

CURIODYSSEY
IMPACT
REPORT
FY2022

Curi@dyssey.

SCIENCE PLAYGROUND & ZOO

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## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your faith in our work as we continue to evolve in making critical STEM education available and accessible to all young people, especially those furthest from opportunity. As a nonprofit science and wildlife center, we are devoted to our mission to:

Inspire love for science and curiosity about the world to create a brighter future.

We are grateful to all our donors and volunteers whose support enables us to share compelling "Real, Rich, and Right Now" STEM content with all of our visitors. Highlights of the past year include:

- The grand opening of our Whoosh! Inclusive Physics-in-Action playground in November 2021 after successful Phase One fundraising for our campus campaign project
- The groundbreaking for our Bay Gallery & Labs building in April 2022
- The introduction of scholarships within all education programs to increase financial accessibility and inclusivity in our public programs
- The creation of a new board committee to join our existing DEI Leadership Team to integrate diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging into our interview and hiring practices as part of our organizational culture
- The renewed accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, which only 10% of the zoos and aquariums in the US hold
- Receiving a 60-year lease extension from San Mateo County as a demonstration of their faith in the value of our work

The fact that we welcomed more than 125,000 visitors in 2022 while still dealing with the impacts of the pandemic is a testament to our connection to the community, which depends on us to provide state-of-the-art programming, exhibits and animal encounters for children from all backgrounds.

On behalf of the CuriOdyssey staff, board, volunteers, and the rescued wildlife that finds a home here, please accept my sincere thanks for your continuous support, which has had a deeply positive impact on our work this year.

With gratitude,

Aragon Burlingham Executive Director



## OUR MISSION AND VALUES

### OUR MISSION

Inspire love for science and curiosity about the world to create a brighter future.



#### **OUR VALUES**

#### Integrity: We do what's right.

- We consider safety in everything we do.
- We are accountable, transparent and respectful.
- We are committed to environmental sustainability, conservation and the welfare of the animals in our care.

#### Creativity: We imagine a better way.

- We are innovative, curious and creative.
- We value fun and imagination.
- We create a better future.

#### Community: We are inclusive.

- We value teamwork, transparency and collaboration.
- We encourage self-direction and empowerment.
- We design for diversity, equity and inclusion by centering marginalized voices.

## OUR PILLARS

#### Education

We create programs that immerse children in hands-on, interactive, exploration-based experiences with science and nature, igniting their curiosity and creating the next generation of critical thinkers. We give children opportunities to be active participants in their own learning. Educational opportunities are presented in a variety of formats, including: camps, workshops, our at-home science center, school field trips, homeschool programs, and STEMCorps.

#### **Exhibits**

CuriOdyssey's Exhibits Department creates original, innovative hands-on exhibits that encourage visitors of all ages to touch, observe, listen, wonder, and experiment with simple scientific phenomena. With in-house design and rigorous on-site prototyping, we ensure that visitor interactions with our exhibits are rich with layers of phenomena that demonstrate various scientific principles, real without simulation and allowing interaction with actual physical forces, and right-now with visitors experiencing immediate outcomes through their interactions. These are all crucial elements for engaging early learning experiences.

#### Wildlife

Our Wildlife Program is the centerpiece of nature education within our organization. The care, conservation, protection, and education it provides are vital to our role as a science and wildlife center and as a champion for the Bay Area environment. CuriOdyssey is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, which is a high honor as less than 10% of the 28,000 zoos and aquariums in the US receive this accreditation. Many of our animals are rescued and would be unable to live in the wild due to imprinting on humans or injury.

### Campus Campaign

CuriOdyssey's campus redesign project will replace our current facility's aging and limited infrastructure with a 21st century, world-class center for early science learning. The new campus will include eight new buildings and a playground. This campus expansion will support the planned increase in local, regional and national programs, additional exhibit space to accommodate market demand, and more education labs to reach even more children, especially those furthest from opportunity.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW



#### THE CURIODYSSEY EXPERIENCE

A serious science playground

This past year, 125,554 people visited CuriOdyssey - a 65% increase over FY2021. We still had closures and restrictions to capacity in FY2022, especially with a surge of the Omicron variant in the early part of the year. Our safety protocols due to COVID gradually became less restrictive though we did require masking throughout the entire fiscal year. In August, we reopened on Tuesdays for the first time since the pandemic began.

Other successes included a member exchange weekend in May with the Exploratorium where 132 of their members visited CuriOdyssey. We had three days with over 1,000 visitors - November 11 (Veterans Day), December 29 (Winter Break), and June 4 (Bubbles & Rainbows event). First Fridays had a few disruptions during the year (two months canceled due to Omicron and one due to a wedding). Still, 2,148 people experienced the food, the band, and the special activities of First Fridays.

