



Cornerstones of Science

awakening curiosity, enriching lives

2019–2020
ANNUAL REPORT

A Letter From Our Executive Director

In this past year, we have seen our country struggle and the national landscape change in an instant due to COVID-19. The economic and social effects of the quarantine, the assault on science, school and public library closures, and families trying to find normalcy and make daily decisions on what to do are but a few of the consequences we experienced. Cornerstones was no exception in grappling with how best to respond to these uncertainties.

Amid this chaos, these new realities did two things for Cornerstones: 1) We felt a renewed call to action. Through increased promotion of accurate science information, we assisted kids and families in finding normalcy and explore the world safely from the confines of their homes; and 2) It focused a very bright light on our mission, who we serve, and pushed us to re-think what we need to accomplish as an organization. With our small staff, we pivoted quickly to meet these challenges. As a result, it brought about new opportunities like broadening partnerships with community organizations (other than public libraries) and directly serving the public.

Let me highlight just a few of the important things that our organization accomplished in the past twelve months:

NEW INITIATIVES

- **A new *Test The Waters* Kit to be distributed to 500 public libraries nationwide** was developed for the National Libraries of Medicine (NLM). An unveiling of the kit was held via webinar for the NLM's 2000 public library members.
- **48,000 Maine families were reached with *REV Up The Fun* (visit www.revupthefun.org).** In collaboration with food distribution sites and the Maine Department of Education, families received good food and Cornerstones provided fun science activities for them to do during the summer.

BROADENING PARTNERSHIPS

Cornerstones of Science continued its work with other community organizations, as well as state and public libraries, including:

- **Maine State Park System** We placed ten telescopes into the hands of park rangers for them to share with the public in state parks around Maine.
- **Camp Susan Curtis Collaboration** A donor and excited supporter of the Library Telescope Program, donated six telescopes to be used by educators and campers this summer.
- **Maine Center for Disease Control** came to Cornerstones asking us to advise them on how to create a Community Self-Measuring Blood Pressure Monitoring kit and Program Plan for use in Downeast Maine. We are very excited to partner with this science leader and are confident this project will result in new and important work for our organization.
- **NASA@My Library Efforts** With NASA as our partner for the last four years, we have been quite busy working with state and public libraries across the country. One effort includes conducting research on learning what captures the attention and motivates a person's interest around Earth and Space science in a library environment. Cornerstones trained and provided support to three libraries (Lawrenceville, GA, San Angelo, TX, and Show Low, AZ) on specific interest development strategies which included the distribution of **1,800 science-based Take & Make Bags** to library patrons in their communities.

In partnership with State Library Agencies in eighteen states, the Space Science Institute, and NASA, we developed and promoted space science kits that were loaned to public libraries for programming with their patrons. We succeeded in producing 250 kits that were circulated to public libraries. As a result, nearly **20,000 library patrons** participated in high-quality science programs.

BETTER, MORE TARGETED COMMUNICATIONS

Cornerstones made significant improvements to our website, newsletter and social media. We saw a marked increase in engagement with Cornerstones stories now reaching hundreds (and sometimes thousands) of people. Social media followers of Cornerstones have doubled within the last year, we have **1,220 newsletter subscribers** and the number of people visiting our newly enhanced website has increased.

SO HOW DOES OUR WORK IN THE PAST YEAR POSITION US FOR THE FUTURE?

Our vision for the future is to further target programs, products and services to positively address disparities, like inequity, and to help people address pressing science-based issues in their communities. We will continue to evolve our programs, products and services to better serve broader communities who need our services. Some of these small transformations include:

- Through a change in our Mission, *Cornerstones will work with **community organizations including public libraries** to spark curiosity and foster a deeper understanding of the world around us.*
- Begin delivering selected Cornerstones programs and products directly to **the public** as well as through the powerful venues of libraries and other community organizations with support from their staff.
- **Activism Through Activities** by re-framing some of our programs to directly address science-based community issues and ways for the public to enhance their awareness and abilities to take action.
- **Online Forums and Webinars** with library professionals on strategies that support their abilities to provide equitable STEM activities and resources to their communities.

