

FY 2023 - 2024

# FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT





Summer Camp

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Executive Director, Kevin Bowie

Dear Charleston County Parks Foundation Supporters:

I am pleased to share the Charleston County Park Foundation’s fiscal year 2023 - 2024 annual report and to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to each of you. Your generosity has been instrumental in helping us fulfill our mission.

This past year the Foundation was able to assist 5,637 people in accessing Charleston County Parks or participating in our programs. This represents a 35% increase in the number of people we served from the prior year. Many of the people we served were individuals, but we were also honored to partner with other non-profits who strive to uplift those in our under-resourced communities.

This past fiscal year we were pleased to introduce two new fundraising projects. We held our inaugural golf tournament in April at Charleston National Golf Club, and we had a “Christmas in July” campaign as we conducted a raffle giveaway for a winner to stay in a James Island County Park cottage during the opening weekend of the Holiday Festival of Lights. These new initiatives, along with grants and other campaigns have led to a record-breaking fundraising year generating over \$300k in gross revenue.

I often measure the Foundation’s success by the wonderful letters we receive from members of the community. One recipient said “I must say that last week’s fishing expedition was absolutely amazing. Our parents, preteens, and teens loved the activity, you, and your team members (planned). We are so appreciative of the time you all took with us to cut up bait, educate us on the different types of fish, measure the fish, and just the time you all took with our group. It was a very special activity for our group”. - Jack and Jill of America.

Thank you once again for being a vital part of our mission. Your passion for our parks and programs makes all the difference. We look forward to sharing more successes with you in the coming year and I hope to see you in the parks soon.

With gratitude,

*Kevin F. Bowie*

Kevin Bowie  
Executive Director





## MISSION

To Help ALL Residents Experience the Charleston County Parks and Programs.

## VISION

Develop and sustain projects that enable people to access the Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission's facilities, programs and services for living an active and healthy lifestyle.

## FOUNDATION FUNDS

The establishment of Foundation funds allows for greater focus on certain aspects of Charleston County Parks that require additional support.

### GENESIS SWIM SAFETY FUND

Supports aquatic safety programs to prevent drownings

### PARK AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITY FUND

Provides opportunities for the community who encounter barriers to access our park facilities, programs, and services

### NATURE STEWARDSHIP FUND

Focuses on preserving, protecting and managing the natural resources throughout Charleston County Parks

### CULTURAL HISTORY FUND

Supports the cultural and historical research, preservation, interpretation, and education with an emphasis on underrepresented histories throughout Charleston County Parks



# YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

PEOPLE SERVED FY 2023- 2024: 5,637



Special Olympics Kayak Team

<b>1</b> GENESIS SWIM SAFETY FUND	<b>\$32,856</b> FUNDED	<b>352</b> SERVED
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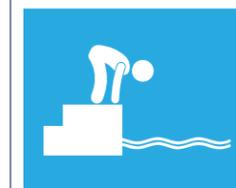
## SWIM LESSONS AT WEST COUNTY AQUATIC CENTER

Scholarships offered to children and adults in the summer at West County Aquatic Center in Hollywood, SC.



## PORTABLE POOL

Supported the mobile pool and swim instruction to children in under-resourced areas of Charleston County.



## SWIM TEAM

Sponsored the West County Wahoos swim team as they competed in the Coastal Carolina Aquatic Association Summer Swim league, including 6 dual meets and City Swim Championships.



## SWIM CLUB

Offered opportunities for Charleston County Parks Summer Camp children to become better swimmers and increased participation and diversity on the West County Aquatic Center Wahoo Swim Team.



**2** PARK AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITY FUND

**\$52,664**  
FUNDED

**2017**  
SERVED



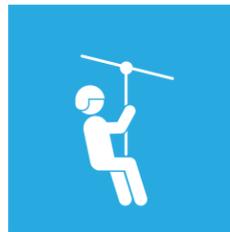
**SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS**

Gave a variety of summer camp scholarships throughout the county park system.



**TITLE 1 SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Provided funding for 10 Title 1 Schools to visit a Charleston County Park; Each school receives four, 90-minute education programs and includes transportation.



**LEADERSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVENTURE PROGRAM (LEAP)**

Funded participation in the program for local youth, focusing on: teambuilding, environmental education, stewardship, outdoor adventure and a community service project.



PARK AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITY FUNDS CONTINUED



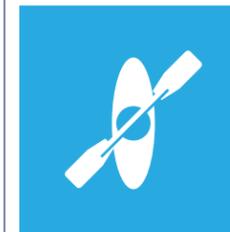
**JAMES ISLAND COUNTY PARK YOUTH TRIATHLON**

Provided scholarships for youth athletes competing in the annual Youth Triathlon (swim, run, bike) at James Island County Park.



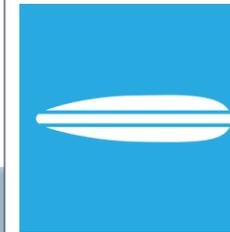
**INCLUSIVE EVENTS**

Offered tickets to dances and special events for people with physical and cognitive disabilities.



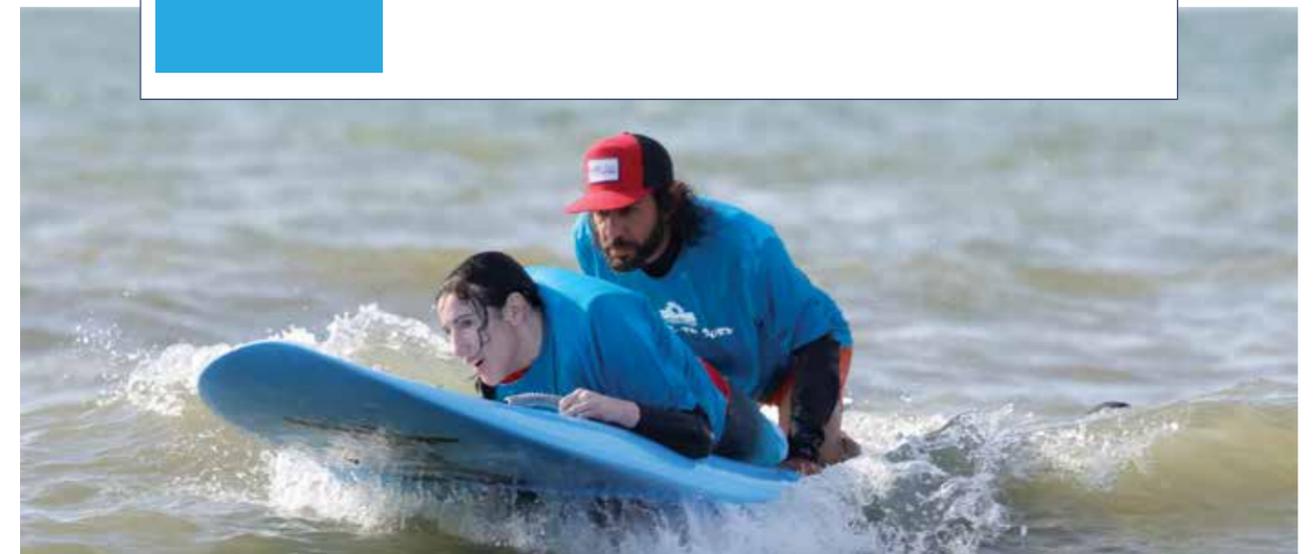
**SPECIAL OLYMPIC KAYAK TEAM**

Funded athletes for 1 training session weekly for 8-weeks season throughout summer; ending with statewide competition held at James Island County Park.



**WHEEL TO SURF**

Supported annual event at Folly Beach County Park allowing participants with disabilities opportunities to surf.



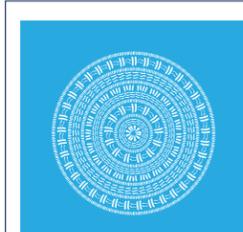
<b>3</b>	<b>NATURE STEWARDSHIP FUND</b>	<b>\$8,304</b> FUNDED	<b>N/A</b> SERVED
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**MCLEOD PLANTATION HISTORIC SITE WILDFLOWER PLANTINGS**

Funded the removal of invasive plants and the planting of new indigenous trees, shrubs, and flowers in the meadow. These ecological enhancements will provide opportunity for future interpretation programs.

