop solar array, and zero net water through our ability to capture and store rainwater to supply the needs of our building and site. We anticipate completing our official LBC audit to earn our full Living Building Certification in 2019!

The Petals of the Living Building Challenge

- PLACE: Restoring a healthy interrelationship with nature
- ENERGY: Relying only on renewable forms of energy
- WATER: Operating within the water balance of our place and climate
- MATERIALS: Creating a materials economy that is non-toxic
- EQUITY: Supporting a just, equitable world
- HEALTH & HAPPINESS: Creating environments that optimize health and happiness
- BEAUTY: Developing an ethos of caring, preserving and conserving

“This is an educational tool that will be used by generations to come.”

“It is to be expected that an environmental education facility would be sustainable, but a Living Building Challenge project is above and beyond.”

—2017 Green Giants Award jury comments



spotlight

Living Building Tour Program

Since opening the doors to our new building, nearly 2,800 people from around the world have participated in our free public [Living Building Tour Program](#), conducted twice monthly, as well as through private tours scheduled by school and college classrooms, professional and community groups, and organizations and institutions who seek groundbreaking new ways to create a human built environment with minimal impact on our natural world.

Peabody Essex Museum's Wild Design Exhibit May 26, 2018–August 4, 2019

The Hitchcock Center's Living Building is a bit of a celebrity. Because of its ecological design informed by nature's wisdom, the prestigious Peabody Essex Museum invited the Center to participate in their visionary [Wild Designs exhibit](#). This exhibit profiles 24 works of architects, artists, institutions and other creative innovators who are looking to nature and living systems for new ideas and creative solutions to human problems. designLAB architects, who designed the Center's Living Building, created a scale model for this exhibit. The model is connected to an interactive display and a live feed of our Living Building Digital Dashboard to demonstrate how our building operates as elegantly and efficiently as a flower.

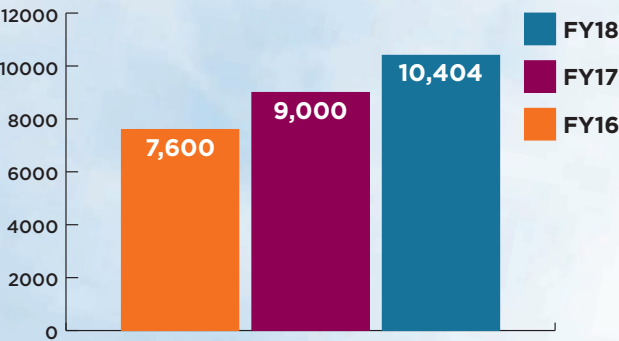
2017 Green Giants Award Recipient

In FY17, Executive Director Julie Johnson was awarded the Green Giants Award by the Western Massachusetts Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in recognition of her work to envision and fund the Hitchcock Center's newly constructed living building.