With COVID-19 still rampant and high-quality, accurate science information a critical necessity, Cornerstones of Science is needed more than ever. It is so timely to take stock of what happened in the past year and for us to make plans for the future. This annual report demonstrates that, with support from people like you, we can make positive and transformative changes throughout the nation. Thank you in the ongoing belief in our mission, work and goals.

Yours for a more community-engaged world,

Cynthia Randall

Cynthia Randall
Executive Director

Cornerstones of Science Programs FY 2019-2020

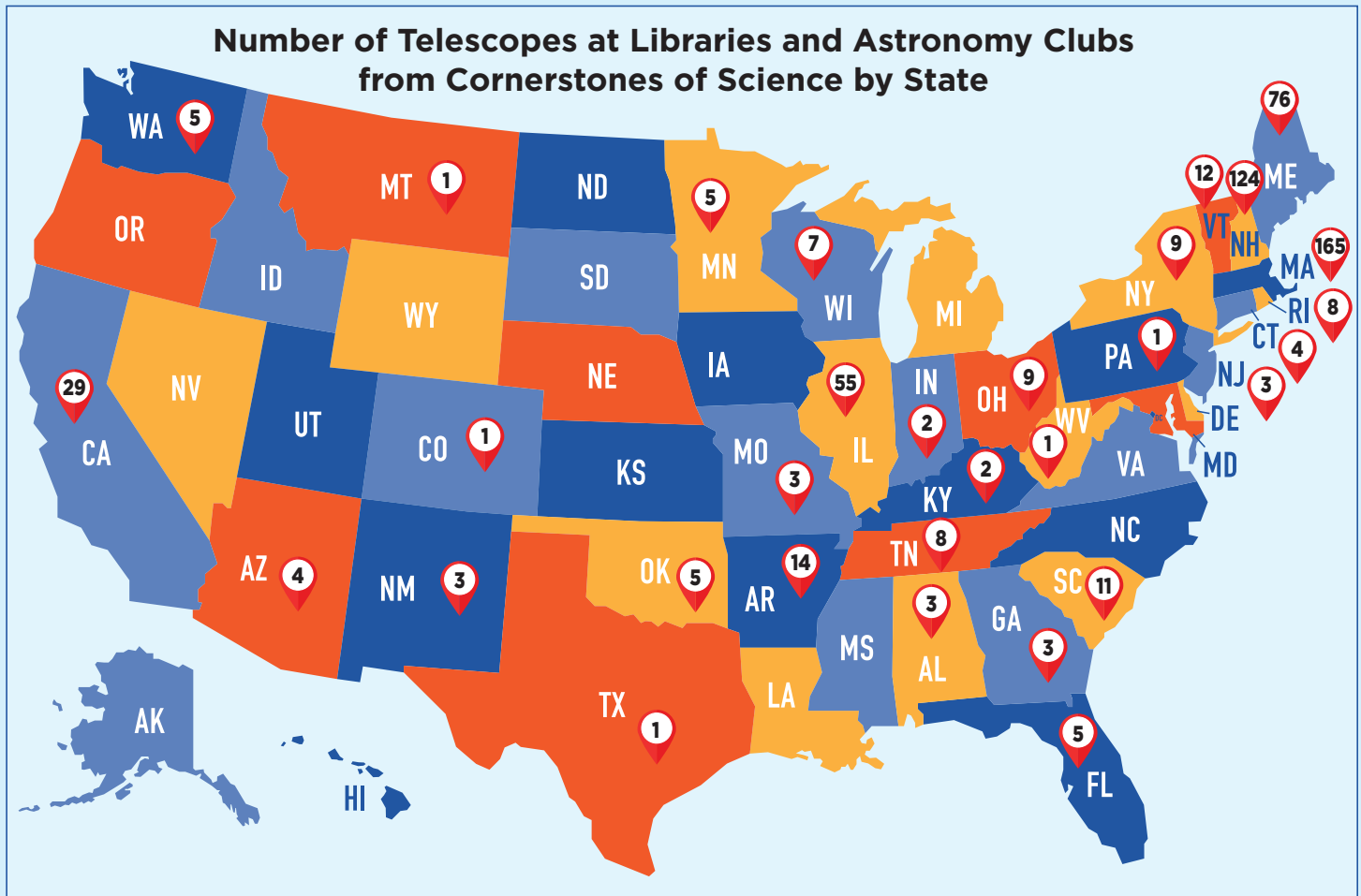
OUR MISSION

Cornerstones of Science **works with community organizations including public libraries** to create science experiences that spark curiosity and foster a deeper understanding of the world around us.

“Before Cornerstones we had no science programming at all. Cornerstones has really sparked interest in science for our staff and for the community.” — Robert Waldman, York Public Library

OUR WORK

Library Telescope Program



Cornerstones' STAR (Sharing Telescopes and Astronomical Resources) Program fosters interest in astronomy by getting quality telescopes into the hands of the public. Checking out the telescope as they would a book, people can explore the wonders of the night sky at home. The STAR Program is an accessible way to make hands-on science fun and give people a greater appreciation for astronomy. For more information, go to <https://cornerstonesofscience.org/products-services/telescope-program/>

Donor Introduces Cornerstones Library Telescope to Camp Susan Curtis and Campers



