

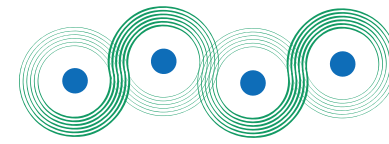
# The Road Ahead

CAMPAIGN FOR TREKKERS' FUTURE

Year Two Report | 2022-2023







# The Road Ahead

CAMPAIGN FOR TREKKERS' FUTURE

## CAMPAIGN CABINET

**Bryson Cowan King**  
Campaign Chair  
Trekking Alum  
Roslindale, MA

**Lucy and Bill Farland**  
Honorary Co-Chairs  
Rockport and Austin, TX

**Joe Higdon**  
Honorary Co-Chair  
Tenants Harbor

**Gregory and Donna Knowlton**  
Honorary Co-Chairs  
Rockport and Atlanta, GA

**Kathleen Meil**  
Board President  
Camden

**Michelle Graham**  
Port Clyde and Brookline, MA

**Jan Letourneau**  
Trekking Parent  
Tenants Harbor

**Suzanne Luzius**  
Tenants Harbor

**Betsy Welch**  
Tenants Harbor

## STAFF LEADERSHIP

**Amie Hutchison**  
Executive Director

**Kate Elmes**  
Director of Development

**Brandon Leppanen**  
Program Director

**Diane Sternberg**  
Training Institute Director

**Tess Valdepeñas**  
Communications & Impact Manager

## DEAR FRIENDS,

As we launch into 2024, we kick off the celebration of an exciting milestone for Trekkers. In the Spring of 1994, 11 students and 11 adult members of the Thomaston community set off on what would be the first of many expeditions that would impact the individual lives of those on the bus, and shape the community for decades to come.

Thirty years later, Trekkers has evolved and expanded over the years, but the simple, yet revolutionary idea that meaningful relationships can transform lives remains at the heart of our work.

When we first embarked on The Road Ahead Campaign for Trekkers' Future, our goal was to ensure that Trekkers will have the capacity, flexibility, and resilience to continue this critical work for the next 30 years.

Since launching the campaign, we have been truly overwhelmed with the generosity of our community – including supporters like you. Your early investment in The Road Ahead has allowed us to make exciting progress on our campaign priorities, including hiring a Training Institute Director to scale our model and start the process of renovating our property into a thriving campus where generations of future Trekkers will be protected, supported, and empowered. We're excited to share more about this progress with you in the following pages.

As we prepare to celebrate our 30th anniversary, we are also preparing to kick off the community phase of The Road Ahead. In the coming months, we'll publicly announce the campaign, engage and energize our network of amazing alumni, and bring in our families, friends, and community supporters to help us across the finish line and give the impact of the past 30 years the celebration it deserves. We're thrilled to have you on the bus as we embark on this next stretch of The Road Ahead together.

Thank you for being such an important member of the Trekkers family.

Bryson Kathleen Amie Kate

**Bryson Cowan King** Alum & Campaign Chair  
**Kathleen Meil** Board President  
**Amie Hutchison** Executive Director  
**Kate Elmes** Director of Development



In memory of Brad Vogt, for his incredible contributions to Trekkers and our Midcoast Maine Community.



Photos at top, left, and bottom right: 10th Grade Expedition, Colorado, Summer 2023. Middle: Brad Vogt. Middle right: 11th Grade Expedition, Montreal, Spring 2023.



# CAMPAIGN MILESTONES

## PHASE 1

Pre-Campaign Planning  
December 2020 - August 2021

### HIGHLIGHTS



Top: 9th Grade Short Trek, Boston, Fall 2023. Bottom: 8th Grade Short Trek, Maine, Fall 2023.

Purchased our first property at 325 Old County Road in Rockland.

Worked with consultant to complete an external feasibility study that highlighted Trekkers has all of the best practice elements needed to conduct a successful campaign.

Based on interviews with key partners, consultants advised that there was strong evidence for a working goal of \$1 million for capital improvements. Consideration of an increase goal dependent on acquiring lead gifts during the quiet phase.