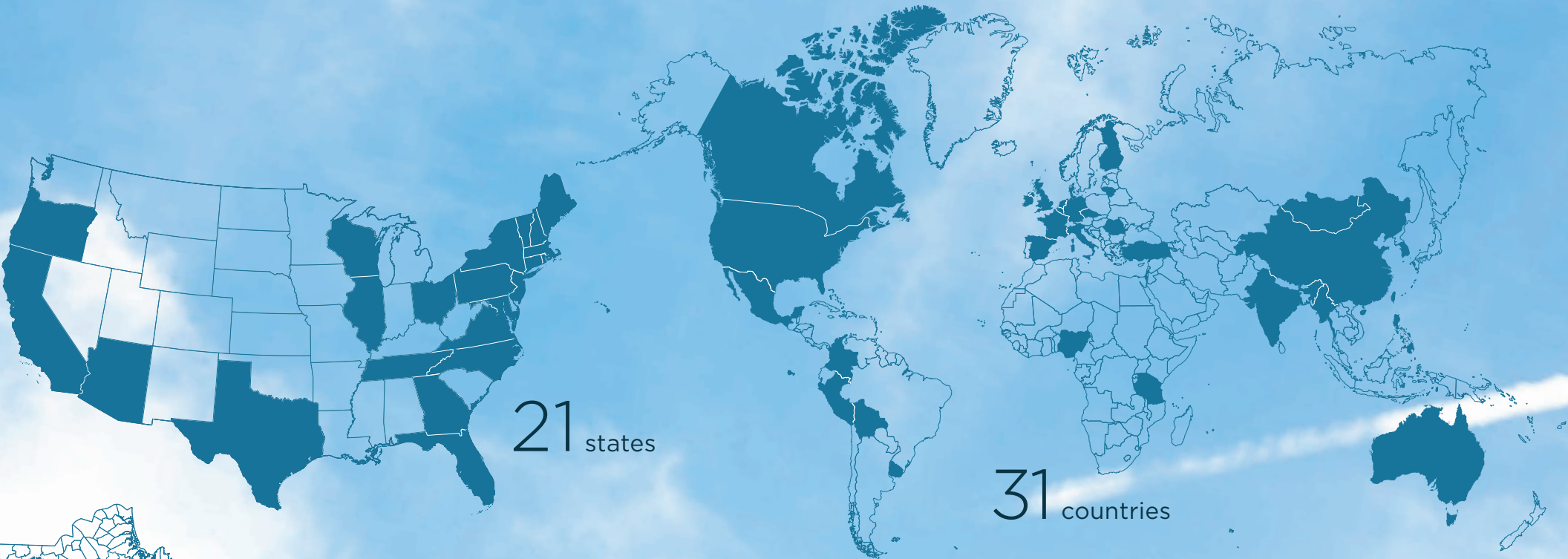
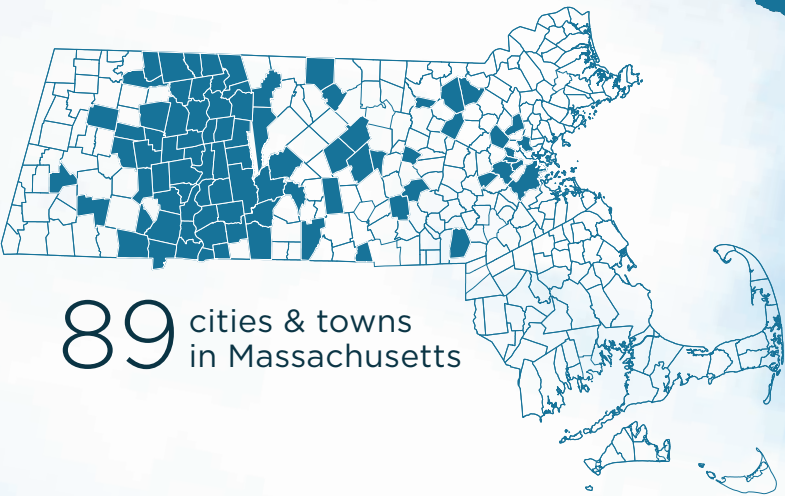
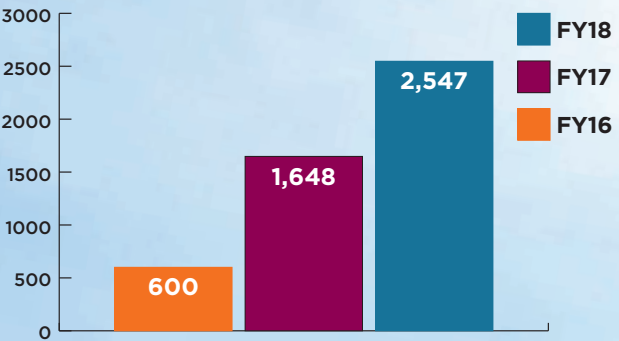
Impact

Since opening our new living environmental education center in 2016, the Hitchcock Center has experienced astounding growth in the number of people we mentor, teach and support, and in the geographic region we serve, through our award-winning programs and building.

37% more program participants



325% more visitors



Children, Youth and Family Programs

Investing in our Future

Beginning with children in their earliest years, we believe that multiple experiences at every developmental stage foster ecological stewardship, building a sound foundation for viewing the world with appreciation and respect.

