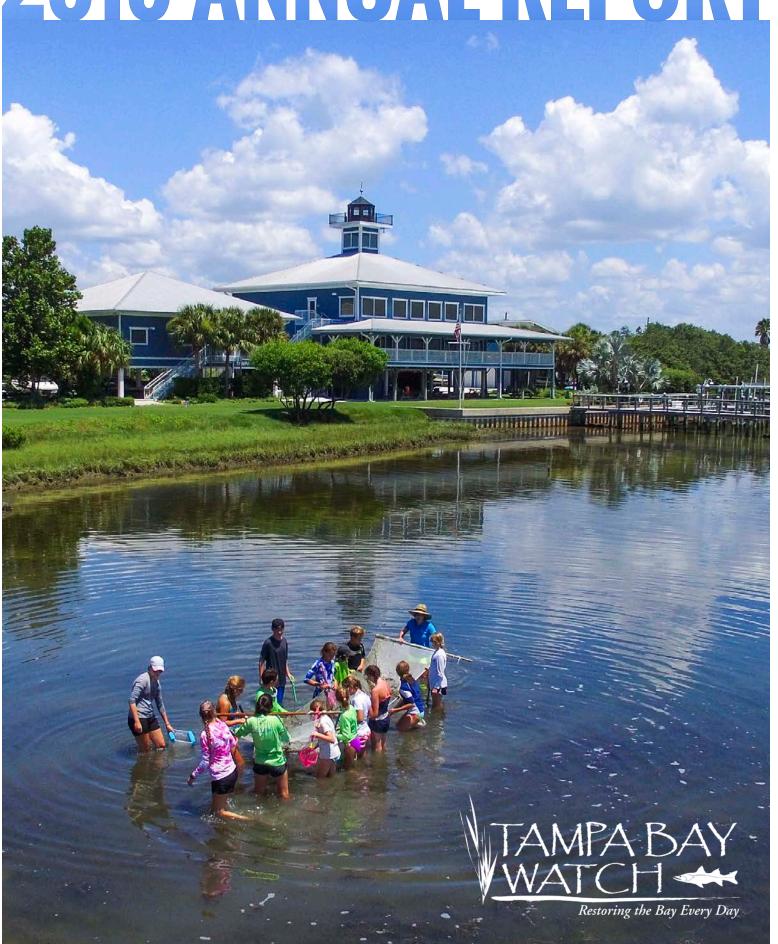
2019 ANNUAL REPORT





## 2019 Annual Report

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Tampa Bay Watch Marine and Education Center

3000 Pinellas Bayway South Tierra Verde, FL 33716

**Tel:** 727-867-8166 **Fax:** 727-867-8188

Web: tampabaywatch.org



Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center at the St. Pete Pier

700 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave NE

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

**Tel:** 727-291-4103

Web: tbwdiscoverycenter.org



#### MISSION:

Tampa Bay Watch is dedicated to the protection and restoration of the Tampa Bay estuary through scientific and educational programs.

#### **Administrative and Development Staff**

Peter A. Clark, President Michelle Andersen John Anderson Pamela Arbisi Rachel Arndt Leanna Jackson Tiana Kirby Jill Kunesh Jamey Miller Michelle Yepez Rachel Zafar Jon Ziegler

#### **Discovery Center Staff**

Dwayne Virgint

#### **Restoration and Education Staff**

Jordan Findley Matt Flynn Melanie Grillone Serra Herndon Samantha Johnstor Andy Lykens Katie Mastenbrook Audrey Mitchell Eric Plage Amy Rothenhoefer Melinda Spall

