



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings!

What an action-packed year 2023 was, with accomplishments ranging from an expansion of accessibility initiatives in both equipment and programming, to improvements around campus on the cabin hill stairs and trails on Blackhawk Island. We welcomed two new permanent staff: Facility and Operations Manager, Craig Boehlke, and Kitchen Lead, Lisa Warner Zirzow! We also hosted two Wisconsin Idea Internship Program students, an Accessibility Intern, a FLOW project artist, and 9 seasonal staff, as well as research projects on ticks and Lyme disease, fire ecology history, and phosphorus transport in the Wisconsin River. We successfully transitioned from a contracted food vendor to an internal food service, graduated 19 new Master Naturalists, completed a Strategic Plan for Research, and embarked on an overall strategic planning process to identify and prioritize initiatives for the next five years! Look for more initiatives to be introduced in 2024, and as always, please do not hesitate to contact me with questions, feedback, and ideas for collaboration and partnership.

Sincerely,



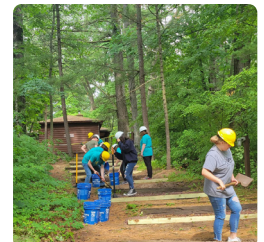
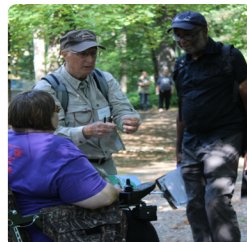
[amy.workman@wisc.edu](mailto:amy.workman@wisc.edu)

## ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES

2023 saw great strides in accessibility initiatives on and off-site. We were awarded a Wisconsin Idea Collaboration grant to partner with 4-H to purchase adaptive kayak equipment and host multiple training sessions on its use throughout the state. We partnered with Access Ability Wisconsin (AAW) to become a host site for an all-terrain wheelchair. We also partnered with the Nelson Institute to develop Upham's first-ever summer STEM camp for Autistic youth, "Nature's Navigators," and collaborated with Richland & Vernon County 4-H to provide an American Sign Language (ASL) leadership camp. We will continue to support accessibility initiatives in 2024!



"I would not have attended if the AAW [wheelchair] wasn't available to me...The chair reassured me that I could safely go into the woods again to attend this informative and fun event"  
-Insect Fest participant





## A YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

### PARTICIPANTS SERVED

**5,544** Youth  
**2,165** Adults

**7,709** Total

**25%** more participants served  
in 2023 than 2022!

### PROGRAM TYPE

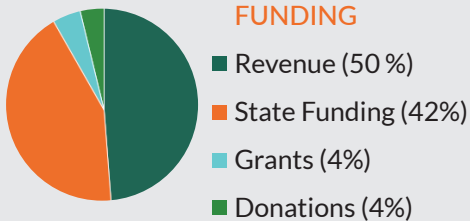
**109** Onsite Education  
**11** Conferences/Retreats  
**23** Outreach Programs

### PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

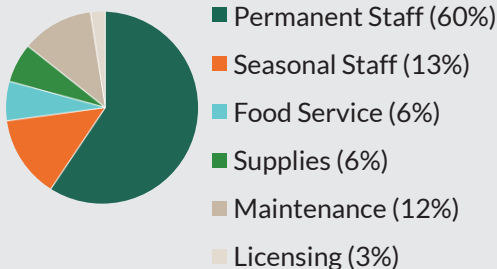
**25** 4-H Groups  
**53** Schools  
**46** Other

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

### FUNDING



### SPENDING



### PARTNERSHIP WITH WISCORPS

We were delighted to partner with WisCorps, Inc., a non-profit conservation corps headquartered in La Crosse, WI, that engages youth and young adults in two areas: conservation projects and nature education. We hosted two Individual Placement service members that supported our education work and a Traveling Crew that worked for two weeks on Blackhawk Island removing the damaged boardwalk and rerouting an improved trail to the caves. We look forward to partnering with WisCorps again in 2024!



“WisCorps service provides me with the unique opportunity to connect with the next generation of land stewards and give back to nature in the process.”  
-Matthew Becraft, Service Member

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW AND IMPROVED DINING EXPERIENCE

Nutritious and plentiful food is critical to fueling the energy needed for youth and adult participants to fully engage in active outdoor explorations at Upham Woods. After examining the feedback and crunching the numbers, we made the difficult but necessary decision to transition from an external vendor to an internal food service, creating and hiring a Kitchen Lead position. The result has been a resounding success! Comments on the food quality and quantity have been overwhelmingly positive, thanks to the efforts of Craig Boehlke, Molly Bodde, Pam Nawrot, and Lisa Warner Zirzow!



### SUPPORT OUR WORK

The 2023 Day of the Badger was a record year, raising over \$18,000 to support improvements to our facilities and infrastructure. We also partnered with the Walworth County and Sheboygan County 4-H Junior and Senior Leaders Associations to fundraise for cabin hill stairs improvements and additional Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs). We could not accomplish these projects without additional support. If you are able, will you consider a donation in any amount to Upham Woods? Your contribution will support replacement and upgrades to program supplies, equipment, and facilities. Contact us if you have a specific area you'd like to support!

