

The Joy of Discovering



Environmental
Learning Center
2014/2015
Annual Report



#discoverelc

ENVIRONMENTAL
LEARNING CENTER

discoverelc.org



Our mission is to educate, inspire and empower all people, including those with minimal access to nature, to be active stewards of the environment and their own well-being.

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Chairman's Message

On behalf of the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) Board of Trustees, I extend our sincere thanks to you, our friends and supporters. This has been an exciting year for us – one of growth and transition! I'm delighted that our new executive director, Molly Steinwald, has fit in so well with our organization and the community. She is a compassionate person who brings more than 15 years of leadership experience in environmental research, education and fund development. Her many talents have already helped us broaden the ELC's reach into the community, and have reinforced the strong linkage between environmental education and personal well-being. Molly is a great addition to our team of outstanding staff and volunteers, and I'm enthusiastic about the many opportunities that lie ahead.

This is my third and last year chairing this wonderful organization, and I turn the reins over to William B. (Bill) Clemens, Jr. Having spent most of his career as a managing partner for world-class executive search firms, Bill was extensively involved in the search for our new director. He has also been very supportive and effective during our period of transition. I have been honored to have worked with him as he served as vice chair this past year and look forward to continuing to work for the ELC under his leadership.

Thank you for your support. You have been a big component to the ELC's success!


Bill Friesell



Executive Director Message




My first year as ELC's second executive director has come and gone! And, I am delighted to say how much we've accomplished in such a short time.

As a not-for-profit organization, our reason for existence is to serve the community. And, we have a responsibility to do that to the best of our abilities. Because of this, we've embarked on a national organizational assessment program through the American Alliance of Museums, focusing on increasing community engagement, strengthening operations, and strategically planning for long-term fiscal sustainability. We have also updated our mission, highlighting our growing role as a center for improving both environmental and human health – which are deeply connected – and serving people in all walks of life.

We are excited to report that over this past year we have made definite steps forward on the road to becoming known not only locally, but regionally and nationally as a transformational leader in overcoming today's epidemic human-nature divide. And without you, we would accomplish only a fraction of what we have and will do. We are endlessly grateful.

We look forward to showing you what is on the horizon as we educate, inspire and empower all people to make changes in their daily lives that ultimately heal the environment and humanity.


Molly Steinwald

Collaborative Partnerships

Through collaboration, the ELC works closely with community organizations and agencies providing people with inspirational opportunities to connect with and understand nature. We actively engaged and worked with people from the following organizations:

- Boys and Girls Clubs of Indian River County
- Bridges Early Learning Center
- Florida Aquatic Preserves
- Gifford Youth Achievement Center
- U.S. Department of Health - Head Start
- Healthy Families IRC
- Hibiscus Children's Center
- Homeless Family Center
- Indian River County 5210 "Let's Go!"
- Indian River Land Trust
- The Learning Alliance
- Laura Riding Jackson Foundation
- Operation Hope of Fellsmere
- Youth Guidance
- Students in Kindergarten - 12th grades in the School District of Indian River County
- Students in Pre-schools and Home-schools
- Vero Beach Power Squadron



"Building stronger, cross-disciplinary partnerships at the local, regional and national level is at the core of our evolution and growth."

— Molly Steinwald



Celebrating 26 Years Of Inspiring Stewardship And Enriching Peoples Lives

Annual Accomplishments

1 Welcomed Molly Steinwald as the ELC's new Executive Director after Holly Dill, our first ever director, retired. Molly joined us from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where she was the Director of Science Education and Research at the prestigious Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. To learn more about Molly, go to www.MollySteinwald.org

143 Implemented "Livin' for the Lagoon," a hands-on, comprehensive education campaign designed to show people how small changes in behaviors can have large effects on the Indian River Lagoon - We involved 143 residents from communities who made changes to their policies and practices reducing nutrient runoff and other procedures that benefited the lagoon. We also trained 13 water quality monitoring volunteers from these communities to track the health of their stormwater ponds.