<b>4</b>	<b>CULTURAL HISTORY FUND</b>	<b>\$9,467</b> FUNDED	<b>110</b> SERVED
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**MCLEOD PLANTATION HISTORIC SITE RECREATION PROJECT AND CEMETERY INITIATIVES**

Funded performing arts programs that support cultural history programs at McLeod as well as the preservation of the The Sankofa Memorial Garden Cemetery.

<b>5</b>	<b>SK8 FORWARD PROJECT</b>	<b>\$4,760</b> FUNDED	<b>326</b> SERVED
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**SK8 FORWARD**

Introduced skateboarding to young people who may encounter barriers accessing proper instruction, equipment, and access to SK8 Charleston.

# PROVIDING PARK ACCESS FOR OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

**SERVED FY 2023- 2024: 2,832**

- Biblical House of Worship
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- Bright Start
- Camp Hope
- Closet of Hope
- Defined Empowerment
- EB Ellington Elementary School
- Florence Crittenton
- Jack and Jill of America
- Landmarks for Families (formerly Carolina Youth Development Center)
- Let's Walk
- Lincoln Community Center
- Macedonia Great African American Methodist Episcopal Church
- Minnie Hughes Elementary School
- Mt. Zion Headstart
- Parents as Teachers Charleston County
- First Steps
- Pattison's Academy
- Pickles People Childhood Cancer Help
- South Carolina Department of Children's Advocacy
- South Carolina Department of Mental Health

"We wanted to say a big THANK YOU to the Charleston County Parks Foundation for providing this amazing experience for the Horizon students yesterday. They had such a great time and came back to school telling all the other teachers and students about how great the James Island County Park Challenge Course experience was!"

*Nicole Hess – Horizons at Ashley Hall is a free all-girls summer program serving youth from under-resourced communities.*



# FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS



## THE GIVING TREE

Raised \$75,500

The Giving Tree art installation will be erected at Old Towne Creek County Park in the spring. This work of art crafted from wood with carvings of leaves and other local wildlife provides an opportunity to purchase an adornment and engrave a special message honoring a loved one.



## HOLIDAY CARD

Raised \$38,275

Each year the Foundation's holiday card features a custom illustration highlighting the natural beauty of one of our parks. It is sent to over 30,000 of Charleston County Park's Gold Pass Members and Foundation supporters as a holiday greeting and opportunity to donate. The 2023 card featured an image of one of Johns Island County Park's majestic oaks.



## GOLF TOURNAMENT

Raised: \$33,260

The Foundation organized our very first golf tournament on April 8th at Charleston National Golf Club with 30 teams of four golfers in attendance. The golfers also had an opportunity to pause and witness the solar eclipse in progress!

## FUND RAISING HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED



## COTTAGE GIVEAWAY

Raised \$4,050

The Foundation raffled off a weekend stay in a 3-bedroom cottage at James Island County Park during the opening weekend of the Holiday Festival of Lights.