## PHASE 2

Campaign Planning  
September 2021 - December 2023

### HIGHLIGHTS

Between September 2021 and February 2022, Trekkers closed nearly half a million in early leadership gifts.

A great summer of fundraising events helped Trekkers expand our base of support and share news of the campaign with close friends.

Gerald and Evelyn Isom create historic matching gift challenge (see page 11).

April 2023

After a very competitive process, Trekkers' Thriving Campus project selected by Congresswoman Chellie Pingree as one of the 15 total Community Project Funding requests submitted to the House Appropriations Committee for consideration in Fiscal Year 2024.

June 2023

THE ROAD AHEAD CAMPAIGN  
REACHED \$1.5M RAISED!

October 2023

30th Anniversary Committee formed to start planning for 2024.

2024

TREKKERS TURNED 30!

January 2024

Board of Directors entered talks with Maine Coast Construction to build our program barn, one of the most important and visible projects of the campaign.

## PHASE 3

Community Phase  
Launching Spring 2024

March 2024

TREKKERS WILL GO PUBLIC WITH  
THE ROAD AHEAD BY OFFICIALLY  
LAUNCHING THE COMMUNITY PHASE.

Late Summer 2024

Campaign celebration!  
Details to come.



10th Grade students on expedition, Summer 2023.

December 2024

Ending of MOSI matching gift  
challenge period!





Photo courtesy of Urban Trekkers, Maine, Fall 2023.



10th Grade Expedition, Summer 2023.

# BUILDING UPDATE

## KEY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We received city approval for our expansion plans! We are very grateful to The City of Rockland, the Planning Board, and City Council for their enthusiasm and support.

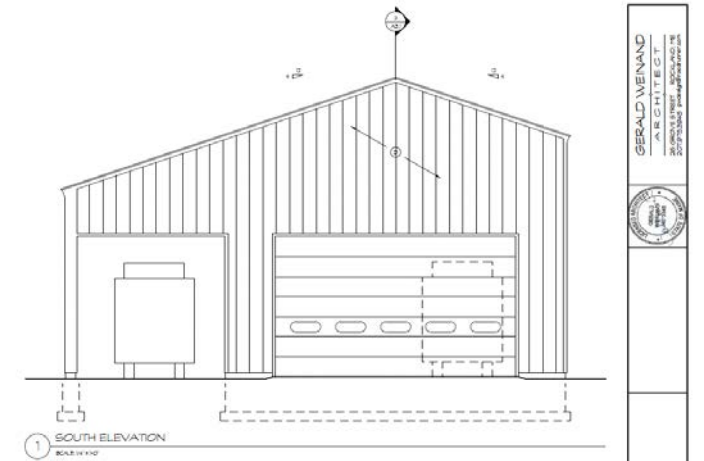
We replaced our sewer system! Although this was an unexpected emergency expense, the timing actually worked well with our campus renovation project; we would have needed to replace it anyway to accommodate the new barn building and expanded kitchen. We were also able to separate our system from our neighbor's system.

**Thank you to our Building and Grounds Committee for their continued support, guidance, and advice. Committee members:**

- Matt Graham, Chief Operating Officer, Lyman Morse
- Karen Reed, Allen Insurance and Financial
- George Stone, Co-Owner, Medomak Family Camp and Retreat Center

Right: Photo by Stephen Betts for the Courier Gazette when Rockland Planning Board toured the Trekkers property in May 2023.

Below: Partial updated site plan and bus barn elevation by architect Gerald Weinand.



# CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES



**A THRIVING TREKKERS CAMPUS**

Renovate our new home in Rockland into an intentional gathering place.



**TREKKERS TRAINING INSTITUTE**

Expand our impact by training other organizations.



**MOBILE CLASSROOM INFRASTRUCTURE**

Fuel our travels with a new bus and bus barn.



**BOARD DESIGNATED FUND**

Ensure that future generations of Trekkers start off on the right road.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

In January, the Board of Directors signed a contract with Maine Coast Construction to build the program and bus barn. The barn construction project will be one of the most visible accomplishments of the campaign and have the largest direct impact on programming. The barn will house two buses inside and a third bus under a sheltered pavilion, providing much needed cover from the elements. When the buses are pulled forward, the barn will provide open, flexible, and accessible program space for our students. Thanks to the generosity of First National Bank, the barn will feature an indoor climbing wall—one of the first of its kind in Knox County.

