

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



A Mission That Comes Naturally

2024 ANNUAL REPORT





Dear Friends,

In 2024, we proudly celebrated our 51st year of 'opening eyes and minds through natural science discovery.' I, for one, was filled with excitement, gratitude, hope, and an increased sense of purpose.

We are deeply grateful for the unwavering support of our community. Your belief in our mission has been instrumental in our success and continues to inspire us as we look to the future.

“In the end, we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught.”

– **Baba Dioum, Senegalese poet and environmentalist, 1937**

This quote exemplifies the heart of our mission here as a place of education, a place that inspires the next generation of scientists and conservationists. This past year, our dedicated teachers developed and implemented a new robust science curriculum based on national Next Generation Science Standards. The world will need people equipped with skills that prepare them to solve the complex science and climate challenges ahead of us, as well as a deep connection and love of nature that comes with education and immersion in nature. For many in our community, that starts here.

Our board of directors and staff have embarked on creating a new strategic plan for Quarry Hill. This plan, deeply rooted in our mission, vision, and values, will serve as our compass, guiding our actions, behavior, and work. We look forward to sharing this journey and vision with you.

In this annual report, we are excited to highlight our impact in education, access, conservation, and commitment, all of which are made possible by our dedicated supporters.

Nature centers like Quarry Hill remain essential catalysts for the education and conservation of the natural world. As a united community of board members, staff, donors, members, volunteers, teachers, and partners, we share a deep commitment to our mission and a strong belief in the essential role of nature. Together, we will do great things!

With sincere gratitude,

Pamela Meyer | Executive Director

ACCESS

Low to no cost programs for all ages is a priority at Quarry Hill. Whether joining us for Summer Nature Camp, an afternoon in our admission-free Exploration Hall, hiking through the oak savanna, or attending a naturalist program, everyone is welcome here. Outreach visits to daycare centers and senior living communities bring nature to where people are because everyone benefits from access to nature.



20,203
weekend visitors
to the Nature
Center

329 acres for exploration,
discovery and connection
with nature

Open & admission-free 361 days of the year



Camp scholarships have more than doubled in the last two years. \$5,670 scholarships were awarded for camp, opening doors to the outdoors.



Rubber (and learning) meets the road! Our nature biking campers peddled a collective 625 miles on the citywide bike trails. From Cascade to Essex, to Foster Arend, kids visited city parks and reservoirs exploring nature outside of Quarry Hill!



More than 100 visually impaired students explored nature with all their senses during White Cane Awareness Day, which was celebrated at Quarry Hill.

180
Headstart
preschoolers &
their families

got off to a
natural start in
2024 during our
family nights at
Quarry Hill.



**94
Hours**

The Rochester Area Independent Living students made a significant impact on our park by dedicating many hours to removing invasive species. Their hard work has helped ensure that our native prairie will thrive.



Conservation starts at home. Since 2005, we've distributed 24,725 native plants to local gardeners. Native plants provide food for pollinators, improve water quality, and attract wildlife.

CONSERVATION

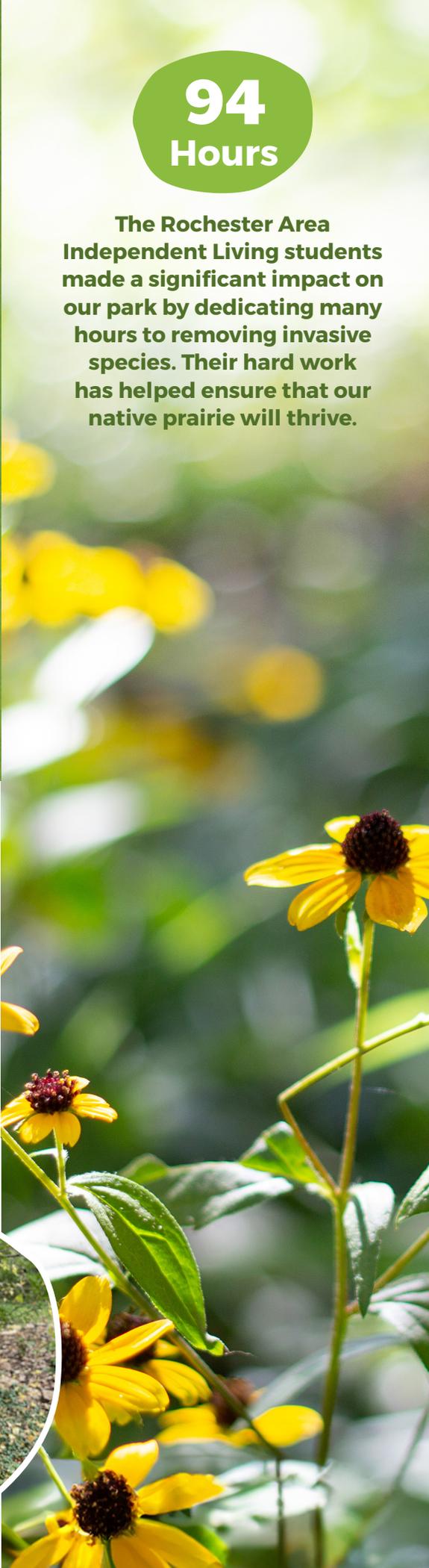
The park is our classroom and a critical habitat for wildlife. Prioritizing conservation of native plants, animals, and the park's ecosystems is essential to our mission. Working side-by-side with our partners at the City of Rochester Forestry Department, Minnesota Conservation Corps, local service organizations, and a grassroots team of Weed Warriors, we protect the park's native landscape for generations to come.

