Eagle Eye Institute is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating opportunities for youth from urban communities to learn about, connect with, and be inspired to protect the natural world.
Letter From the Board President

I am excited and honored to step into the role of Board President for Eagle Eye Institute. For close to 30 years, I have had the benefit of learning from and working in partnership with Maja Kietzke and Anthony Sanchez, who co-founded Eagle Eye in 1991. Anthony has been Eagle Eye’s visionary and president since its inception and will be elevated to President Emeritus to keep a light on his great vision for Eagle Eye to promote peace in the world by helping people discover the peace within through experiences and time in nature.

From my very first encounter to now, Anthony has been working to remove barriers that prevent young people in cities from experiencing the magic that comes from spending time in nature. He laid the groundwork for doing whatever it takes to bring nature into the lives of people who in many cases may never get to experience its magic. He secured partnerships with youth-serving organizations, natural sites to visit, local businesses, and environmental professionals as instructors, all to create mentor-rich environments that lent to powerful cultural exchanges and new ways of seeing oneself, others, and nature. Anthony was a bit of a lone ranger dispelling the myth that Black people don’t spend time in the woods. Years later, we celebrate the emergence of Black, Indigenous, and people of color leaders who are advancing the movements to connect young people to the outdoors and dismantle systemic barriers to access, inclusion, and belonging in nature.

As Eagle Eye looks to the next 30 years, it is essential that we consider all that is happening in the world today. Much of how we see ourselves and each other has a new lens, yet the benefits of time in nature have remained constant. **We will continue to elevate time in nature as an integral partner in support of our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.** We will strive to continue learning as we impart our 30 years of experience in personal development, leadership development, and partnerships. We will join with activists to promote and demand equity in access to nature and a more inclusive outdoors for all.

Our inspiration comes from witnessing the powerful impact that time in nature can have on a young person’s self-image and how they view their place and purpose in the world. We are blessed with a deeply committed board of directors, dedicated staff, volunteers, and allies. I am looking forward to engaging you in our journey in one way or another.

Peace and love,
Chris Cato
Strategic Visioning

For the past year, the Eagle Eye leadership team has been engaged in a strategic visioning process for the next phase of our organization. We want to thank Chris Proulx for offering his in-kind expertise to guide us in this process. Chris is a longtime friend and supporter of Eagle Eye; in 2000, he developed Eagle Eye’s first website and our national “Trees Are My Friends” campaign website. Chris brings over 20 years of organizational development experience with nonprofits. Since 2017, he has served as a member of the senior leadership of Humentum, whose mission is to inspire and achieve operational excellence for organizations focused on positive societal impact.

Youth Development & Nature Cohort

Eagle Eye was accepted into a year-long learning cohort with the Children & Nature Network along with eight other organizations from across the U.S. working at the intersection of youth development, nature, and outdoor equity. In addition to receiving a $10,000 grant to expand youth development & nature programming, Eagle Eye will benefit from peer-to-peer networking and technical assistance provided by C&NN to support our organizational and program development. The mission of C&NN is to increase equitable access to nature so that children - and the natural world - can thrive.

19th Annual Hike-a-thon #YouBelong

In October, we led our 19th annual Hike-a-thon fundraising campaign with community hikes in Eastern and Western Mass. We are grateful to our friends and supporters who attended the events, hiked on their own and fundraised, sponsored a hiker, or donated to the campaign. We raised $26,186 from individual donors and got our match of $20,000, for a total of $46,186. A special thanks to PeoplesBank and Conklin Office Furniture of Holyoke for sponsoring the event and Holyoke Community College Graphic Design Program for providing in-kind design work for the campaign.
The Eagle Eye Approach

The Eagle Eye approach creates a circle of engagement from the city to the forest and back. By connecting youth to nearby nature as well as immersive environments, we teach youth that nature is wherever you are -- and that you belong here. We know that thoughtfully designed experiences in nature can result in powerful youth development outcomes, like greater self-confidence and relationship skills, so we’re intentional about our practice. We create mentor-rich environments with professionals and community members of diverse identities and backgrounds who represent many ways of connecting with nature. And we allow nature to be a partner in the work. When all is said and done, magic happens.

Eagle Club provides young people an opportunity to connect with nearby nature and each other during the pandemic

Left to right: youth go birding at Ashley Reservoir in Holyoke; youth plant seedlings at the Holyoke Boys & Girls Club (HBGC)

Thank you to our collaborators at Latino Outdoors, Massachusetts Young Birders Club, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Crave Holyoke, and our TerraCorps Member Ellie for bringing their expertise on urban ecology, birding, wildlife conservation, sustainable agriculture, local food, and soil science to our program.
The Learn About Forests™ program offers an immersive experience and new ways of seeing oneself, others, and nature

“It was incredible to see the youth exit their comfort zone in an environment where they aren’t being judged and they are allowed to be kids again in this fast-paced world. I remember the faces they made when they took their shoes and socks off and walked around the forest barefoot for the first time. The laughing and bewilderment at how soft the forest floor was beneath their feet and the groans and eww’s they made as the mud crept between their toes are memories they and I will cherish forever.”