We plan to phase our campus renovation project to begin with the bus and program barn in the back of our property and work our way forward, toward Old County Road. Once we can transfer our current gear storage to the barn, we will start construction on the community kitchen project planned for inside our office building. Similarly to the barn, the community kitchen is a key priority due to the significant positive impact it will have on programming. The kitchen will be used in student meetings, in which shared meals are a way to build community; in preparing for expeditions; and as a space for staff, Board, volunteers, and our community to gather.



# TRAINING INSTITUTE UPDATE



TTI Workshop Series, Rockland, Summer 2023.



## ASPIRATIONS INCUBATOR UPDATE

TrekKers continues to partner closely with five Maine organizations that were selected as a part of The Rural Futures Fund Aspirations Incubator Project. These organizations have all created their own six-year mentoring and experiential education program based on TrekKers' principles. TrekKers provides ongoing training and coaching, and hosts the student leadership summit each fall for 11th and 12th grade students from TrekKers and the Aspirations Incubator sites.

As of 2022, students in an Aspirations Incubator program or TrekKers who graduate high school with at least a 3.0 grade point average or above will receive a minimum merit scholarship of \$500 and **automatic admission to the University of Southern Maine or the University of Maine** at the Orono and Machias campuses.

## KEY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Expanding and deepening our impact is a central theme of The Road Ahead Campaign. As such, we identified investing in the TrekKers Training Institute (TTI) as a top campaign priority, and we're energized by the early results!

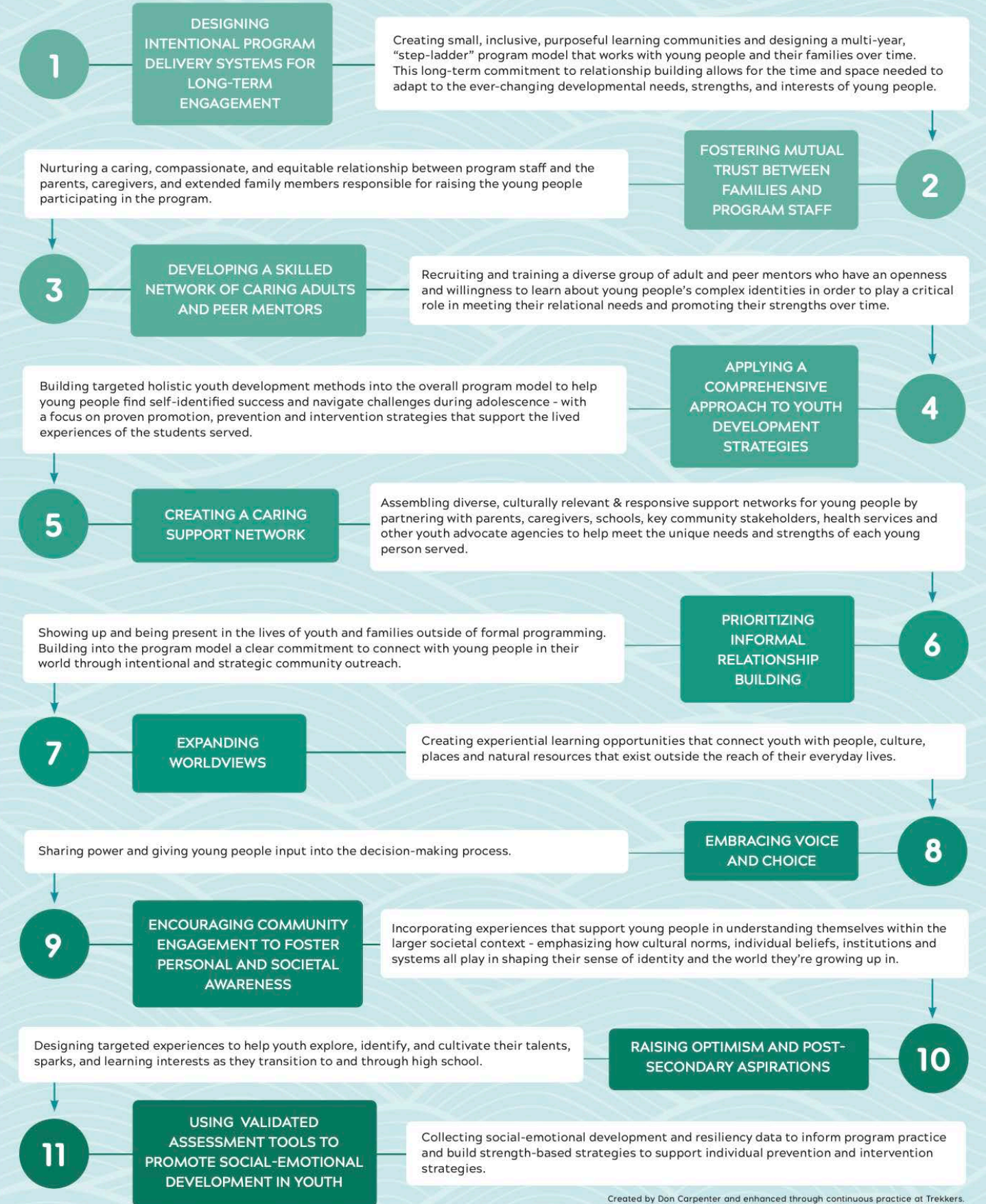
In the fall of 2022, campaign funds enabled us to hire Diane Sternberg as our Training Institute Director. Diane joined the TrekKers team with over 20 years of experience as an experiential educator, program director, and classroom teacher.

