



Ecology in Classrooms & Outdoors

JULY 2019 - DECEMBER 2020 DONOR IMPACT REPORT



“

ECO inspires me to take actions on little things that could help the environment.

- Student at Gladstone High School

To all the friends of ECO,

The last year and half was unlike any other. ECO experienced some of our greatest successes and challenges.

In the fall of 2019, ECO celebrated 14 years of operations with a successful Garden Party fundraiser. We secured our first federal grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for our Walking to Wetlands project, and a \$100,000 award from the ninety-nine girlfriends philanthropic initiative to create an educational film series, ECO Adventures. ECO launched a digital strategy to increase the reach of our mission that would prove critical in the year to come.

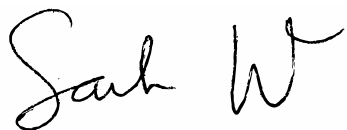
With the closure of schools in the spring of 2020, ECO faced a budget shortfall and was forced to release half of our staff. Resiliency, creativity, expertise, and valued partnerships guided the ECO team in serving our community.

ECO's highly experienced and educated staff are developing cutting-edge environmental curriculum, a film series, new educational card and computer games, and climate action education. As 2020 came to a close, ECO secured a spectacular donation of a 77-acre forested property. Just 30 minutes from downtown Portland, this land will be transformed into an experiential education destination and community resource.

Guided from inception by Justice, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (JEDI), our programs are empowering students with the highest quality environmental science education. We are the change for a world we all want.

On behalf of the students, educators, and communities we serve, the ECO team wants to express a heartfelt thank you. Our incredible achievements stand on a foundation of your support, and you are the hero of our story. We're excited to celebrate all the milestones still to come!

With sincere gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Woods". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Woods

Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer

ECO's School Programs

Assembled

40

Place-Based Units

Delivered

310

Lessons

Provided

204

Field Trips

Engaged

5,280

Students

Served a Total of

32,670

Students Since 2005

ECO's Online Programs

Increase of

275%

in Web Traffic Since
April 2020

Delivered

12

Learn at Home Lessons

Filmed

14

ECO Videos

In-School Programs

From September 2019 through March 2020, ECO led in-person and digital programs for K-12 students in 37 schools. Educators delivered programs including in-class science lessons, hikes on the coast, and service-learning trips in local wetlands.

On one beautiful fall afternoon at the Gresham Meadowlands, students, volunteers, and ECO staff added 50 native plants at the wetland, including mock orange, spirea, and sedges. By the end of the day, mud-covered students laughed and revelled in the positive impact they made!

ECO Garden Club

ECO's after school Garden Club at Abernethy Elementary provided hands-on education in the Garden of Wonders. From the plum tree to the edible plant garden students learned through play and seasonal, nature-based activities.

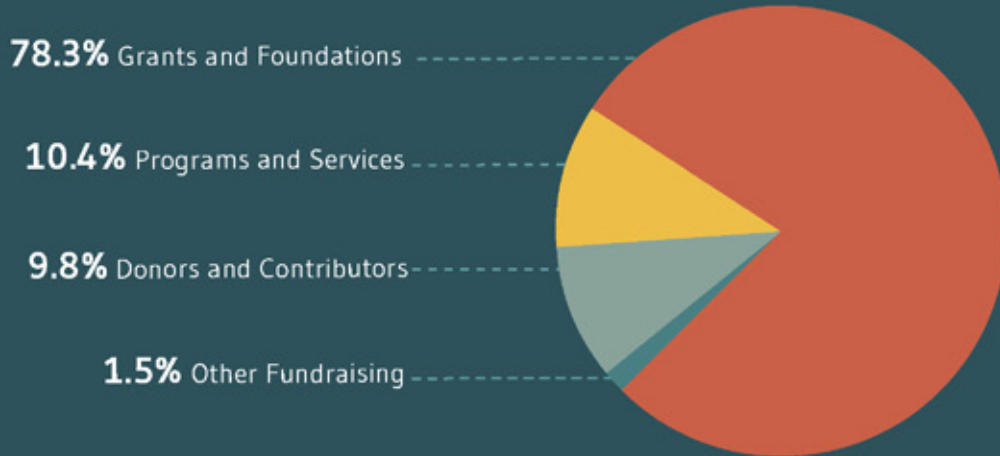
Digital Programs

In March of 2020, with the onset of school closures due to COVID-19, ECO adapted our programs to serve students and teachers learning at home. We created lessons for teachers and guardians to implement digitally, complete with detailed teacher guides, instructional videos, worksheets, and games. ECO educators delivered digital lessons, using a new suite of equipment including webcams, ring lighting, microphones, a microscope and a gimbal!

