

ANNUAL REPORT

2017



**OCEAN
DISCOVERY
INSTITUTE**
young lives transformed through science

Executive Director and Chair Message

2017 was an exciting year for Ocean Discovery. We provided new opportunities for our students, built new partnerships, and of course, continued work on our new Living Lab in the heart of City Heights.

This past year, our inspiring volunteers, partners, and staff provided science education, support, and mentoring to the students of our school-shed. We engaged 950 fourth grade students in an effort to transform local habitats. We introduced our afterschool program to life aboard a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration research ship. We expanded our student initiative programs through a new partnership with the National Park Foundation. These are just a few of the ways we provided science learning experiences to more than 5,000 eager students in City Heights this past year.

Research continues to emerge documenting the uphill battle faced by students from urban, low income communities and the detrimental impacts on society when we leave those students behind. While the national problem comes into clearer focus, we see continued success in our unique, local approach to unlocking the potential of students in underserved communities.

Together, we've been working toward building a state-of-the-art science facility in the heart of City Heights. This Living Lab is significant because it will allow us to double the number of students we serve. Further, it will provide a beacon of hope and offer proof that our students and this community deserve the same opportunities afforded students in more affluent communities.

We're so close to realizing that milestone. As with other ambitious endeavors, we've experienced our share of successes and setbacks. Through it all, everyone involved has developed closer ties and a greater sense of purpose. As we sit poised to open the Living Lab, we are more excited and optimistic than ever before.

Thank you for standing together with us and investing your time, talent, and money in our vision. You are part of our community that continues to open doors for the science and conservation leaders of tomorrow.



Shara Fisler
Executive Director



Scott Pearson
Chairman of the Board



Scott Pearson
Chairman of the Board



Shara Fisler
Executive Director
2017 LEAD Graduate of the Year

OUR MISSION

Imagine a nation where all of our young people succeed. Imagine these young people become the diverse and thoughtful leadership we need.

And because of this, cities are resilient to climate change, ecosystems thrive, and discoveries are made that protect our loved ones and make our time on earth even richer.

Ocean Discovery Institute imagines just that. But we aren't there yet.



Young lives transformed through science

Manny found learning difficult from an early age. In school, he was put on an Individual Education Plan, to help him with his learning disability. His public school teachers and his parents didn't have the resources for additional outside help.

Students like Manny typically get left behind, especially in the sciences. Manny could have gotten frustrated and dropped out like 1 in 5 of his peers. Instead, he joined Ocean Discovery Institute and defied the odds.

Ocean Discovery sparked his interest in science. Their support system and mentoring helped nurture his curiosity and gave him the tools he needed to graduate high school.

Now a college student, Manny knows that his Ocean Discovery experiences helped him to go farther and he wants that for other kids too. He knows what it's like to struggle and the importance of having a network to call on for support.





THE PROBLEM

Today, many young people in our country live in poverty and lack opportunities to succeed. One of the opportunities that is glaringly absent is access to rigorous science education. Because of this, kids who grow up in underserved communities don't believe science is something they can do or that a scientist is someone they can be. This means that we are missing the chance for great discoveries by not including all young people.



OUR SOLUTION

Ocean Discovery Institute has a solution. By providing continuous science opportunities, paired with mentoring and the tools to overcome challenges - young people unlock their potential.

Our model targets one community or "school-shed" at a time. By beginning in City Heights, a San Diego neighborhood that is among the most diverse in the nation, we have tested this approach. The results have been unprecedented, earning the 2010 *Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring*.



What's a school-shed?

Ocean Discovery Institute focuses our attention on the community of City Heights and, in particular, the Hoover High School group of schools. This is what we call our school-shed.





OUR IMPACT

We believe all kids deserve the chance to succeed. In 2017, our programs helped students in our school-shed realize their potential. We use rigorous evaluation to understand our impact and chart our path forward.

In California, a state that ranks second to last in science test scores, our in-school participants increase their science knowledge by

▲ **30%** Better science knowledge

Against a backdrop in which less than 10% of low-income, first-generation college students earn a degree, most of our after-school participants earn a college degree within six years.

