



2024-2025 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



2024-25 YEAR in REVIEW

As we put another year at Splash in our rearview mirror, I cannot help but be pleased about how much impact we are having on the Sacramento region. Splash opened the year by welcoming a new partnership with Republic Services to now add our 7th program, "Trash Talk." This program is an in-classroom presentation to teach students and their parents about the complexities of waste sorting and overall waste education. We created an engaging hands-on presentation that students and teachers are loving!

With the addition of this program, Splash was able to connect with roughly 20,475 students and 643 teachers between July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025. All of our programs have been growing reach just a little and the reason we are only seeing this marginal growth, year over year, is the lack of sustainable funding. Splash has the capacity to connect far more teachers and students with the great outdoors in Sacramento, yet we simply do not have sufficient funding to even continue at our current pace.

A huge THANK YOU goes out to each and every matching fund donor and individual or organizational donor that helped us have our BIGGEST Big Day of Giving ever, in May, raising over \$154,000!

This year we were hit with some challenges, including a major roof leak that flooded the Splash Center and required us to gut one of our rooms. We also had some plumbing complications, which forced us to rearrange some field trips. We were then informed that our County funding, through Regional Parks, was at risk, but with the support of speakers from throughout the community, we were grateful to have the Supervisors grant us another year of funding. We know that we are going to need to contribute to the roof replacement costs, which is one reason Splash is going to be hosting fundraising events in in the coming year and trying to find new Splash donors to join our current supporters.

Splash has always been dedicated to helping children understand and value our natural world! We will continue to do so through the ongoing support of our donors and sponsors. As we close this fiscal year, we're grateful for the last year, but we are forging ahead with some big goals for 2025-26. Thank you for being a part of our journey!

With Gratitude,

Mackenzie Wieser

Mackenzie Wieser
CEO, Sacramento Splash



MISSION STATEMENT:

Helping children understand and value our natural world.

VISION:

A generation of children who value the natural world and take an active role in its protection.

SACRAMENTO SPLASH BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

President: Nigel Moore

Vice President: Bryan Young

Treasurer: Eugene Lee

Secretary: Obadiah Bartholomy

Melanie Okoro

Chloe Grinberg

Allie Dumas

Volker Otto

Splash CEO:

Mackenzie Wieser

*Sacramento Splash
Is a 501c3
Public charity.*



WHO WE ARE

For over **25 years** Sacramento Splash (“Splash”) has delivered hands-on science education programs centered on the environment. Splash is guided by its mission, in hopes of providing ALL children access to experience nature. To date, we have connected roughly **220,500** students with nature.

Splash has always been dedicated to helping municipalities fulfill their Watershed and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Education and Outreach requirements, while ensuring children have access to opportunities to form connections with nature. Working for many jurisdictions across Sacramento and El Dorado Counties and the Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership (SSQP), Splash provides the Life in Our Watershed: Investigating Vernal Pools Program (“IVP”) to schools, the Youth Environmental Leadership Camp (“YELC”) to individual children, and Project AWE (Agriculture, Water, Energy & Environment) to schools throughout the Sacramento County. Splash also provides in-class presentations of Splash in the Class (“SITC”) within Sacramento and El Dorado Counties and Trash Talk (“TT”) in Citrus Heights and Elk Grove.

This annual report summarizes work performed during Fiscal Year 2024-25 (01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025) by Splash.

Connect with us



@sacsplash



sacsplash.org

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2024-25 by the numbers...

