



# Great Basin Outdoor School

“Hands-on Discovery in the Outdoor Classroom”

## 2024 Annual Report

**Great Basin Outdoor School is proud to finish off another successful year** as a nonprofit connecting local children with nature. Our standards-based STEM programs brings students on the shore of Lake Tahoe and other northern Nevada sites.

By expanding our outreach, Great Basin Outdoor School was able to include more children and have an extra program day this year! Highlights of this year also include participating in the University of Nevada, Reno's Pack Internship Grant Program and the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada's Nonprofit Academy. We are also grateful to receive support from various community partners and friends.

## Camp Galilee on Nevada's Tahoe shore

is home base for 2, 3, and 4-day overnight science camps for school classes ably led by Executive Director Emily Baldwin.

Our naturalist educators teach students in small trail groups here in spring, fall, and winter.



Many students had never been to Lake Tahoe, and most had never stayed in a cabin, hiked in the forest, or helped with an environmental stewardship project before.

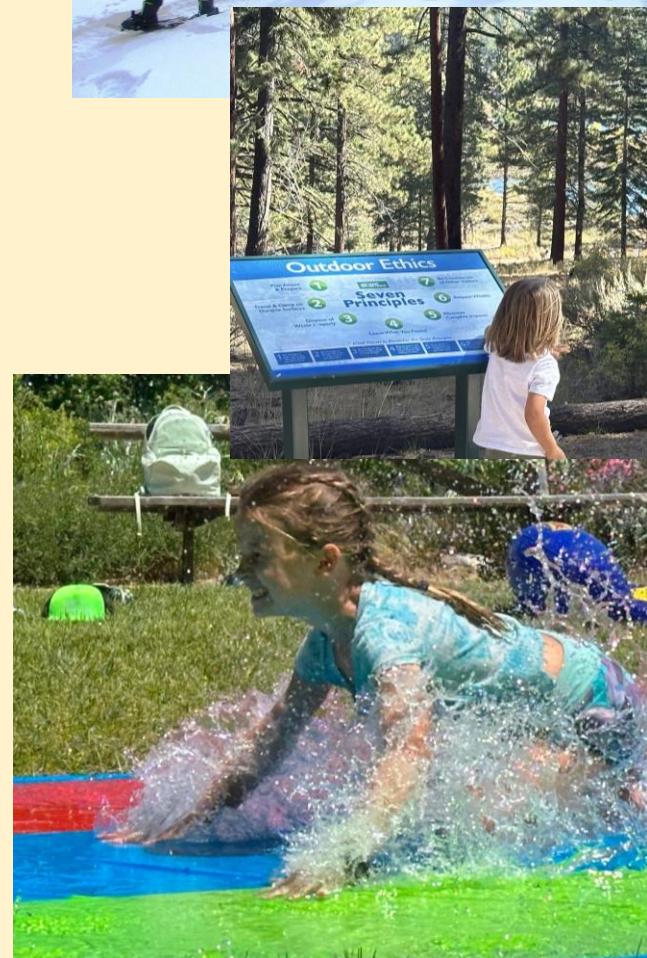
Thanks to community support, we are able to share many “firsts” with traditionally under-served children.

Over 25 years ago we were founded to provide these multi-day overnight science camps in the spring and fall with no idea we'd soon add winter ecology and snowshoeing thanks to Jeni and Brian Root's donation of snowshoes and snow gear from another program and inspiration from Snowlands and the Winter Wildlands Alliance SnowSchool.

Nor did we foresee offering day field trips for schools, school break day camps, or family hikes, all now key program components.

Our community outreach now also includes annual professional development workshops for teachers, a leadership role in Snapshot Day's annual citizen science monitoring of the Truckee River, and participation in events such as Earth Day and Back-to-School Night.

One thing that has not changed is our commitment to keeping school programs well below actual cost to include children otherwise missing the life-changing impact of hands-on discovery in the outdoor classroom.





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**Thanks to community support, we reach over 1,200 students** annually in a combination of single-day and multi-day programs totaling over 3000 student program days. Scholarships and fee reductions help include children with the least access to enriching outdoor activities, 41% of our public school students in 2024.