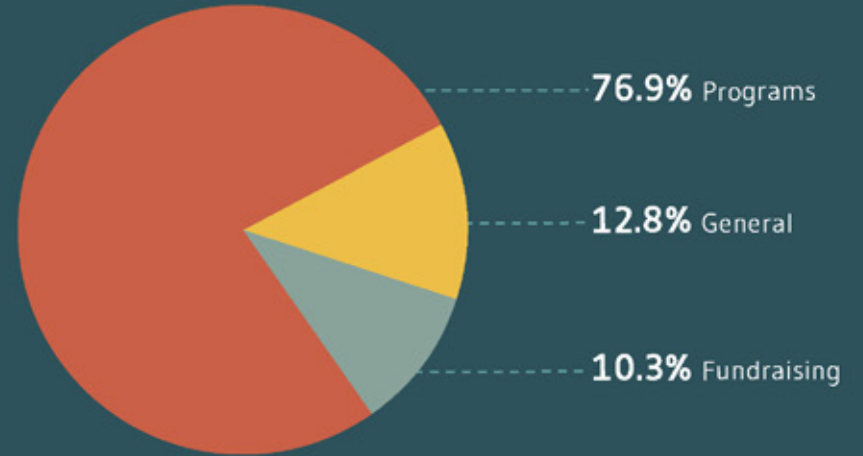
Since then, ECO educators have created 12 free Learn at Home lessons available on our website, developed new card and computer games, and completed our series of curriculum kits or Place-Based Units.



INCOME



EXPENSE



STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

54.1% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch

41.3% of students identify as a minority

3.8% Black/African American, 5.1% Asian or Pacific Islander, 58.7% White, 23.4% Hispanic, 7.4% Multiracial, 1% Native American





Ninety-nine Girlfriends

From 190 applications, ECO was chosen as one of five nonprofits to receive an Impact Award from ninety-nine girlfriends. The \$100,000 award launched the production of a series of videos called *ECO Adventures*, designed to build student's environmental and climate literacy through connections to their local habitats.

With ninety-nine girlfriends' catalytic support, ECO believes we can start to achieve our goal of reaching every student in Oregon.