Under Diane's new leadership, TTI has worked with practitioners, teachers, and AmeriCorps members from 20 youth-serving organizations and schools throughout Maine and New Hampshire. These programs included open enrollment summer workshops offered to the local community, and contracted trainings reviewing the **TrekKers Youth Programming Principles**.

Over the summer, two TrekKers students helped facilitate an "Elevating Youth Voice and Choice" workshop this summer. An eager room full of adults engaged in a youth-led consensus decision process, which highlighted one of the principles that makes our program unique. (Read about these principles on the opposite page.)

In the fall of 2023, we launched a new year-long partnership with Oceanside High School's Alternative Education NOVA program. NOVA students meet with TrekKers staff weekly to build relationships, plan outdoor expeditions, and engage in service-learning projects. For example, we worked at Erickson Fields harvesting winter squash, packing fresh produce for food pantries, and helping prep the grounds for winter. Our connection with Erickson Fields began when the Maine Coast Heritage Trust staff participated in a TTI training in the spring.

# TREKKERS YOUTH PROGRAMMING PRINCIPLES



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# MORE EVIDENCE OF TREKKERS' LONG-TERM IMPACT!

## BACKGROUND

Thanks to generous funding from the Leon Lowenstein Foundation, Trekkers contracted in 2021 with a research team at the Data Innovation Project (DIP) at the University of Southern Maine's Catherine Cutler Institute. Together with Oceanside High School and Partnerships in Education and Resilience (PEAR), the researchers conducted a rigorous study to evaluate Trekkers' impact.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RESULTS

In examining the long-term impact of Trekkers, researchers found important differences between Trekkers students and their peers at the same school.

### Higher Academic Outcomes

Trekkers participants had lower rates of chronic absence, higher GPAs, and were more likely to enter into and complete a post-secondary education.

### Higher Social-Emotional Outcomes

Participants had greater strengths in adult and peer relationships, controlling emotion, expressing empathy, and self reflection.

### Improvements Over Time

Participating in Trekkers increased strengths in key resilience indicators over time, including in areas of trust, assertiveness, and critical thinking.

## NEXT STEPS

Our Training Institute is in an excellent position to train other organizations in Trekkers' model. Currently, five rural Maine programs are operating based on Trekkers' Youth Programming Principles. In collaboration with the Rural Youth Institute, all sites evaluate their programs and track fidelity to

Trekkers' model. Early indicators from these sites show that our model is replicable in other rural communities. We will continue to work with DIP to pursue model program status through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.