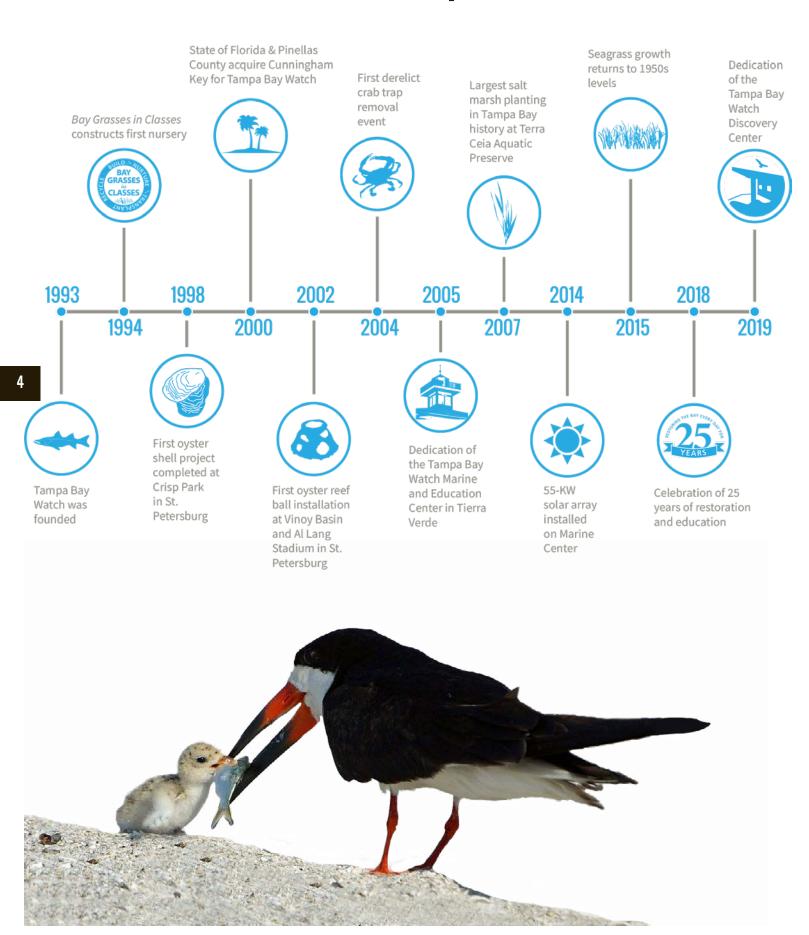
#### **Board of Directors**

Mary Ann Renfrow, Chair Mark Chmielewski, Vice-

Doug Sokolowski, Treasurer/Secretary Matthew S. Bisset
Derek Houston
Lari Johnson
Kevin Kelso

Travis Parker Steve Stanley Larry Weiner Mike Wilson

## The History of Tampa Bay Watch







## **Letter from the President**

Restoration, Education, and Expansion

This year was certainly a busy one as our staff and Board of Directors worked doubletime in order to prepare for the opening of the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center at the new St. Pete Pier while continuing to run our handson habitat restoration and environmental education programs.

Our staff took part in several workshops and brainstorming sessions in order to design interactive and engaging exhibits for the Discovery Center. In addition to our Discovery Center Capital Campaign, a new Founding Membership program was developed to support our capacity to grow program and operational opportunities. Among significant milestones, the dedication of the Discovery Center was celebrated on April 2 in appreciation of our generous sponsors, including the Milkey Family Foundation, who is the naming sponsor.

At the same time, our staff worked diligently to implement our restoration and education programs. The science staff wrapped up a significant three-year oyster reef project at McKay Bay. We expanded citizen science efforts by offering Florida Microplastics Awareness Projects workshops and hosted our first Vertical

Oyster Garden building project. It was the most successful year of the monofilament fishing line program with 836 miles of line recycled!

We applaud all of our members, partners, and supporters for all that you do to help move Tampa Bay Watch's environmental initiatives forward as we begin the next chapter of our organization by opening the Discovery Center. I would like to thank the entire community for supporting the restoration of the bay every day. Each volunteer, member, partner, and sponsor truly does make a difference and plays a key role in the important work that we do at Tampa Bay Watch. Thank you, all!

Sincerely,

Peter A. Clark
President and Founder





Thank you to our generous sponsors and partners who made possible this exciting new chapter for our organization!

Congratulations to everyone who worked so hard to make the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center a reality.

