



ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

2022 was a year of growth and rebuilding, reigniting annual events and programs. We saw plans for The Learning Centre finalised, contracts signed, permits issued, and daily progress on the construction site that was celebrated every step of the way from groundbreaking to roof raising. All the while the FRIENDS family grew and we are grateful for all who joined the exciting rebuild journey.

2022 brought opportunities to get programs back on track. The year began with the pandemic still a big concern and Abaco still in recovery, but adjustments were made and virtual events were well attended. It wasn't long into the year that we were able to interact face-to-face. With creative planning we had a full year of environmental education and conservation.

The support and commitment of our donors, partners, friends and family is what keeps us moving forward helping to keep our mission of protecting Abaco's environment through environmental education, conservation and research facilitation always in the forefront. Thank you for believing that FRIENDS could come back stronger and continue to pave the way for a sustainable Abaco.



CHA BOYCE

Executive Director



WHO WE ARE

VISION

WE ARE AN ISLAND COMMUNITY THAT IS LIVING SUSTAINABLY AND PROUD TO BE STEWARDS OF OUR RICH BIODIVERSITY

MISSION

TO PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT OF ABACO, THE BAHAMAS THROUGH EDUCATION, CONSERVATION, AND RESEARCH FACILITATION.

STAFF



L-R: Cha Boyce - Executive Director,
Olivia Patterson Maura - Deputy Director,
Ruth Albury - Administrative Coordinator,
Lianna Burrows - Outreach Coordinator,
Lyndeisha Curry - Education Officer,
Amanda DeGregory - Campus Administrator

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wynsome Ferguson, President
Jim Richard, Vice President
Charlotte Dunn, Treasurer
David Knowles, Secretary
Diane Claridge, Director

Joy Chaplin, Director
Reg Patterson, Director
Justin Higgs, Director
Jeremie Saunders, Director
Michelle Bailey, Director

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

REACHED 904 STUDENTS

Tripling educational outreach since
online programs in 2020



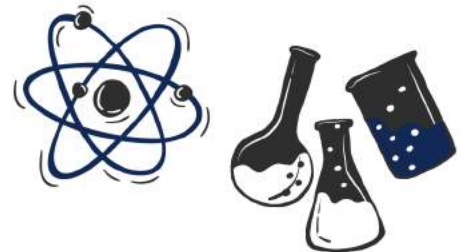
HOSTED 6 FULL WEEKS OF SUMMER CAMP



Reaching communities of Marsh Harbour,
Sandy Point, Cooper's Town and Guana Cay
with our first full season of in-person camp
since 2019

BROUGHT BACK THE ABACO SCIENCE FAIR IN PERSON

Engaging over 100 students from 9 schools
across Abaco with the theme "Ecosystem
Services of Coastal Ecosystems".



**REACHED A MAJOR
FUNDRAISING GOAL OF**

\$2,000,000



Raising an additional
\$1,000,000 since 2021 through
our capital campaign to rebuild
the Learning Centre.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

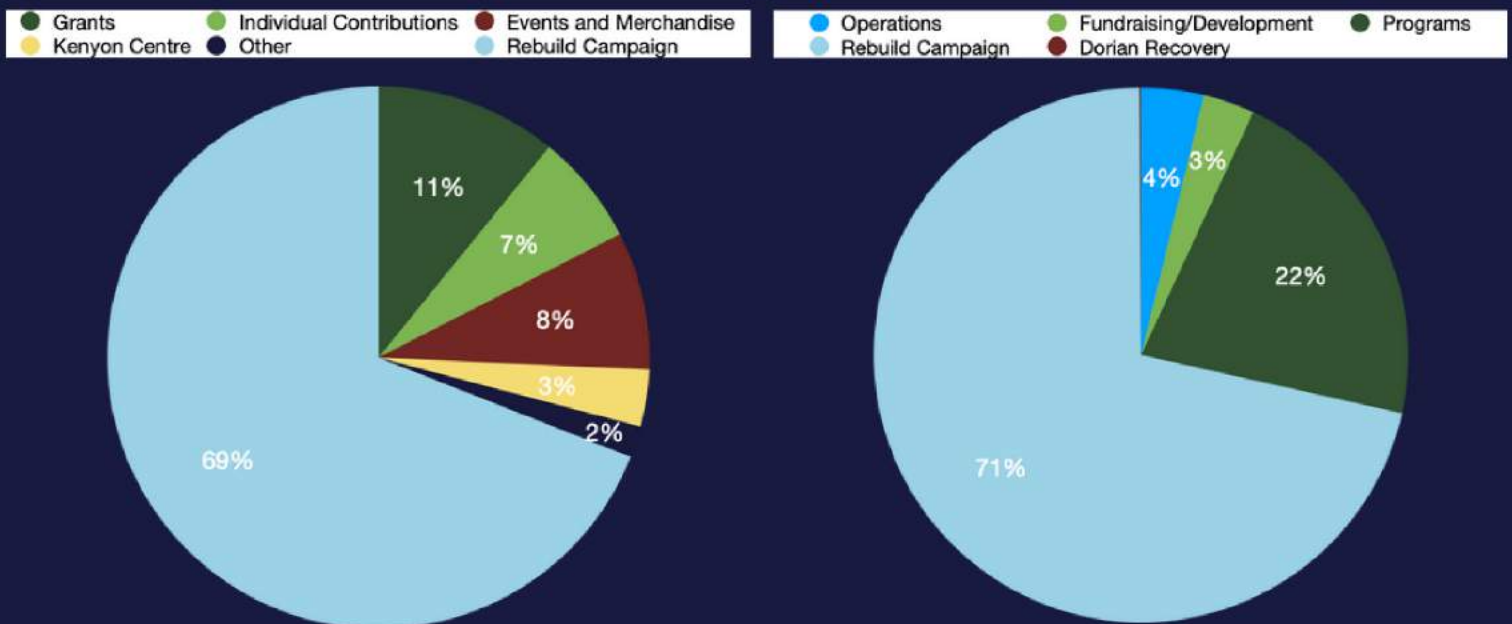
This year's budget tells a story of progress, where less Dorian repair was undertaken, and the Learning Centre rebuild project was well underway. Our education programs returned in full force and while our staff was still displaced from an office setting general operations were more normalized due to lifting of COVID restrictions and general recovery status of the Abaco community.