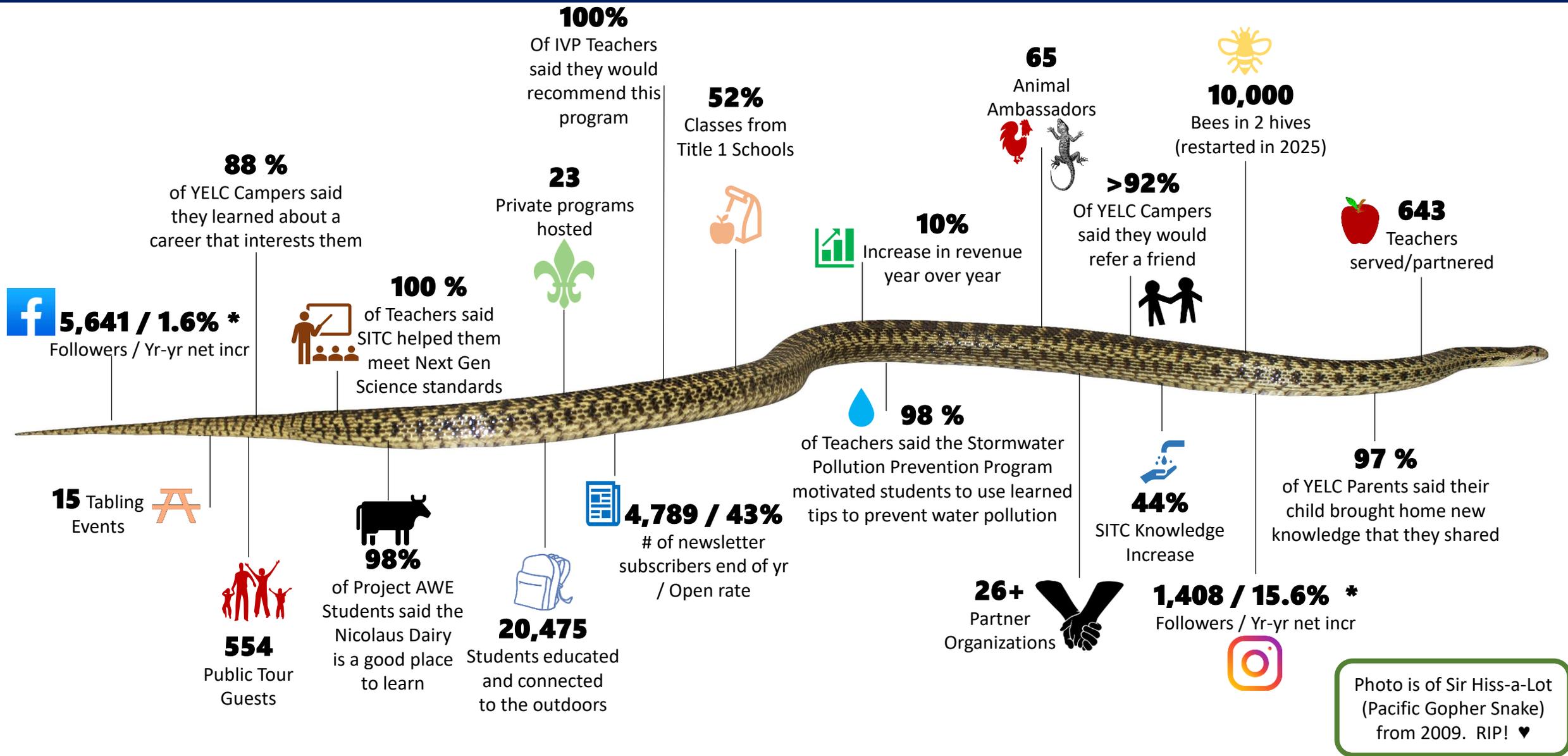


Photo is of Sir Hiss-a-Lot (Pacific Gopher Snake) from 2009. RIP! ♥

* On Facebook and Instagram, Splash ranks above the 75th percentile across the nation in followers and interactions compared to similar profile types, with content that resonates and inspires meaningful engagement.

Life in Our Watershed: Investigating Vernal Pools (IVP)

FIND OUT WHAT THIS PROGRAM IS ALL ABOUT [HERE!](#)



91%

Knowledge gained by students (Post- vs Pre-Assessments)

99

Classes completed our IVP curriculum and came to Splash for a culminating fieldtrip

98%

Of teachers said our curriculum and field trips were educational, grade-level appropriate, and helped them meet standards

52%

Of classes came from Title 1 schools (13% increase from last year)

What's new?

This year IVP connected approximately **3,000 students** (plus chaperones and families) with nature and science across **99 classes** from **34 schools**. This includes **22 new teachers** and **2 new schools!**

The vernal pools filled early this time, and multiple hard freezes contributed to an exceptionally dense and diverse population of vernal pool macroinvertebrates early in the season. Students were able to dip into the pools and identify the same critters they had been learning about in class all the way through the end of March. For a few weeks, we were even able to incorporate both wet phase and flower phase content, providing a seamless and enriching transition between seasonal stages.

A shift in bus allocation disrupted some field trip plans, including one on the day-of. We got them rescheduled through coordination, flexibility, and a commitment to making field trips accessible to all students.

This year we had 3 students with limited mobility (1 wheelchair-bound and 2 blind, a first for IVP) and 3 Special Day Classes* come out for a field trip. These students approached the experience with courage and curiosity. One was especially determined to reach the vernal pool water, no matter the distance or how uneven the ground. With the support of our team, he made it, and the joy on his face was unforgettable. These students and their teachers remind us of the power of inclusion, perseverance, and shared learning.

*Special Day Classes are filled with students having special needs of all levels.

Splash in the Class (SITC)

What's new?

During the last school year, we presented to **231 classes**, connecting **7,091 students** to stormwater pollution prevention and watershed protection! Over the past roughly 16 years, SITC presentations have been delivered to over **107,000** grade 3-6 **students** throughout Sacramento and El Dorado Counties.

We added two more presenters this year. Thank goodness for our amazing team!

This year, we extended the dates of the SITC "season" to enable our program managers to share staff more effectively, to provide work hours closer to year-round for more predictable staff work and pay, and to give teachers a bigger window in which to select requested presentation dates. We plan to continue this practice going forward and possibly extend the program "season" even further, particularly since some of the schools we serve are on a year-round track.

231

SITC Presentations

100%

Teachers would recommend this program

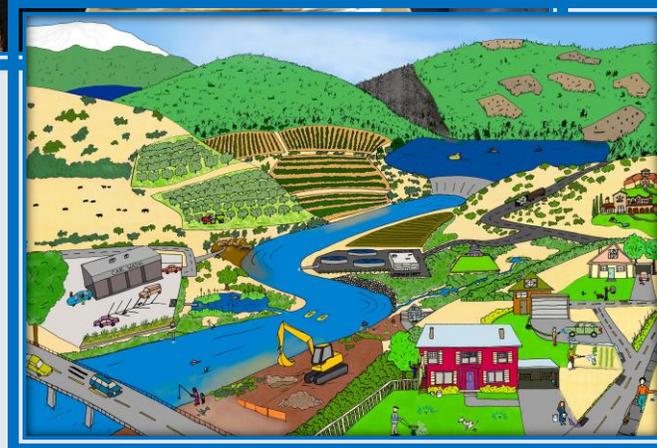
7,091

Students connected to stormwater pollution prevention

56%

Of the classes came from Title 1 schools

FIND OUT WHAT THIS PROGRAM IS ALL ABOUT [HERE!](#)



Youth Environmental Leadership Camp (YELC)

FIND OUT WHAT THIS PROGRAM IS ALL ABOUT [HERE!](#)

What's new?

YELC is having a big impact on the community and it's growing! Our 2024 campers completed about **165 hours of volunteering** and **raised over \$2,400** for eco-centric non-profits (not Splash). This is roughly **2x** the volunteer time and **nearly 5x** the fundraising compared to 2023.

June 2025 was our **fourth summer** of YELC and we keep hearing rave reviews from the campers and their parents! We had **113 applications** for 60 spots (before we cut it off). We've now completed **15 weeks** with **207 kids having completed** this immersive camp.

This year, we asked on the application what parents hoped their child would gain from the program. This *seems* to have helped us to identify candidates who would be a better fit for this program, but we're excited to see if this is an annual pattern.