#### Discovery Center Presenting Sponsors

Milkey Family Foundation Official Tourism Sponsor: Visit St. PeteClearwater Exhibit Gallery Sponsor Terry and Ginny McCarthy Eco-Vessel Sponsor The Spurlino Foundation

#### **Leadership Gifts**

City of St. Petersburg
Pinellas Community
Visionaries W.A. "Bill"
Waters, Jr. and Alain A. Cerf
Francis and Gertrude Levett
Foundation
Rays Baseball Foundation
and Rowdies Soccer Fund
Anonymous
George and Isabel Adams
George and Debbie Baxter
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Bonefish Grill

Mark Chmielewski and Linda **Jantschek** Randal and Sharon Cochrane Margaret E. Dickins **Foundation Duke Energy Foundation General Dynamics** Joan and Dick Jacobs **Endowment** Kevin and Amy Kelso In Memory: Frank and Alice Lay, Who Loved Tampa Bay The Moser Family Harry and Beverly Nicklaus Margaret and David Perry Foundation Joe and Robin Reed The Risser Family Drs. Eli and Janet Marley-Rose Abigail Seldin and Whitney Haring-Smith The Sokolowski Family Fred and Carol Whaley Ken and Vicki Wilson The Woodnote Foundation

## Discovery Center Founding Members

Joe and Nancy Adams Amuni Financial, Inc. Michael, Pamela, and Adam Arbisi Jennifer and Lowry Baldwin **Biltmore Construction** Carbiener Family Charitable **Fund** Catalina Marketing Charitable Foundation Helen, Max and Rudy Consoni Pete and Sharon Dagostino **Dream Big Fund** Larry and Emily Fasan Frank E. Duckwall **Foundation** Scott and Natalie Gebicke Guy Harvey Ocean **Foundation** Kathy and Roger Herrnsteen Kathryn Howd and Edward

Rucks

Court and April James Greg and Dianne Johansen Garner and Connie Koons Charles and Laurie Lowe Mahaffey Family Foundation Jacob and Deborah Mast Terry and Ginny McCarthy McNeel Family Fund Kim and Chris Moench Mary Ann and R. Gary Renfrow Sabal Trust Kathy and Joe Saunders The Saunders Foundation **Bert and Margaret Smith** St. Petersburg Audubon Society Brian and Belinda Sullivan TSE Industries / Klingel **Family Foundation** Mr. Chip Webster and Dr. Debra Doud Larry Weiner and Yvonne Grimm Rosemarie Williams Mike and Rita Wilson

## **Discovery Center**

## Taking Learning to a New Level at the St. Pete Pier in 2020

Located halfway down the new St Pete Pier's over-water walkway, the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center will open in summer of 2020. The Exhibit Gallery will tell the story of Tampa Bay and share the history and recovery of this unique ecosystem, and the role of Tampa Bay Watch, to visitors from around the corner and around the world. The focal point of the Exhibit Gallery is a centerpiece aquarium that showcases many of the species found in our local waters. There will also be a touch tank, interactive displays, video presentations, and docent-led tours which will combine for an unforgettable experience and a newfound respect for our local environment.

The official name of the building will be the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center presented by the Milkey Family Foundation, which will honor the \$1 million donation by Kevin and

Jeanne Milkey. As Mr. Milkey stated during the Discovery Center Dedication and Appreciation Day on April 2, "We really support [Tampa Bay Watch's] mission of protecting and restoring Tampa Bay waterways and the education programs that [they] provide. Jeanne and I are passionate about protecting the environment. I think that the way we need to do that—and Tampa Bay Watch is doing that—is through education."

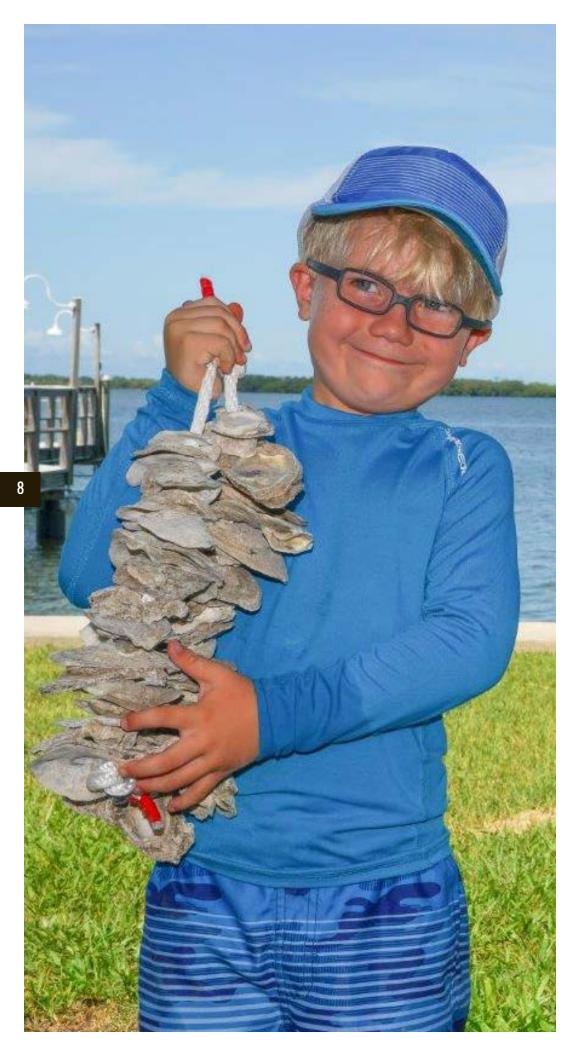
Duke Energy Foundation presented a check of \$100,000 to Tampa Bay Watch to support a multi-level habitat restoration program that will be showcased in the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center at the new St. Petersburg Pier. Funds will also help construct a living shoreline exhibit where children and adults can use a touch-screen platform to build a living shoreline habitat.