3 Staff members committed to reducing poverty in Indian River County by attending the Bridges out of Poverty Workshop, a comprehensive training workshop addressing the root causes of poverty at the individual and systemic level.

14 Certified 14 new National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Certified Interpretive Guides (CIGs) at the first ever NAI CIG Workshop at the ELC. All guides completed a 32 h workshop, interpretive presentation and exam. These guides will be making an impact all throughout the state working for the Grassy Water's Preserve in West Palm Beach, Florida Public Archaeology Network, University of Florida, Florida



International University, volunteering for Brevard County Parks and the Environmental Learning Center.

5 Certified 5 Florida Master Naturalists (FMN) through the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. These students completed 140 hours of classroom presentations, field trips, videos and interpretive presentations.

11 Engaged 11 additional FMN students in the 40 h Coastal Module. Many of these students will volunteer as nature guides at local parks and preserves.

643 Mentored 14 Junior Interpreters and 15 Environmental Ambassadors who volunteered 643 hours to participate in stewardship activities such as making habitat for oysters, growing plants to be used for shoreline restoration and cleaning up lagoon shorelines.



Celebrating 26 Years Of Inspiring Stewardship And Enriching Peoples Lives

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Annual Accomplishments

771 Held early childhood learning classes for a record 771 students, ages 4 - 5, from 17 schools who participated in the Young Explorers program with five different nature-related topics.

13 Engaged 13 students to participate in the Indian River County Science Fair ~ 4 went on to participate in state competitions.

3,245 Actively engaged and taught 3,245 elementary school students in 1st, 3rd and 4th grades with SPLASH 1, SPLASH 3 and Lagoon Days classes.

450 Hosted 450 people through Water Ventures Learning Lab, a traveling science center that encourages positive stewardship of Florida's diverse watersheds.

1,300 Challenged close to 1,300 elementary school students to create artistic entries in the Making a Difference in MY World contest and received 1,300 entries that focused on the lagoon.

463 Provided 463 stimulating, hands-on EcoVenture programs including hiking, boating, seining, geocaching and beachcombing.

516 Hosted 516 people at the third WinterGreen Nightlights including guided canoe trips through Lagoon mangrove forests lit up with sparkling holiday lights.



180 Awarded 25 students scholarships to attend summer ecology programs and held outdoor summer classes to 180 participants.

200 Hosted National Estuaries Day for 200 people to show unity and concern for the Indian River Lagoon.

5,700 Naturalist published a feature article entitled, "The Local Muse," in Legacy, the magazine of the National Association for Interpretation. 5,700 circulation.

60 Naturalist presented "Making a Case for Mobile Tours," to 60 people at the National Association for Interpretation National Workshop in Denver, Colorado in partnership with 5 organizations - OnCell-TourSphere, Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center, US Forest Service, Center for Design and Interpretation, and Orange County Parks, California.

500 Executive Director was the invited speaker for the University of Washington 2015 Sustaining our World Lecture: "Human[-]Nature: Care for Our World is Care for Ourselves." To over 500 people.

10 Staff members were invited to the Fairchild Challenge Summit at Fairchild Botanical Garden in Coral Gables, Fla. The Summit brought together 10 national and international partners to discuss how to successfully implement this award winning interdisciplinary, environmental science competition, designed to engage students in STEAM education from PreK through 12th grade.

Volunteers Extraordinaire

9582 That's how many hours our team of 260+ volunteers contributed to the community ~ We owe deep gratitude to those who donate their time, talents and treasures to improve our quality of life!

70 volunteers contributed 1,190 hours at Lagoon Days ~ our program which all 4th grade students attend.

386 That's the number of plants and mats full of oyster shells that our volunteers nurtured and planted to help restore the lagoon.