40 / 94

2025 applicants volunteered to benefit the envir. / amounting to at least this many hours

Of campers came from Title1 schools / Avg pct school FRL usage

30% / 40%

92%

Campers would recommend this camp to a friend

Eco-centric career opportunities brought to light each week

~56

~127

Nature sightings each week (encouraging observation)

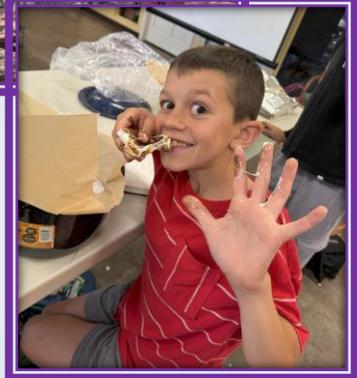
Partner Orgs help make this camp possible!

20

To get a glimpse into the camp, please watch [this highlight-video](#) that showcases the memories we made.



youth Environmental Leadership Camp





FIND OUT WHAT THIS PROGRAM
IS ALL ABOUT [HERE!](#)



[Watch this short video](#) to experience this field trip through the eyes of our students and teachers.

56%

Of the classes came from Title 1 schools

16

Farm animals (aside from bees)

98%

Of teachers said the program supported their teaching of grade-level standards

85%

Knowledge gained by 2nd gr students (Post-vs Pre-Assessments)

What's new?

In the past year, Splash welcomed **231 classes** from **38 schools**, with about **7,000 students**, for our educational and fun field trips. Early registration for fall opened in April for previous teachers and we are **nearly full!** Just a few available days left to choose from. Spring registration will be opening in August.

Splash welcomed a new Program Manager to Project AWE in January, Garrett Werner, who came to us from the Sacramento Tree Foundation, bringing years of outdoor education experience and a background in environmental program management. We are thrilled to have him heading the team.

Several projects were undertaken this past year to improve and beautify the dairy, including sheet mulching, a sensory garden with a trellised bench, and two new murals on the goat pen. A popular and fun branding station for 4th- and 5th-grade students was also added in the fall.

We said goodbye to our resident mini-donkey, Frosty, this year. He's moved to a home with a better social life, where we hear he's happier. We had to start two new bee hives in the spring, which are now producing honey at a rapid rate. We also added more native bee habitat and released over 50 native Mason bees into the area. Our guests of all ages continue to love spending time with our live farm animals – **3 Nigerian dwarf goats** (Oingo Boingo, BamBam, & Poppy), **13 chickens**, and **the busy honey bees in our observation hive!**

SMUD became a sponsor this year, through their Sustainable Communities program, furthering the impact we can have on students in the Sacramento region. Our partnership with the [Sacramento Area Sewer District](#) remains strong and our success with this program has given us confidence to seek **additional donors, sponsors or partners** to help make this fantastic program sustainable and to help us reach even more local students.

NEW Splash Program in 2024-25: Trash Talk (TT)

What's new?

This entire program is new! This year we partnered with Republic Services to develop and deliver waste education presentations in grade 3-6 classrooms. We presented to 78 classes, teaching 2,152 students about the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot! This engaging and interactive program is called "Trash Talk" and focuses on what everyone can do to reduce the waste that goes into our landfills. The program meets Common Core and NGSS requirements as students learn about the waste stream, assess the impact of human activities on wildlife and the environment, and learn waste management best practices. Students walk away empowered to make simple changes at home and in school to promote sustainability and benefit both their environment and their communities!



78

TT Presentations

100%

Teachers would recommend this program

2,152

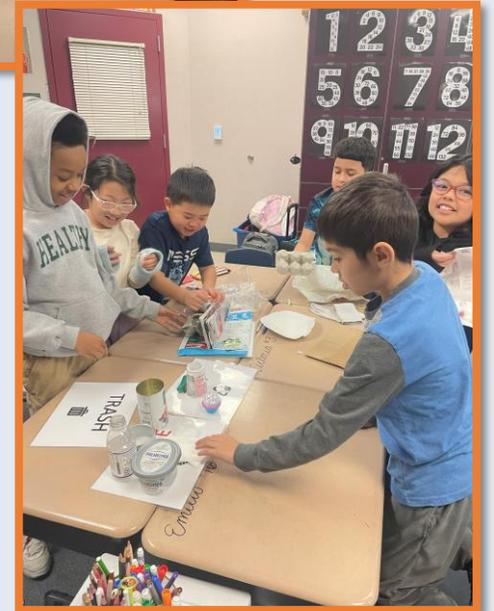
Students connected to waste education

26%

Of the classes came from Title 1 schools



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS PROGRAM [HERE!](#)



Splash Programs for Mixed Ages

Vernal Pool Public Tours* “Friend Raiser”

These guided tours are a wonderful opportunity for visitors to learn about and see the biodiversity of the vernal pools and how they differ each year. It is also a chance for families and friend groups to find joy together OUTSIDE IN NATURE. Splash offers four dates in Mather each spring. Two are focused on “critters” and two on flowers native to our local vernal pools and surrounding grasslands.

554

Attendees who came to see the rich habitats in and around the vernal pools. (consistent with 2024, but lower than recent prior years – have we saturated the market for now?)



Private Programs*

Splash also provides customized programming and tours at both the Mather Vernal Pools and at the Nicolaus Dairy, fulfilling specialized needs for scout troops, Nature Bowl teams, homeschool groups, garden clubs, and other groups. Splash makes the journey engaging and exploratory for each unique group of participants. We love working with so many different people of different ages to earn badges, prepare for competitions, fulfill core standards, or just have fun learning!

23

Widely varied groups had a customized experience with Splash.



*Note: these programs are fee-for-service programs.



Splash Presence at Events

Splash reaches thousands throughout the Sacramento area each year through participation in special events hosted by partner organizations. We provide a booth or table full of nature or stormwater pollution prevention education, often live critters, and more, as appropriate to the event.

15

Events had a Splash presence.