Each year, our programs help get thousands of children outside, connected with their local natural environment, exploring and understanding the life it supports, addressing real-world environmental problems, and understanding their role in solving those problems in constructive and meaningful ways.

FY18 ANNUAL PARTICIPANTS: 2,150—a 27% increase since FY16

*“I think this was my messiest day ever.
And this was my BEST day ever.”*

—Miriam G. (age 6), Nature Play afterschooler

The Elizabeth Farnsworth Scholarship Fund

Perhaps one of the greatest gifts a child can have is a summer full of making new friends and exploring the great outdoors. Through individual donations, the Hitchcock Center’s Summer Camp Scholarship Fund provides partial and full subsidies for up to 17 children annually. Thanks to a generous endowed gift of \$20,000 and a matching challenge gift of \$5,000 a year for four years from Nancy Goodman, we are able to significantly expand these scholarship awards in honor of the life of Elizabeth Farnsworth (see “In Memoriam” on the inside back cover). We are deeply grateful to Nancy, a childhood friend of Elizabeth’s, who allowed us to expand our annual scholarship awards by over 48% to help foster the future Elizabeth Farnsworths of our world.



spotlight

A Natural Start

Research shows children are increasingly spending less time outdoors connected to our natural environment with detrimental effects to their cognitive, physical and mental development. Combatting this trend is a top priority of the Hitchcock Center. Through our programs such as [Nature Play Afterschool](#), [Homeschool Discovery Days](#), [Girls Into the Wild](#) and [Nature Discovery Preschool](#), children spend nearly 90% of their program time outdoors under the guidance of a skilled environmental educator. Our [Summer Camp Program](#) offers five sessions of immersive all-day study of the natural world Monday through Friday.

The Hitchcock Center will offer families and children expanded opportunities for interactive and experiential learning through our [Nature Play and Learning Places Master Plan](#), teaching gardens, and Discovery Yard.

Second Saturday Family Science

Thanks to generous funding support from Peter and Valerie Byrnes, Mollie T. and John H. Byrnes, the Tower Family Fund, and local business partner UMassFive College Federal Credit Union, the Hitchcock Center launched its new [Second Saturday Science Program](#) for families with young children in the fall of 2016. This free monthly program is designed to enhance children’s understanding of and respect for their natural world, by teaching the initial skills of scientific inquiry while engaging the whole family in shared learning experiences. In FY17 and FY18, a total of 320 children and their family members participated in these hands-on science and nature activities focused on topics such as metamorphosis, composting critters, backyard birds and scutes and scales.

PreK-12 Programs

Developing Critical Thinkers

The Hitchcock Center is one of the most influential sources of preK-12 environmental education, shaping the environmental attitudes, beliefs and values of K-12 students in over 45 elementary, middle and high schools each year.

With an emphasis on S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) education and place-based learning, we give students a real context to explore, understand, develop and apply the values of curiosity, rigor, careful observation, reflection and inquiry.

FY18 ANNUAL PARTICIPANTS: 5,500
—a 17% increase since FY16

Title I Schools

Of the 45 preK-12 schools we serve, 71% are Title I schools, representing a high percentage of low-income students.

“I am an enormous admirer of all the people and programs the Hitchcock offers educators. Our work with your team has had a tremendous impact on science education in our schools. The Hitchcock Center has been our go-to resource, and teachers in Union 38 are enormously grateful for the inspiration that your faculty provides.”

—Louise Law, Director of Education and Curriculum,
Union 38 School District

spotlight



Youth Climate Summit

In November 2017, the Hitchcock Center and Mass Audubon's Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary held their 1st Annual Western Mass Youth Climate Summit. The Summit provides an empowering platform for high school students to engage in conversations with their peers on the issue of climate change. Each team identifies goals and actions they will take to address the problem.

A total of four high school teams representing 50 students from Amherst Regional, Hampshire Regional, Holyoke Central, and Northampton Kennedy High Schools participated in this first Summit. The number of high school teams participating in the Summit will double in the next two years.

