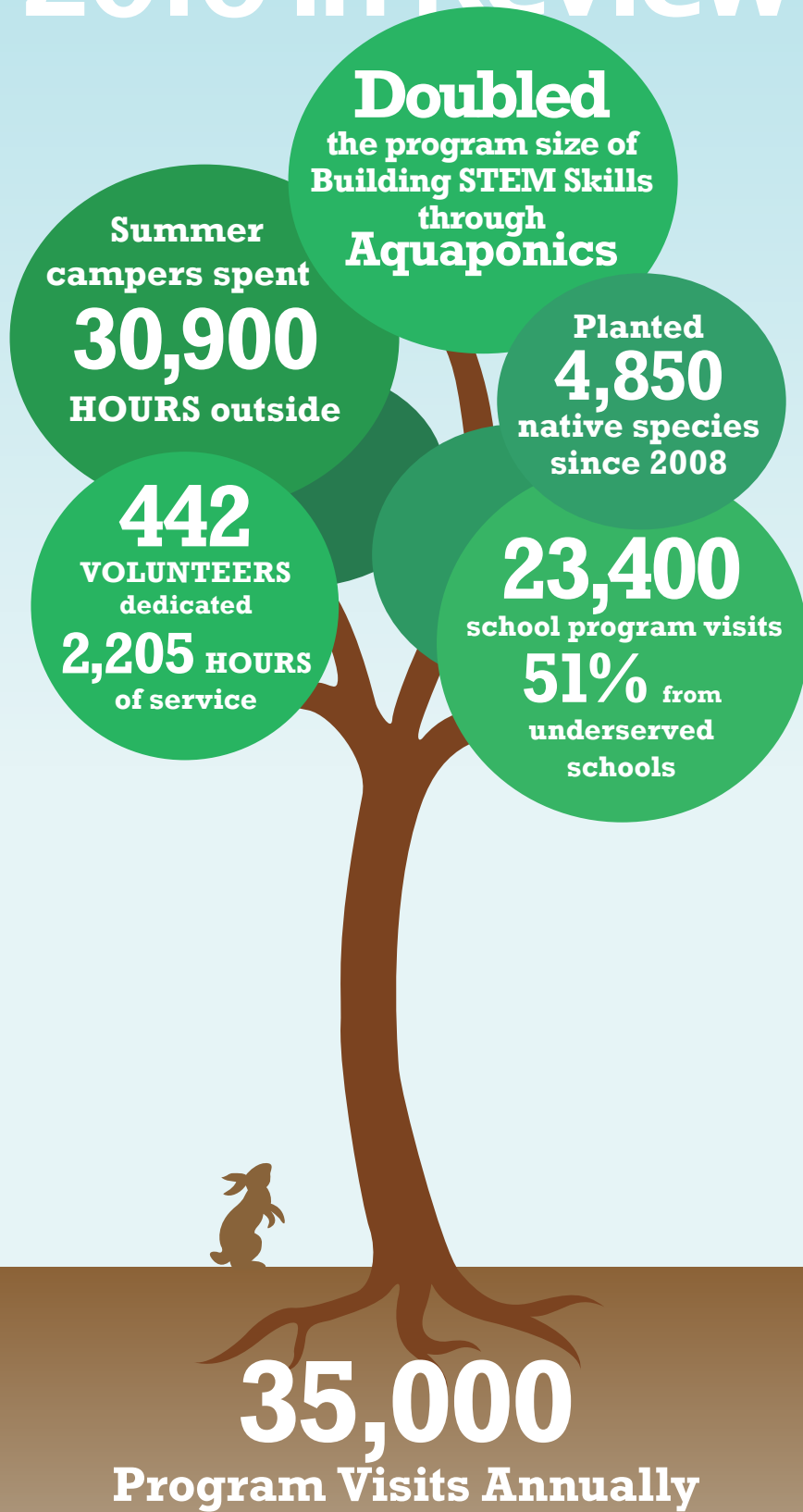


2016 in Review



Riverbend Environmental Education Center teaches environmental principles to children in Southeastern Pennsylvania through a direct connection with nature, inspiring respect for our natural world and action as aware, responsible and caring citizens.



Spring and fall is habitat volunteer time at Riverbend!

TeamPHLY from Philadelphia Insurance Companies pitched in at Riverbend last fall and again this April. Thanks to all our 2016 corporate and individual volunteers who made a difference at Riverbend!