7,500

People visited our event tables/booths



KEY ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION POINTS

Every year, we measure students' knowledge gain from our programs using pre- and post-assessments. Our IVP students showed a remarkable **91% average score increase** (same as last year)! For SITC, student performance **increased by an average of 44%**. This is bit less than last year, likely tied to the students having caught up on their knowledge loss during the pandemic, as demonstrated by their pre-assessments averaging higher than last year's while post-assessments were about the same as last year. Both of these well-established programs continue to show a significant knowledge gain. Project AWE's third full year showed 2nd-grade kids with an **85% average score increase!** That's even more than last year! 4th grade **increased by 36%** (also an increase from last year). 3rd & 5th grade performance gain is much lower, so we'll take a deeper dive on these and try to figure out if we're not focusing enough on the core topics, if the questions are not hitting the core topics properly, or if there's something else going on once they get back to school and take the post-assessments, up to multiple weeks after their field trip.

YELC's 4th year yielded an **average increase of 5.6%**, which is fairly consistent with last year. and still largely explained by the fact that we ask them to complete this quiz in the last hour or two of the last day of camp, when they are tired after their active day and week. Next year, we plan to offer prizes for top score and greatest improvement to motivate these pre-teen kids to care a little more about answering the questions as best they can. Trash Talk's pilot year showed an impressive **32% average score increase** and we think we can do even better next year!



Teacher or Parent & Student Evaluations allow us to ask how they feel about the program overall, what we did well or could improve, whether they would refer friends to the program, and more. Some of the key metrics are (all 4.x scores are out of 5):

| Question | Teachers | | | |
|--|----------|------|------------|------|
| | IVP | SITC | AWE | TT |
| The Program lessons and activities provided were fun and engaging for my students. | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.7 |
| The Program lessons and activities helped me meet certain standards for instruction. | 4.8 | 4.6 | 100% | 4.2 |
| The Program empowered my students to share their knowledge with others. | 4.6 | 4.7 | not asked* | 4.6 |
| I would recommend this Program to other teachers. | 100% | 100% | | 100% |

- Project AWE Students
 - Is the Nicolaus Dairy a good place to learn? Gr2/3 **98.6%**, Gr4/5 **94.6%**
 - Did you learn anything new? Gr2/3 **97.2%**, Gr4/5 **97%**
- YELC
 - Parents: How successful was this program overall? **4.9**
 - Parents: This program inspired my child to try to address one or more of the environmental issues they learned about. **4.5**
 - Parents: Would you recommend this program? **98%** (1 maybe)
 - Participants: This program inspired me to take action on environmental issues introduced to me. **4.4**
 - Participants: I learned a lot from this program. **4.6**

* We are considering aligning Project AWE's Teacher questions more to those used for IVP, SITC, and TT for next year.

Testimonials

IVP

“This is one of our favorite field trips of the year. I am always amazed with the knowledge that my students get about their individual critter. They also absorb knowledge from their classmates' critters and can tell facts about them when we are out in the field or in the Splash center.” - Ms. Schmech at Robert McGarvey Elem

The engaging activities made it fun and educational for my students to learn about Sacramento's rich biodiversity and its vitally important watershed. - Mr. Wood at Westside Elem

SITC

“Wonderful job! The Splash presentation is an engaging program that builds kids' natural curiosity and interest in our aquatic ecosystems. It teaches responsible stewardship and it's just plain fun. My kids loved it!”
Rachelle Gray, 5th grade, Matsuyama Elem.

“Splash is the only science-based program that we have in 5th grade that generates excitement and engagement with students. We're so grateful for Splash!”
Christine Sherwood, 5th grade teacher, Arlene Hein Elementary

TT

“Students can be ambassadors of change when educated and then encouraged and empowered to do so. I am grateful to those who created and support this program.” – Elementary Teacher

“The lesson was fun, entertaining, and engaging. Really kept students interests in mind as it was being developed, and presenter was amazing! Her energy and enthusiasm set the tone for the learning experience.” – Elementary Teacher



“I love that the kids are active and engaged during the stations. The lessons are relevant and age-appropriate.” -
Joseph Sims Elementary
Teacher

YELC

“Splash gave the kids alternative ways to learn beyond the traditional classroom. Our son loved learning so much and getting fun time outdoors. He left inspired with goals to volunteer for Splash when he is old enough to do so. He was comfortable with all the instructors and staff, talking about them almost as old friends versus distant teachers. THANK YOU to the Splash team and the camp staff. We are already recommending YELC to many other families.” – Ashley, parent

“Splash was so fun and I did not know a lot of things that I then learned at splash. All Splash, workers are so nice and all the food, animals, and trips are awesome.” – Quinne, camper

Project AWE

“This is my 3rd year attending and I am amazed that the experience has evolved to be even better than before, if that's even possible. This trip was already so worthwhile, but the additions to each station made this a very engaging learning experience for my students. I appreciate the docent's ability to bring enthusiasm and fun, knowing that they do this multiple times for various students. I also appreciated the additions to the lesson. I was happy to see connections and increased rigor in the preparation materials. The students had so many first-time experiences while learning about our local history along with science standards. The parents had their expectations exceeded. Thank you to the organization from beginning to end. This is a valuable opportunity for my Title 1 students, and we plan to be back annually! Such a hidden gem right here in Elk Grove!” - Barbara Comstock Morse Elem. Organizer/Chaperone