The Wave

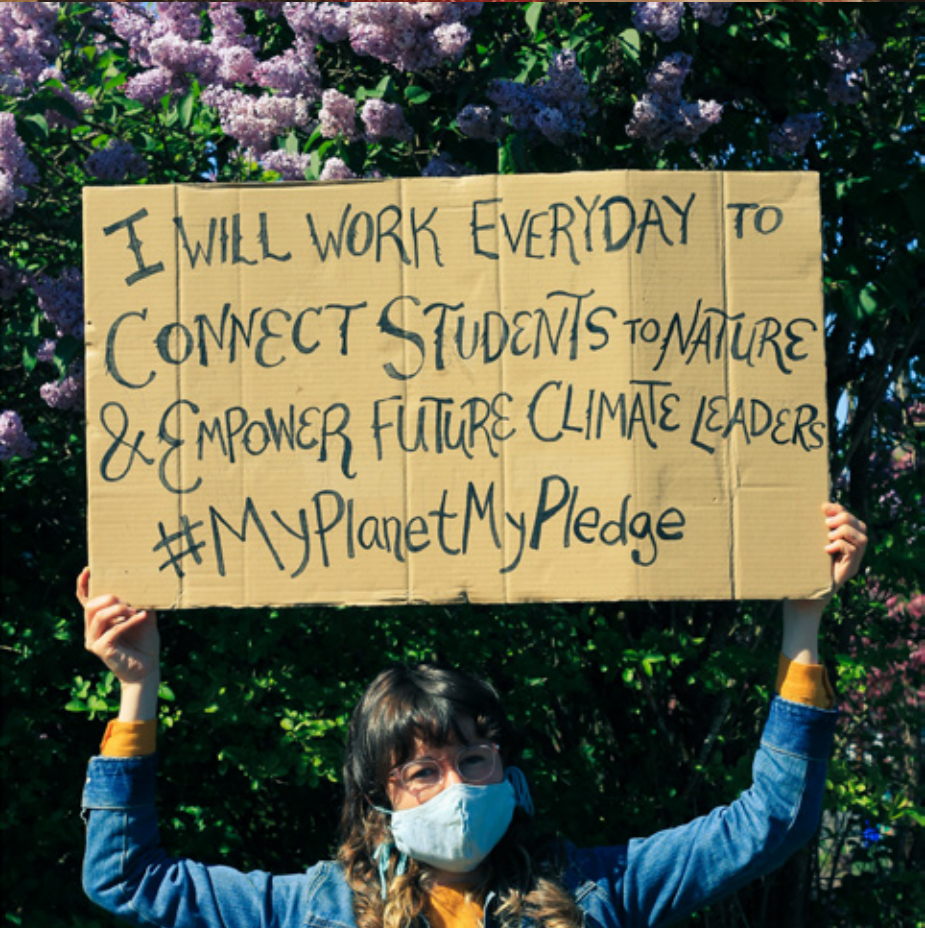
ECO joined The WAVE, a new sustainability collaboration between some of the most iconic and influential organizations, institutions, and venues in the Northwest. ECO brought our expertise on student engagement to The Wave's Youth Advisory Board.

We're excited to support The Wave in working towards 100% clean energy, zero waste, healthy and sustainable food, and clean air and water.

50th Anniversary of Earth Day

2020 was the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day! ECO was honored to be part of Earth Day Oregon, a coalition of businesses and nonprofits working together to amplify Earth Day. We joined their digital #MyPlanetMyPledge campaign to post signs of how we will take direct action for the environment.

Thank you to our preeminent sponsors: Vernier Software and Technology and Blackbird Benefits Collective.



I WILL WORK EVERYDAY TO
CONNECT STUDENTS TO NATURE
& EMPOWER FUTURE CLIMATE LEADERS
#MyPlanetMyPledge

A close-up photograph of a hand reaching towards a white daisy flower in a field. The background is a soft-focus field of green grass and other flowers. The hand is positioned in the upper right quadrant, with fingers slightly curled as if about to touch the flower. The overall scene is bright and natural, suggesting a connection to nature.

1% For the Planet
1000 Friends of Oregon
Abernethy Elementary School Parent Teacher Association
Adam Van Aken
Agnew Family Foundation
Autzen Family Foundation
Bilquist Elementary School Parent Teacher Association
Bland Family Foundation
Brian Kelley Film
City of Lake Oswego
City of Oregon City
Clackamas County Water Environment Services
Clark Public Utilities
CommuniCARE
Community Watershed Stewardship Program
Corbett Grade School
Earth Day Oregon
East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District
Eco-school Network
Elena Cronin
Elmira Elementary School Parent Teacher Association
Ethos Commercial Advisors
Friends of Outdoor School
Friends of Trees
Gray Family Foundation
Hampton Family Foundation