1



#### A New Kind of Gardening: Vertical Oyster Gardens (VOGs)

## Innovative technique will improve water quality in urbanized settings

Our first VOG-building project brought community volunteers together in June to build 1,150 VOGs in just 2.5 hours. Busy hands worked to string oyster shells—recycled from local restaurants—onto rope.

"500 VOGs will be suspended from docks at Gulfport Marina to create a hard substrate where juvenile oysters can attach and develop. Water quality measurements will be taken just before installation, then trained citizen volunteers will again measure at six- and twelve-month points," said Eric Plage, Tampa Bay Watch Environmental Specialist. The data collected during the first year will be shared with Tampa Bay Watch as part of our ongoing research.

VOGs can last for several years and do not require special permitting. Each 3-foot long VOG encourages from 50 to 100 juvenile oysters to attach, where they can grow to adulthood.

Oysters provide multiple benefits to the bay. They are a food source for birds and fish. Many small fish, crabs, shrimp, and other critters live among oysters, providing food for large fish and wildlife. Oyster habitats are a great place to catch fish. Most importantly, oysters are natural filters, cleaning an average of 2-5 gallons of water an hour. More oysters mean a cleaner bay!

## How we Restored Tampa Bay in 2019



#### **Oyster Shell Bars**

Improving water quality by reducing shoreline erosion and promoting oyster habitats.



**583** volunteers

219 tons of fossilized shell12,676 square feet of new reef



#### **Fishing Line Recycling**

Helping protect wildlife from unnecessary injury or death. Volunteers also monitor and collect fishing line for recycling.



74 volunteers
836 miles of line recycled
195 collection tubes
69 locations



#### **Oyster Reef Balls**

Stabilizing shorelines, providing hard bottom habitats for fish and wildlife resources, and promoting water quality improvements.



482 volunteers
553 reef balls built
500 reef balls installed
320 feet of new reef created



#### **Coastal Cleanups**

Protecting marine creatures and humans from trash and marine debris that floats onto the shorelines.



410 volunteers

**5,200** pounds of debris removed



#### **Great Bay Scallop Search**

A fun community participation program with the goal to record the status of the local bay scallop population.