▲ **75%** Earn college degree





Supporting students from kid to career.

Richy joined Ocean Discovery in middle school. He traveled to Mexico as part of our summer research program and later returned to guide other students through the program.

Richy progressed on to the University of California, Santa Barbara. And like nearly 60 percent of new graduates who struggle to launch their desired career pathway after graduation, he also struggled to find a job.

However, Richy had something that many other recent graduates didn't have - the powerful network of Ocean Discovery supporters.

The connections he made with professionals during his time as an Ocean Discovery student enabled him to connect with a robust network. The same resources, support, and mentoring that helped him navigate the college application process, were available to him now as a post-graduate.

After graduation, Richy connected with his Ocean Discovery network and worked with Ocean Discovery staff to hone his resume and interviewing skills.

The extra help gave him the edge he needed. Within six months, he was hired by Abalta Tech as a software engineer.

OUR PROGRAMS

By receiving high quality science education and a network of support, young people in poverty develop a passion for science, stay in school, go to college, and gain entry to high paying fields where they make a difference.

BELIEVE

Our Community Initiative serves all young people in the school-shed as well as our families and their neighbors. It engages participants in science and conservation-oriented exploration in a place-based context. It aims to break down barriers of perception toward science and ultimately, permeate residents with a sense of belief that science is something they can do and scientist is someone they can become.

ACHIEVE

Our Student Initiative serves elementary and middle school students across the school-shed. This initiative engages students in hands-on science education in their school setting and takes these students to the outdoors for study and stewardship, with a goal of students learning that they can achieve in science and thinking critically.

LEAD

Our Leaders Initiative serves students as they progress on their pathway from middle school through college and beyond. By pairing rigorous science programming and leadership experiences with college and career support services, this initiative aims to develop young people into science and conservation leaders who make a difference in their community and our world.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

We provide opportunities to help students unlock their potential. Our volunteers empower us to make that vision a reality. We are grateful for the passionate people who work – often behind the scenes – to help these students succeed.



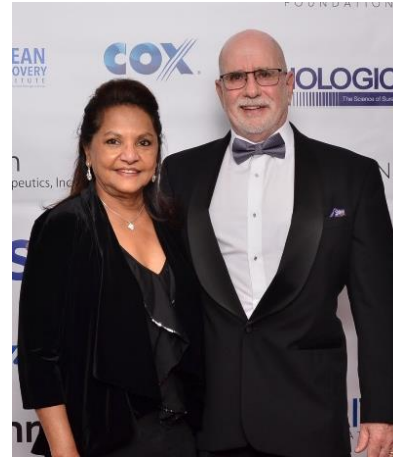
Claudia leads our family advisory committee. She selflessly gives her time to share our work with schools and develop recruitment materials.



Stan, a talented artist, shared his creative skills. He created new tables for the Living Lab that help bring the ocean into our classrooms.



Jan racked up an astounding 173 hours of volunteer service in 2017. She provides support across the organization from working as a financial assistant to helping the Leaders Initiative.



Dina volunteered nearly 200 hours of her time to this year's annual Bubble Up gala fundraiser. This included rallying all her friends and family the night before the gala to create beautiful centerpieces.

360 volunteers spent **6,300** hours serving others.

10 AmeriCorps VISTA fellows completed **16,000** hours of service.

“Ocean Discovery was a wonderful connection of my love and support for education, science, and giving back to the community. Although I’m not trained in education or science I can lighten the load in the office so others may carry on Ocean Discovery’s mission.”

Jan, Volunteer since Sept. 2016

OUR PARTNERS

We are stronger working together. We've cultivated strategic partnerships with other like-minded organizations, government agencies, and academic institutions. Our partnerships with these local and national groups amplify our impact and allow us to touch thousands of young lives.



UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep Khosla and Associate Professor and Vice Chair Gentry Patrick toured the Living Lab construction site and discussed creating a pipeline of students from City Heights to UC San Diego.



