



PO Box 7067, Denver, CO 80207 | 303.447.1076 | [www.CottonwoodInstitute.org](http://www.CottonwoodInstitute.org)

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## COTTONWOOD INSTITUTE

*2015 Annual Report*

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:



June 2016:

Cottonwood Institute had a phenomenal year in 2015 and we are incredibly grateful for the generous support of our educational partners, students, parents, staff, instructors, board members, donors, corporate sponsors, foundations and cheerleaders that believe in the power and impact of our work.

In 2015, CI delivered 28 programs, served 398 students, logged 10,900+ program contact hours, and recorded 3,400+ service-learning project hours through its educational programs, outreach programs, and volunteer projects.

Students explored the outdoors, howled with the wolves at Mission:Wolf, created an upcycled art project to raise awareness about environmental issues, encouraged students to get to school using alternative transportation, and more.

We completed an Urban Farm Volunteer Project with Re:Vision to help tackle food deserts in the Westwood neighborhood of west Denver, began reconnecting with our alumni, and worked with an external evaluation consultant to analyze our program evaluation data and to document the impact our programs are having.

As an organization, we continued to make great progress towards our 5 primary organizational goals to implement a more sustainable business model: 1. Focus on CI's hedgehog concept, the intersection of what it is passionate about, what it can be best in the world at, and what can drive its economic engine. 2. Refine and execute a robust evaluation plan to improve the quality of its programs and track the short-term and long-term impact of each of CI's core programs. 3. Position CI as a leader in providing high quality, high impact environmental education and service learning programs for schools and youth organizations in Colorado, including continually improving its curriculum and cultivating high quality instructors. 4. Maintain and grow diverse revenue streams to fund its programs. 5. Strengthen CI's marketing and communications to effectively communicate CI's mission, vision, key message, and core programs to cultivating long-term program partnerships and donors.

Cottonwood Institute is making a tremendous impact in the lives of our students, educational partners, communities we serve, and the environment and it is an honor and a privilege to do this work every day!

Sincerely,

Ford Church, M.A., Founder and Executive Director, Cottonwood Institute  
w. [www.CottonwoodInstitute.org](http://www.CottonwoodInstitute.org) | e. [ford@cottonwoodinstitute.org](mailto:ford@cottonwoodinstitute.org) | p. 303.447.1076  
#ExploreOutdoors #ChangeYourWorld

## 2015 EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS:

We are extremely proud of our educational partners, including:

- **Casa de la Esperanza**, serving 100% low-income, 100% Latino middle school youth in Boulder County.
- **Colorado Youth For A Change**, a dropout prevention program primarily serving 70% low-income, 80% students of color in Denver and Boulder County.
- **Johnson & Wales University**, serving university students in Denver, CO
- **Littleton Academy**, serving charter school students in Littleton, CO
- **New Vista High School**, serving public high school students in Boulder, CO
- **STRIVE Preparatory Schools**, serving 90% low-income, 95% students of color in Denver, CO.



## TOP 10 STORIES FROM 2015:

It's been another incredible year and we are excited to announce [Cottonwood Institute's](#) annual top 10 inspiring stories from 2015. Thanks to all who voted on our [Cottonwood Institute Facebook Page!](#) So what were our students up to this year? Check it out:

1. [Cottonwood Institute Programs Have Life-Changing Impact](#)
2. [Cottonwood Institute Partners With Great Outdoors Colorado Inspire Initiative Community Hubs](#)
3. [A Wolf Lickin' Good Time with STRIVE Schools](#)
4. [Back Together: Cottonwood Institute Alumni Reunite](#)
5. [STRIVING To Reduce Transportation Pollution](#)
6. [The Sound of Silence...And Giggles with Colorado Youth for a Change](#)
7. [CAP Class Saves a Drop, Saves a Liter, Saves the World!](#)
8. [Casa de le Esperanza Explores Another World](#)
9. [Urban Farm Volunteer Project with Re:Vision](#)
10. [Military Kids National Guard Family Overnight](#)



## TESTIMONIALS FROM 2015:

"I can't believe I am doing this, I can't believe I'm here! This is a once in a lifetime opportunity." STRIVE Prep – Montbello Student

