

Walking toward a brighter future in 2023

Dear Friends of CBEC,

We hear it again and again, there's no place like the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center! It's no surprise that generations of families continue to visit CBEC, but we can't remain the "hidden gem" forever. **Ask yourself, 'what role does CBEC play in your life?'** Do you walk the trails with your loved ones or pets? Does your preschooler explore the forest with our educators? Do you enjoy kayaking with your friends, or, solo paddling to gather your thoughts? For so many, CBEC is a cherished nature center and we are grateful for that role in your lives.

We are thankful for the many ways you have given back to the CBEC. Our community's love was more than apparent when vandals ruined our summer camp playing field and main field trip staging area, adjacent to the parking lot. Over the course of two weeks, and with the help of our supporters on social media, local businesses came to the rescue, volunteering their time and materials to restore the damaged lawns. This spared CBEC thousands of dollars in repairs. Although that might not sound like a big deal, it is for a small nonprofit whose budget is \$650K annually. Those repairs would have cost CBEC 7-days' worth of field trip monies.

I'm happy to say **we are coming out from under the COVID shadow** and want to hit 2023 running. Our 2022 Rock the Reef fundraiser was a great success bringing in new energy and supporters. We are **seeing a renewed interest in all existing programs** especially Legacy Institute for the Environment (LIFE), Critters & Cocktails and Creepy Crawlers Pre-K classes. There is **enthusiasm for developing new programs and initiatives** focusing on adaptive paddling tours, art classes and corporate team building. Keeping that momentum going comes at a cost.

Our annual budget is approaching \$700,000 for 2023.

We need to make facility repairs, replace educational equipment and purchase additional vessels for our kayak fleet. These things need to be done "up front" to keep this renewed momentum.

When you donate to our annual fundraising campaign, you let us keep the lights on and the doors open for the 25,000+ general public visitors and school-aged children we serve each year. There is much more we can do.

With getting back up to pre-COVID speed **our monthly expenses have increased to \$56,000.** The winter months of **January through March are the toughest months for CBEC operationally.** We have a goal of raising \$150,000 with this appeal, and we need your donations, company matches and stock contributions to **help keep the center viable and sustainable.**

Please remember the value CBEC adds to your family, the community, and the greater Bay Area during this season of giving. When you support CBEC with a gift today, YOU are ensuring that this will be a place for all to meet, learn, play, and enjoy the beauty of nature.

Thank you for being the strength behind CBEC. Your gift makes all the difference!



With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicki Paulas".

Vicki Paulas
CBEC Executive Director

What your donation helps us accomplish!



EDUCATION *Keeping programs affordable*

CBEC has been providing hands-on, feet-wet environmental programs for thousands of students from not only Maryland, but also, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania and other states for over 43 years. The demand for CBEC's unique services has never been higher, nor, the financial need greater to meet that demand. We were thrilled to have sold out our 2022 summer camps. Our school field trips came back in mid-April, and we already have bookings into the fall of 2023. We charge \$17.50 per student for an onsite field trip and our goal for 2023 is to keep our rates the same. **Your donation of \$50 will help offset the costs to run these programs including the purchasing of seine nets, microscopes, GPS units, art and cleaning supplies.**



RESTORATION *Commitment to volunteerism and stewardship*

It is the dedication of 100+ volunteers participating in our various habitat restoration projects that has allowed CBEC to keep the 500-acres preserved since 1979. As dramatic climate events continue to threaten this pristine property, it will be your dedication and generosity which will allow CBEC to keep pace with the challenges. We have much work to do to ensure shoreline resiliency and protection of our fragile marshlands and forests. In 2023 we will start repairing 1 mile of our shoreline, adding 1.3 acres of historic marsh and creating more aquatic habitat through the placement of 300+ reef balls for juvenile sportfish and oysters. **Your donation of \$250 will help create more habitat by providing funds to purchase oyster spat for seeding our reefs and the concrete needed to build reef structures.**



RECREATION *Access for all*

With 4 miles of hiking trails, water trail access and a rich diversity of observable wildlife it's no wonder people flock to CBEC to enjoy the sights and sounds of nature. In 2022, we reopened a trail to the North Point that had been closed for 17 years. Facility rentals increased. Construction on the new lake pavilion commenced. This pavilion will serve as the hub of our education classes and provide another rental revenue stream. **Your donation of \$1000 will enable us to purchase new kayaks and accessories to be used with our school programs and guided tours.**

"CBEC's LIFE class for adult students concluded a few weeks ago. When I signed up, I was unsure what to expect. Now I can say that a paragraph of superlatives wouldn't be enough to describe my experiences. All the lectures were so informative and were complemented by stimulating hands-on outdoor activities. We all wished the days at CBEC could have lasted longer. I have learned so much about nature and human impact on the Chesapeake Bay!" —Joy Mayfield



Chesapeake Bay
Environmental Center

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