Six telescopes were donated to camp. The telescopes are anticipated to be used by educators with students in the fall school year.

“I got to see the moon up close for the first time.” — Ayden

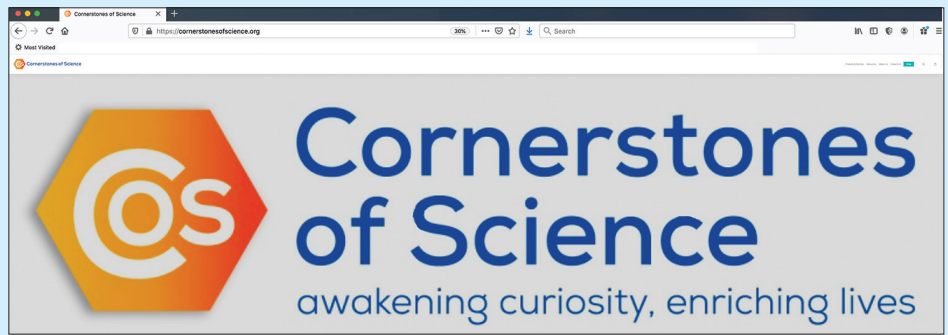
“I’ve always been so interested in space. There is so much out there to see!” — Delaney



Cornerstones of Science Website

www.cornerstonesofscience.org

- Increased number of site visits by 11%
- Average visit duration is 2 mins, 43 seconds, increased by 27%
- Number of different webpages visitors are clicking on increased by 33%



REV UP The Fun

www.revupthefun.org

- Launched in June, 48,000 families reached with **REV UP The Fun** activities
- A database of activities where families can access activities on energy, space and health
- In a partnership with the Maine Campus Compact, Maine Americorps volunteers, Maine Department of Education Summer Nutrition Program and 5 food distribution sites statewide



Federal Grants

NASA@My Library and State Library Partnerships

- Partnered with 18 state library agencies in developing and promoting science kits they loaned to their public libraries for programming with their patrons.
- 250 kits were circulated to their public libraries.
- Nearly 20,000 library patrons participated in earth and space science programs.



Patron Experience Pilot (PEP) Research

- PEP project slide (NASA Nugget) chosen by NASA to go to the White House in March 2020.
- The PEP project pivoted due to public library closures.
- Over 1,800 Take and Make Bags were distributed curbside to keep patron interest high around earth and space sciences.



