



ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025



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: Olivia Patterson Maura - Executive Director
Lyndeisha Curry - Deputy Director
Cha Boyce - Development Director
Ruth Albury - Administrative Coordinator
Danielle Evans - Campus Administrator
Brad Cooper - Program Officer
Nikita Fraser - Custodian



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Richard, President
Lory Kenyon, Treasurer
David Knowles, Secretary
Diane Claridge, Director

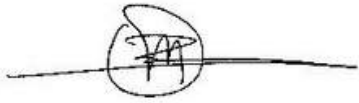
Joy Chaplin, Director
Reg Patterson, Director
Justin Higgs, Director
Denise Mizell, Director

Outgoing Directors:
Charlotte Dunn
Jeremie Saunders

*To our current and outgoing Board we wish to express our gratitude for your
contributions to the strategic direction of our organization!*

REFLECTIONS

When I look back at 2025 I see two things. I see growth, but I also see consistency - and for us, that's important! Each year we provide core programs that reach the next generation of students. This allows students to grow through, and basically graduate from our programs! Starting at age three, and all the way up to adulthood we have something for everyone. Sustainable livelihood apprenticeships, internships, and mentorship from our staff assist students in exploring career paths while developing a culture of volunteerism and environmental engagement. Annual events such as the International Coastal Cleanup are reliable, and help us build on our impact, year over year. Our facility is based centrally in Marsh Harbour, open from Monday to Friday with staff willing to both share our knowledge and learn from you. I can see the positive impacts rippling out through the community, and I want you to know that your support of FRIENDS isn't just a donation of money or time - it's a long term investment in a healthy future for Abaco.



OLIVIA PATTERSON MAURA

Executive Director

IN MEMORIAM:

FRIENDS remembers with deep gratitude the lives and contributions of Michelle Bailey and Wynsome Ferguson, whose dedication, leadership, and passion for our community left a lasting legacy. Mrs. Bailey served on the FRIENDS Board from 2018 and was a valued partner in our education programs from their earliest days. A pioneering science educator, she helped strengthen environmental education in The Bahamas, inspiring generations of students through her teaching, mentorship, and commitment to hands-on learning. Wynsome Ferguson joined the FRIENDS Board in 2010 and later served as President of the Executive Board, providing years of steadfast leadership, warmth, and guidance. Wynsome helped strengthen our partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and championed sustainability throughout her career. Both women played an important role in advancing FRIENDS' mission, and they will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by our community.



Michelle Bailey



Wynsome Ferguson

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

REACHED 1,794 STUDENTS

Field trips, clubs, and camps make a lasting impact on local and visiting students!



HOSTED 7 WEEKS OF SUMMER CAMP



Reaching communities of Marsh Harbour, Sandy Point, Crossing Rocks, Cooper's Town, and Grand Cay (back after a 7 year hiatus)!

CAMPUS FACILITIES DIRECTLY BENEFITED 838 PEOPLE

FRIENDS' Campus is a place for partnership, collaboration, and community! In 2025 over 540 people used our Learning Centre rental spaces and over 298 people stayed at the Frank Kenyon Centre!



793 PEOPLE ATTENDED COMMUNITY EVENTS



Events such as the Abaco Science Fair, International Coastal Cleanup Day, Earth Day Community Fair, and more, are designed to engage and empower the public to be agents of positive change in their communities.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FRIENDS' fiscal year follows the calendar year, which helps align our financial and programmatic reporting.