Special Event Volunteers

Erin Andres
Estelle Atkinson
Graham Bachman
Emma Barcus
Julie Barcus
Michelle Barcus
Anne Barker
Lauren Binnion
Karnit Biran
Jordan Brian
Mairead Brogan
Leah Broker
Sarah Collier
Elsie Collier
George Collier
Sarah Collier
Dave Copas
Bob Dahms
Lisa Elizondo
Hadley Evans
Fred Greenspoon
Matt Gregory
Bill Haines
Madelyn Haines
Duncan Haines
Bridgette Henner
Ellis Herz
Monika Horteis
Olivia Jaekle
Ellen Jordan
Annika Langjahr
Leann Luong
Dennis Markle
Nancy Markle
Dylan Masalta
Sierra Masalta
Amanda Masucci
Shreya Mathawan
Tim Matthews
Kathy Matthews
Shannon McCool
Maren McDonnell
Kathleen Moran
Jennifer Morrisette
Emily Morrisette
Melissa Neilson
Ethan Pentz
Karen Petruskas
Lindsey Samahon
Ryan Schloer
Meghan Smith
Nick Smith
Vince Smith
Dan Sullivan
Maggie Taylor
LaToya Uzzell
Morgan Wisheart
Chris Witzigman
Roxanna Wood
Lily Zelov

Teen Summer Habitat Volunteers

Graham Branscom
Jack Goldman
Claudia Gonzalez
Ken Guadagnino
Hoop Christine
Sophia Lan
Jenny Liang
Nora Melton
Jack Ouligian
Trevor Russin
Stephen Snyder
Will Springer
Andrew Stone
Max Wolff
Lisa Zipperer

Days of Service: Corporate, School & Community Groups

Agnes Irwin School
Baldwin School
Bryn Mawr College
Eagle Scout Candidate Nicky Kotler & Scout Troop 181
Enterprise
Episcopal Academy
PECO
Goldman Sachs
Haverford College
Philadelphia Insurance Vanguard

Habitat Interns

Matt Binnion
Shannon Christiansen
Peter Dudley

Individual Volunteers

Christopher Angell
Lorna Atkinson
Marisa Sobel
Monika Hoerteis
Ryan Rex
Marisa Sobel

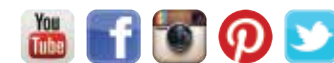
Teen Summer Camp Volunteers

Kayla Berstein
Tamar Cahana
Claire Fukuchi
Keegan Gallagher
Naveen Gooneratne
Nora Melton
Alex Norbert
Jack Ouligian
Alex Welsh
Benjamin Whitman



1950 Spring Mill Road
Gladwyne, PA 19035

Nature Connect



EAT WELL FARM

TO Table

A TOAST TO TWILIGHT

Sunday, June 4th
4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Join Riverbend for a unique experience where seasonal ingredients star on plates & lively performers dazzle with balance & beauty.

SPONSORSHIPS AND TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW AT RIVERBENDEEC.ORG/NEWS/SPECIAL.HTML

Nature Connect

Spring/Summer 2017



A Newsletter for Special Friends & Donors of Riverbend Environmental Education Center



Welcome!



Welcome to the inaugural issue of **NatureConnect**, a bi-annual newsletter for the special friends and donors of Riverbend. NatureConnect is an opportunity to keep you, the generous individuals, families and corporate friends who invest in the Riverbend mission, informed on our progress and impact. The fall issue will additionally include traditional annual report data.

Why NatureConnect? Riverbend's purpose is to connect children, and really all of us, to nature so we can grow in our stewardship of the environment. As a conduit, we strive to ignite the curiosity, passion, and skills that lead to care for the natural world. A sound understanding of environmental principles is needed to solve the problems of the future. Nature, and we hope this newsletter, reminds us that nothing in nature exists in isolation. Everything is connected, including all of us!

Thank you for taking the time to read about a few of Riverbend's important connectors -- generous friends Dee and Nick Adams who have invested deeply in our work and partners like the Upper Merion Area School District who are taking aquaponics to the next level of learning. Together, connected in nature, we will continue our care for this beautiful planet that sustains us all.