**127** volunteers **51** scallops recorded



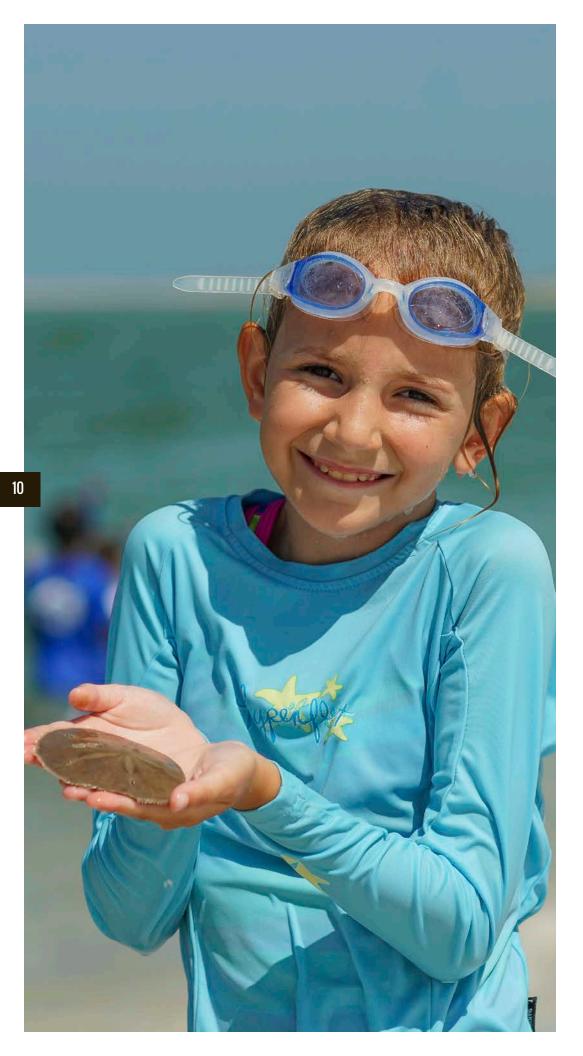
#### Derelict Crab Trap Removal

Removing abandoned traps that entrap and entangle marine creatures, as well as create boating safety hazards.



**36** airboats **82** volunteers

**202** derelict crab traps removed



#### **Bay Education for All**

Inspiring knowledge with experience—for all Tampa Bay youth

Estuary EDventures teaches about the importance of the Tampa Bay estuary in daily life and about manmade and natural impacts on the estuary, as well as what can be done to restore the health of our local estuary.

It is our hope to instill in all students who participate in our field trips a genuine love and respect for Tampa Bay and the multitude of species that call it home.

In 2019, 46% of the field trips facilitated at Tampa Bay Watch were with schools that are designated Title I School or who are deemed academically at-risk. We continue to strive to provide free educational field trip opportunities for low socioeconomic school groups in the Tampa Bay area.

Many school-aged children from financially disadvantaged households in the Tampa Bay area have never been on a boat or seen the beach.

We believe it is essential to continue to provide high-quality field trip opportunities for the Tampa Bay region—even to those schools and families who cannot afford to pay field trip fees. Every child should be able to experience the beauty and productivity of Tampa Bay, regardless of their family's economic status.

## Teaching Tampa Bay in 2019



#### **Summer Camps**

Our Estuary EDventures daycamp program gives kids the opportunity to explore the estuary by snorkel, kayak, and boat.



228 campers attended **40** days of camp **20** scholarships provided



#### **Field Trips**

Giving kids an up-close and personal experience with the interconnectedness of water quality, habitats, and the food web in the estuary and ocean.



3.403 students attended **692** educators 101 school field trips





#### **Bay Grasses in Classes**

Our school-based native plant nursery program fosters a sense of stewardship by students who grow a source of native wetland plants for use in restoration projects.



**1,4255** students 13 participating schools **5,550** native grasses transplanted







#### Citizen Science

Interactive workshops which give students and volunteers the opportunity to collect scientific data to contribute to worldwide projects on seahorses, microplastics, and water quality.



**364** students and **60** educators recorded viable data for the iSeahorse citizen project, catching and measuring 45+ seahorses.

20 volunteers and 273 students gathered 29 litter samples, contributing data to the Florida Microplastic Awareness Project.

**85** students participated in Philippe Cousteau's EarthEcho Water Challenge by collecting and testing local water parameters.

## Tampa Bay Watch Tarpon Rodeo

#### 14th Annual Tarpon Rodeo, Honoring Ed Alber

The 14th Annual Tarpon Rodeo raised \$120,000+ for our education and restoration programs.

With 24 teams, a record 23 tarpon were caught and released successfully in the tournament on May 31, 2019.

As proud partners with Tampa Bay Watch, we are thrilled that Team Bonefish Grill won first prize with Captain Jared Simonetti.

We introduced mobile bidding for the first time with a goal to cut down on paper waste and increase participation in Tarpon Rodeo's Castaway Soirée auction at the beautiful TradeWinds Island Resort.

Thank you to all our sponsors, donors, volunteers and guests that supported Tarpon Rodeo and Castaway Soirée!