## EVENING AT McLEOD

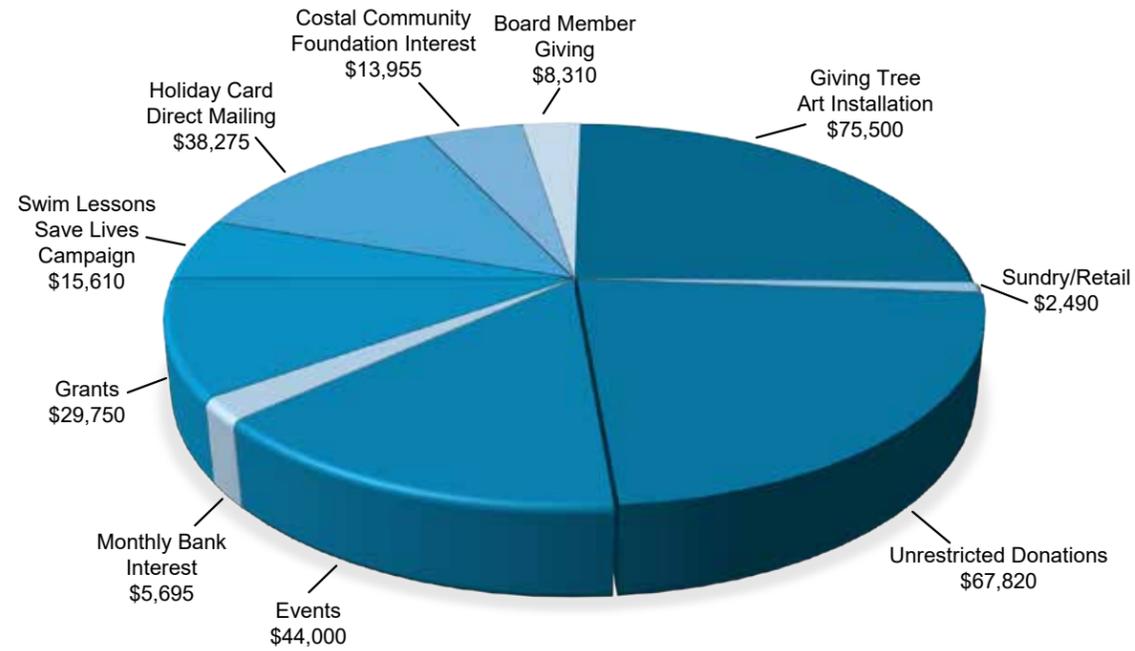
Raised \$10,740

The Charleston Symphony Orchestra and opera singer Philip Lima partnered to present a concert at McLeod Plantation Historic Site to benefit the Foundation's Cultural History Fund. This fund will help cover the costs for Cultural History programs in the parks and some restoration of the Sankofa Memorial Garden at McLeod.