3 days
with over
1,000
visitors

125,554

people in our community experienced CuriOdyssey

50,000

of these visitors were children

#### **ACCESS FOR ALL**

Science education is a right, not a privilege

CuriOdyssey offered several free and reduced-cost programs to ensure equal opportunities to experience our transformative programs. These programs aimed to increase access to science education for all.

We strive to help our community by providing free admission with the Discover & Go pass (in partnership with local libraries), CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), Blue Star Museums (for active-duty and reservist military families), and to teachers and school group children to visit again with their families. In cooperation with the Museums for All initiative, CuriOdyssey also offered reduced-fee admission and memberships for qualifying families.

3,800

visitors received reduced-cost admission through Museums for All

260

qualified families signed up for a reduced-cost membership 1,300

visitors received free admission through another program



5,346

children and teachers served through CuriOdyssey school and public programs



25 students served in the STEMCorps Mentor program

12

hours of experiential learning and STEM mentorship

#### **EXCITING PROGRAMS**

STEM is interdisciplinary and interwoven into our everyday lives

CuriOdyssey believes that it is critical to have STEM education at a young age to leverage a child's amazing and developing mind. The skills of creativity, inquiry, observation, problem solving and discerning fact from opinion are fostered through STEM education and are vital to the development of future generations of innovators, problem-solvers and decision makers.

Camp CuriOdyssey expanded in the summer of 2022, growing to 5 camp groups and adding a new theme, "Museum Medley", which presented new campers with experiential learning across all camp themes.

#### INSPIRING EXHIBITS

Innovative, hands-on exhibitions that you won't see anywhere else

CuriOdyssey's Exhibits Department creates original, innovative hands-on exhibits that encourage visitors of all ages to touch, observe, listen, wonder, and experiment with scientific phenomena. Our exhibits encourage children to learn by doing, watch results, and draw conclusions about how the world works.

This year, visitors enjoyed autumn flower arrangements and decor, carved Jack-o'-lanterns on pikes, a hay bale "maze," singing pumpkins, and exhibits like the Bone Zone, and Zombie Plants as part of our seasonal event, Pumpkin Days.

IlluminOdyssey, our beloved winter light science experience, returned for the fifth year in its classic form as a seasonal temporary indoor exhibition that included some all-new interactive exhibits.

Additionally, design and fabrication began on 15 new exhibits for the ViewPoint exhibition to be installed in the Bay Gallery. This is the first "permanent" exhibition to be built by CuriOdyssey in over six years and is also the largest exhibition we have ever created.



15

new exhibits in design and fabrication stage for the ViewPoint exhibition

years of IlluminOdyssey, our beloved winter light science experience

18,692

visitors explored IlluminOdyssey

(November 21, 2021 - January 9, 2022)

282

volunteers

9,924

hours of service

4.8

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

## DEDICATED VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteers are critical to our success

Volunteers work with every department at CuriOdyssey, from speaking to visitors about animals to leading activities to helping behind the scenes. With the pandemic, volunteers pivoted with us to provide virtual learning opportunities in addition to onsite experiences when it was safe to do so.

Our volunteers help create an authentic, inquiry-based, and immersive environment, while providing meaningful, robust, and personal learning experiences. Volunteers create meaningful and memorable experiences for visitors by interpreting CuriOdyssey's wildlife collection and engaging visitors with touchable biofacts.

This year, CuriOdyssey entered its second pilot year of STEMCorps. STEMCorps connects volunteer STEM professionals with students who are traditionally underrepresented in STEM. The program seeks to enhance the resources available for BIPOC youth to pursue STEM learning in a safe space where they can connect with and be encouraged by supportive role models.

\$317,568

estimated value in FTE work

12,500

personalized interactions for families and groups



#### RESCUED WILDLIFE

Accredited care, conservation, protection, and education

CuriOdyssey is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, which is a high honor as fewer than 10% of the 28,000 zoos and aquariums in the US receive this accreditation. Many of our animals are rescued and would be unable to live in the wild due to imprinting on humans or injury.

The animal encounters we offer connect our young visitors with wildlife and give them a concrete foundation for becoming respectful, compassionate, science- and nature-literate people who understand and care about our planet and the animals to whom it is home. Children cannot learn about the natural world without experiencing the animals who live in it.

Our comprehensive care approach ensures that the 68 individual, non-releasable animals (totaling 40 species) who live here experience optimal quality of life. In addition, we are involved in conservation work impacting endangered and threatened species.

