From the President’s Desk

WOW! What a year it has been. As I am writing this, we are in the midst of a global pandemic that is wreaking havoc on the country’s health and multiple crises that have exposed the great inequalities in our society in ways we could have never imagined.

Young people have stepped up in response to the chaos of 2020. This year alone, more than 4 million young people took to the streets to protest inequality and climate change. These young people recognized that we face severe environmental challenges and that those challenges are disproportionately impacting communities of color. At Earth Force we stand with these young people.

Our goal this year was simple: to use our experience creating civic engagement programs to help young people translate the passion from the marches into engagement in policy work and systemic environmental change. I am deeply proud of our work. As you will see in this report, we engaged thousands of adults in the support of 13,000 young people.

We are working with educators, environmental education organizations, and school systems to leverage the study of the environment with the application of those lessons to support environmental policy making. Many of you have joined us on this.

It is with gratitude, hope, and optimism that we move into 2021. The hard work and dedication of our staff has positioned us well moving forward.

Sincerely,

Vince Meldrum
President/CEO
MISSION

Earth Force engages young people as active citizens who improve the environment and their communities now and in the future.
The Power of Civic Experience

Research shows that civic experiences are an essential element of creating a prepared citizenry able to address systemic environmental issues.

“No other program provides this level of civic engagement. It's an opportunity to learn things in new ways. I don’t see that happening anywhere else.”

Virginia Educator
MOVING TO A VIRTUAL WORLD

The pandemic has been challenging for everyone – and particularly educators. When the hundreds of educators that we work with learned that they would be teaching online or in hybrid environments we made a hard pivot to help them. Between March and August, we reimagined the materials we provide and how we train educators.

Material Redesign
We redesigned our materials to meet new demands. Everything is new - from our Educator Guide to TIPS Cards.

Virtual PD
We designed an all new online professional development model and then ran 25 sessions!

Online Resources
We made our activities available for free at www.earthforceresources.org.

Catalog of Tools
We created a catalog of online tools educators can use and made it publicly available.
OUR STRATEGY

We draw from 20 years of experience and a wealth of research on effective STEM education, youth development, and civic engagement to influence how young people are engaged in environmental learning. Based on that knowledge we are moving three levers of change:

**PREPARE EDUCATORS**
In 2020 Earth Force directly trained and supported 161 educators.

**PREPARE ORGANIZATIONS**
In 2020 Earth Force trained and supported 45 organizations as they incorporated civics.

**STUDENT CONTESTS**
In 2020 we hosted student contests in two communities and launched new contests in two new states.
PREPARE EDUCATORS

*Earth Force provides professional development to educators from across the country.*

- Earth Force hosted 25 virtual professional development sessions between August and December.
- 100% of educators recommend Earth Force to their peers.
- 91% of educators reported increased student beliefs that they could make a difference.
- 84% of educators increased their emphasis on public policy when teaching about the environment.
PREPARE ORGANIZATIONS

The Alliance for Student Action is a group of organizations that support and/or promote youth-led civic action.

- **484** Alliance partners trained and supported 484 educators in 2020.
- **100** 100% of participating organizations plan to incorporate civics.
- **45** 45 organizations participated in Alliance activities in 2020.

Alliance for Student Action Growth
CONTESTS

Each year thousands of young people are taking action to improve the environment. Earth Force is committed to increasing awareness of the positive environmental impact of projects driven by young people.

We are excited to announce that the RISE Challenge is growing. This year we have launched pilots in Montana and Illinois. The movement to engage young people in community resilience is growing!

A group of young people participating in the Caring for our Watersheds contest successfully convinced the state to adopt indoor air quality standards that keeps toxic mold out of public schools. As one participant explained the impact, “What I learned is that I can create change. We found something we cared about, we found a solution, and we convinced the Senate to adopt our idea. Who would have thought that a bunch of introverted 13 year olds could do such a thing?”
For the last two years Steve Johnson’s Estes Park 6th Grade Science and Outdoor Adventure Club students have been using Earth Force’s RISE Challenge to study wildfire hazards in their community. Little did they know that their work would be used when their community was threatened by fires.

In the Spring of 2019 students presented their work at the Estes Park Mountain Festival. Through the Festival students educated community members on how to remove fuel sources from around homes and provided services to some Estes homeowners unable to take mitigation measures themselves. With wildfires raging across the Western U.S. the Estes Park students had planned a series of awareness events again last Spring. Just as they were getting started, Estes Park was hit by the Coronavirus. The student’s efforts were stopped by the pandemic. Then in mid-August, the Cameron Peak Fire ignited to the northwest of Estes Park.

For Johnson, in the light of the historic wildfire season in Colorado, “The students’ project seems more important than ever. People are recognizing the need for defensible space around their buildings, but some neighbors are better than others in tackling effective fuel clearance and mitigation measures.”

Johnson admitted to being frustrated with the pandemic impacting the student’s efforts, “We could have helped people prepare better.” When asked what he would do to in the future Johnson replied, “If I could do anything? I’d like to get the whole middle school, grades 6 - 8, engaged in this Earth Force program.”
## FY20 Financial Statements

### Income Breakdown
- **Grants & Contributions (69%)**
- **Government Grants (25%)**
- **Sales (3%)**
- **Other Income (3%)**

### Expense Breakdown
- **Program (89%)**
- **Management (7%)**
- **Fundraising (4%)**

### Statement of Activities

#### Support and Revenue:
- Grants and contributions: $590,124
- Government grants: 211,628
- Product sales, net of cost of goods sold of $91 (2020) and $5,787 (2019): 22,979
- In-kind contributions: 2,558
- Other income: 29,007
- Interest and dividend income: 381
- Net assets released from restrictions: 0
- **Total support and revenue:** 856,677

#### Expenses:
- Program Services: 769,353
- Supporting services -
  - Management and general: 61,477
  - Fundraising: 38,434
- **Total Expenses:** 869,264

#### Change in Net Assets
- **$ (12,587)**
**BOARD AND STAFF**

**2020 Board of Directors**
- John Vogel, Board Chair
  Natural Resource Planning Services
- Kit Ambrose, Treasurer
- Bridget Burnell
  General Motors
- Amelia Bernstein
  Student
- Anna Brown
  Aequita Consulting LLC
- Michael Evans
  Vines of Mendoza
- Ana Humphrey
  Student
- Jesse Sutz
  Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck

**2020 Earth Force Staff**
- Grace Edinger
  Chief Program Officer
- Jennifer Hanson
  Grants Manager
- Alyssa McConkey
  Program Manager
- Sarah Pacheco
  Chief Operating Officer
- Alexis Thorbecke
  Program Manager
- Hayley Valley
  Grant Writer
- Justin Zakoren
  Program Manager
Thank you to the supporters and partners who have made it possible for Earth Force to thrive in 2020.

A special thanks to the educators who use Earth Force in their classrooms each year.

You are our heroes!