Supporters

Hansen Realty Group / Keller Williams Realty

Heritage Bank

Juan Young Trust

KEEN

Kaiser Permanente

Lent School PTA Garden Committee

Lents Springwater Habitat Restoration Project

Markham Elementary School Parent Teacher Association

Metro

Moberi

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Ninety-nine Girlfriends

North Clackamas School District

Northwest Youth Corps

Oak Lodge Water Services

OnPoint Community Credit Union

Oregon Community Foundation

Oregon Forest Resources Institute

Oregon Natural Resource Education Program

Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department

Oregon State Parks Foundation

Oregon Zoo

Pacific International Academy

Portland General Electric Corporate Giving

Portland Metro STEM Partnership

Portland Parks & Recreation

Portland State University

Portland Timbers Community Foundation

Rasmussen Family Trust

Reser Family Foundation

Robert D. and Marcia H. Randall Charitable Trust

Robert Gray Middle School

Robert Gray Middle School Parent Teacher Association

SAGE

Siuslaw Watershed Council

Snow Peak

SOLVE

Spirit Mountain Community Fund

Stem Beyond Schools/OSU

St. Rose School

The Collins Foundation

The Intertwine Alliance

The Nature Conservancy

The Portland Clinic Foundation

The Wetlands Conservancy

This is My Earth

Tiedemann Advisors

Tualatin River Watershed Council

Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District

Vernier Software and Technology

Wentworth Foundation

Wisdom of the Elders

West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District

Climate Action Program

ECO is implementing a unique Climate Action Education program for middle and high school students. Our 'Apples to Apples'-style climate action card game encourages creative problem solving as a means for young adults to examine this critically important issue. ECO will be piloting the series in the winter of 2021.

Place-Based Units

ECO has been developing Place-Based Units (PBUs). Our kits contain integrated curriculum modeled after the proven, hands-on science lessons our educators deliver in classrooms and schoolyards during the school day. Ten PBUs will be available to classrooms and partner organizations for use throughout the state in 2021.

Old Bird Card and Computer Game

ECO educators are creating innovative games to extend our curriculum to new audiences. Our Old Bird card game reimagines 'Old Maid' into a lesson on species adaptations. We're also in the final stages of creating an online version of Old Bird to reach students learning at home!

Zoom Lessons

ECO continues our work directly with students, through Zoom-based lessons! Beginning in the fall of 2020, ECO educators created and implemented interactive, digital lessons for Corbett Grade School. With a geology theme in mind, we studied rock properties, watersheds, landforms of Oregon and more! It's always fun to engage students, even when learning from home.

2019 Garden Party

Our 3rd Annual Garden Party was our most successful yet! Donors created 23 scholarships for children to experience hands-on classroom lessons, receive garden-based after school programs, and go on field trips across our beautiful state. We celebrated 14 years of successful operations with a plant identification activity, delicious food, and a beautiful land acknowledgement by Tanna Engdahl, the spiritual leader of the Cowlitz tribe. Thank you to everyone who joined us, and our preeminent event sponsor, OnPoint Community Credit Union!



ECO Adventures Film Series

ECO Adventures, a ten-part ecology video series, is in final production!

What sets *ECO Adventures* apart from existing science videos is that they are student-centered, place-based, and focused on the flora and fauna of the Pacific Northwest. Additionally, this engaging series features women leading STEM activities, to offer female representation and empowerment in the field of ecology. The videos are aligned with Next Generation Science Standards and can be utilized by educators across the country, from classrooms to homeschool 'pods', or by other organizations.

Each *ECO Adventures* video correlates with a uniquely designed Place-Based Unit, allowing teachers to deliver the science lesson and its accompanying hands-on activity with ease. The science lesson serves as a foundation and is supplemented with extension lessons in math, English language arts, social sciences, and art.

When in-person learning resumes, the video series will serve as a natural complement to *ECO's* schoolyard explorations and field trips.



The Skyline Property

As 2020 came to a close, ECO received an extremely generous donation from the Rasmussen Family Trust, 77 acres of property on a forested ridgeline. Located on Skyline Boulevard with sweeping views of the Columbia River and Cascade Mountains, this legacy donation provides incredible potential for the organization. It opens many new pathways including the location of a new ECO headquarters and on-site experiential education.

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With your support, the possibilities are truly endless.