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

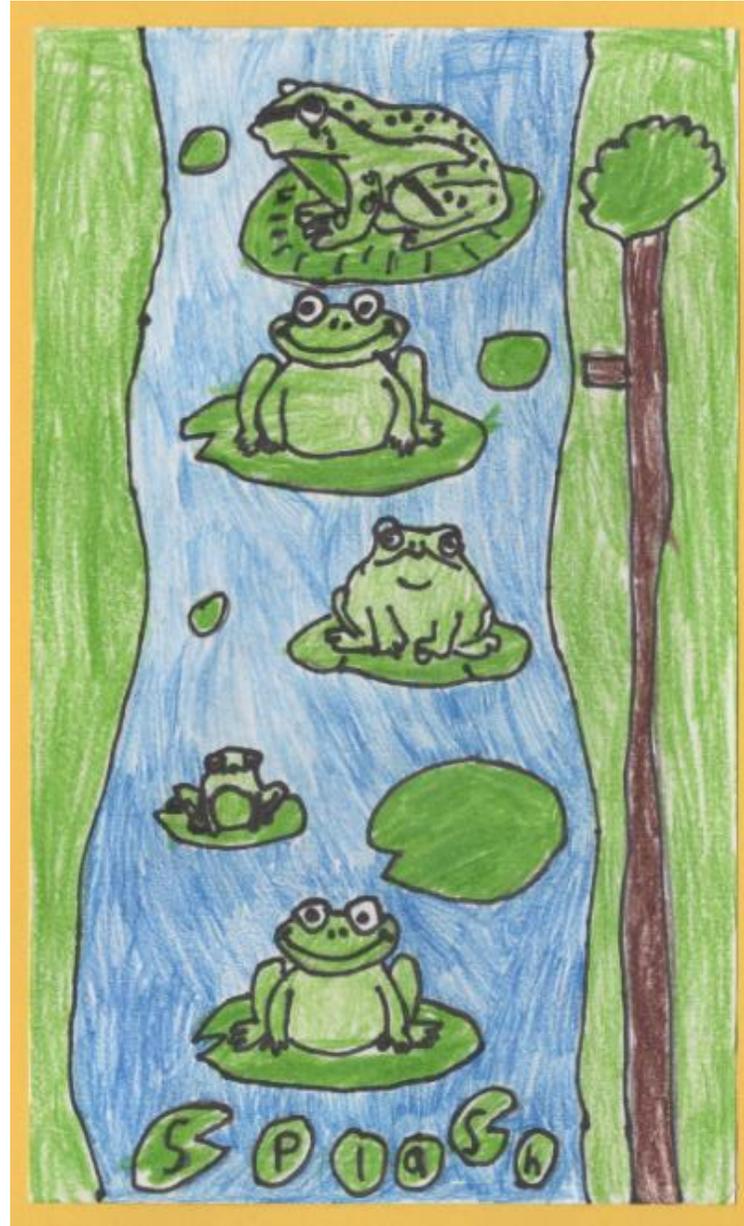
As of June 30, 2025

ASSETS

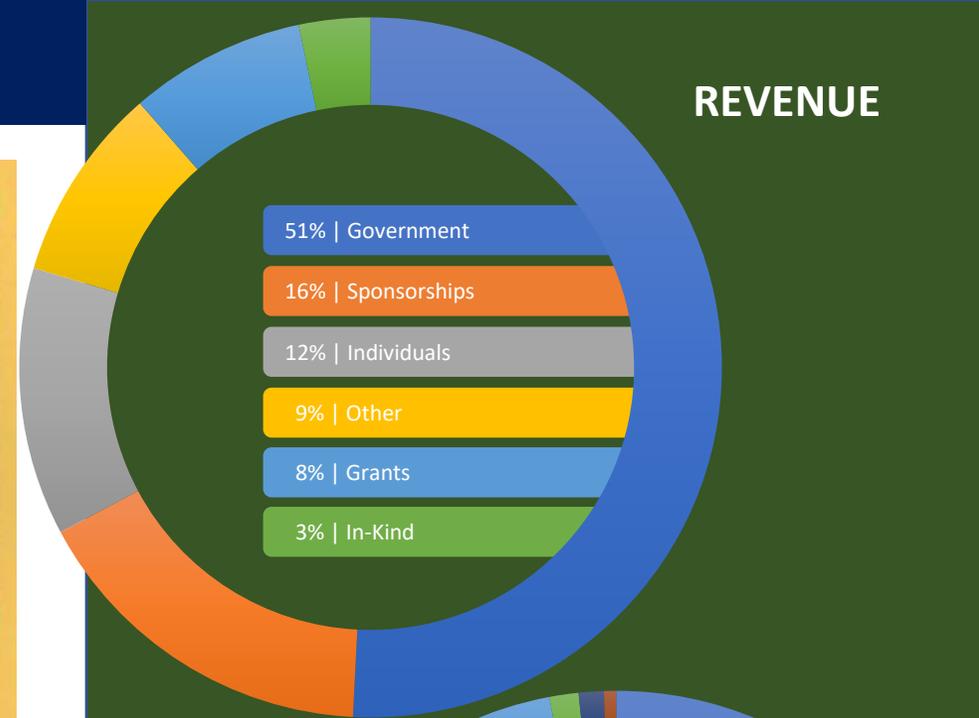
| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Current Assets | |
| Bank Accounts | \$ 208,313.84 |
| Accounts Receivable | \$ 185,194.30 |
| Prepaid Expenses | \$ 4,450.49 |
| Investments | \$ 271,020.80 |
| Total Current Assets | \$ 668,979.43 |
| Fixed Assets | \$ 44,920.50 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | \$ 713,899.93 |

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

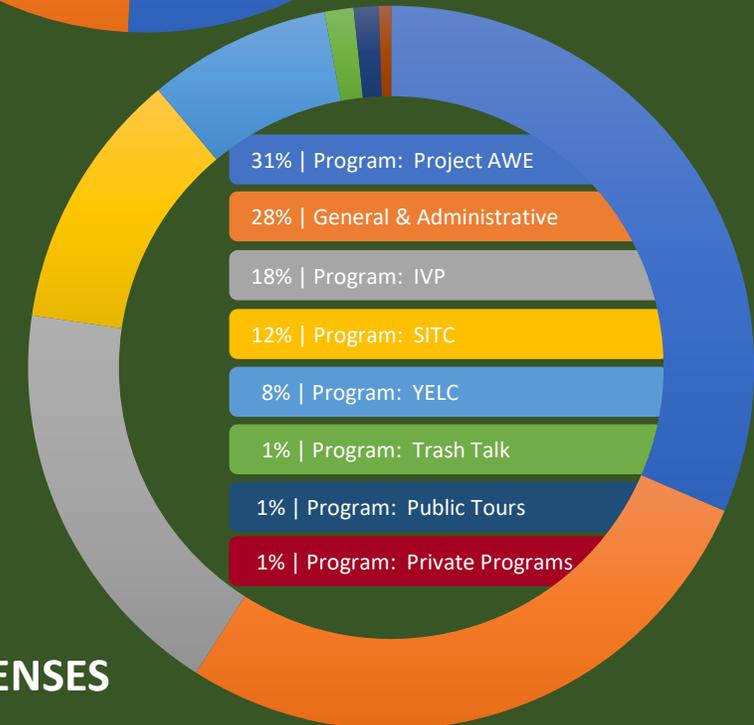
| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Liabilities | |
| Accounts Payable | \$ 2,716.22 |
| Accrued Expenses | \$ 28,764.63 |
| Total Liabilities | \$ 31,480.85 |
| Equity | |
| Unrestricted Net Assets | \$ 624,093.88 |
| Donor Restricted | \$ 58,325.20 |
| Total Equity | \$ 682,419.08 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY | \$ 713,899.93 |