College Interns



For the first time ever, we hosted two college interns at the ELC for six weeks in the summer of 2015. The students were mentored by our ELC educator, Sarah Rhodes-Ondi, who guided them through multiple projects including teaching children's education

programs; conducting biological field studies in collaboration with the Indian River Land Trust scientists; engaging in land stewardship activities and maintaining educational aquaria and exhibits.


One student was a senior from Centenary College in New Jersey with a double major in biology and secondary education while the other was a sophomore majoring in behavioral marine biology at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. Our pilot college intern program was a huge success! Both interns describe their experience as "life changing." One said, "I think this has

shown me that getting involved with field work is not as huge a challenge as I thought, and it gives me hope that I'll be able to get involved with projects I would have previously not considered in my league." The other said, "I know that I would be learning a lot...but I was still surprised with the diversity of experiences provided nearly every day. I'm a hands-on learner, so this experience was ideal for me to learn about what this area has to offer as well as learn a bit about myself and what I want to do. It has verified my passion in actively working in a more engaging setting. I used to want to be a teacher, but I don't want to be holed up in a classroom; I want to experience new things with new people every day."

As a result of this positive experience for the interns as well as the children in our summer programs, we will be continuing our college intern program. We also plan to continue growing our relationship with the Indian River Land Trust to enrich the content and participatory nature of our offerings for youth.




"I knew that I would be learning a lot but I was still surprised with the diversity of experiences provided nearly every day"



MOLLY STEINWALD

ABOUT OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR


Molly is an accomplished environmental and science educator, researcher, photographer and new executive director of the Environmental Learning Center. Molly is the organization's second executive director since its inception 27 years ago.




Lives in Vero Beach with her husband Walter and their 2 children, Eva Marie and Auguste.



Prior to joining the ELC, Molly served as Director of Science Education and Research at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh, PA.




Passionate about ensuring all programs connect nature conservation with human wellness.




As a photographer, Molly's received recognition including the Sundance Film Festival in 2008 as "one of the seven emerging female artists from around the country" and exhibition of her photo-story, "Children as Citizen Scientists," at the 9th World Wilderness Congress in Mexico in 2009.


ELC 2014-15 HIGHLIGHTS



Engaged 1,300 elementary school students in creating art focused on lagoon conservation.



Trained 143 residents in 16 Home Owner Associations in environmentally friendly landscaping practices through our Living for the Lagoon program.




771 Students attended early childhood learning classes - Young Explorers for ages 4 to 5 from 17 schools taught by our Naturalists

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2014-15 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER



LITERACY ON THE LAGOON PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WITH THE LEARNING ALLIANCE (ELC HAS BEEN ASKED TO DOUBLE THIS IN 2016)



SPLASH 1 AND 3 AND LAGOON DAYS SCHOOL FIELDTRIP PARTICIPANTS

GROWTH OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS

Program	2014-15	2010-11
VOLUNTEER HOURS	9,479	5,800
JUNIOR INTERPRETER & ENVIRONMENTAL AMBASSADOR HOURS	643	514
ECOADVENTURES PROGRAMS	463	190

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Your generosity has provided vital support that enables the Environmental Learning Center to connect people of all ages and backgrounds with the wonders of nature and to create better stewards of our fragile ecosystems. All donations listed were accepted during FY15, July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015 (excludes funds spent on programs or making a purchase).

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Mrs. Muci Clemens
Mr. Christoff Delavau
Mr. Kevin Given
Mr. & Mrs. Pat Gorman
Mr. Michael Hauser
Mr. Steve Hayes
Mr. Carl Hiaasen
Mr. & Mrs. Toby Hill
Mrs. Georgie Hutton
Ms. Colleen Intjiar
Mr. Tom Juliano
Mrs. Susie Kasten
Mr. Henry Kirkendall
Mr. & Mrs. John Klein
Mr. Carl Miller
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The Morton Family