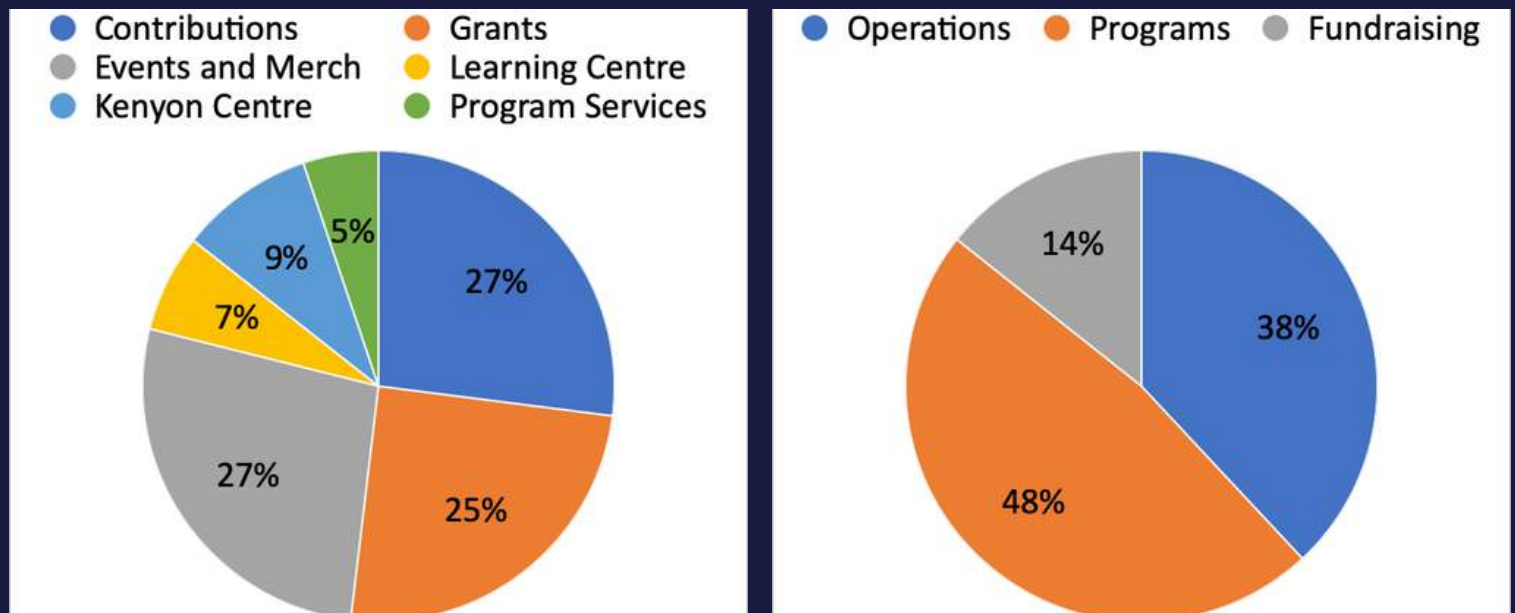
Income generated in 2025 was \$750,493.32 and expenses were \$680,599.27. As usual, some of our projects extend beyond the calendar year.

We continue to strive for a diversified income to support resilience and sustainability for the organization. Sources include grants, contributions, events, merchandise, rentals of common spaces and offices at the Learning Centre, and accommodations and programming through the Kenyon Centre.



FIGURE 1. 2025 OPERATIONAL BUDGET

Income - \$750,493.32 (left), and Expenditures - \$680,599.27 (right)



FRANK KENYON CENTRE

The Frank Kenyon Centre has 8 rooms, bathrooms, a common area and kitchen, and lab and deck space for projects. The Frank Kenyon Centre was built to support work in research, education, and conservation and is available for rent by schools, non-profit organizations, researchers, and community service groups. In 2025, the Frank Kenyon Centre housed 298 people from 18 organisations and institutions. Kenyon Centre guests contributed time and knowledge to mangrove restoration, marine mammal research, environmental education, and various community outreach and Dorian recovery projects.



Lyford Cay International School and Windsor School are repeat visitors at the Frank Kenyon Centre.

"Becoming a part of the FRIENDS family has been an incredible experience and I am forever grateful for the learning and the memories that I have because of this place! Thank you for taking care of us and being so kind! Felt so much like home."

"This [visit] was the absolute best way I could've ended my college career. Thank you for inspiring a passion for the environment and conservation that only this organisation could have. Forever Thankful."

"Grateful for this beautiful facility and will be praying for your mission for this beautiful world we get to shape." - Storyhill Church

THE EXPLORATORIUM

Bringing the vision to life...

Throughout 2025, The Exploratorium took exciting steps toward becoming a reality. What began as a vision continued to come together as interactive displays were added, exhibit structures were created and paintings began to bring the space to life.

The Exploratorium will guide visitors on a journey through Abaco's ecosystems and its rich biodiversity. Our hope is that guests will build connections to the environment through this experience and become inspired to learn and do more.