Naturalist-in-Residence Programs

We work closely with students in their schools and communities, fostering a strong sense of place and connection to their local environment. With critical funding support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council's STARS (Students and Teachers Working with Artists, Scientists, and Scholars) grant program, our highly skilled Hitchcock Center naturalists and environmental educators work closely with teachers and their students. In-depth, inquiry-based studies of the natural world consider the impacts humans have on the ecosystem, culminating in a study of ways to promote a healthier, more sustainable future. In FY17 and FY18, a total of 16 residencies were completed, serving 2,200 students representing 103 classrooms and 17 schools throughout Hampshire, Hampden and Franklin Counties.



Adult Education Programs

Promoting Lifelong Learning

The Hitchcock Center offers a wide range of adult education programs aimed at fostering greater environmental awareness, literacy and action, they include workshops, lectures, courses and symposia centered on natural history, sustainability and environmental justice.

These programs are offered through our experienced education staff as well as through a strong network of scientists, naturalists, environmentalists, educators, advocates and organizations who partner with the Hitchcock Center.

FY18 ANNUAL PARTICIPANTS: 2,100—a 201% increase since FY16

EBT Card to Culture

The Hitchcock Center is a proud partner of the Mass Cultural Council and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services' EBT Card to Culture Program. Through this program, the Hitchcock Center is able to provide free membership to low-income individuals and families, giving them discounts to a wide range of our environmental education programs.

“The Hitchcock Center is a wonderful place to connect with the natural world and to engage with educators, naturalists, scientists, humanists and researchers from throughout our region who are developing ways we can all live in greater harmony with nature and with ourselves.”

—Rita Dietrich, Hitchcock Center member and volunteer

Forests and Climate Change

Our forested lands play a critical role in mitigating climate change. As deforestation and forest degradation have such a significant impact on climate change, reducing forest loss can have multiple benefits for ecosystems and people. These include cutting greenhouse gas emissions, sequestering carbon, providing other ecosystems services, and maintaining intact, functioning forests that have the best chance of withstanding climate change. In FY17 and FY18, the Hitchcock Center and partners brought over 170 people together in active discussion over the latest research and approaches to forest conservation, sustainable forestry and climate change through a series of workshops, film screenings, field trips and presentations.

Sustainability and the Built Environment

The built environment is a major contributor to climate change, resource depletion, waste, over-consumption, diminished human health, and other significant problems. The best route to a sustainable future is to make the built environment sustainable. Over the last two years, this has been and will continue to be a critical and emerging focal area of the Hitchcock Center. Between FY17 and FY18, a total of 1,740 people participated in over 127 tours, workshops, conferences, symposia, lectures and presentations designed to develop effective agents of change for a non-toxic material world and actions for greater environmental justice.



Professional Development Programs

Leveraging Expertise

We provide a wide range of professional development opportunities for environmental educators and sustainability practitioners.

Historically, our professional development work has focused on K-12 schoolteachers, but it is increasingly including practitioners, activists and advocates who are working to advance sustainability principles in their own fields. Our programs are designed to go beyond merely raising consciousness and concern for environmental issues, preparing a broad array of professionals to effectively communicate scientific facts and become leaders for change.

FY18 ANNUAL PARTICIPANTS: 525—an 11% increase since FY16

spotlight

Professional Sustainability Fellows Exchange Program

In FY18, Hitchcock Center Education Director Colleen Kelley and Living Building and Communications Coordinator Jessica Schultz completed the Institute for Training and Development's (ITD) Environmental Sustainability for Latin American Professional Fellows Program. As hosts, Colleen and Jessica supported and hosted Fellows from Latin American countries in FY17. Subsequent trips to the Fellows' home countries, funded by the U.S. Department of State, bolstered the professional effectiveness of all while building stronger networks of environmental and sustainability professionals across the Americas.

