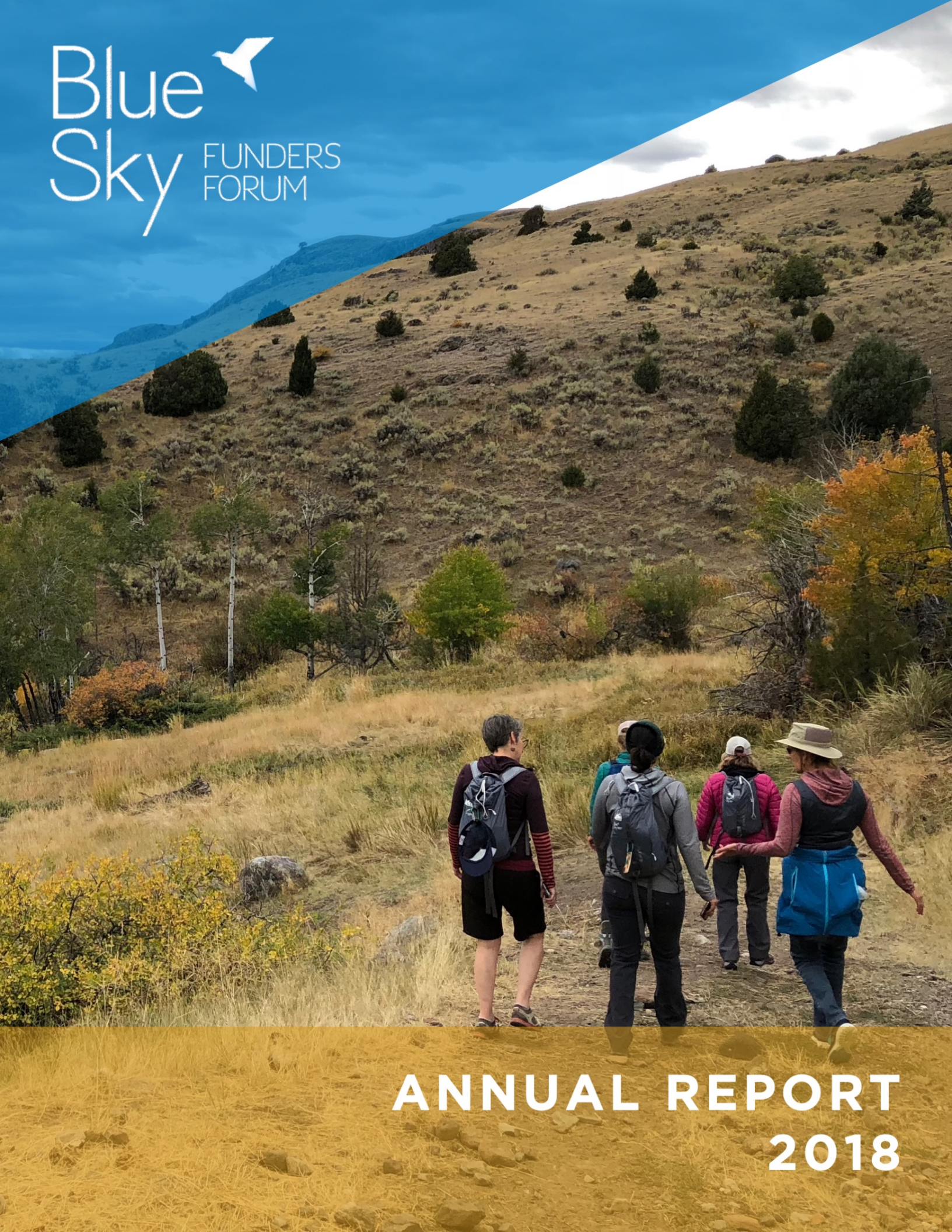


Blue Sky 
FUNDERS
FORUM



ANNUAL REPORT
2018

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

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Pisces Foundation

Angel Braestrup
The Curtis & Edith Munson Foundation

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Lampert Byrd Foundation

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*Captain Planet Foundation;
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George B. Storer Foundation

Mary Jo Veverka
Veverka Family Foundation

Dear colleagues,

The Blue Sky community has grown in new, exciting, and unexpected ways this year. What started just a few years ago as a hopeful idea is now a vibrant network, drawing a wide range of funders and partners, sparking meaningful collaborations, and providing strategic vision for a stronger, more unified field.

In 2018, Blue Sky has worked to engage funders in a dynamic learning community, to activate collaboration through the shared narrative initiative, and to showcase members' and partners' work to expand access to opportunities that connect people and nature and build environmental literacy. We also said farewell to Blue Sky's founding executive director, Angie Chen, in June, and we are grateful for her phenomenal leadership. And in December, we were thrilled to welcome Anupama Joshi, who will—working with all of you—chart the course for Blue Sky's next chapter!

As we look back on 2018, I am humbled by what we have accomplished together, and excited for what lies ahead. On behalf of the board and staff of Blue Sky Funders Forum, thank you for your partnership in this vital work.

Onward!