We continued a diversified approach to fundraising to ensure sustainability of our programs and continuity for the rebuild project.



FIGURE 1.

2022 Income - \$2,268,130.86 (left), and Expenditures - \$1,916,461.37 (right)



PROGRAMS BACK IN ACTION

After school clubs ran for 20 weeks this year, reaching an average of 37 students per week between our three clubs: Sea Beans (ages 3-6), Eco-Scouts (ages 7-11), and Island Investigators (ages 12-17).



We guided 351 students on 52 field trips highlighting important ecosystems including mangroves, coral reefs, pine forests and blue holes.

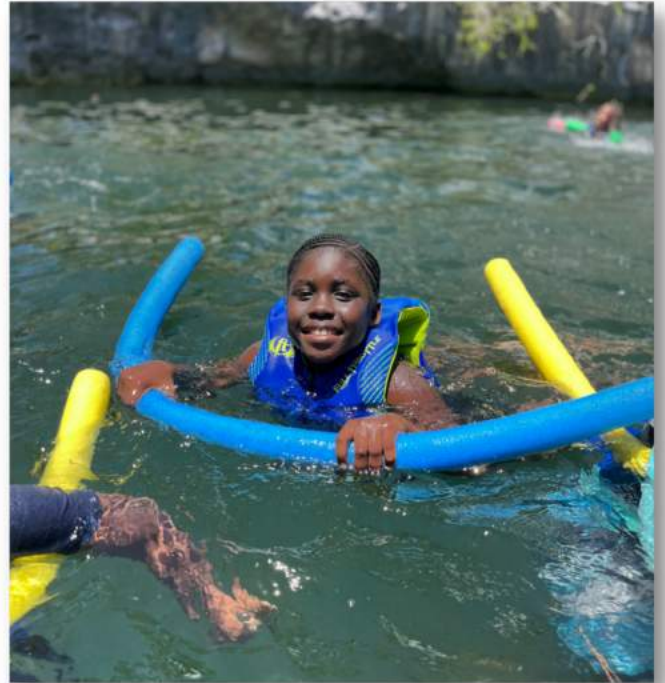
We gave 19 presentations to local and visiting schools, reaching 233 students.

PROGRAMS BACK IN ACTION

Full Season of Summer Camp!

For the first time since Dorian and COVID we hosted a full six weeks of camps, reaching 114 students across North, Central, and South Abaco!

Thank you to Kirk of the Pines, SC Bootle High, and JA Pinder Primary for hosting us!



Guest Speaker Dr. Nick Higgs (Cape Eleuthera Institute) also participated as a judge.

Science Fair Returns in Person!

Theme: Ecosystem services of coastal ecosystems

9 schools

155 students and teachers

Representing communities across Abaco

Sponsored by:



BEP FOUNDATION

CONSERVATION PROJECTS



We have continued our partnership with the Ocean Conservancy as cleanup coordinators for Abaco, hosting several cleanups with school groups, communities and summer camps. In one of our biggest cleanups this year, 450 pounds of trash was collected from Winding Bay beach in South Abaco in partnership with The Abaco Club. Due to our limited capacity, we have also developed a cleanup kit designed to encourage individuals to host their own cleanups. This kit includes gloves, trash bags, cleanup sheets and educational talking points to lead a cleanup. Contact us if you'd like to receive more information on this!



DORIAN RECOVERY



We continue to play an active role in environmental recovery after Dorian by being a partner in mangrove restoration and conservation efforts. FRIENDS is conducting mangrove education, hosting a mangrove nursery on our campus, helping to plant mangroves in The Marls, and facilitating a small restoration project at Marnie's Creek on Elbow Cay. Other key partners include Bonefish and Tarpon Trust, The Bahamas National Trust, Perry Institute for Marine Science, Waterkeepers Bahamas, The Nature Conservancy - Bahamas, Bahamas Forestry Unit, and MANG.