Highlights of Colleen's visit to Peru and Uruguay:

Uruguay: Visited CEIMER education center to share curricula and ideas. Shared the Hitchcock Center's new building and sustainable curricula with municipal officials and college students at a conference at Centro Universitario de la Región Este in Laguna de Rocha as well as with U.S. Embassy officials and the Environmental Ministry. Helped develop proposals for improving water quality in the Santa Lucía River with local Fellows.

Peru: Visited the Kerenda Education Project and travelled by boat to the Reserva Nacional Tambopata on the Amazon River. Observed research sites for studies of animals, plants, river quality, mining and a climate change monitoring tower. Visited Malinowski Field Station to understand local ecosystems and the "Tower of the Greenhouse Gasses." Visited a lake managed by a native community that preserves Amazonian river otters, and Chunchu



clay licks to learn about avian research and eco-tourism impacts.

Visited the university in Lima and met with academic researchers doing field studies and research on sustainability.

Highlights of Jessica's visit to Peru and Mexico:

Peru: Participated in international wildlife conservation and community environmental education project with the Amazon Rescue Center in Iquitos, Peru, and the Dallas World Aquarium, to release rescued Amazonian Manatees in the Reserva Nacional Pacaya-Samiria.

Mexico: Presented the Hitchcock Center's Living Building Challenge project to community groups, as well as academic, municipal, and federal agency audiences in the states of Tabasco and Chiapas as part of an environmental



sustainability exchange, supported by the U.S. Department of State. Professional support, collaboration, and knowledge building and sharing with local organizations including host organization CECROPIA (Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas), as well as the Instituto Tecnológico Superior de la Región Sierra (Teapa, Tabasco), and others.

Learning from Nature K-8 School Curricula & Professional Development

With generous funding from The Clowes Fund, the Edwin S. Webster Foundation, the Francis R. Dewing Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, new standards-based curricula were developed in FY17 with teachers trained to pilot up to 50 new lesson plans in Massachusetts classrooms in

FY18. Curricula are designed to build scientific understanding with increasing sophistication among students focused on Earth Systems, Water and Climate, Earth and Human Activity and Sustainable Engineering and Design, and to train teachers to effectively implement these curricula as building blocks in creating a

radical shift in the way we think about and develop solutions to mitigate our destructive human-environmental interactions. To date, a total of 59 teachers have been trained, and 563 students from 31 classrooms and 26 schools have participated in this initiative.

Treasurer’s Letter

The Hitchcock Center is in the midst of an historic period of growth and development. It has completed the construction of a revolutionary new sustainable building that significantly increased its capacity for innovative new and continuing environmental education programming. Since opening the doors to its new facility, the number of people assisted through the Center’s educational programs and services has grown by a combined 57% when counting both visitors and program participants.

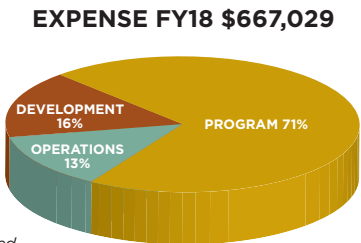
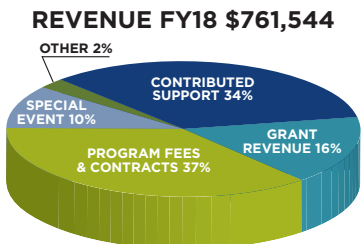
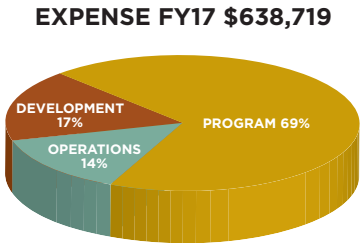
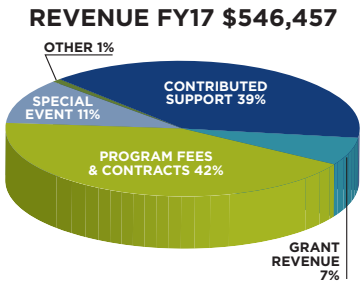
As expected, Hitchcock Center’s operating budget also increased. With a new and much larger facility, the Center’s operating expenses grew by more than 25%, or a net of \$133,695, between FY16 (the last fiscal year at its former site) and FY18. Over these last two years, the Hitchcock Center moved to its new location and took on major new responsibilities associated with owning and managing a multi-million dollar capital asset and incrementally growing programs to meet the full potential of its new home. The result is an operating budget very much in flux, with planned cash reserves offsetting the Center’s operating budget expenses, which immediately outpaced revenue in FY17, our first year in our new home. We experienced a net operating income of -\$92,262 in that year but closed that gap in FY18 with a +\$94,514 net operating income, thanks to two significant and unexpected gifts.