During our development process the doors were never officially closed; summer campers, after-school club students and visiting schools and community members were all able to get an early look at the space. Their enthusiastic response was a great encouragement as we finalized details for the Grand Opening of The Exploratorium.

The Exploratorium was formally opened in April 2026. We look forward to sharing more details with you in our next report and hope that you can visit us in person to explore our exhibits!

The FRIENDS Exploratorium is open from Monday - Friday, 9am - 4pm. Large groups are encouraged to call in advance.
Admission is free!



Inspiring Young Minds!



STUDENTS CONTINUE TO LEARN, DISCOVER AND CREATE LASTING MEMORIES AT THE LEARNING CENTRE

After school clubs ran for 16 weeks across the Spring and Fall 2025 school terms, providing hands-on environmental education for young people ages 3-17.

Approximately 80 students engaged each week across our four clubs. While some students participated in both the spring and fall terms, each semester also welcomed new participants, allowing us to reach a broader group of young people throughout the year. Clubs included Sea Beans (ages 3-6), Eco-Scouts (ages 7-9), Advanced Eco-Scouts (ages 10-12), and Island Investigators (ages 13-17).

Each term has a different theme, and in 2025 Club Members explored topics surrounding native Bahamian wildlife, coppice forests, marine ecosystems, and marine protected areas. These experiences encouraged students to investigate the natural world around them and better understand their role in protecting it.

We guided students on 79 field trips highlighting important ecosystems including mangroves, coral reefs, pine forests and blue holes, and gave 87 presentations to local and visiting schools.

Field trips focused on discovery and observation, species identification, use of scientific field equipment, and best practices for exploring the environment.

Overall, we offered 1,794 student experiences!



SCHOOL OUTREACH



FRIENDS also partnered with Dr. Megan Davis, a researcher from Florida Atlantic University, to bring her program "Conch in the Classroom" to FRIENDS. It was introduced through after-school clubs and will be expanded to local primary schools.

Abaco Science Fair

Theme: Science, Sustainability and The Queen Conch

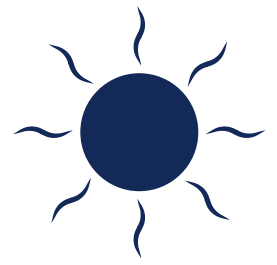
10 registered schools

285 attendees from across Abaco

Guest Speaker: Dr. Megan Davis



SUMMER MOMENTS!



Summer Camps were held in 5 communities across Abaco, offering 7 sessions encompassing activities for ages 3-17. We also hired 2 summer interns and hosted 2 student volunteers who gained valuable leadership experience.

Thank you to
Crossing Rocks Primary,
JA Pinder Primary,
SC Bootle High, and
Grand Cay All Age School
for hosting us during our
traveling camps!



Special thanks to the
International Game Fish
Association, Allen Exploration
and our Sponsor a Smile
donors for supporting
summer camps!

Summer Camp Feedback:

Overall I learnt a lot of new things and I'm glad that [FRIENDS] not only gave us a lesson on it but we also got to experience what we talked about. I felt good about the camp and it truly makes me want to take care of my environment better.

-S. Murray (Age 15)

Thanks for another amazing camp adventure!! [My son] really enjoyed himself and learnt so much. He's always teaching me something new.

-S. Etienne (parent)

BUILDING CAPACITY



FRIENDS hosted three interns, helping to increase exposure to environmental careers and build skills in Bahamian youth for conservation and environmental education.

Riley Wong (left), a student from Forest Heights Academy, chose Friends of the Environment for her two-week work experience placement, a graduation requirement completed during Grade 11.

Gerri Summers (below left) Victoria Albury (below right) joined us as Summer Camp interns for four full weeks of outdoor learning and student engagement!



Pre-college Ocean Discovery and Science (PODS) helps Bahamian students prepare for post-high school STEM programs through coastal ecology lessons, research experience, and mentorship. Organized by the University of Michigan's Coastal Ecology Lab in partnership with FRIENDS, the 2025 cohort included students from Grand Bahama, New Providence, and Abaco. After completing an online course, students wrapped up their summer studies at the Kenyon Centre, exploring local ecosystems together. We're excited to continue this partnership!