National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health, *All of Us* Research Program

- 500 NLM_Cornerstones of Science *Test The Water* Kits to be distributed to public libraries nationwide.
- Unveiling of the kit was held via webinar to NLM's 2,000 public library members.
- Over 31,000 families will increase their understanding and ability to take action on the role and importance clean water has on our health, lifestyles and environment.



- **KIT CONTENTS** 6 activities, scripts and tests where families:
 - 1) discover how much water their bodies need to stay healthy;
 - 2) learn what goes down the storm drain along with water that affects our environment; and
 - 3) gain citizen science experience to ensure safe drinking water by contributing to a national inventory of water pipes.



FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position

Assets	FY2018-2019*	FY2019-2020**
Cash	154,673	190,414
Contributions		
Receivables	39,852	45,829
Investments		
Total Current Assets	194,525	236,243
Long-term Investments		
Long-term Receivables and Assets		
Other Assets	2,078	3,159
Total	196,603	239,402
Total Liabilities	44,836	58,856
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	151,767	138,432
Restricted		42,114
Total Net Assets	151,767	180,545
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	196,603	239,402

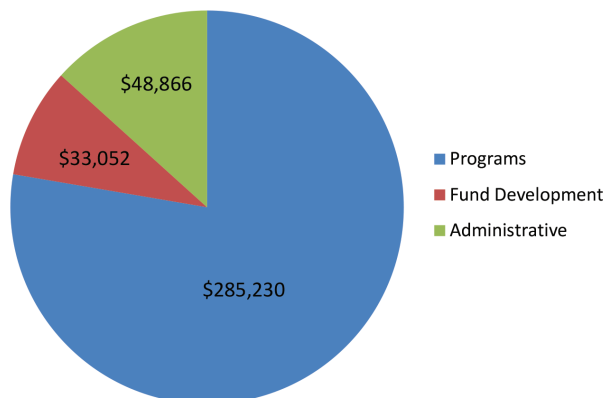
Statement of Activities

Revenue and Support	FY2018-2019*	FY2019-2020**
Unrestricted	215,360	119,370
Contributions		
Grants	99,901	221,420
Other Income	43,869	55,154
Total Revenue	359,130	395,944
Expenses		
Programs	260,680	285,230
Administrative	38,554	48,866
Fundraising	11,630	33,052
Total	310,864	367,148
Change in unrestricted net assets	79,129	-13,335
Change in temporarily restricted net assets	-25,388	42,114
Net Assets - beginning of year	98,026	151,767
Net Assets - end of year	151,767	180,546

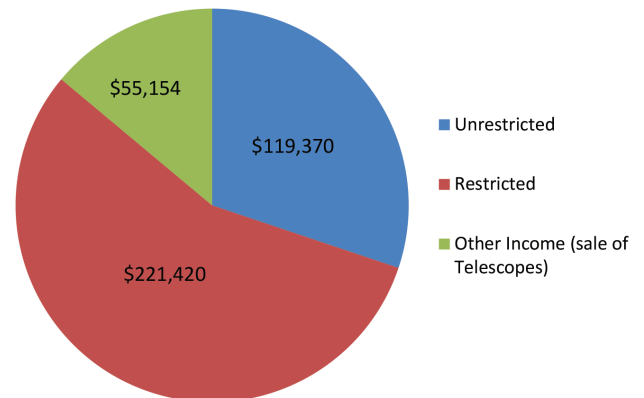
* Figures based on 990 submitted to IRS.

** Figures prepared for submission to IRS.

FY2019-2020 Consolidated Expenses



FY2019-2020 Consolidated Revenues





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Leadership

Staff

Cynthia Randall, Executive Director
Sarah Post, Program and Library Support Manager

Board of Directors

Lee Grodzins, Founder
Chris Goodwin, President
Don Hudson, Treasurer
Lanning Levine, Member
Francis Eberle, Member
Steve Weems, Member

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