It is important to note that the reported net operating income does not take into account depreciation. Though not translatable as an immediate expense going out the door, it plays an important role in the Center’s budget planning process, as the Center must ensure that the building systems are well maintained and replaced in a timely manner over the building’s lifetime. In FY16, to address this need, the Center established a Board-restricted endowment with a generous grant of \$500,000 from the Kendeda Fund. As of the end of FY18, our endowment is valued at \$569,829 and is expected to grow to over \$1 million by 2022.

We are grateful to all the people who have so generously supported the Hitchcock Center over the last two years, listed in the pages that follow. Our members and contributors provide over 44% of our annual operating revenue and are critical to our mission success. We hope you will continue your strong support as we continue to push limits and drive education innovation in pursuit of a healthier, happier and more sustainable future.

Best,
Joe Vreedenburgh
Joe Vreedenburgh

Net Operating Income		Endowment	
FY17	-\$92,262	FY17	\$574,369
FY18	+\$94,514	FY18	\$569,829
Total Net Assets		Depreciation	
FY17	\$5,876,531	FY17	\$143,638
FY18	\$6,180,493	FY18	\$153,231



Development expense is higher than usual due to fundraising activities related to the Center’s ongoing capital campaign.

Contributors

Investing in the power of environmental education benefits us all. We could not accomplish our mission without the support, involvement and enthusiasm of our over 900 annual contributors.

Household & Member Contributors

LEADERSHIP GIFT CIRCLE

\$10,000 and up (Benefactors)

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\$5,000 to \$9,999 (Advocates)

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Donor Spotlight: Lise and John Armstrong

The Hitchcock Center for the Environment is a family affair for Lise and John Armstrong. Doug Marshall, their son-in-law, is a former member of the Hitchcock Center’s board and building committee, and their grand-daughter Rebecca was a Hitchcock Center camper.

And since 2013, the Armstrongs have supported the Hitchcock Center with generous donations to fund the Center’s programs and the Building for the Future capital campaign.

Lise, who served on the Hitchcock Center’s capital campaign committee, says, **“Our philanthropic priorities are in equal parts environmental issues, regional investment, and**

positive community values, all of which are fostered by the Hitchcock Center’s mission and programs.”

The Armstrongs believe that innovative environmental education is necessary for a strong community and a healthy future.

John, a scientist and retired director of research at IBM, adds, “We value local institutions like the Hitchcock Center that help make our community vital, engaged, and caring.”

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Austin Miller Co-op Hero Award from River Valley

Hitchcock Center for the Environment was honored to receive the Austin Miller Co-op Hero Award from River Valley Co-op in June 2018. **This award recognizes those people and organizations that nurture and sustain the community and that embody the cooperative principle of support for community.**

The award was presented at the Co-op’s annual Strawberry Ice Cream Social, which featured lively music, happy children, delicious food, and ice cream.

As the recipient of the award in the Non-Profit category, the Hitchcock Center was pleased to be recognized in the company of the other awardees, including Margaret Christie, Astarte Farm, and Alternative Recycling, who each received their awards in the Individual, Farm, and Business categories, respectively.

The award included a cash prize, donations from the Co-op’s monthly Green Stamp program, and proceeds from food sales at the Strawberry Ice Cream Social, together contributing \$4,450 to the Hitchcock Center’s innovative environmental education programs.

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Donor Spotlight: The Corson and Fitz-Gibbon Family

Catherine Corson and Desmond Fitz-Gibbon have been members of the Hitchcock Center ever since their son, Geoffrey, first became a Hitchcock camper at age 6. As soon as their younger son, Alex, was old enough, he joined his big brother in the fun. Both children have spent winter vacation breaks, parts of their summers, and many hours after school at the Hitchcock Center learning about science and exploring the outdoors.

