A Year of Discovery

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



2020 Annual Report

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Discovery Center at the St. Pete Pier
700 2nd Ave NE
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Tel: 727-291-4103
tbwdiscoverycenter.org



What a Year.

This year was definitely one for the history books with a global pandemic completely changing our lives. In mid-March many of our employees began to work from home, all of our scheduled spring special events and volunteer projects were greatly reduced, and the opening of our new Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center at the St. Pete Pier was delayed. Thankfully Tampa Bay Watch was able to secure a federal Paycheck Protection Program loan to enable us to keep our programs moving forward. Additionally, our dedicated supporters stepped up in a big way to ensure our continued growth. Including the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, who developed a COVID-19 Nonprofit Needs list in order to make it easy for donors to assist the urgent and emerging needs of local nonprofits.

We celebrated the grand opening of the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center in June with a limited sneak peek to our generous sponsors and partners with whom this exciting new chapter for our organization would not have been possible. The Discovery Center opened to the public in early July with a great turnout and lots of wonderful accolades from guests experiencing the bay in a new way. All visitors were required to wear a mask and social distance to maintain health and safety guidelines.

I am greatly appreciative to our members, partners, and supporters for your generous support which has allowed us to not only survive, but succeed throughout this tumultuous year. 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

2020 Crew

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Nina Ardle, Development Director

Peter Clark, President
Serra Herndon, Habitat Restoration
Director
Katie Mastenbrook, Director of Education
Dwayne Virgint, Executive Director of
Discovery Center

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Our Mission:

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

Since 1993... 2020 Grand opening of Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center. 2018 Celebration of 25 years of restoration and education 2015 Seagrass growth returns to 1950s levels 2014 55-KW solar array installed on Marine Center 2007 Largest salt marsh planting in history at Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve Dedication of the Tampa Bay Watch Marine Education Center in Tierra Verde 2004 First derelict crab trap removal event 2002 First oyster reef ball installation at Vinoy Basin and Al Lang Stadium in St. Petersburg 2000 State of Florida and Pinellas County acquire Cunningham Key for Tampa Bay Watch First oyster shell project completed at Crisp Park in St. Petersburg 1994 Bay Grasses in Classes constructs first nursery 1993 Tampa Bay Watch founded



Discovery Center

Opened July, 2020





We're thrilled to offer the opportunity for the public to experience our beautiful bay in a new way. The Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center presented by the Milkey Family Foundation opened in July at the new St. Pete Pier with a goal to inspire visitors to become stewards of their own environment by sharing the story of the recovery and ongoing restoration of Tampa Bay. The center's Exhibit Gallery features aquariums that showcase a variety of species found in local waters, interactive displays, video presentations, and docent-led tours. There is also a state-of-the-art classroom that hosts field trips, after-school programs, summer camps, and fun and engaging marine science public programs—there is something for everyone!



Kevin and Jeanne Milkey cut the ribbon to commemorate the opening of the Discovery Center in June 2020. The Milkey Family Foundation is our presenting sponsor, honoring their \$1M donation which enables us to make a dream into a reality.

Thank you to our Discovery Center supporters!

Presenting Sponsor:
Milkey Family Foundation
Official Tourism Sponsor:
Visit St. Pete/Clearwater
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.
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Discovery Center Founding Members:

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Discovery Center Founding Members Joe and Nancy Adams Amuni Financial, Inc. Michael, Pamela, and Adam Arbisi Auer Family Jennifer and Lowry Baldwin Biltmore Construction Carbiener Family Charitable Fund Catalina Marketing Charitable Foundation In memory of Raymond and Annabelle Cochran Helen, Max and Rudy Consoni Pete and Sharon Dagostino Dream Big Fund Larry and Emily Fasan Frank E. Duckwall Foundation **ECOmersion Kayak Tours** and the Shaffer Family Scott and Natalie Gebicke Guy Harvey Ocean

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2020 Restoration

Program accomplishments



Oyster shell bars

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

89 volunteers placed **72** tons of fossilized shell to form **4,104** square feet of new reef.



Oyster reef balls

Stabilizing shorelines, hard bottom habitats for wildlife, better water quality

320 volunteers built **625** reef balls and placed **500** reef balls in Tampa Bay.



Coastal Cleanups

Protecting wildlife and people from trash and marine debris that floats onto shorelines

219 volunteers removed **1,449** pounds of debris from shorelines and inland areas.



Great Bay Scallop Search

Where community joins together to record the status of the bay scallop population.

158 volunteers recorded **133** bay scallops in upper and lower Tampa Bay.



Fishing Line Recycling

Helping protect wildlife from unnecessary injury or death; line is collected for recycling.

59 volunteers removed **826** miles of fishing line and recycled **127** miles of line from **208** monotubes in **75** locations.



Native Plantings

Strengthening healthy shorelines to withstand effects of storms and provide essential habitat.

13 volunteers planted **6,700** plugs of native grasses to restore **9,529** square feet of habitat.