990
native plants

were sold during our annual plant sale in 2024.

232 people volunteered to help improve our green spaces.

Whether battling invasive species or preparing the land for restorative planting, we shared the commitment to keeping natural spaces diverse and healthy.



EDUCATION

As a welcoming hub for environmental education, Quarry Hill fosters a love for nature through hands-on, fun learning experiences. Whether through our exciting programs, friendly interactions with naturalists, or even during our birthday parties, there's something here for everyone! All ages can discover the wonders of nature and leave feeling inspired and connected to the world around them.

Nearly 2,100 birthday guests participated in animal programs, and our animals spent almost 4,200 minutes at birthday parties in 2024!

1,923
summer
campers

spent a collective
24,787 hours outside!



"Time in nature is medicinal. I love being outdoors with my children. It's wonderful to have green space right in the heart of our city."

— Sarah H., Member since 2020



At Quarry Hill, science becomes an adventure rather than just a subject to learn! Over the past year, 23,569 students participated in experiences that challenged them to think and act like scientists. By exploring real-world phenomena and connecting science to their everyday lives, students develop a deeper appreciation for the natural world.



Through our education partnership with the Olmsted County Waste to Energy Facility, 2,492 students went behind the scenes with us to learn how the county manages what we throw away to protect groundwater and convert garbage to energy.

839
households

were members at Quarry Hill Nature Center

270
supporters

made their first donation to QHNC in 2024!

465
hours

were spent in our classrooms by volunteers, helping our naturalists bring lessons to life!

COMMITMENT

It takes time, talent, and financial resources to do what we do each day. Thankfully, we have each other! Through the shared commitment of our members, supporters, volunteers, and staff, we can amplify our mission. As Rochester's first and only nature center, we are grateful to all who share their time, talent, and resources, joining our commitment to providing education and opportunities in nature that foster discovery, ignite learning, and inspire action.

FINANCIALS

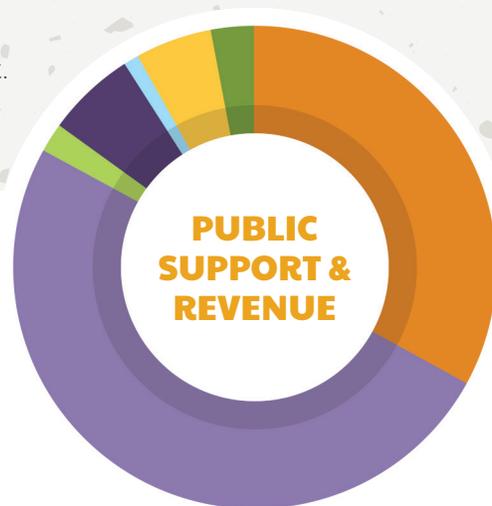
Friends of Quarry Hill Nature Center financial statements are audited annually by an independent certified public accountant. Detailed audited financials are available on our website.

PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUE

● Programs & Events	50%
● Contributions & Grants	33%
● Contract Services	6%
● Interest & Investments	5%
● Endowment	3%
● Rentals	2%
● Merchandise Sales	1%

EXPENSES

● Program & Event Services	68%
● General & Administrative	28%
● Fundraising	4%



Quarry Hill Nature Center

Staff

Pamela Meyer, Executive Director
Matt Lambert, Development Manager
Jill Danielsen, Program and Volunteer Coordinator
Jenny Doty, Office Manager
Lori Forstie, Public Relations and Outreach Coordinator
Nancy Freese, Bookkeeper
Travis Meyer, Facilities Manager
Carrie Nelson, Naturalist
Jenna Daire, Teacher/Naturalist
Brooke Hilger, Naturalist and Animal Care Lead
Cheryl Newman, Teacher/Naturalist
Maple Lassila, Naturalist and Animal Care
Rob Lager, Weekend Naturalist
John Roth, Weekend Naturalist
Kara Page, Weekend Naturalist

Quarry Hill Nature Center

Board of Directors

Peggy Edwards, President
Mike Willard, Vice President
George Penokie, Treasurer
Ray Goldstein, Secretary
Jason Dinsmore
Hans Hollander
Catharine Richert Jones
Mary McKie
Keith Morriss
Mike Nigbur
Mike Olson
Christina Caprice Rieder
Jon Turk
Tracy Will