The implications of these results are even more profound in the post-COVID era, in which we see skyrocketing mental health needs among youth, coupled with ever-increasing social media usage and online modalities for school and work. Our study provides evidence for policymakers and practitioners working in this area to chart a course forward based on supporting long-term youth resilience building efforts such as Trekkers."



- BEYOND 365 DAYS: A RETROSPECTIVE EVALUATION OF TREKKERS BY SARAH GOAN & MADISON BURKE OF THE DATA INNOVATION PROJECT



SCAN HERE TO READ THE FULL REPORT.



Top Right: AmeriCorps Members, 10th Grade Expedition, Summer 2023. Bottom: 7th Grade Expedition, Maine, Spring 2023.



# Last chance to double your impact!

The MOSI matching gift challenge is the largest single gift to Trekkers in our history. 2024 is the final year of this three-year challenge! Please don't miss this incredible opportunity.

In 2021, the MOSI Foundation, at the direction of Evelyn and Gerry Isom, created a historic matching gift challenge with the goal of helping Trekkers expand our base for support and reach our fundraising and impact goals. The matching challenge provides **a dollar-for-dollar match of \$600,000 over 3 years** (\$200,000 per year, 2021 through 2024). The match applies to all new and increased campaign gifts up to \$25,000 per family per year over the 3-year campaign period.

As of January 1, we have raised \$440,764 towards the \$600,000 goal. With only \$159,236 remaining, we would love your help crossing the finish line to ensure we can unlock the full match.

The matching challenge has had a truly transformational impact on our campaign. Thank you, Evelyn and Gerry, for your investment in the future of our Midcoast Maine community and for inspiring so many others with your generosity and your leadership.



## WAYS YOU CAN HELP



1. Consider an additional gift to The Road Ahead.
2. Host a house party this summer to introduce Trekkers and the campaign to your friends and neighbors.
3. Work with Trekkers' development team to send a personalized letter to your networks inviting them to join you with a gift to The Road Ahead.
4. If you are celebrating a milestone birthday or anniversary in 2024, please consider encouraging your friends and family to donate to Trekkers' campaign in your honor.

If you're thinking about making a first or second investment in The Road Ahead, please contact us at [kate@trekkers.org](mailto:kate@trekkers.org) or (207) 594-5095.

# THANK YOU.

It is with heartfelt gratitude that we recognize our earliest campaign supporters and the transformative impact their gifts will have on Trekkers.

This list reflects campaign gifts and pledges received September 1, 2021 – December 31, 2023

## OVER \$100,000

- Anonymous
- Ann and Rick Bresnahan
- Lucy and Bill Farland
- Donna and Gregory Knowlton
- The MOSI Foundation, Gerry and Evelyn Isom

## \$99,999 – \$50,000

- First National Bank
- Dee and Phoebe Megna
- NorthLight Foundation

## \$49,999 – \$3,000

- Anonymous
- Stephanie Bailey
- Rick and Lucy Belding
- Stephanie L. Brown
- Mary Ann Carey
- Michelle Graham and Scott Sullivan
- Kate Hewlett and Van Laliberte
- Kendal H. Kennedy Foundation
- Alyssa ('08) and Dale Landrith
- Jan and Alan Letourneau (P '04, '07)
- Long Cove Fund of MCF
- Love Family Charitable Trust
- Suzanne S. Luzius
- Judy and Tim McCormally
- Kathleen and Ari Meil
- David Mumford and Alice Gorman
- Melanie Nelson
- Tina and Joe Pyne
- Grant and Karen Simpson
- Kate and Brad Vogt
- Ron Stern and Elisse Walters
- Eric and Clair Waters (P '16)
- Elizabeth Welch
- Mr. and Mrs. Bert Witham