REVENUE



EXPENSES



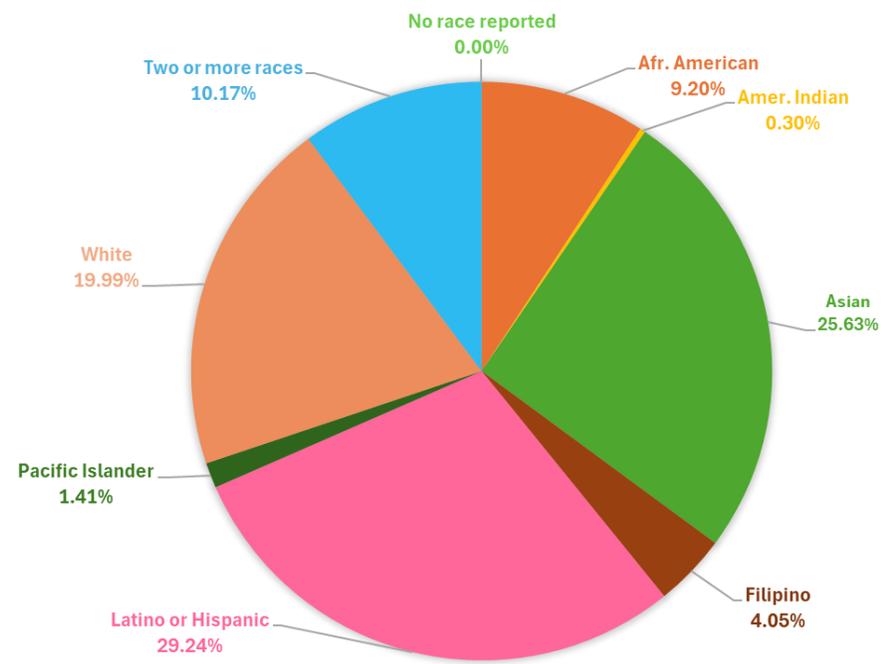
POPULATION SERVED

By supporting Splash, the Sacramento region’s municipalities are reaching thousands of families through their children at local public schools. Many of these families represent hard-to-reach populations who would otherwise likely not receive such education and outreach. The table below shows how well the classes participating in Splash Programs closely mirror the ethnic and socio-economic diversity of Sacramento County public schools as a whole. This is one of the greatest advantages of working through local schools.

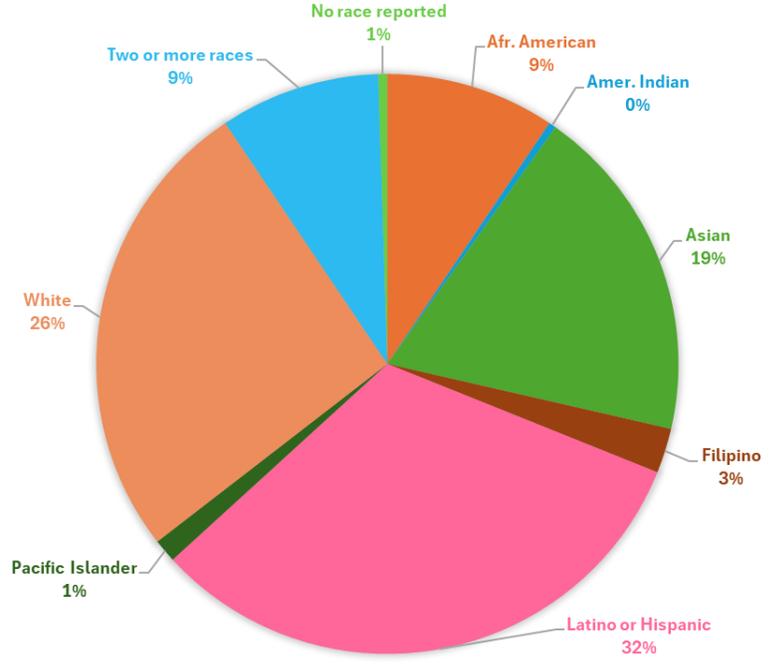
| Splash and Sacramento County Demographics | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|--------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| | Afr. American | Amer. Indian | Asian | Filipino | Latino or Hispanic | Pacific Islander | White | Two or more races | No race reported | Socioeconomically Disadvantaged |
| Splash | 9.19% | 0.30% | 25.60% | 4.05% | 29.20% | 1.41% | 19.97% | 10.16% | 0.00% | 52.70% |
| Sac County | 9.40% | 0.40% | 18.80% | 2.50% | 32.10% | 1.30% | 26.10% | 8.90% | 0.50% | no longer avail |
| Difference | -0.21% | -0.10% | 6.80% | 1.55% | -2.90% | 0.11% | -6.13% | 1.26% | -0.50% | N/A |

51% of Splash classes were from Title 1 schools

SPLASH CLASS RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS



SACRAMENTO COUNTY CLASS RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS



AWARDS and RECOGNITION

Who noticed what great things we're doing at Splash?



2024 Outstanding Environmental Leadership and Education Award

Sacramento Splash celebrated a significant achievement with the announcement that the Sacramento Environmental Commission had awarded the organization the 2024 Outstanding Environmental Leadership and Education Award. This prestigious recognition highlights the dedication to nature and the environment and the hard work of the Sacramento Splash team, its volunteers, and its supporters to positively impact the community with environmental education.