- Sarah Woods, Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer



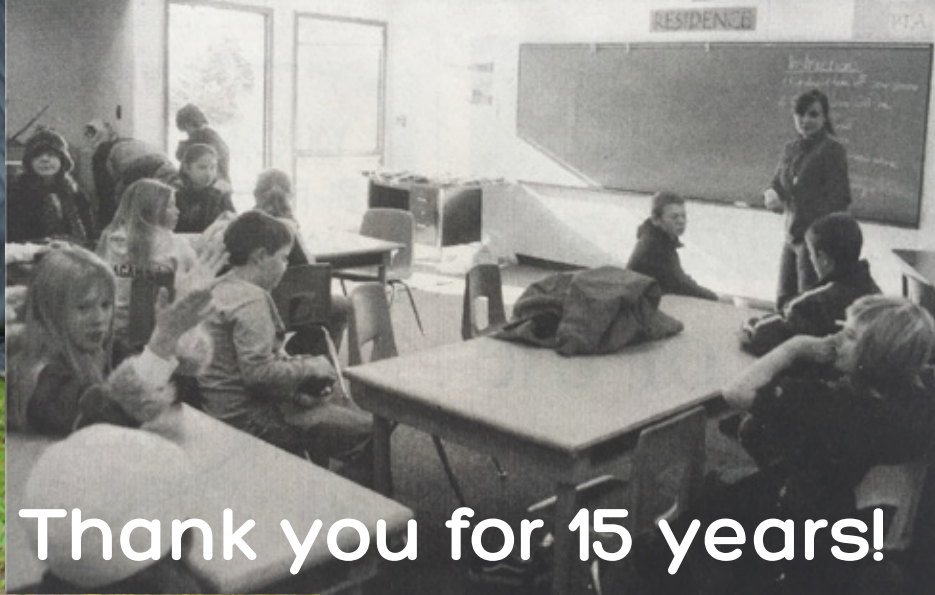
ECO's 15th Anniversary

Thank you to everyone who joined us for ECO's (Digital) 15th Anniversary Celebration!

Our community tuned into a documentary double feature of 'Mossville: When Great Trees Fall' and 'Deer 139', and feasted on Devil's Food Catering home delivery. We sailed past our \$15,000 goal and raised over \$18,000 for cutting-edge, accessible ecology education.

Thank you to our top sponsors: OnPoint Community Credit Union, Tiedemann Advisors, and Metro!





Thank you for 15 years!



Julie Baweja

Program Director

Without question, this school year has been wildly unlike any other we've experienced before. Instead of travelling to schools to interact with students, we now flip open our computer. I've never considered myself to be an actor, but this school year has brought a new perspective to the phrase: lights, camera, action!

When we first entered a virtual classroom this fall, I was nervous. It was like having the first day of school jitters all over again. Would the kids like me? Would they listen and have questions? How does classroom management happen over a computer? Is there something in my teeth? How do you teach about nature, without being in nature?

We 'entered' the classroom, in our ECO gear, a few minutes early to make sure our cameras and microphones worked and we quickly felt at ease as the teacher asked how she could help and what we needed. The students started showing up and in less than three minutes, we were 'surrounded' by students excited to have guest teachers. The time flew by; we talked about ecology, rocks, watersheds, and what we love about nature. I wish we could have met in person, but I'm grateful for the opportunity to keep fostering their curiosity.

This has given us the opportunity to connect to more teachers, environmental educators, homeschool teachers, parents, guardians, and other learners outside of our normal reach. We've jumped into the digital world with our Learn at Home lessons. Working closely with other members of the ECO team to create and share our knowledge over a new platform has been enlightening.

We've jumped into the digital world...