## UP TO \$3,000

- Anonymous
- Barbara Aras
- Charles Altschul
- Ann Susan and Nevins Baxter
- Kate Bourne and Mark Munger
- Theodora T. Butts
- Leah and Patrick Chamberlin
- William and Jody Cowan (P '08, '10)
- Kathy and Jim Cuthbertson
- Kris Debye and Skip Trump
- Kate Elmes and Andrew Dorr
- The George A. Ramlose Foundation
- Rhonda and Tom Gioia
- Matthew B. Graham
- Gerald and Suzanne Hall
- Mary "Mimi" Hewlett
- Makaila Hickey ('19)
- Elizabeth Hilpman
- Mr. Ross Hinton
- Amie Hutchison and Jason Buck
- Molly and Fred Kellogg
- Bryson ('08) and George King
- Fletcher Smith-McNaboe and Michael McNaboe
- David and Nancy Moore
- Greg and Nadine Mort
- Nellie Mae Education Foundation
- Cynthia and Lipscomb Norvell
- Constance and Eric Silverman
- The Teal Foundation
- Carol Webb and Alan Green



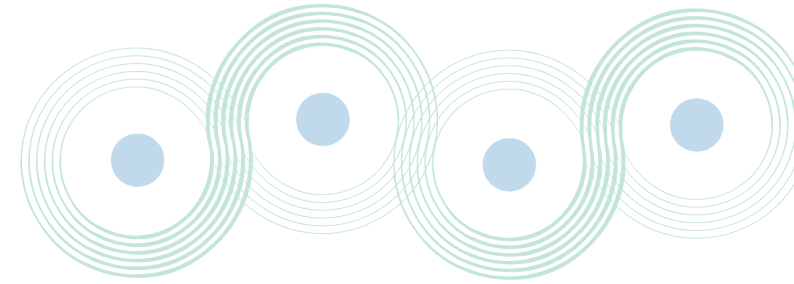


Top left: Photo courtesy of Oceanside Middle School, Spring 2023. Top right: Courtesy of Urban Trekkers, Fall 2023.



Middle and bottom right: 7th Grade Expedition, Maine, Spring 2023. Bottom left: 11th Grade Expedition, University of Maine, Spring 2023.

# FUNDRAISING UPDATE



Platinum  
Transparency  
2024

**Candid.**



**TOTAL REVENUE**  
\$1,765,756\*

**ALLOCATION OF GIFTS**  
Unrestricted \$1,690,756  
Kitchen Fund \$10,000  
TTI Fund \$5,000  
Climbing Wall \$60,000

\*includes \$600,000 Mosi Foundation matching gift challenge, which is contingent on receiving eligible matching funds.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

Eric Waters, Chair  
Board Treasurer and Trekkers Parent  
Spruce Head

Susy Ellis  
Community Member and Trekkers Parent  
Spruce Head

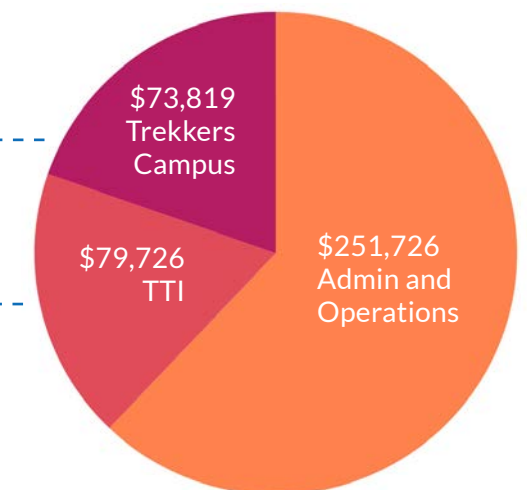
Douglas Erickson  
Former Board Member  
Thomaston

Ken Oelberger  
Former Board Member  
Saint George

Visit [trekkers.org/financials](https://trekkers.org/financials) for our  
FY23 operating financials.

Campaign  
Priority 1

Campaign  
Priority 2



**TOTAL EXPENDITURES**  
\$405,271



# SAVE THE DATES!

## ART AUCTION

May 8-15 Preview

May 15 Bidding & Reception

Dowling Walsh Gallery

## FIRED UP

July 10, 2024

SaltWater Fields



TREKKERS · 325 OLD COUNTY ROAD · ROCKLAND, ME 04841

[TREKKERS.ORG/THEROADAH](https://trekkers.org/theroadahead)