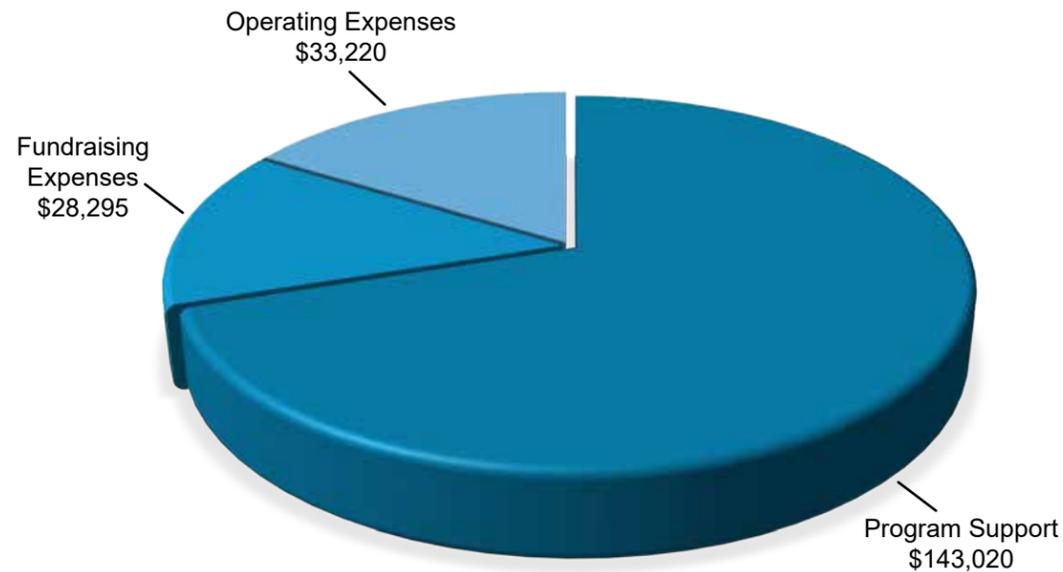


# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

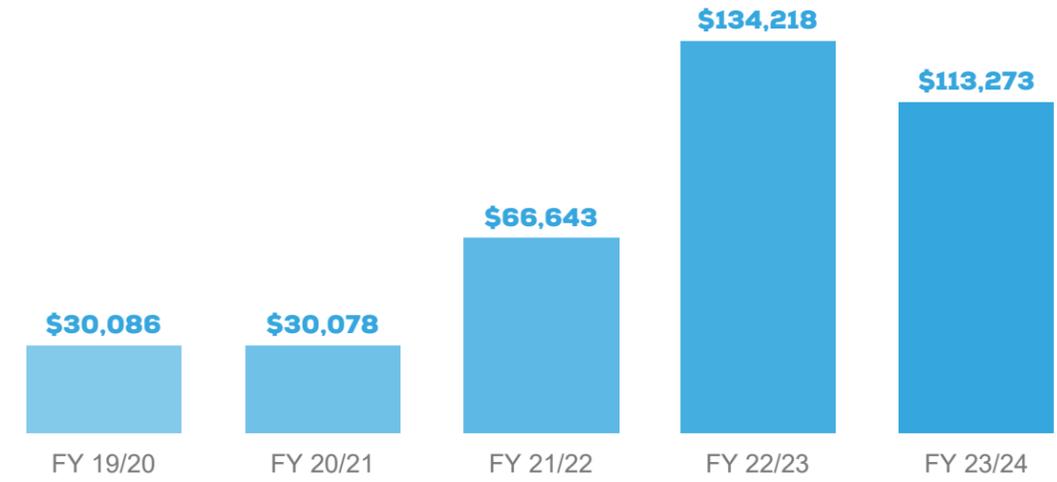
## FY 23/24 REVENUES - \$301,405



## FY 23/24 EXPENSES - \$204,535



# FOUNDATION SUPPORT TO CHARLESTON COUNTY PARKS



Youth Triathlon



# WAYS TO GIVE

The Charleston County Parks Foundation has several funds for the betterment of the community. Your gift to the Foundation helps us to provide access for all to enjoy Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission's facilities, programs and services. Donations to the Charleston County Parks Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Our Federal ID is 57-0913949.

## DONATE TO OUR FUNDS

- General Fund
- Genesis Swim Safety Fund
- Park and Recreation Opportunity Fund
- Cultural History Fund
- Nature Stewardship Fund

## HONOR & MEMORIAL GIVING

- Nature Stewardship Fund
- Giving Tree
- Planned Giving
- Legacy Giving

**SCAN TO  
DONATE**



# CHARLESTON COUNTY PARKS FOUNDATION BOARD

## BOARD OFFICERS

Stephanie Monroe Tillerson  
**Chair/Treasurer**

Seth Levy  
**Vice Chair**

Lisa King  
**Commission Liaison**

## BOARD

Dale J. Aren | Jason Barton | Gary Christmas | Barbara Denton |  
Jacquelyn Smashum Heyward | Eva Ravenel | Ronald Ravenell

## Term Ended in FY 23/24

Frannie Reese  
**Former Chair**

Krista Barnes  
**Former Vice Chair**

Shannon Brigham  
**Former Board Member**



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RETIRES



David Bennett

David Bennett served as the Foundation Executive Director from 2016-2024. During this time he was instrumental in rebranding the Foundation by changing the name from the Parklands Foundation to the Charleston County Parks Foundation. He also modified the mission and vision to be more aligned with the agency's mission and vision emphasizing access for all. He introduced many new fundraising initiatives including the legacy giving program to encourage people to include the Foundation in their wills and trusts and the Giving Tree as a means to honor loved ones.

Since 2019 over 12K people in the community have benefitted from Foundation's work including granting scholarships for summer camps, swim lessons and other programs, and giving access to parks and special events like the Holiday Festival of Lights. Over the last several years the Foundation has reimbursed over \$298K back to Charleston County Parks and currently hold a fund balance of over \$600K.

Thank you David for your unwavering commitment to enriching and transforming the lives of so many in the community and positioning the Foundation for a bright future.



Inclusive Dances



**CHARLESTON COUNTY PARKS FOUNDATION**  
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