“



Donors: \$10 to \$249

Patricia Andrade-Gordon, Jay Austin, Scott Bandoroff, Ashley Barnes, Dave and Elaine Beaulieu, Sean Becker, Chris Bekemeier and David Oyen, Ray Bercume, Kathleen Billings, Molly Billings, Meghan Borato, Rose and Cal Brower, Carl Bruch, Laurie Calderbank, Alita Carbone, Darlene Carlson, Cathy Chinn, Desiree and Jack Chiu, Amber Cognata and Andrew Ring, Kristen Connor, Debbie and TK Conrad, Dayna and Larry Corwin, Georgette E. Currie, Dave and Susan Cyr, Michelle and Chris Dawkins, Naga Devi, Rajan Dharni, Julie DiLeone, Amber DiLoreto, Brian Dunnaville, Lisa Durham, Sam Dyer, Tanna Engdahl, Ruthellen and Rich Fein, Jessica Finstuen, Erin Fish, Lisa Fratianni, Carolyn and Jim Furlong, Tony Furtado and Stephanie Schneiderman, Ashley George, Chase Goitia, Alexandra Gordon, Tim Grisham, Jami and Christian Haaning, Timothy Hahn, Lorraine Hanson, Ryan Harris, Trevan Hertz, Robin Jensen, Dolores Judkins, William Kaltenthaler and Lisa Fratianni, Bonnie and Brian Kaul, Tyler Kennedy, Kelly Kinzer, Kim Kosa, Alicia Ladenes, Nancy and Ron Lapotin, Cathy and Kelly Larkin, Kat Larson, Kelly Larson, Jenny Layton, Laura Lee, Elianne Lieberman, Megan Light, Dawn Lowe-Wincentsen and Jesse Lowe, Debbie and Dave Lyman, Nick Lyman, Annie Lyons, Patty Lyons, Brent MacDermot, Holly Martin, James Mason, Diane McCalmont, Aubrey and Brian McCauley, Alexander Montgomery, Kristie and Ted Morgan, Katie Morrice, Salwa and Adnan Muklashy, Cathy and Mark Myers, Lorna Nakell, Beth Nesser, Karen and Larry Nollenberger, Roberto Olivero, Rebecca Olsen, Corey Ome, Danielle Pacifico-Cogan, Jennifer Prince, Stacy Remensperger, Amelia Corbari, Steve and Kat Remington, Morgan Rider, Linda Robinson, Myranda Rusie and Jimmie Kruschinska, Fitz Ryland, Claudia and Mark Sanzone, Brian J. Schmedinghoff, Gail Shaloum, Matthew Shipkey, Justin and Joanna Sooper, Mardy and Hank Stevens, Shauna Stevenson, Mina Stricklin, Noelle Studer-Spevak, Mindy Stutzman, Marta and Leo Tautfest, Nicole and Brandon Thomas, Lynn and Eric Tobar, Hannah Tooley, Daniel Treacy, Marilyn Tucker, Nicholas Walrod, Yumei Wang, Frederick Wearn, Pat Wollner, Adrienne Yorker, Zenn Family

Donors: \$249 to \$500

Dixie and Stan Bland, Melissa Busch, Christina Davis, Gun Denhart, Susan Douglas, Eric and Allie Hoest, David Irving, Selah Johnson, Jan and Jack McGowan, Mimi Mello, Jason Resch, Daniel Roth, Terri Rottman and Joel Allen, Lawrence Weisberg