Clearing Marine Debris from our Waters

Even during a pandemic, marine debris program yielded results Despite 2020 being a difficult year, our monofilament recycling program had great results since it can be accomplished with single volunteers. Tampa Bay Watch maintained 208 monotubes (monofilament recycling stations) at 75 docks, piers, and parks around the bay. 59 volunteers collected and retrieved 826 miles of fishing line from the monotubes throughout Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, and Pasco Counties. 127 lbs. of monofilament was recycled.

Additionally our Do-it-Yourself (DIY) Neighborhood Cleanups proved to be a perfect way to participate in projects during the pandemic. Our annual summer cleanup and International Coastal Cleanup/National Estuaries Day Cleanup in the fall were successfully conducted in this format. It's amazing to see what we can do, even while socially distanced to work towards a cleaner future!

2020 Education

Program accomplishments





Summer Camps

Day camps give kids the opportunity to explore the bay by snorkel, kayak, and boat.

40 campers attended **25** days of camp—**three** of whom attended based on scholarship grants.

Bay Grasses in Classes

School-based native plant nursery program growing native plants.

1,050 middle and high school students from **14** participating schools raised and transplanted **1,112** plugs of native grasses to restore **6,098** square feet of habitat.

Field Trips

Where kids enjoy personal experiences with bay restoration, water quality, and the estuary.

823 students attended **54** field trips, along with **137** educators.



iSeahorse

A database for monitoring global seahorse populations and conservation efforts.

In collaboration with Project Seahorse and iNaturalist, **58** students and **8** educators caught, measured, and released **20** seahorses.



Florida Microplastic Awareness Project

Supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

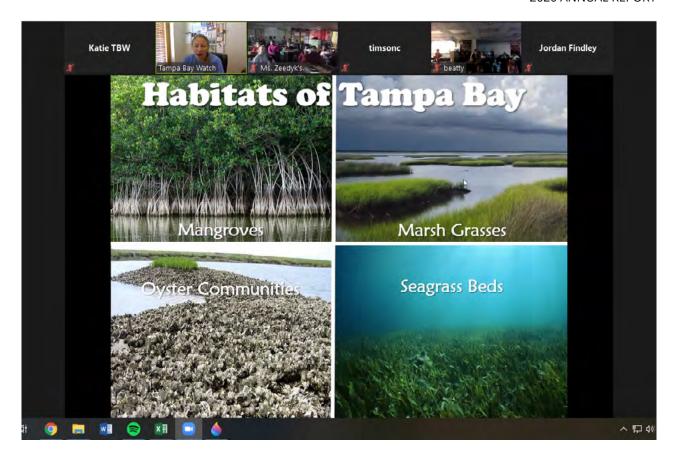
21 volunteers and **31** students gathered **4** litter samples, contributing data to the project.



Ocean Conservancy International Coastal Cleanup

Cleaning up Tampa Bay.

70 community volunteers walked **49** miles to remove **579** pounds of debris throughout the Tampa Bay region.



New Tricks of the Trade

Education efforts go online during 2020

Education is a vital part of our mission at Tampa Bay Watch. We offer education programs that introduce estuarine ecology and habitat restoration through hands-on school field trips. Our education department was proactive in the continuance of our programs during this unprecedented time since public school field trips were not permitted for the 2020 school year. In response to these policy changes, our educators found it necessary to strategically modify our programs to better meet the needs of the community during these times through the development of traveling education kits.

Our education kits contain programmatic educational materials, resources, and lesson plans that can be delivered to schools to replace our on-site field trips and outreach visits. These kits include a combination of lesson plans and materials for hands-on activities, marine science labs, student-led experiments, and data science projects, adhering to Florida State Standards. The curricula is designed to be facilitated by the teacher or guided by Tampa Bay Watch staff virtually. The goal is to increase students' understanding of the function and importance of the coastal and marine habitats in the absence of field trips.

The Year of DIY

Fundraising takes another tact



2020 Tarpon Rodeo

A slightly modified event format didn't cast any shadows on this year's participating fishing teams! The 15th Annual Tarpon Rodeo presented by Great Bay Distributors raised more than \$40,000 in support of our programs and mission. With 22 teams competing this year, a total of eight tarpon were caught and released successfully in the tournament on Friday, July 17.

Congratulations to the Hancock Whitney team and Capt. Kyle Applefield for winning first prize in the Guardian Division!

We'd also like to thank all of our sponsors, donors, and volunteers who made Tarpon Rodeo a success!



Event sponsors:





































MARY & BOB SIERRA FAMILY FOUNDATION MATTHEW BISSET



TIERRA VERDE BAIT AND TACKLE



Event sponsors:

COASTAL PROPERTIES GROUP - LIZ HEINKEL







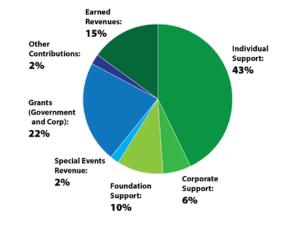


Holiday Bay Boutique

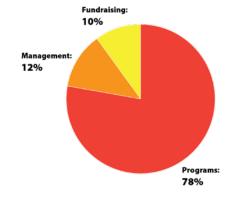
The 2020 Holiday Bay Boutique—our virtual fall fundraiser held in place of *Evening for the Bay*—raised more than \$20,000 for our programs and mission. We're grateful to our sponsors and to all who shopped with us!