Catherine, a political ecologist who studies environmental politics, markets and human rights, and Desmond, a historian, understand the value of environmental education for their children and for our collective future.

“With so many electronic distractions for kids these days, Hitchcock offers a chance for kids to be kids,” Desmond explains. “Our children always come

home full of excitement and stories. It brings out their natural curiosity to explore the world around them.”

The Corson and Fitz-Gibbon family provides steady support to the Hitchcock Center as monthly donors. They also gave to the Building for the Future Campaign. And when Catherine and Desmond decided to add solar power to their house, they chose PV Squared, which was offering a donation to the Hitchcock Center for every solar array installed—thereby benefitting both the Center and our environment!

Says Catherine, **“In its expanded role and new building, the Hitchcock Center offers an example to our broader community of the sustainable future that is possible.”**

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Customers' Choice Community Grant from Florence Bank

Thanks to the votes of Center volunteers, members and staff, who also spread the word to their friends and family, 2017 marked the inaugural year of the Hitchcock Center's eligibility for a Customers' Choice Community Grant. Success followed again in 2018, with the Center receiving even more votes, translating to a larger award. Together, these grants totaled \$2,005.

The funds were used to benefit the Hitchcock Center's nature summer camp scholarship program, making outdoor adventures, cooperative games, art projects, singing, and science experiments accessible to more children in the Pioneer Valley.

This popular award is also an opportunity to introduce the work of the Center to a larger audience. And with more community members aware of the Hitchcock Center's mission, there is hope that this grant will continue to increase in coming years.

Volunteers

We would not be who we are today without the amazing support of our volunteers, who help to significantly advance our environmental education mission.

James Aas	Karina Delagado	Flynn Hibbs	Carolyn Mathews	Joe Roberts
Linda Abrams	Isabella Dell'olio	Sharlow Hitchcock	Rei Matsushita	Juliana Rodriguez
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Front cover photography: Phil Doyle



In Memoriam

Elizabeth Jean Farnsworth

Elizabeth Farnsworth was a tireless worker bee, helping the Hitchcock Center to promote greater environmental literacy. Her knowledge of the natural world was encyclopedic.

As a Board member, Elizabeth also helped lead the Hitchcock Center through an extraordinary time of transformation and change, as we built our visionary new environmental learning center. When people first walk into our new building, they are greeted by Elizabeth’s illustrations on a Welcome Wall that introduces visitors to our mission and educational values.

Elizabeth provided over 60 natural history and botanical illustration workshops in her more than 20 years working with the Hitchcock Center. She was also a lead organizer of the Hitchcock Center’s annual Biothon. Children will remember Elizabeth as Mama Bear, one of the beloved characters she played at our Enchanted Forest non-scary Halloween event. She was always applying her creative talents to further our educational mission, like the beautiful native species coloring postcards for sale in our Visitor Center.

Elizabeth’s significant contributions included her regular articles in the Hitchcock Center’s “Earth Matters” column, a biweekly publication in the *Daily Hampshire Gazette* to educate the broader public about fascinating local natural history. We invite you to read all her articles on our website—her words and writing style are quintessentially Elizabeth.

In so many ways, and in so many places, Elizabeth’s memory will live on in perpetuity. As another way of keeping her memory close here at the Hitchcock Center, we are establishing a native fern garden in her name, so that we may remember our dear friend and colleague surrounded by one of her great loves —ferns! Thank you for your gift to help further a passion we shared with Elizabeth for cultivating in people a sense of wonder and respect for the natural world, building our environmental literacy, and together creating a healthier planet.



Hitchcock Center

FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Hitchcock Center for the Environment
at Hampshire College

845 West Street, Amherst MA 01002

413-256-6006

Hours:

Tuesday-Thursday 9am-5:30pm

Friday 9am-5pm

2nd Saturdays 9am-1pm
(September-June only)

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