Justin Bresnahan, Program Coordinator, HBGC

Training & Professional Development

For the last five years, we have led our residential summer internship program offering college students, especially those from underrepresented communities, an opportunity to develop comfort and experience in the outdoors, connect with like-minded peers, and gain leadership and professional skills. We look forward to expanding opportunities to share our expertise in the field, develop young leaders, and support them to engage youth in nature in ways that are relevant and meaningful to them.

“Living at Eagle Eye for three and a half weeks gave me the opportunity to slow down and appreciate smaller moments of beauty that I don’t always notice while living in a city. I found that I enjoy working with kids and was in awe of their wonder and curiosity upon digging for newts and frolicking in the rain. I want to carry these joyful moments of innocence and glee with me.”

Julia Boral, Intern, Skidmore ’21

We are currently exploring a partnership with Bay Path University in East Longmeadow, MA, to offer students in their youth development program opportunities for nature-based personal and professional development. Students visited this fall to learn about our program, group facilitation techniques, and the evidence base around youth development and nature.
Youth Programs
- We served 70 youth ages 8-18 in partnership with four Holyoke schools & youth organizations.
- We developed two new programs to meet the need to stay local during the pandemic, Nature & The City and Eagle Club at the Holyoke Boys & Girls Club.

Partnerships
- We partnered with Kestrel Land Trust for the third year, coordinating Eagle Club at Holyoke High School Dean Campus in the spring and sharing a TerraCorps member in the fall.
- We built new partnerships with the Massachusetts Young Birders Club and Latino Outdoors, collaborating on youth activities and a public event in December.
- We became a service site for the TerraCorps program and began hosting our first member.
- We joined a working group around climate resilience in Holyoke and secured a $5,000 grant from the City of Holyoke/The Nature Conservancy to develop a youth curriculum in 2021.

Training & Professional Development
- We trained four college students in the fourth year of our Residential Summer Internship Program, from Williams College, Smith College, UMass Amherst, and Holyoke Community College.
- We developed a virtual Instructor Orientation and trained 20 new and existing program instructors.
- We trained 15 Holyoke High School teachers and administrators in our program model.

Volunteers
- We engaged nine student volunteers to complete media and education projects in partnership with the UMass Natural Resource Conservation (NRC) Department.
- We engaged 10 program instructors representing the Department of Conservation & Recreation, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, UMass, the Massachusetts Young Birders Club, and others.

Fundraising
- We developed our first virtual fundraising campaign for our 18th annual Hike-a-thon and met our campaign goal, raising $19,635, which was matched by an anonymous donor.
- We received a $15,000 grant from the Community Impact Fund, allowing us to coordinate our Residential Summer Internship Program for the fourth year.
- We received $4,000 from the Roy A. Hunt Foundation, $4,500 from the Mass Cultural Council, $2,500 from the Acacia Fund of Boston Foundation, and $2,000 from the Living Spring Foundation.
- In total, we raised $57,780 from individual and corporate donors, $23,750 in grants, $9,600 in fee-for-service, and a $9,150 SBA PPP loan subject to forgiveness to meet our annual budget for 2020.
Thank You to Our 2020 Donors!

Soaring Eagle
Community Impact Fund
Dr. Linda Henderson
Earth Spirit Fund
Jill & Courtney Nottage
Anonymous Hike Match

Eagle Egg
Sharyn Bahn
Judy Bexfield
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Bald Eagle
Acacia Fund of Boston Foundation
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Mary Ellen Sweeney
Lynda Watson
Carol Woolfe

Thank you to those who provided volunteer and in-kind service –
we couldn’t do it without you.
Help us reach our annual fundraising goal of $65,000!

We have raised $50,000 towards our goal.

Will you help us raise the remaining $15,000 by year end?

Your support helps us engage young people in hands-on outdoor experiences that raise awareness and cultivate a sense of belonging – in nature, in their communities, and in themselves.

Support Eagle Eye’s Work in 2022!

Contribution Levels

☐ Visionary Eagle $10,000
☐ Soaring Eagle $5,000
☐ Bald Eagle $2,500
☐ Golden Eagle $1,000
☐ Other: ________________

Name: ___________________________
Address: _________________________
City: __________ State: ____ Zip: _____
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Yes ☐ No ☐

Please send your donation to:
Eagle Eye Institute
P.O. Box 440481
Somerville, MA 02144

Or visit eagleeyei.org/donate to make an instant gift with PayPal Giving Fund.

Planned Giving

The Eagle Eye board is currently engaged in planning for our future. We welcome and encourage you to consider a legacy gift to ensure our work continues. Some planned giving options are a bequest in your will, IRA or other qualified retirement assets, charitable IRA rollover, life insurance, or charitable gift annuity. For further information, speak to your financial advisor or contact Eagle Eye Treasurer MaJa Kietzke at mkietzke@eagleeyei.org.

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