"I realized that it takes a united community to make a difference, and that I myself can start a movement within my own community. It comes so effortlessly for us to focus on ourselves instead of thinking how our own presence extends beyond us. We all make an impact but it is up to the individual to choose what impact we make. Whether we make a positive difference or a negative one our attitudes make that distinction. We all have the potential to change the world and save it if we take advantage of one another's specialties and recognize the beneficial distinctive features in ourselves." New Vista High School Student

"I recently volunteered for Cottonwood Institute's Urban Farm Volunteer Project and before that hadn't really thought of the Cottonwood Institute program I took 11 years ago in high school. But volunteering with



Cottonwood Institute reminded me that my high school program with Cottonwood Institute impacted my life through my passion for the environment, Leave No Trace, survival, service-learning, and drove me to look at issues we are facing with the environment and social justice. I am currently pursuing positive change work and facilitation in the nonprofit sector.” Cottonwood Institute Alumni

“We had an incredible time! My students feel very strongly about how much even a night in the woods has supported their development of self; allowing them to tune into their being and gain a different perspective. They think all students should do some kind of experience like that for that reason.” Colorado Youth For A Change Staff Member

## 2015 DEMOGRAPHICS:

For donor-supported programs, Cottonwood Institute primarily works with schools and youth organizations that serve high-need students of color that qualify for free or reduced lunch. In 2015, on average:

- 72% of youth qualify for free or reduced lunch, an indicator of poverty.
- 67% of youth are Hispanic/Latino
- 24% are Caucasian
- 5% African-American
- 5% of youth identified with other races



## 2015 PROGRAM EVALUATION DATA:

CI has been working with Maggie Miller Consulting since January 2015 to update its Logic Model, Evaluation Plan, Community Adventure Program post-course survey, field-based program survey, and to train CI staff to harvest and report on data it collects from its program participants. CI is currently implementing a plan to engage and evaluate CI alumni to document long-term impact of its programs. CI uses formative and summative evaluation methods in order to track and measure CI's outputs, outcomes, impact, and program successes. CI documents and tracks changes in knowledge, behavior, attitudes, and skills through pre/post course surveys, student journals, course debriefing sessions, and follow up surveys. In addition, CI tracks program outputs as well, including the number of programs delivered, number of students served, number of student contact hours, and service-learning project hours.

[Click Here](#) to read the full report, but here are a few key findings from evaluating CI's 2015 programs:

- **Students desire to learn more about the environment:** 92% of participants from field-based programs agreed with the statement that, “I want to learn more about ways to help the environment.”
- **Applicable knowledge of local environmental issues:** 100% of Community Adventure Program students agreed that they learned about environmental problems or issues.
- **Students sense of responsibility towards the environment:** 93% of participants from field-based programs agreed that it is their job to help the environment.





## 2015 FINANCIALS:

Year-End Financials: Statement of Activities: October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015

### REVENUE

|                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Individual Contributions: | \$61,802         |
| Business:                 | \$16,094         |
| Grants:                   | \$18,315         |
| Earned Income:            | \$56,524         |
| Events:                   | \$83,789         |
| Investment Income:        | <u>(\$2,164)</u> |

**Total Revenue:** **\$234,360**

### EXPENSES

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Programming Expenses:                               | \$204,058       |
| Administration, Operations, and Personnel Expenses: | \$15,601        |
| Fundraising Expenses:                               | <u>\$11,201</u> |

**Total Expenses** **\$230,860**

**NET PROFIT/(LOSS)** **\$3,500**

*Year-End Financials: Cottonwood Institute Statement of Financial Position: October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015*

### ASSETS

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Checking Account          | \$68,434 |
| Savings Account           | \$510    |
| Rose Community Foundation | \$66,438 |
| Accounts Receivable       | \$17,350 |
| Undeposited Funds         | \$194    |