### **DirectedCapital**



























≈AQUAWORX







MIKE & BOB SIERRA **FAMILY FOUNDATION** 



FLORIDA STATE FENCE















#### Fundraising:

## **Evening for the Bay**

#### 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Event presented by Progressive Insurance

Tampa Bay Watch and Progressive Insurance thank the guests and supporters who helped make the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Evening for the Bay, on November 7, 2019, the most exciting year on record!

As each guest stepped onto the red carpet, they were greeted with the sights and sounds of a bustling Vegas scene tucked into the hidden gem of the Tampa Bay Watch Marine and Education Center.

Bonefish Grill and TradeWinds Island Resorts delighted with fine buffet stations while specialty cocktails flowed, thanks to

Cooper's Hawk Winery, Great Bay Distributors, Kozuba & Sons Distillery, and Old St. Pete.

The Tampa Bay Yacht Management High Roller's Casino was alive with supporters who tossed the dice for coastal restoration and friends gathering around tables overlooking the bay to be enchanted by the tunes of Frank Sinatra. Expansive silent and live auctions were the highlight of the evening with over \$145,000 being raised for the mission of Tampa Bay Watch!

PRESENTED BY:



DINNER SPONSOR:









BEVERAGE SPONSORS:































ADDITIONAL EVENT SPONSORS:





























#### Tampa Bay Watch Crew Enjoy a Backstage Pass at Busch Gardens

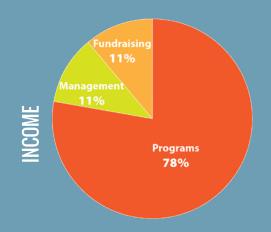
Tampa Bay Watch staff was treated to a special behind-the-scenes tour of Busch Gardens around the holidays. Highlights of the day included meeting the resident elephants and kangaroos, experiencing a safari to feed giraffes, and touring the animal hospital and nutritional center.

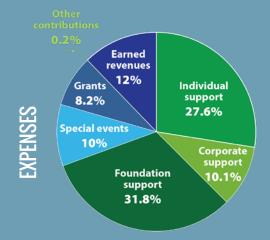
SeaWorld Busch Gardens Conservation Fund has been a long-term supporter of Tampa Bay Watch by funding our annual Scallop Search and marine debris programs. Additionally, many of Busch Gardens staff participate as volunteers at our restoration projects.



## **2019 Financial Summary**

Tampa Bay Watch's 20 fulltime staff members seek to fulfill its mission through habitat restoration programs relying on volunteer support and youth education each year with field trips and summer camps. Tampa Bay Watch significantly increased its annual budget to \$2.6 million through fundraising efforts to prepare for the opening of the new Discovery Center on the St. Pete Pier.







## 2019 GuideStar Seal of Transparency

Tampa Bay Watch is proud to be a acknowledged as a platinum organization by GuideStar, the world's largest source of nonprofit information.

We've earned the platinum seal of approval for sharing our full and complete story with the world, including quantitative metrics; indepth financial information; strategies, and progress toward our mission on guidestar.org.





## **Volunteerism: Digging in for a Better Bay**

#### Who do we appreciate? Our VOLUNTEERS!

Tampa Bay Watch hosted our 8th annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on March 29 in an effort to express our gratitude to everyone who supports our habitat restoration projects, education programs, community outreach events, and fundraisers throughout the year. Around 100 active volunteers were in attendance—all of whom enjoyed dinner, a free raffle, some volunteer camaraderie,

and a beautiful sunset. Congratulations to our volunteers of the year: Frank Gallant, David Price, and Jenna & Gail Davenport.

TBW staff congratulate volunteer Frank Gallant for his lifetime achievement award

#### 2019 Volunteer Statistics

We survey our volunteers to maximize our communication effectiveness and to ensure the happiness of our volunteer partners!

94% feel prepared for the project based on our reminders

99% anticipate volunteering again

94% feel welcomed and appreciated at the project

## 2019 Bay Guardians

The Tampa Bay Guardians support our mission to restore and protect the bay with a three-year pledge of at least \$1,000 annually.