International Coastal Cleanup (Sept.)
150+ participants
1,177 lbs debris collected

HELPING HANDS ACROSS ABACO



Great Elbow Cay Cleanup (Jan.)
95+ participants



Great Abaco Cleanup (May)
222 participants
9,609lbs of debris collected

MANGROVE RESTORATION



As an affiliate member of the Bahamas Mangrove Alliance, FRIENDS maintains a mangrove nursery on our campus, helps coordinate mangrove propagule collection, outplanting, and mangrove education activities. We are grateful to Sunrise Rotary Club of Birmingham, Alabama, the Rotary Club of Abaco, Austin Serving Abaco, and Abaco's fly-fishing guides for their enthusiastic support of mangrove restoration activities in 2025.



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

B.A.M. CELEBRATES A DECADE!



Bahamas Awareness of Mangroves is a long-standing partnership between FRIENDS and the Khalid bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation. B.A.M. has become an impactful program for 10th grade students in Abaco, teaching them the importance of mangroves and their role in protecting the environment through concepts focused on scientific method and habitat restoration. Three of Abaco's six high schools are currently engaged in B.A.M. Additional support in 2025 was received from Rotary International and Moore Bahamas Foundation.



Bottom Left: Forest Heights Academy, and Bottom Right: Patrick J Bethel High School

If you would like to help future 10th grade classes participate in B.A.M., please contact us!

ON CAMPUS



On campus events like our Earth Day Community Fair, Christmas Cove market, and other presentations and tours strengthen community connections. This year, 793 people attended community events.

OFF CAMPUS



Off campus events like the Reef Ball, Turtle Trot and Combustion Music Fest help extend environmental education beyond Friends of the Environment's campus.

PARTNERSHIPS



Left: FRIENDS partners with BREEF as the on-island representative for the Eco-Schools Programme, providing support to local schools as they seek to achieve and maintain their green flag certification. Hope Town Primary (above), Forest Heights Academy, and Every Child Counts renewed their certifications in 2025, following a pause after Hurricane Dorian.

Below: FRIENDS is partnering with an international organization called Rare to engage local communities on issues surrounding sustainable fisheries. FRIENDS has participated in training workshops focused on behaviour change, and has spent time with fishers in the communities of Sandy Point and Cherokee to begin discussions on what impacts their livelihoods the most and changes they'd like to see for improved fisheries. In Sandy Point, fishers expressed a need for better access to government services like licensing and permitting. Cherokee fishers shared observations of seagrass loss in nearby creeks along with their concern about resultant impacts to fisheries. FRIENDS is listening and continuing to find ways that we can support these communities in becoming active participants in managing their fisheries with the goal of a healthy environment, healthy fisheries, and sustainable livelihoods for many years to come!



IN RECOGNITION

GRANTS AND PROJECT PARTNERS

A special thank you to funders and collaborators who were part of active programs in 2025.

Abaco Lodge
Abaco Club on Winding Bay
Bahamas Caves Research Foundation
Bahamas Dept. of Agriculture
Bahamas Dept. of Marine Resources
Bahamas Forestry Unit
Bahamas Mangrove Alliance
Bahamas Marine Mammal Research Organisation
Bahamas National Trust
BEP Foundation
Bonefish and Tarpon Trust
BREEF
Combustion Music Hope Town Music Festival
Cruise Abaco

The Delphi Club
Devereux Ocean Foundation
Engineered Electric Services
Florida Atlantic University
Florida International University
GEF SGP implemented by UNDP
Hope Town Zero Waste
International Game Fish Association
Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation
Lyford Cay Foundation
MANG
McPike-Zima Foundation
Moore Bahamas Foundation
OceanAid 360

Ocean Conservancy
ORG Bahamas
Perry Institute for Marine Science
Poinciana Paper Press
Rare
Rotary Club of Abaco
Royal Marsh Harbour Yacht Club
Sunrise Rotary Club - Birmingham, AL
The Nature Conservancy - Bahamas Country Program
University of Michigan
Waterkeepers Bahamas
White Sound Press
Yellow Dog Community Conservation Foundation

FOUNDATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Thank you to the many foundations and individual donors who supported our work in 2025.





Abaco Home School Association
visiting South Abaco Blue Holes
Conservation Forest



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!

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[@friendsoftheenvironment](#)



www.friendsoftheenvironment.org