Total Assets **\$152,926**

### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Total Liabilities \$0

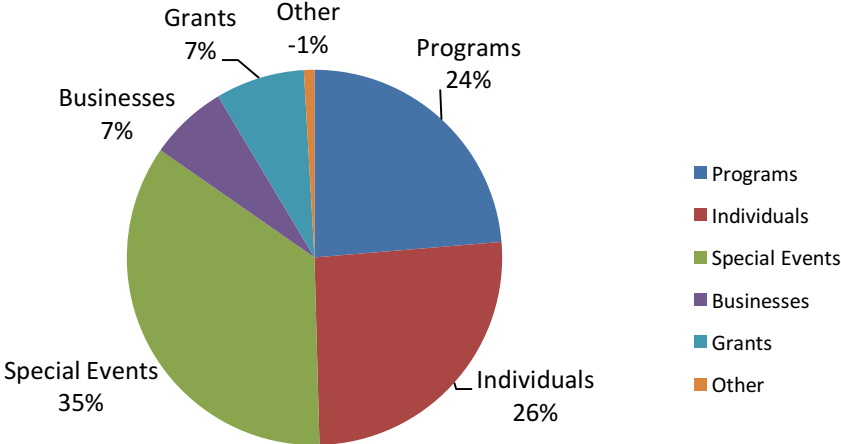
#### Equity

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unrestricted Net Assets | \$93,989 |
| Retained Earnings       | \$55,437 |
| Net Income              | \$3,500  |

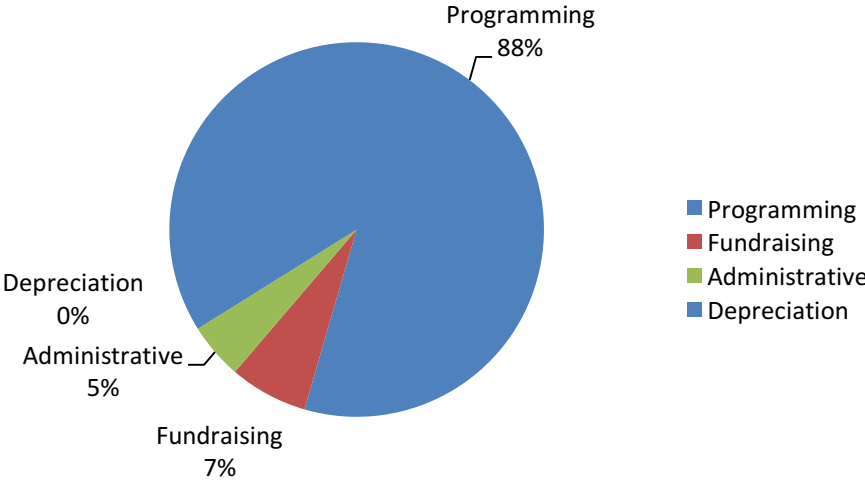
Total Equity **\$152,926**

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY** **\$152,926**

# 2015 REVENUE



# 2015 EXPENSES



## 2015 SUPPORTERS:

October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015

\$10,000+:

- Ladd Foundation
- Jason and Erika Griffith

\$5,000 - \$9,999:

- East West Partners
- Anonymous x 2
- Daniel Pacetti
- Mr. and Mrs. Brett Stone

\$2,500 - \$4,999:

- CoBiz Financial
- Columbine Logging
- Freeport McMoRan
- Great Divide Brewing Company
- Jared Polis Gift Fund
- Dr. and Mrs. John M. Church, Jr.
- New Belgium Brewing Company
- Dr. and Mrs. William Conway
- Mr. and Mrs. Adam Fiedor
- Mr. and Mrs. Michael Lassers
- Trent and Paig Peaker
- Ms. Rebecca Ross

\$1,000 - \$2,499:

- Alcatel-Lucent
- Brett Family Foundation
- Clement F. Hausman Trust
- Community Foundation Serving Boulder County
- Enterprise Holdings Foundation
- Greater New Orleans Foundation
- Guaranty Bank
- Holland & Hart
- Kelly & Walker
- Microsoft Corporation
- Power Service of Colorado
- Taddonio Family Foundation
- Wynkoop Brewing Company
- Anonymous x 3
- Mr. and Mrs. Scott Beckett
- Mrs. Linda Bjork
- Mary Kay Henningsen
- Matt and Maira Holzmann
- Ray and Joyce Jones
- Mr. and Mrs. James C. Landis
- Mr. and Mrs. Mac McDermott
- Dr. and Mrs. Stefan Mokrohisky
- Mr. and Mrs. Alan Mumford
- Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Paulson
- Mr. and Mrs. Trent Peaker
- Mr. and Mrs. William Sullivan