#### **Stewards**

(\$5.000 - \$9.999 annually) Eric Hull & Bryan Baldwin

#### **Advocates**

(\$2.500 - \$4.999 annually)

Bobby & Elena Bussey Jeff and Linda Carbiener Frank and Dana Dalton Christopher French Firat Gezen James T. Pascia, DDS Mary Ann & Gary Renfrow

#### Leaders

(\$1.000 - \$2.499 annually)

Pat & Paul Brown Peter & Sharon Dagostino Dr. Bill Heller Kathryn Boeckman Howd Janet & Harold Hurwitz Craig Jordan & Elaine Koziar-Jordan Steve & Mary Stanley Bill & Dyreese Sweeney Mike & Rita Wilson

#### **Bay Guardians Bobby and Elena Bussey**

Bobby and Elena Bussey have been active members of Tampa Bay Watch for over ten years. They show their support by actively volunteering to represent us at community outreach events, attending our fundraisers, and being Tampa Bay Guardians. Bobby expresses why they have chosen to support Tampa Bay Watch: "As St. Petersburg natives, Elena and I grew up enjoying Tampa Bay. Tampa Bay Watch is a

dedicated local organization dedicated to preserving and improving our waters. They allow us to return what for so many years we took for granted."





## 2019 Legacy Society

The Tampa Bay Watch Legacy Society recognizes those who have included Tampa Bay Watch in their will or estate plans to help ensure a healthy bay for generations.

Through a provision in your will, you can make a simple yet significant gift that will provide for the future of Tampa Bay Watch's work to protect and restore the Tampa Bay estuary and create a lasting legacy of your interest.

Legacy gifts to Tampa Bay Watch help us to achieve longterm financial stability and sustainability.

#### **2019 Legacy Society members:**

Anonymous donor Peter & Marion Clark Al Donn & Dorothy Holle Stephanie Green Joan & Dick Jacobs **Donald James Lyons** Captain Steve McCreary Drs. Eli and Janet Marley Rose



# JABIL

# Rays and Jabil go to bat for bay restoration and education!

We are extremely grateful to the Tampa Bay Rays and Jabil for supporting bay restoration and education!

Tampa Bay Watch was presented with a generous \$15,000 check to support our mission at the Rays game on April 20, 2019 in honor of Earth Day and in celebration of our partnership.



Pictured from left: Jennifer Tran, Vice President of Tampa Bay Rays Human Resources & Organizational Engagement; Stephen Thomas, Executive Director of Rays Baseball Foundation; Bill Wiener Jr., Vice President of Tampa Bay Rays Employee and Community Development; Andrew Gallo, Jabil Global Communications Program Manager; Peter Clark, Tampa Bay Watch President; Kevin Milkey, Milkey Family Foundation; Pamela Arbisi, former Tampa Bay Watch Director of Development; Marion Clark, Tampa Bay Watch; and Jeanne Milkey, Milkey Family Foundation.

## **2019 Corporate Members**

Tampa Bay Watch Corporate Members are active partners working to protect and restore the Tampa Bay estuary. Our unique estuarine environment helps drive the local economy, provides habitat for a variety of important wildlife, and is a primary factor in the quality of life for the region. Corporate Members help make Tampa Bay a healthier, more desirable place to work and play. They also influence and support the education of thousands of young people, teaching them the importance of environmental stewardship.

400 Beach Seafood & Tap House

Alden Suites

American Strategic Insurance

Amuni Financial, Inc

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ARS Wealth Advisors

Baldwin Krystyn Sherman

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Southpoint Financial Services

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Tampa Bay Yacht Management

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**Tennant Special Risk** 

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TruGreen Commercial

Wilcox Nursery & Landscape

Wiss

**WRB** Enterprises

We apologize for any accidental omissions from this list. Thank you for your support!



## 2019 Donors and Contributors

#### \$50,000+

Bloomin' Brands
Bud & Fran Risser
Cindy Fletcher
Duke Energy Foundation
George and Debbie Baxter
Milkey Family Foundation
Mosaic
Rays Baseball Foundation
Spurlino Foundation
The Francis and Gertrude Levett
Foundation

#### \$25,000 - \$49,999

Abigail Seldin & Whitney Haring-Smith Anonymous Friends of the Tampa Bay National Wildlife Refuges General Dynamics Joyce and Larry Beltz Randy & Sharon Cochrane

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The Woodnote Foundation

Tampa Bay MS & Tampa Port Ministries Inc.

#### \$5,000 - \$9,999

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#### \$1,000 - \$2,499

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Pete & Sharon Dagostino

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Sourcetoad

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Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of

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Tampa Bay Rays

Tampa Orlando Pinellas Jewish Foundation

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