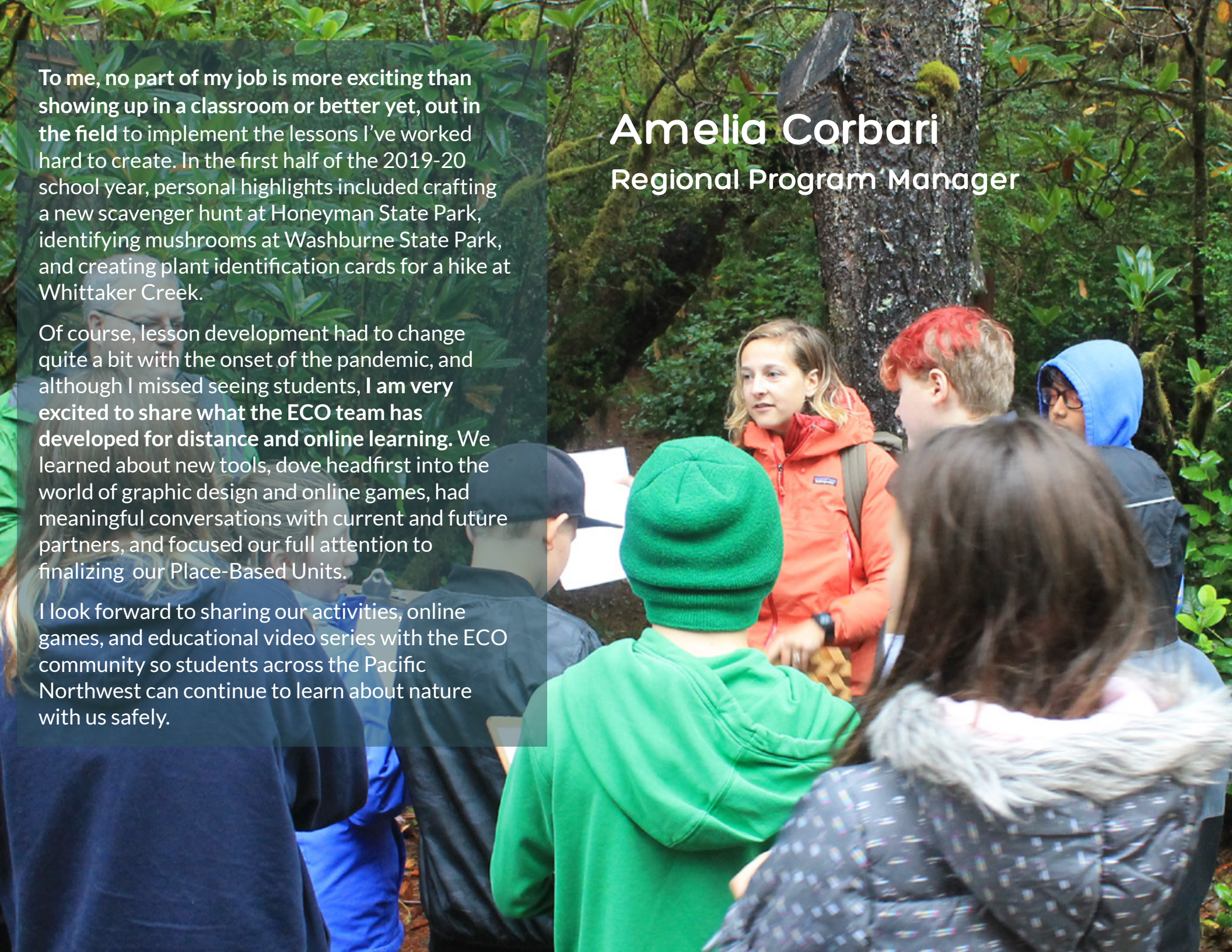
Donors: \$500 & Up

Caleb and Catie Aring, A.J. Arriola, Josh and Renee Bean, Ryan Carpenter, Amber and Thomas Clark, Fred Cohen and Randy Zasloff, Richard and Sheridan Collins, Paul Del Vecchio, Kate Donnelly, Ken and Annie Edwards, Jasmin and Matt Felton, Andra Georges, Daniel Georges, Benna Gottfried, Jeffry Gottfried, Joan Hoffman, Abby and Mike Houston, Jenny and Ken Martin, Jess Martin and Devon Mitchell, Sam Martin, Susan Masta and Jay Withgott, Nicole Mathes, Alexandra Merrin, Wendy and Raymond Mitchell, Wasim Muklashy, Lauren and Scott Mullen, Gene and Svati Nicholson, Chad Parker, Dan and Jennifer Prince, Tom and Linda Ralley, Erik Rasmussen, Lance Rasmussen, Robin Rasmussen, Rick and Krista Reynolds, Ruth Roth, Dick and Jeanne Roy, Kevin and Jessica Sailor, Brian and Adell Shetterly, Gregg Shetterly and Addison Harris, Lane and Francine Shetterly, Jamie and Tim Snider, Kathryn Thomas, Alain Van Doosselaere, Teri Wadsworth, Christina Waldron, Jay Withgott

“

When I grow up, I want to be a scientist, so I can study all the animals.

- Student at Whitcomb Elementary School

A photograph of a woman in an orange jacket speaking to a group of people in a forest. The woman is standing and holding a white paper. The group consists of several people, some wearing hats and jackets, listening to her. The background is a dense forest with mossy trees and green foliage.