2025 "Stars of Service" Award for Service Organizations & Groups

In the spring, the City of Elk Grove and Mayor Bobbie Singh Allen awarded our CEO, Mackenzie Wieser, with the City's 2025 "Stars of Service" Award for Service Organizations & Groups. This award recognizes significant contributions to the quality of life in the City, leadership, creativity, & hard work, while inspiring others to make a difference in the community.



We are always grateful to be recognized for our hard work and dedication to the region.

SPECIAL EVENTS

In July 2024, we welcomed Gina Fleming to the team as our Director of Development. She spent a solid year getting to know Splash's programs and partners, shadowing our CEO, and meeting with a myriad of donors, current and prospective sponsors, and elected officials. Among other things, Gina produced the first special events for Splash in a very long time!

Santa and Mrs. Claus Visit Critterville

We are grateful and amazed by the incredible turnout for this event at the Splash Center. Seeing old friends, meeting new ones, and sharing our love for Splash and all the holiday cheer filled our hearts! Thanks to everyone's generosity, we raised \$286 to support Critterville. Every donation makes a lasting impact on our beloved animal ambassadors and the students we serve.

Thank you to Santa and Mrs. Claus, Mike and Sherri Retzlaff, and Splash staff for spreading joy and making great memories. We can't wait to see kids run to embrace Santa again next year!

AWE in Action

Gina curated our first ever "Awe in Action" event out at the Historic Nicolaus Dairy in March, where we were able to close our funding gap by almost \$18,000. This event included an adult field trip that not only toured the Historic Nicolaus Dairy, but also got to experience the student activities that are part of the Project AWE program, leaving our guests inspired! They walked away with a deeper connection to nature and a stronger understanding of the daily program Splash runs at the Dairy for our local youth. We even had a student alumnus back to tell his story, full of pride and excitement!

Thank you to our energetic auctioneer/emcee, our generous sponsors & auction item providers, our refreshments and shuttle providers, all of our staff, our guests and especially to those who bid on auction items and won, supporting Project AWE!

These were the first of many "fun"draising events, and we can't wait to see them grow!



Making New Friends

Come Visit the Nicolaus Dairy, Splash Center, and Vernal Pools

This year, Splash brought many new friends out to observe classes fully engaged in learning, while having fun. We welcomed State of CA Treasurer Fiona Ma out to the Nicolaus Dairy to learn about our programs. We also had a fun field trip with State Senator Ashby's Chief of Staff, Daniel Washington. Many people from the CA Farm Bureau and CA Agriculture in the Classroom came for a tour, as well as the Dairy Council Staff. We had CA Natural Resources Agency staff out, and we are now in the third round of a competitive process for the Youth Community Access grant through this Agency, with hopes of securing 3 years of funding for Project AWE.

Splash welcomed City of Sacramento Councilmembers Phil Pluckebaum and Lisa Kaplan & staff, as well as staff from Sacramento County Supervisor Pat Hume's office at our Awe in Action Event, among others. Citrus Heights Mayor Jayna Karpinski-Costa also stopped by with a generous gift. We partnered with Eskaton Sr. Living centers to host their "Buddies" program a second time, for which seniors brought their 2nd grade "Buddies" out on a Splash field trip. The students had such a great time with Splash.

Splash has also been making friends all over the region by speaking at community service organizations. We want to say a special thank you to the Optimist Club of Country Club for their generous contribution to Splash. We were able to match their donation during the Big Day of Giving, which is a large part of why we had such amazing success in this event this year. We also want to thank the Laguna Sunrise Rotary, The Breakfast Optimist Club, and the Rancho Murrieta Garden Club for supporting Splash this year with a donation. We are always open to speaking about our programs at any club across the region, please contact gina@sacsplash.org to book Splash for your next meeting.

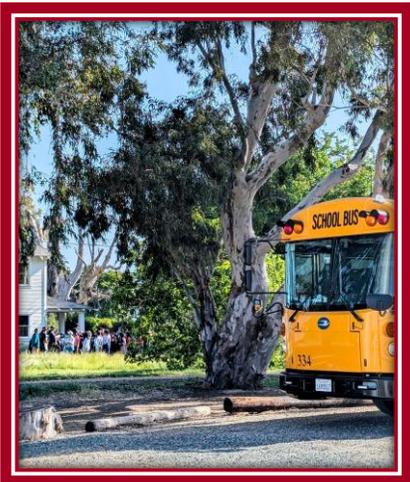
We love showcasing our programs to new friends and are always open to having visitors see what we love to do. If you are interested in booking a visit to Splash please email gina@sacsplash.org.



Challenges Overcome

Splash had many challenges this past fiscal year. Aside from starting another fiscal year with a huge budget deficit looming over us, our growth has been so quick over the last five years, we had not had time to build in solid infrastructure to sustain that growth. It became very clear to our CEO and the Board of Trustees that the organization needed to spend time documenting internal processes, as well as planning for succession, so that the organization can continue its mission. So, this year, we began this effort, including process improvements along the way, putting sound policies and procedures in place. In the coming year, we will continue to enhance and document, but we are already poised to be far more sustainable and scalable.

Transportation issues still linger post-COVID, due to bus driver shortages, making things less predictable for scheduling. We continue to work with each district's transportation office to ensure seamless field trips. Another challenge we have is that teachers are less willing to attend the Teacher Training program for our Investigating Vernal Pools program (required for first year teachers of our program), because they are overwhelmed with many school and district requirements, as well as emails and calls from parents. We also still saw many students who have not fully caught up to grade level post-COVID. 2025-2026 students will be the first group of 4th graders that will have not been affected by the COVID shutdowns.



Adding a parent subjective question to the YELC application and a commitment clause to the registration contract was a big help this year. We asked parents what they hoped their child would gain from the camp and we had parents commit to bringing their child to all 5 days of the all-day camp. Last year, 13 parents withdrew their accepted child from camp prior to its start, several for reasons that should have prevented them from applying and some who confirmed in writing, but then were non-responsive thereafter. This year, we only had 1 post-acceptance withdrawal, 1 who didn't complete all 5 days, and 3 picked up early on the last day of the last camp week. This was a huge improvement!