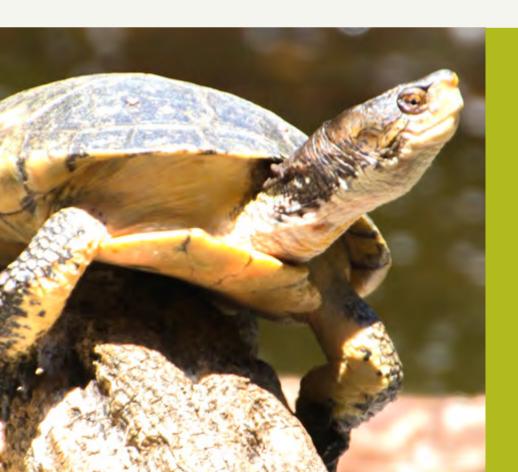


#### CONSERVATION

To inspire hope to heal the planet through collaborative learning, action, and inclusion

CuriOdyssey prioritizes its role as a bridge to the natural world to inspire the next generation of conservation thinkers and solutionists. Through our resident wildlife, our conservation research partnerships, as well as our science camp and school programs, we strive to create conservation connections for our visitors, while instilling a sense of optimism in the learning process, and excitement about conservation solutions that have yet to be discovered.

This year, CuriOdyssey launched a Conservation Department. The team drafted a mission and strategy, and identified key areas of focus for CuriOdyssey's conservation program. Through the efforts of this new team, CuriOdyssey became the education and engagement lead for AZA's SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction) western pond turtle (WPT) program.



Education and
Engagement Lead
for
AZA SAFE's
western pond
turtle program

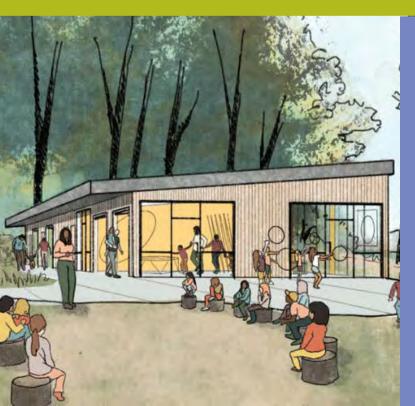
#### **CURIODYSSEY CAMPUS CAMPAIGN**

A new space for a more science-literate community

CuriOdyssey's campus redesign project replaces our current facility's aging and limited infrastructure with a 21st century, world-class center for early science learning. The new campus design includes eight new buildings and a playground. Each will be designed to take full advantage of our incredible setting and views, and will better incorporate the outdoors, accommodate a greater number of visitors, and offer enhanced ADA accessibility.

Phase One of the project is comprised of our Whooosh! inclusive Physics-in-Action playground, which opened in November 2021, and the Bay Gallery & Labs. The playground was designed by the Magical Bridge Foundation and modeled on their playgrounds, which utilize the latest in universal design principles to accommodate the one in four of us living with visible or invisible disabilities.

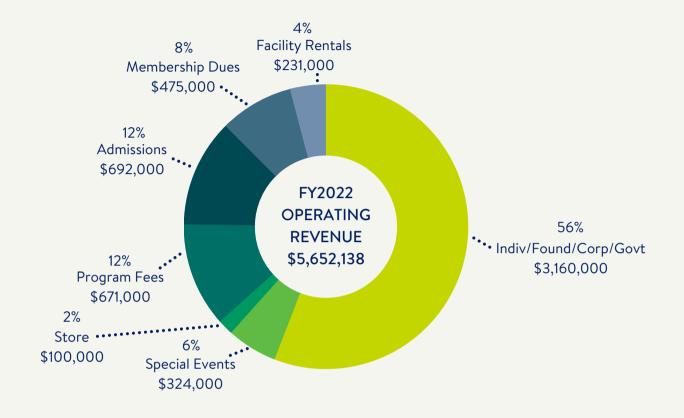
Groundbreaking for the new building took place in April 2022. The new 3,000 square foot building will feature approximately 1,200 square feet of exhibit space (a 30% increase over existing exhibit areas), two state-of-the-art learning labs, and an outdoor terrace to take advantage of our waterside location and Bay views.





### FINANCIAL REVIEW

FISCAL YEAR OCTOBER 1, 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2022





## DONORS



Crows are incredibly smart birds. They have been proven to have the intelligence level of a 5 to 7 year old child. They can make tools, understand causality and remember human faces.

YOUR SUPPORT PAVES THE WAY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF PROBLEM-SOLVERS, INNOVATORS AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS WHO WILL CHANGE AND SHAPE OUR WORLD.

#### \$100,000 AND ABOVE

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#### **\$2.500 AND ABOVE**

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Visra Vichit Vadakan and
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Warriors Community Foundation

#### **REDWOOD SOCIETY**

CuriOdyssey's Redwood Society recognizes those who have chosen to support CuriOdyssey through planned giving.