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Ms. Christina Sabia
Mr. Dale Sorensen, Jr.
Mrs. Karla Spooner
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Mr. & Mrs. Helmut Swarovski
Mrs. Emily Taft
Ms. Catherine Walker
Ms. Ashlee Wyckoff
A Pampered Life Spa & Boutique
Advantage Security
Amalfi Grille
Bent Pine
The Blue Poppy
Bobby's Restaurant
Calvetti & Company
Chive
Citron Bistro
Coastal Conservation Association
Create at Studio M.A.
Decorative Arts
Deep Six Dive Shop
Disney Vero Beach
Dos Amigos
Flowers For You
Hutchinson's Floral Artistry
Hutton Broadcasting LLC
J. McLaughlin
Kemp's Shoe Salon
Leigh Jewelers
Loggia on the Beach
M. Maison
The Moorings Club
National Elephant Center
New Vision Eye Center
Ocean Grille
Orchid Island Bikes & Kayaks
Orchid Island Golf Club
Palm House Gallery
Patisserie
The Posture Clinic
Quail Creek Plantation
Quail Valley Club
Quail Valley Golf Club
Riverside Theater
Roundabout
Save the Chimps
Serenity Salon
Veranda
Vero Bowl



ELC, Inc. Financial Summary

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015
Unaudited Financials*

Support and Revenue		Expense	
Contributions	\$ 395,679.73	Program Services	\$ 648,591.03
Program Revenue	\$ 126,185.51	Support Services:	
Special Event Revenue (net of costs)	\$ 130,315.06	Management & General Support	\$ 98,676.01
Gift Shop Sales (net of costs)	\$ (7,086.65)	Benefit & Fundraising Costs	\$ 184,459.38
Investment Income	\$ 210,901.96	Total Expense	\$ 931,726.42
Other	\$ 6,915.00		
Total Support and Revenue	\$ 862,910.61		

*Summary of unaudited financial statement.
A copy of the audited financial statement is available by written request to the Environmental Learning Center.

ELC Foundation

The Environmental Learning Center Foundation, Inc. is a separate not-for-profit corporation which manages funds designated by the board for long-term investment and funds permanently restricted by donors for investment in perpetuity.



The ELC Foundation utilizes an internal committee of financial stewards who manage the Foundation's assets. Through prudent oversight, the investment committee has ensured rates of return that have performed solidly over a ten year period.

Board of Directors	Investment Committee
Chairperson - Todd Fennell	Chairperson - John D. Lowenberg, Sr.
Vice Chairperson - (vacant)	Alice Cole
Secretary - Chuck Pollard	Todd Fennell
Treasurer - Robert McCabe	Robert Prindiville
Alice Cole	Robert Puff
William Friesell	
Andrew Hartline	
John D. Lowenberg, Sr.	
Thomas Spackman, M.D.	
David Van Pelt	

Environmental Learning Center Foundation

Rate of Return as of June 30, 2015

All Data are Annualized					
	1 yr	3yr	5yr	7yr	10yr
ELC Foundation Assets	10.73%	15.31%	12.34%	7.20%	7.83%
Benchmark 65/35 Mixed*	1.59%	9.49%	9.27%	5.07%	6.08%

*65% All Country World Index MXWD, 35% Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index AGG



The ELC's dedicated staff are committed to improving the quality of life in our community.

Molly Steinwald – Executive Director	Nancy Puglio – Volunteer Coordinator*
Heather Stapleton – Education Director	Dan Perkins – Caretaker
Camille S. Yates – Development Director	Mark Butterworth – Boat Captain*
Nance Hatch – Marketing Communication Director*	Jenny Schuette – Office Manager
Rosemary Badger – Naturalist	Rose Gallo – Bookkeeper*
Sarah Rhodes-Ondi – Naturalist	Linda Weisner – Administrative Assistant*
Sara Piotter – Naturalist *	

*Indicates part-time

Your generous support helps keep these boots in the field!
Please help us by donating today.



ENVIRONMENTAL
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