To me, no part of my job is more exciting than showing up in a classroom or better yet, out in the field to implement the lessons I've worked hard to create. In the first half of the 2019-20 school year, personal highlights included crafting a new scavenger hunt at Honeyman State Park, identifying mushrooms at Washburne State Park, and creating plant identification cards for a hike at Whittaker Creek.

Of course, lesson development had to change quite a bit with the onset of the pandemic, and although I missed seeing students, I am very excited to share what the ECO team has developed for distance and online learning. We learned about new tools, dove headfirst into the world of graphic design and online games, had meaningful conversations with current and future partners, and focused our full attention to finalizing our Place-Based Units.

I look forward to sharing our activities, online games, and educational video series with the ECO community so students across the Pacific Northwest can continue to learn about nature with us safely.

Amelia Corbari

Regional Program Manager



Alexandra Gordon
Elementary Program Manager



In the fall of 2020, we began piloting some virtual ecology lessons with Corbett Grade School. Our first round of lessons were a success; we didn't have any technical difficulties, the activities ran smoothly, and we were so excited to be connecting with students again.

However, like anything involving technology, we ran into a few challenges with a second grade class where we were scheduled to teach a lesson about landforms in Oregon. **We could not, for whatever reason, log into the classroom!** I emailed and called, trying everything I could, because the teacher had communicated to us how excited his students were to have ECO join their classroom.

After almost half an hour of trying, we finally got in! We jumped right into the lesson after a brief explanation to the students about what had happened. At first, I was nervous, thinking the students had been disappointed in us. All of that quickly faded away as I realized how engaged they were with our lesson and activities. They asked several insightful questions after every stop on our landform journey and at one point the teacher even **praised his students for being the most engaged they have ever been for a Zoom lesson.**

This experience, for me, felt like a microcosm of a hard year: there were **obstacles along the way, but we persevered** and even ended up having a fun, successful lesson.

In-Kind Donors

A film crew is working in a lush field of tall grass and white daisies. A woman in a blue shirt is leaning over, examining the flowers. A man in a blue shirt is also leaning over, looking at the ground. In the background, a man in a black shirt is holding a boom microphone on a long pole, capturing audio. The scene is set against a backdrop of dense green trees.

Adidas
Barre3
Books with Pictures
Bollywood Theatre
Cameron Winery
Columbia Sportswear
Doug Fir Lounge
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Ford Food & Drink
KEEN Utility
Migration Brewing
Meridian Lee
M&M Painting Inc.
Mountain Rose Herbs
New Seasons Market
Pacific Foods
Pastini
Patagonia
Stella Taco
Timberline Lodge
Tony Furtado
Trader Joe's
Stephanie Schneiderman
SubUrban Riot

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Julie Baweja - Program Director

Amelia Corbari - Regional Program Manager

Alexandra Gordon - Elementary Program Manager

Claire Baldwin - Development & Communications Manager

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Brian Dunnaville

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Thank you to the staff and board members who were part of our journey in 2019/20:

Alex Earl - Staff

Rebecca Strohm - Staff

Maura Milder - Staff

Olivia Patick - Staff

Chelsea Ernst - Staff

Chloe Merrifield - Staff

Brod Salo - Staff

Dasha Pechurina - Staff

Angela Ovchinnikov - Staff

Dan Prince - Board Secretary

Katie Morris - Board Member



ECO's 15th Anniversary was a celebration of all the people who have been part of our journey. Thank you to our funders, donors, partners, volunteers, staff, and board. All the ways you support us, from attending our volunteer events, to sharing our content online, elevates our mission. Your support has inspired tens of thousands of students to care for nature and their communities through hands-on science education.

As we reflect back on a year unlike any other, it's the acts of kindness and good faith that stand out. Because of our community's generosity, ECO was able to continue fulfilling our critical mission even as COVID-19 amplified disparities.

Thank you for your continued support, as we work to ensure ALL students receive cutting-edge science education.



Ecology in Classrooms & Outdoors

PO BOX 90293 Portland OR 97290

503-272-1774

info@ecologyoutdoors.org

EIN no. 20-3710367