Our multi-day programs ranging from two-to four-day science camps on the shore of Lake Tahoe and five-day school break day camps at the River School Farm in Reno understandably have the most lasting impact on the children, and our day school field trips, usually at Galena Creek or Spooner Lake, provide a welcoming invitation and introduction to outdoor learning adventures.

We scheduled 16 weeks of day and overnight science camps for school classes, 9 weeks of school break day camps, seasonal professional development sessions to best prepare our educational staff, 11 monthly family hikes, and our annual Truckee River Snapshot Day.

## Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Results

Students completed pre-and post-assessments to measure knowledge gain and attitude and collect quotes on students' impressions of their experience.

- \* Summer day camp assessments documented knowledge gain for 73% of campers. 82% could identify their watershed, 90% identified Leave No Trace principles, and 77% suggested ways to protect environment.
- \* 86% of students in our multi-day overnight Tahoe science camp said they believed what they do is important and makes a difference after engaging in an environmental service project helping clear a drainage area to reduce sediment draining directly from Highway 50 into Lake Tahoe.
- \* 82% committed to ways they can help protect their watershed. 79% showed an understanding of nonpoint source pollution.
- \* 49% said they made new friends, 76% gained self-esteem, 58% increased their interest in science, and 79% said they increased their leadership skills.





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We especially appreciate all of our students who become stewards of protecting the environment. Many of them had never performed a service project before and find themselves enjoying every minute of it! At Lake Tahoe, many of our students help clean out the pine needles from irrigation channels to prevent sediment from flowing into the lake. They also help pick up pinecones to prevent wildfires and encourage fire safety.

In Reno, all of our day camp students clean up trash within Mayberry Park and on the banks of the Truckee River to protect their watershed from being polluted by litter.

We thank all of our stewards for their hard work and hope they continue their efforts of protecting our Mother Earth!

# 2024 Impacts



**1230** students served

**109** days of programs

**3209** student contact days

**1483** total served during all programs

**584** students served during single-day programs

**620** students served during multi-day programs



### **GREAT BASIN OUTDOOR SCHOOL is:**

really fun, cool, interesting, awesome, better than school, adventurous, exciting, amazing, good, lots of trees and pinecones, lots of activities, calming, funny, beautiful, community, new, explorative, good games, good food, peaceful, nice, relaxing, nature, pretty, welcoming, understanding.

## **Student Quotes**

### **The BEST thing about Great Basin Outdoor School is:**

- Exploring
- the outdoor experience
- the nature

### **The MOST IMPORTANT new thing I learned is:**

- that I should never give up
- about wildlife in the area
- winter safety
- cooperation is very important
- nature is beautiful
- to protect nature

### **The MOST INTERESTING thing I learned about myself is:**

- I am capable of doing hard things
- I love the outdoors
- I like nature
- I like science

## From a Teacher:

"You always do a great program. The kids are really engaged and this is what they are learning in school."

"...with students today, they really need this."

"The naturalists were so much fun. They are so knowledgeable. The games were so much fun to play. The staff are great and so knowledgeable."

"They did a great job teaching the kids how to be responsible and respect nature. I love how this incorporated into everything from dining to cleaning out cabins."



## From a Supporter:

"Keep up your great work! It's especially needed now!"

## From Summer Day Camp Parents:

"[My child] really enjoyed all of the time spent outside especially at the river catching crawfish."

"[My child] enjoyed playing in the river, the slip n slide, the staff (especially Emily)."

"..my daughter seemed to have a good time at camp. She was worried that she wouldn't like it but after the first day she said 'mum, I was wrong, camp was actually really fun'."





## Scholarships

Thanks to our generous support from donors and community members, we were able to award scholarships to 4 schools. 3 of the schools attended our multi-day overnight camp on the shore of Lake Tahoe. The other attended our day field studies at Galena Creek.



## University of Nevada Intern

We had the pleasure of having an intern join us from the Pack Internship Grant Program, hosted by the University of Nevada, Reno! She was a great role model for our students and shared her time, enthusiasm, and science background.