If you would like to participate in or support the mangrove restoration project, please contact us!

DORIAN RECOVERY



In a project focused on improving island sustainability and climate change resilience, FRIENDS installed a 16.6kWp solar and battery energy storage system at Forest Heights Academy in Marsh Harbour. The project included training for teachers, students, and two high school graduate apprentices, and supports FHA's goal to reduce their carbon footprint and reliance on BPL power.

Total Carbon Dioxide emissions avoided equals approximately
24,162kg/year



A project of the Bahamas Protected Areas Fund and the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development through KfW.

FRANK KENYON CENTRE



Students and Professors from Bentley University came together with FRIENDS' staff to celebrate the end of a successful course to visit Abaco's ecosystems!

"From Shore to Sea: Understanding Caribbean Ecosystems and their Services". The Kenyon Centre provides accomodation and logistical support to schools, researchers, and service groups visiting Abaco.

In 2022, the Frank Kenyon Centre housed **204 people** from **24 organisations** and institutions, and hosted **three external workshops**, contributing to knowledge and progress in the areas of mangrove restoration, sustainable fisheries, forest management, STEM education, marine debris, sea turtles, stony coral tissue loss disease, Hurricane Dorian recovery, renewable energy and safe water supply.

RISING FROM THE ASHES

This year FRIENDS' campus made the most dramatic transformation we have seen since Hurricane Dorian destroyed our Education Centre in 2019, but this time progress was made in the right direction! From final demolition of the remaining walls of the Education Centre, to ground-breaking, then foundation, walls, and a roof - the new Learning Centre took shape.



STORIES



MY NAME IS JOHN PINTARD, AND I AM A FRIEND OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

"Growing up on a family island in The Bahamas there is often a difficulty finding productive activities for young children to take part and be engaged in. For myself and so many others, Friends of the Environment has aided in bridging that gap.

Since I was 7 years old until 2019, I participated in the wide range of activities that "FRIENDS" offers. From the summer programs, to the after school program.



The vast exposure to marine life, the importance of the environment, and the safe practices for the same have nurtured my interests into a future career in maritime studies. Some of my most memorable moments growing up were experienced during the summer camp programs. My personal favorites were snorkeling at Mermaid Reef, planting mangroves over the Northern Marls of Abaco, and swimming in blue holes. After witnessing my older sister take part in the programs, as well as volunteer, I knew that it was imperative for me to do the same. Friends of the Environment has impacted my life on many levels. The lessons learned and relationships that I was able to foster are priceless. I will forever be grateful to the persons that take the time and impart their knowledge and passion into all of the children that take part in their programs."

John is currently a student at SUNY Maritime College and we are very proud of his achievements!

STORIES



A huge "thank you" to FRIENDS and staff for an awesome adventurous week!! My grandchildren loved it and are already looking forward to next summer's camp!! Please keep me on the mailing list for any future activities!! - P. Pinder.

Thank you for such an informative camp all of my children are still talking about it including my 4 year old. - M. Mills.

Dear FRIENDS, Thank you for a fabulous 3 days of fun, learning and camaraderie! This was a great experience for all! LCIS Thanks you! - Denise Mizell (Kenyon Centre Visiting Schools Program)

Thanks to the program I obtained knowledge and experience in my field of choice. I now aim and will push to obtain an electrical job. I have realized that it is fully what I want to do in life. - N. Major, Solar Sustainable Livelihoods apprentice



IN RECOGNITION

GRANTS AND PROJECT PARTNERS

A special thank you to funders and collaborators who were part of active programs in 2022.

August A. Busch III Charitable
Trust

Bahamas Department of
Agriculture

Bahamas Marine Mammal
Research Organisation

Bahamas National Trust

Bahamas Protected Areas Fund
BEP Foundation

Bonefish and Tarpon Trust

Center for Disaster Philanthropy

Combustion Music Hope Town
Music Festival

Devereux Ocean Foundation

Engineered Electric Services
Global Giving

Hope Town Zero Waste

IDEA Relief

MANG

Ocean Conservancy

ONE Bahamas

Perry Institute for Marine
Science

Sol Relief

The Nature Conservancy -
Bahamas Country Program

Water Mission

Waterkeepers Bahamas

Yellow Dog Community
Conservation Foundation

FOUNDATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Thank you to the many foundations and individual donors who supported our work in 2022.





GET INVOLVED

Volunteer – Support – Partner

Support

There are many ways to support through time, in-kind services, and direct donations. Shop our merch online at RedBubble, or buy locally in Abaco.

Partner

Are you an organization or entity working in conservation, or education and outreach? We'd love to discuss ways to combine resources for the greater good. Please reach out to our staff!

Follow Us!

Follow us on social media:
[@friendsoftheenvironment](#)