Financial Snapshot





Expenses



The Discovery Center on the St. Pete Pier opened in July of 2020 which increased our annual budget and earned revenue through ticket sales. Special event income was down this year due to the pandemic, and individual contributions were up. Funds were received through the Payroll Protection Program. In accordance with the PPP funding agreement, the Organization's loan would be forgiven and converted into a grant once the Organization meets certain criteria related to its payroll, utility, and interest expenses over a specified measurement period.

Sustainable Giving

Programs that support us year after year

Tampa Bay Guardians

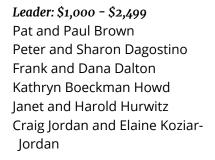
Annual giving for the bay's future

Tampa Bay Guardians support our mission to restore and protect the Bay with a three-year pledge of at least \$1,000 annually. If desired, Tampa Bay Guardian gifts can be designated for habitat restoration programs or the Estuary EDventures environmental education program.

We'd like to thank our 2020 Tampa Bay Guardians for their very generous support:

Advocate: \$2,500 - \$4,999

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



Erik Lieberman Steve and Mary Stanley Bill and Dyreese Sweeney Mike and Rita Wilson





Guardian Spotlight



Sharon & Pete Dagostino

Bay Guardians

Generous donors of Tampa Bay Watch for several years and TBW Guardians since 2017, the Dagostinos have supported our annual Evening for the Bay and Bay Life events, and most recently, have become Discovery Center Founding Members. When asked why they choose to invest in Tampa Bay Watch, Pete Dagostino stated that they both grew up in Tampa Bay and greatly enjoy living in the area. In Pete's words, "Tampa Bay Watch is doing an outstanding job putting life and beauty back in the bay." Thank you, Pete and Sharon, for your generous gift to the bay!



Corporate Members

Demonstrating environmental citizenship

Tampa Bay Watch corporate members are active partners in our efforts 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.

2020 Corporate Members:

4th Street Family Dentistry 400 Beach Seafood & Tap House Affinity CPA Alden Suites American Strategic Insurance Amuni Financial, Inc Argos USA LLC ARS Wealth Advisors Baldwin Krystyn Sherman Partners

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Calhoun International
Carmelita's Rum
Catalina Marketing

COMANCO Environmental Corp

Cooper's Hawk Winery
Coppertail Brewing Company

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Tampa Bay Pilots Association

Tampa Bay Rays

Tampa Bay Yacht Management

TECO Energy

Tennant Special Risk TJM Properties Tradewinds

TruGreen Commercial

Wilcox NWiss WRB Enterprises

Xenegradeursery & Landscape

Legacy Society

Ensuring a healthy bay for future generations

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. Legacy gifts help us to achieve long-term financial stability and sustainability.

2020 Legacy Society Members:

Anonymous donor Peter and Marion

Clark

Al Donn and Dorothy

Holle

Stephanie Green

Joan and Dick Jacobs Donald James Lyons Captain Steve

McCreary
Drs. Eli and Janet
Marley Rose



2020 All-star Volunteers

Do-gooders teamed up for the good of Tampa Bay

Our large group volunteer projects were mainly on hold during the pandemic with the exception of our do-it-yourself cleanups, monofilament recycling program, and Watergoat maintenance. In order to keep our habitat restoration projects going, we invited a small, but mighty group of committed volunteers, also known as our all-stars, to support our slate of fall projects. We limited each project to a maximum of twenty people including staff in order to accomplish oyster reef ball construction and installation, oyster shell bar installations, native plantings, and fishing line cleaning. We enforced safety requirements for the well-being of all participants including temperature checks, face masks, and social distancing. A special thanks to our all-stars for working side by side with us in a safe way to fulfill our mission!



"Whatever you
can do will make a
difference, and if we
all do something,
we'll make a heck of
a difference."

—Jim Iqler





Janet and Eli Rose

Volunteers, do-gooders

We couldn't accomplish anything without our amazing volunteers! We would like to acknowledge Janet and Eli Rose who have volunteered with Tampa Bay Watch since 2012, spending over 600 hours at our habitat restoration projects! Janet and Eli explain why they've chosen to invest their time with us: "For the past 25 years, Tampa Bay Watch has accomplished extraordinary work in the Tampa Bay estuary to restore and maintain water quality, improve the marine environment and ecosystems and educate today's youth on the importance of being stewards of our land and sea. We are very proud to be part of this wonderful organization as volunteers and donors."





Contributors

People whose efforts—financial or physical—made a difference in 2020

\$50,000+

John and Sheila Auer
Terry and Ginny McCarthy
Milkey Family Foundation
Mosaic
Pinellas County Board of County
Commissioners

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Honest 1 Auto Care Rays Baseball Foundation Spurlino Foundation Randy and Sharon Cochrane Community Foundation of Tampa Bay

Power Pole

\$10,000 - \$24,999

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