**GREAT BASIN OUTDOOR SCHOOL**  
Chloe Hatcher, Science Education Intern

**Nevada Career Studio**  
The University of Nevada, Reno

**Skills and Responsibilities**

During this semester with Great Basin Outdoor School, I held the responsibilities of facilitating children's engagement and enthusiasm through STEM activities and lessons as well as aiding the naturalist in securing an optimal learning environment. Skills that I was working on building throughout this experience was contributing a part in fostering a thriving office atmosphere and utilizing connections with peers, and improving my overall ability to engage with kids.

**Accomplishments**

- Assisted in organizing and preparing for the spring day camp
- Capable of leading a botanical themed craft that promotes exploration of different plant varieties
- Monitored and recorded the developmental needs of youth assessment
- Participated in community outreach to promote national advertising

**About Great Basin Outdoor School**

Great Basin Outdoor School operates exclusively in Nevada and has served thousands of children and adults as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit since 1998. Great Basin Outdoor School offers students opportunities to get leadership-based experience as well as outdoor hands-on activities.

**Reflection**

This internship has significantly expanded my understanding of the importance of environmental education for children. Throughout the past semester, I've had the privilege of interacting with individuals from diverse scientific backgrounds. I found immense joy in engaging with children and facilitating their experiences at the camp. This opportunity has enriched my expertise in advocating for the preservation of ecosystems and spreading awareness about sustainable living practices.

**Future Goals:**

My next endeavor involves seeking opportunities with non-profit organizations akin the Great Basin Outdoor School to further explore this interest alongside my studies. Post college, my goal is to transition to coastal regions for graduate studies, nurturing my commitment to environmental advocacy and education.



**We love our staff** and mentor them in their multiple roles from teaching to administrative duties. They're a small but mighty team giving 110% all the time.

Executive Director, Emily Baldwin, and Development Coordinator and Lead Naturalist, Derik Knak, are at the helm supported by seasonal naturalist educators and university interns and volunteers.

## Thanks to Our Board

Each shares valuable skills and each makes significant financial contributions each year earning Community Foundation recognition as a 100% Giving Board.



SUE JACOX, President, Washoe County School District Educator, retired  
CALEB S. JENSEN, CPA, Treasurer, Certified Public Accountant  
PATTY MOEN, Secretary, Environmental Scientist  
LEILANI KONYSHEV, Washoe County School District Educator  
DEBBIE CHOY, Accountant, Registered Agent  
JERRY WAGER, Environmental Program Manager, retired

*A message from our founding director, Sue Jacox:*

*"I want children to have what I have and cherish myself. Every day I want them to look at the mountains and the sky and feel inspired and excited. I want them to love Nevada and the earth and to feel a part of their community. I want them to have the skills and the will to make positive choices and to recognize that every choice and every action can make a difference. And finally, I want them to be stimulated by lifelong learning and nurtured by a sense of connection to the natural world."*

# Our Great Basin Buddies

support “Hands-on Discovery in the  
Outdoor Classroom”

“It takes a village . . .” and we are forever grateful to all our community partners who help us make life-changing experiences possible for hundreds of students each year.

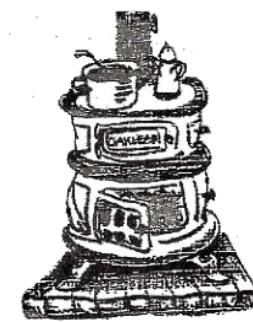
All the friends, foundations, and organizations who have become our “Great Basin Buddies” keep school program fees well below actual cost to be affordable for classes and allow us to include underserved children with little access to the joys of connecting with nature and learning the science of our natural world. Here are logos of some of our supporters and partners.