We have always run a seasonal organization; however, it is quite challenging to manage the constant struggle of hiring and training staff, then putting them on pause with hopes that they will return for the next season. This year we had some amazing staff of over 3 years decide to leave due to insufficient hours and their need for a predictable monthly paycheck. In the upcoming year, we are going to be looking at more creative ways to ensure our staff have a more reliable paycheck month-to-month, in order to cover their necessary living expenses and continue to work for us. Turn-over is costly, and we don't want to lose our amazing staff. Without these wonderful educators, Splash is nothing.

At the Splash Center in Mather, we maintain a set of animal ambassadors that are either native to the Vernal Pools (or surrounding grasslands) or are representative of them...since it's harder to teach about this ecosystem when it can be rare to see the critters in the wild. Every animal we have in Critterville was either injured or kept as a pet and cannot be released into the wild, or was donated. Our amazing critter keepers generally take care of ~40 critters, many of which require special permits.

This year we said "Goodbye" to:

- Gilbert (Western Skink)
- Bluey (Blue-Belly Lizard)
- 1 Eastern Tiger Salamander
- 1 CA Tiger Salamander

May they rest in peace.



This year, we said "Hello" to:

- Clover (Western Spadefoot)
- Petey (CA King Snake)
- Maidu (CA King Snake)
- Slater (Corn Snake)



Other critter news this year:

- Leroy (our "senior" CA King Snake) is now retired from public view (in another room)
- 1 CA Tiger Salamander (CTS) had a tumor removed & biopsied, determined to be a squamous cell carcinoma. The lab said they've never seen it before in a salamander. The salamander is doing very well since surgery.
- Our CTS was featured in a SMUD relocation training video!



At the Historic Nicolaus Dairy in Elk Grove, we maintain a set of animal ambassadors that are examples of typical animals found on a family-run farm of the era.

This year we said "Goodbye" to:

- Frosty (mini-donkey)

Living at a new home with friends.

This year, we said "Hello" to:

- 10,000 new honey bees
- 50 native Mason bees
- Nesting Kestrels & Red-tailed Hawks (ok, they're wild, but they're nesting at the Dairy)

Still with us:

- BamBam, Oingo Boingo, and Poppy (Nigerian dwarf goats)
- Nesting Great Horned Owls (again, wild, but at the Dairy)
- and we have lots of neighboring cows and calves

Eagle Scout & Volunteer Projects

Landscape Service Days (3) at the Splash Center – Thank you all!

November – The hard work of about 10 Splash “Mighty Green Warriors” (volunteers) joined our Director of Development, Becky, to complete a huge amount of essential trimming and started some needed heavier removal work.

December – A SMUD Cares Team of 14 volunteers joined our CEO, Mackenzie, bringing their energy and human power to Splash and, in one drizzly hour, transformed one of our outdoor spaces, finishing the major work started in November.

April – A tiny, but determined group of 3 volunteers again joined our Becky for some much-needed weeding and removal of some bushes (including roots) that had been contributing to a squirrel and skunk problem under our building.



Bench with Trellis at Nicolaus Dairy

Thanks to the hard work of an amazing Eagle Scout from Elk Grove, we now have a lovely bench with a trellis located in our sensory garden. This is a perfect addition to the garden that helps improve the Nicolaus Dairy and enhance the students’ experience. Children (of all ages) can sit on the bench during lunch and enjoy the colorful flowers and scents around them, creating additional opportunities to connect with nature.



Potting Bench at Nicolaus Dairy

Thanks to the hard work of a fabulous Eagle Scout from Elk Grove, the Dairy is now the proud owner of a beautiful potting table, providing another opportunity for a student learning experience. The potting table will be used on a daily basis during school field trips, as students learn about gardening and the origins of their food.



LOOKING FORWARD...

In the coming year, Splash will focus on reaching new donors and friends willing to support Project AWE. This is an incredible one-of-a-kind program that lacks sustained funding. Bolstered resources to truly make this an established program will enable us to begin working with other partner organizations to increase capacity and connect more students with the outdoor educational experiences they deserve. Thank you to [SMUD](#) for believing in our program and committing to a two-year sponsorship!

Our 5th summer of YELC is NOT yet fully funded for another 60 participants across four weeks, due to insufficient enrollment in Rancho Cordova. We must spend time talking with City of Rancho kids & parents about this amazing camp! And we need to find additional sponsorship(s). In the hopes of filling at least part of our funding gap for Project AWE, YELC, and our new roof, Splash will host 3 fundraising events in the coming year: "Back Yard Bash for Splash" (August 22nd, at Sheldon Inn), "Santa Visits Critterville" (December, at the Splash Center), and "Awe in Action" (March, adult field trip at the Historic Nicolaus Dairy).

Splash's Program Managers are working towards helping Splash communicate with teachers with a single voice for all our programs. We want to make it far easier for all teachers to know about ALL of the programs we have to offer them.

We are looking forward to our continued partnership with [Republic Services](#), to deliver waste education presentations in 72 classrooms this upcoming year. We are also excited to continue field trips to the [Sacramento Valley Conservancy's](#) "Kassis Vernal Pools" this coming spring, which will help us grow our vernal pool program. Splash is also welcoming the "Friends of Bushy Lake" under the Splash umbrella. This is a way to help Dr. Michelle Stevens continue her western pond turtle survey work at Bushy Lake along with her internship training program for students at the California State University of Sacramento (Sac State). Splash will become the fiscal sponsor for all her grant programs, to ensure her work can continue.

Splash is very proud of being at the forefront of helping other organizations thrive. We hope to create more partnerships through a large project that we hope to begin the planning stages for at the Historic Nicolaus Dairy as well. This will be a recycled water demonstration project to showcase that recycled water can be used in mitigation watershed restoration projects in the state. We are currently open to many additional partnerships, alongside our existing partnership with the Sacramento Sewer District, to be able to bring this project to fruition.



*Your support helps children understand and value our natural world.
Please consider making a donation.*