Jason Morris
Board Chair, Blue Sky Funders Forum
Senior Program Officer, Pisces Foundation

BOARD

Jason Morris (chair)
Pisces Foundation

Lois Morrison (vice chair)
*Harold M. and Adeline S. Morrison
Family Foundation*

Nancy Bales
Gray Family Foundation

Kathleen Doffermyre
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Kim Moore Bailey (EGA board liaison)
Youth Outside

Ann Shulman
Lampert Byrd Foundation

INTRODUCING OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR!



Anupama Joshi joined Blue Sky Funders Forum as executive director on December 10, 2018. Anupama was previously executive director and co-founder of the National Farm to School Network. She is a recognized leader who brings decades of experience in network building, cross-sector collaboration, and strategic thinking to Blue Sky. Under Anupama's leadership, in 2019 Blue Sky will advance its ongoing work to inspire, deepen, and expand philanthropy to advance opportunities to learn, play, and grow in nature.



MEMBERS:

33

including 5 new members

CONVENING

WITH BAY AREA ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE

74

attendees



WEBSITE ENGAGEMENT:

2,400+

pageviews per month
(4% increase from 2017)

6,100+

total users
(32% increase from 2017)



ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMS:

6 webinars

webinar registrants **144**



SOCIAL MEDIA:

440+ social media impressions

twitter followers **56K**
(47% increase / 13% increase from 2017)

NEWSLETTERS:

730 subscribers, including **344** funders
(21% increase from 2017)

Who BLUE SKY is for:

- Blue Sky unites funders whose interests intersect with environmental literacy.
- By working with funders to increase and align support for environmental literacy, Blue Sky contributes to decisions and behaviors that allow people and nature to thrive.



Core Strategies

ENGAGE

Connect and convene funders, providing opportunities and resources for learning

ACTIVATE

Create opportunities for regional and national funder collaboration, facilitate partnerships between members, and promote opportunities to leverage funder assets beyond grantmaking

SHOWCASE

Highlight successful and innovative projects, facilitate sharing of lessons learned, and improve the tracking and knowledge of funding for connecting people and nature

Outcomes

As a result of our work, we contribute to these outcomes for funders:

- Greater motivation to fund environmental literacy
- More contact with practitioners and funders, deepening relationships and increasing the flow of information
- Greater ability to coordinate funding for environmental literacy
- More coherent strategies for achieving impact
- Access to a centralized knowledge bank of approaches that successfully achieve environmental literacy outcomes
- Increased understanding of environmental literacy, including best practices and promising approaches

Tools

- National convenings
- Regional meetings
- Online learning opportunities
- Case studies
- Member and advisor directories
- Grants database
- Curated research and policy resources
- Communications guides

ENGAGE ACTIVATE SHOWCASE

Blue Sky **ENGAGES** and convenes funders to grow philanthropy that supports the many benefits of a stronger connection to nature. By connecting funders, practitioners, and researchers in the field, Blue Sky **ACTIVATES** funder collaboration to advance shared goals. And Blue Sky spotlights successful programs and strategies and **SHOWCASES** innovative partnerships to enrich and inform members' grantmaking.

In 2018, Blue Sky partnered with partner networks, nonprofits, and funders to host in-person and online programs. On May 23, Blue Sky and the Bay Area Environmental Education Funders Collaborative hosted a convening in Oakland, California to explore the power of networks to increase equitable access to the outdoors. Blue Sky's 2018 online learning opportunities highlighted topics such as community and citizen science, federal policy, nature-based early learning, social and emotional learning, and cultural relevancy. 2018 convening and webinar speakers represented over 25 organizations, including:



In addition to in-person and online programming, Blue Sky showcased the work of over 20 organizations through **case studies**, **blog posts**, and **funder profiles** on the Blue Sky website.



BLUE SKY'S SHARED INITIATIVE: A UNIFYING NARRATIVE

A shared narrative is a big story designed by and for a collaborative of individuals and organizations united in common cause. Shared narratives are aspirational and inspirational, inviting participation and action from new allies and audiences. The field of environmental education and the movement to connect people and nature are broad, made up of many voices, perspectives, and messages. In 2018, Blue Sky funders and partners took important steps toward the creation of a shared narrative to unify and strengthen the field. After a robust phase of research and stakeholder engagement, Blue Sky convened a working group of funders, practitioners, and researchers in September in Emigrant, Montana to refine the shared values and goals that will shape and support the narrative. With the continued partnership of leaders in the field, Blue Sky looks forward to launching this shared narrative in 2019.



WHY A SHARED NARRATIVE? STAKEHOLDERS WEIGH IN...

“We can think about children and nature, environmental education, and conservation as all sharing some things in common, but we’re not all one field. We’ll be more effective if we find the bullseye that we can say, ‘We’re all for that,’ and find a shared voice for that bullseye.”

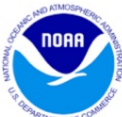
“We need a ‘sense of urgency’ case statement. We need a better reason than this is just feel-good work.”

“There is enormous potential to create new allies, to find common ground.”





MEMBERS



ADVISORS