Ocean Discovery students joined the crew of NOAA's state-of-the-art research ship, the Reuben Lasker, to learn about fisheries science and life aboard a research ship.

1,200 meals and snacks were provided to students through partnership with **Feeding San Diego**.

2,248 volunteers removed **290** dumpsters full of trash and weeds from Manzanita Canyon through our partnership with **San Diego Canyonlands** and **California Sea Grant**.

"It's really important in public education that we come together as an entire community to have collective impact. Ocean Discovery is a model for how that can happen across not just our city but our state and our nation."

Cindy Marten, Superintendent
San Diego Unified School District

OUR INVESTORS

Our supporters enable our students to transform their lives, their communities, and the world. The commitment of our donors, whether they be individuals, foundations, corporations, or government agencies, is what enables the Ocean Discovery to provide programs 100% tuition-free and exclusively in high poverty communities.



Ben Friedman, NOAA's Deputy Under Secretary for Operations, visited with Ocean Discovery students from Monroe Clark Middle School and toured the Living Lab construction site.

12% of **Visionary Community** members are Ocean Discovery program alumni.

14% of people who gave in 2017 have been giving for **10 years or more.**

315 new donors joined our community of support in 2017.



Southwest Airlines became the Title sponsor of our annual Bubble Up! Gala in 2017.

INVESTORS

Names listed in blue signify membership in our Visionary Community of monthly donors

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www.OceanDiscoveryInstitute.org



2017 FINANCIALS

Revenues

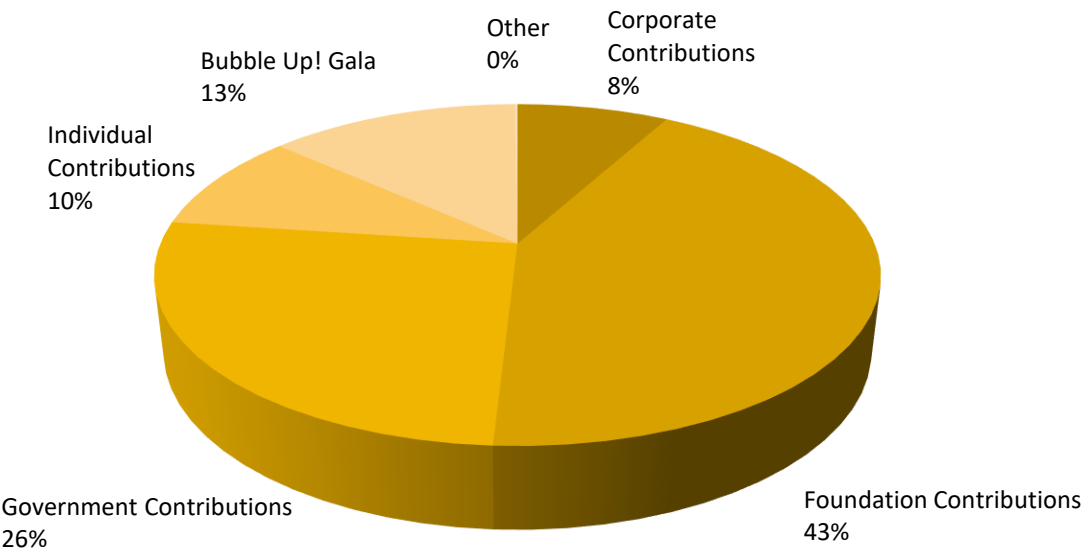
Foundation Contributions	\$1,095,893
Government Contributions	\$670,877
Bubble Up! Gala	\$341,496
Individual Contributions	\$240,636
Corporate Contributions	\$206,411
Other	\$3,647
TOTAL REVENUES	\$2,558,961