Laurie Bachman
Executive Director

2017 Board of Directors

Doris Brogan, Esq., Chair
Michael Haines, Vice Chair
Glenn Barenbaum, CPA, Treasurer
Ellen Jordan, CFA, Secretary
Angela Allevi, MD
Joshua Bailer
Gretchen Cooney
David Copas, Esq.
Bryan Franey, Esq.
Simon Herriott
Doreen Masalta
Jimmy Owens
Jeffrey Thomas

Key Staff

Laurie Bachman, Executive Director
Lisa Hancock, Director of Development
Erin McCool, Director of Education & Strategic Initiatives
Lorna Atkinson, Habitat Management Coordinator
Allison Coté-Donovan, Manager of School, Scout & Programs
Hadley Kunz, Camp Manager
Lisa Matthews, Senior Marketing Specialist
Tara McDonnell, Community Engagement Coordinator

Riverbend Grows STEM Entrepreneurs through Aquaponics

Upper Merion Middle Schoolers Get Down to Business with Aquaponics

Riverbend is elated to witness first-hand how Building STEM Skills Through Aquaponics brings the challenge of growing healthy food for the future to life in today's classrooms.

"I take what I learn in this program and go home and tell my parents and brother about it. It's cool because I get to teach them something they didn't know." - Riley

Aquaponics engages students in critical thinking and encourages them to work collaboratively to address real-life challenges.

The Upper Merion School district has taken the program to a new level with their own Basil Lemonade contest launched within the 7th and 8th grades for the 2016-17 school



year. Middle School STEM Director Sean Gardiner was a key person implementing the program. Students formed their own teams and businesses, complete with CEO, marketing executives, and project managers. Students on each team acted in business roles to grow plants, design a plan, and market basil lemonade. They even negotiated for crop insurance!

Through this project, students made improvements to various lemonade recipes and honed their sales strategies. They learned through failures and were so engaged that the losing team regrouped on their own time and met at school early to rework their product. Teachers reported that students who were disengaged in other subject areas came to life, taking on leadership roles and showing exceptional enthusiasm. The project-based format of aquaponics is proving to be a dynamic teaching tool, fostering cross-curricular learning and real-world skills.

Breaking News!

This April Riverbend received the PA Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence for Building STEM Skills through Aquaponics in collaboration with the Norristown Area School District. We were among 21 nonprofit organizations to be honored with the prestigious award throughout the state.

Congratulations to the Upper Merion Area Middle School for receiving the Environmental Community Service Award for their Basil Lemonade Project using Riverbend's Building STEM Skills through Aquaponics program. The award is sponsored by law firm **Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox, WAWA**, and also **6ABC**.

Dee & Nick Adams Spur Growth at Riverbend

New Pavilion to be Named in Honor



"We feel Riverbend is crucial to the education and development of our youth. In this age of technology, climate change, and environmental concerns, it is more important than ever for our children to be grounded in the greatness and wonder of Mother Nature."

A pressing need for indoor programming space, high demand for Riverbend's hands-on science education, and a beautiful new pavilion with a naming opportunity returned us full circle to environmental education champions Dee and Nick Adams. Dee and Nick had played a key role in helping to raise the funds for Riverbend's Aquaponics Greenhouse and they share our passion for bringing nature's benefits to more youth and adults.

Now a new gift from Dee and Nick of \$150,000 propels us forward to address three organizational priorities: 1) Building capacity to meet mission demand through Riverbend's annual

fund, 2) Addressing the need for indoor programming space through renovation of our property's historic farmhouse, and 3) Advancing the key programmatic initiative, Philadelphia Children Access Nature in the 2017-18 academic year.

Dee and Nick have long believed in the power of nature. Dee, who owned her own yoga company, now studies the ways in which nature is a natural detoxifier. Nick is a successful investment advisor who is a "nut for trees," says Dee. When Nick was young, he gardened alongside his mother and will never forget the first time he grew marigolds from a seed. Watching them sprout seemed like a miracle. Dee and Nick want all kids to have that experience.

Grant funding applications are in progress for Philadelphia Access Nature, and on the annual fund front, Nick and Dee's generosity challenged the Riverbend board and friends to step up with their own giving, raising an additional \$50,000 in new and increased gifts through the **2016-17 Bump It Up Campaign**. Thank you to all who helped!

Riverbend is incredibly grateful to the Adams. We are thrilled to celebrate their gift through the naming of the new Riverbend pavilion in their honor. Watch for details as we plan our naming celebration.



Farmhouse Renovation Funds Needed!

The third part of the Adams's gift challenges us to raise \$50,000 in funds to complete the first phase of Farmhouse renovation. The McLean Contributionship was the first to step up with \$25,000 toward the goal, and we are incredibly grateful for their generosity. Riverbend now has another \$25,000 left to raise. Could you be the key to helping Riverbend secure this portion? Please contact Lisa Hancock, Director of Development at 610-527-5234 to learn how you or a friend can help with the Farmhouse project.