*Thank you!*

Arlen K. Bean  
Memorial Trust



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION  
of Northern Nevada



stewart



UCDAVIS  
Tahoe Environmental  
Research Center

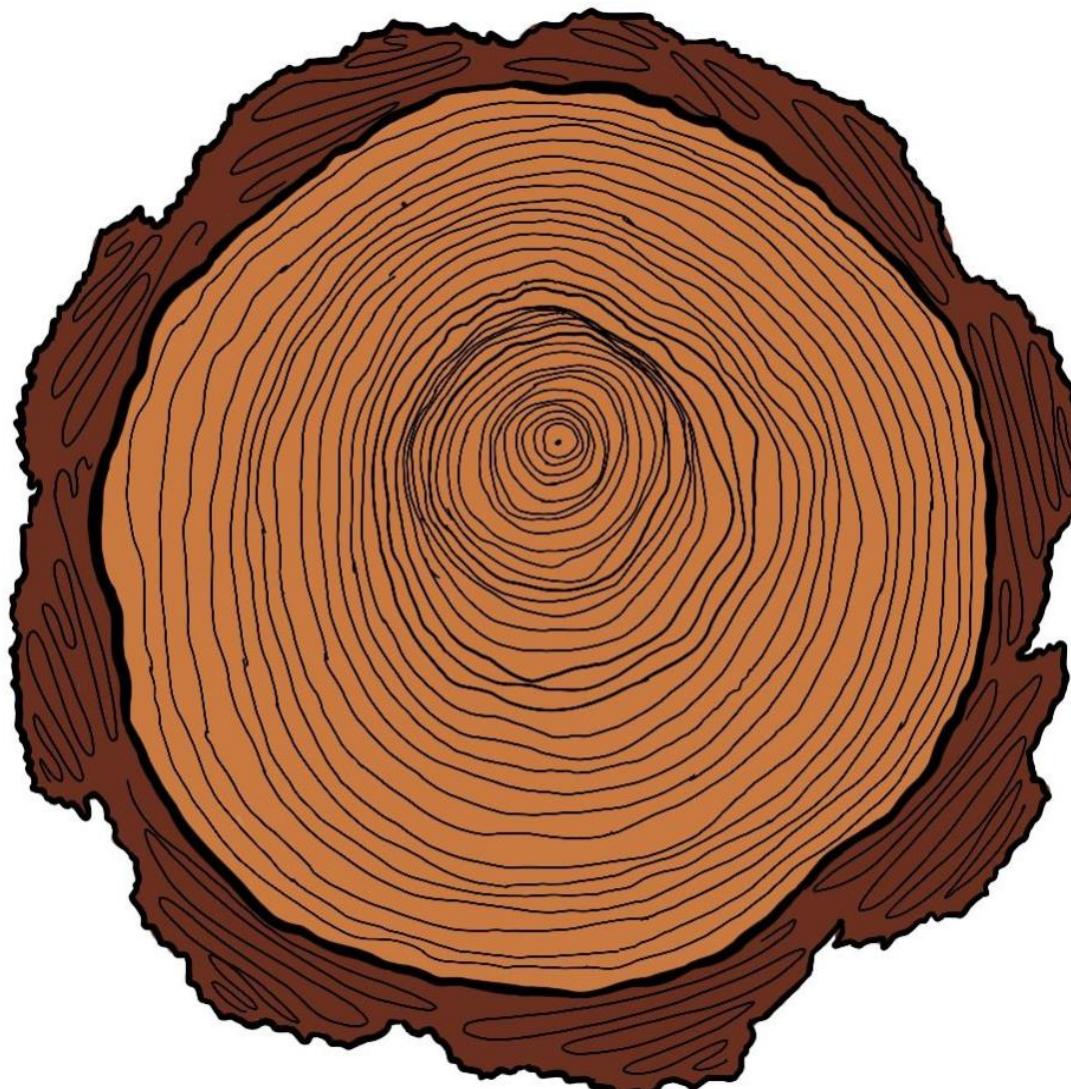


Marine Research & Education, Inc.

# Financials

100% of board members contributed support, and our fundraising and grants always subsidize over 50% of expenses for children in our school programs. Full details on our budget and support will be available in January 2025. Our IRS Forms 990 are available upon request and on GuideStar's website at <http://guidestar.org/>.

Program Fees	Coming Soon!
Grants	
Donations & Fundraising	
<b>Total Income</b>	
Program	Coming Soon!
Admin. & General	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	



■ Program      ■ Admin & General

Platinum  
Transparency  
**2024**

**Candid.**

**THANK YOU! We wouldn't be able to do this without your community support!**