Expenses

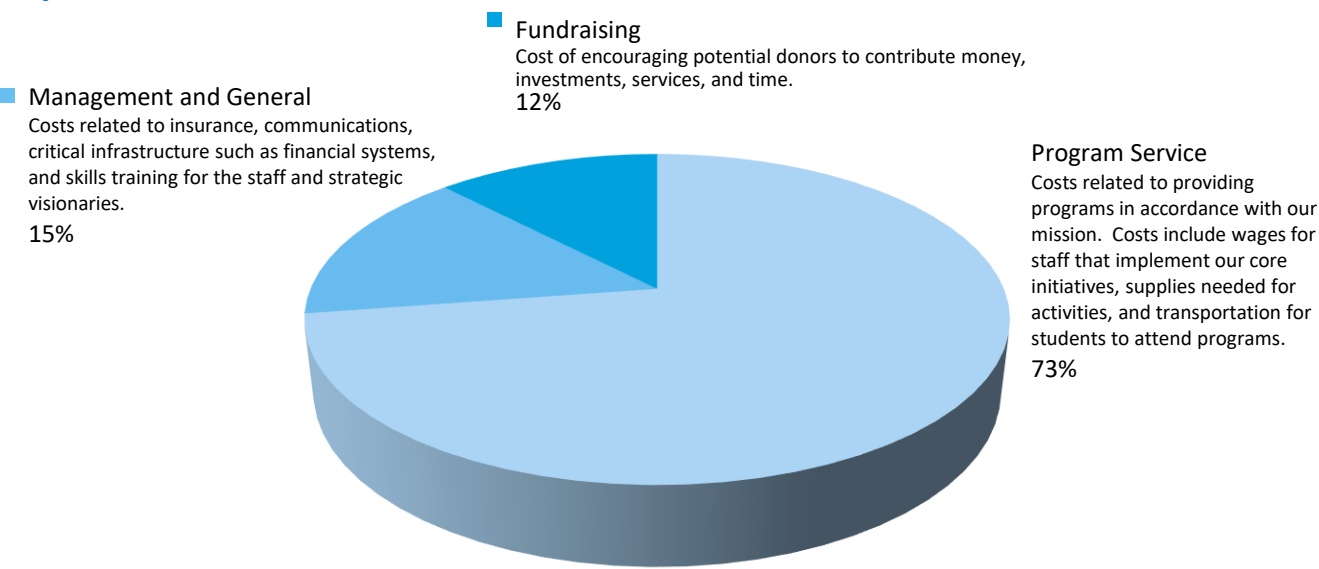
Program Services	\$1,255,714
Management and General	\$262,108
Fundraising	\$211,484
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,729,306

Change in Net Assets	\$829,655
Net Assets at beginning of year	\$4,270,558
Net Assets at end of year	\$5,100,213

Revenues



Expenses



Ocean Discovery Institute prides itself on being extremely resourceful and limiting costs whenever possible. While "Program Services" are always our most significant costs, it is important to remember that limiting investments in "Management & General" or "Fundraising" are felt far beyond the classroom - without tracking systems we cannot determine which programs are reaching desired outcomes, lack of qualified personnel or training affects the quality of service to beneficiaries. At Ocean Discovery, we invest in these expenses as we are a growing organization, but also to ensure that we are a sound investment for our supporters

OUR VISION

Ocean Discovery uses science to transform young lives. By expanding this model and bringing it to high poverty, urban, coastal communities across the country, the vision we imagine becomes clearer.

In 2018, we will open a state-of-the-art, net-zero energy Living Lab in the heart of the City Heights school-shed, giving us the ability to reach 10,000 students each year. Simultaneously, we are working to establish Ocean Discovery Institute on the east coast, in Norfolk, Virginia on the Chesapeake Bay.

We'll use what we learn through these efforts to create sites across the United States.

What happens then?

We see our efforts inspire young people to reach new heights. We see them succeed and move themselves and their families out of poverty. We watch them grow to make scientific discoveries and develop innovative solutions that protect our planet.

We see leaders who will make our world a better place.



The new Living Lab increases Ocean Discovery's reach and serves as a stepping stone for the next phase in the organization's growth.



Ocean Discovery Institute

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