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Penny Wilkins and Paul Grishaber

Many thanks to all of our generous supporters!

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given by Amy Vener & Noelle Fagerlund

Linda Allen

given by Gretchen Klein

Annette the guinea pig

given by Annette Girion

Bacchu Uncle

given by Anu Datta & Stephanie LeMar-Datta

Jessa Barzelay

given by Brenda Besdansky

Charlotte & Levi Becerra

given by Alfredo Becerra & Rachel Naishtut

Abigail Bernhardt

given by Jessica Bernhardt & Theodore Goldstein

Raymond Carlomagno

given by Louann Carlomagno

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given by Anonymous, Mr. & Mrs. Andy Allbaugh-Jones, Sherry & Brian Chan, Linda & Sterling Lanier. Joan Martel & David Mitchell. Helen Yoshii

Ellie & Luca Cerf

given by Elizabeth & Robert Cerf

Jay Conway

given by Dan & Eileen Conway

CuriOdyssey Volunteers Team

given by Tonaka Kendrick

Arundhati Dey

given by Erin Moore

John Dicks

given by Jack & Terri McHenry

**Emily Felton** 

given by Krista Felton

Jennifer Gale

given by Douglas Williams & Madelyn Bedig-Williams

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given by Gretchen Valentine

Maureen & Bill Garrett

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given by Atilla & Anna Lazar

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given by Anonymous

Your inclusive new Magical Bridge

Playground

given by Jill & Christopher Escher

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given by Anonymous

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given by Daniel & Josine van Doorn

Connie Sevier

given by Thomas & Susan Newmeyer

Laura Shih

given by Anonymous

Jack Smith

given by Trinity Brown

Gavin Swinehart

given by Ann & Dan Swinehart

Clara Swinehart

given by Ann & Dan Swinehart

Jan Switick

given by Sula Watermulder

Hailey Tam

given by Yu Tong Tam & Judy Lee Tam

**Gregory Tilenius** 

given by Eric & Christeen Tilenius

James Tsai

given by Alice Chen & Jason Tsai

Aline Vartan

given by Kate Petelle & Arbi Vartan

**Arthur Vartan** 

given by Kate Petelle & Arbi Vartan

Mavis Vener

given by Amy Vener & Noelle Fagerlund

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Marian N. Atcheson

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given by Nancy Chaudoir

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given by Diane Daniel

**Christopher Miles Johnson** 

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Aidan Stone, Frank & Mary Hughes Stone,

Dr. & Mrs. Mitch Wakasa

**Tucker** 

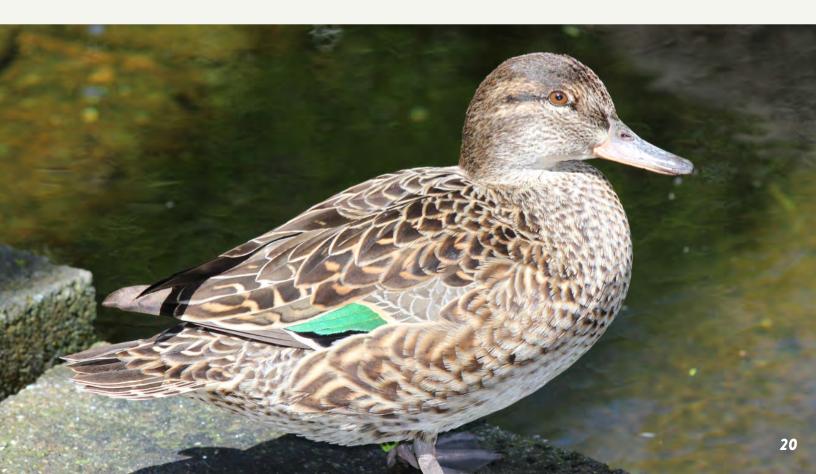
given by Coralee Mermod

Mary Page van Hamel Platerink

given by Laurel & Steven Miranda

**Betty White** 

given by Kimberly Yuen



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE CURIODYSSEY CAMPUS CAMPAIGN BETWEEN 10/1/2011-9/30/2022!

OUR AMBITIOUS BUILDING CAMPAIGN WILL CREATE A WORLD-CLASS SCIENCE AND WILDLIFE CENTER PROVIDING HIGH IMPACT INFORMAL SCIENCE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY.

#### \$5,000,000 AND ABOVE

TomKat Foundation

#### \$1,000,000 AND ABOVE

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#### \$250,000 AND ABOVE

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#### \$100,000 AND ABOVE

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