



BRIDGE TO
THE FUTURE
Expanding Access to Nature

How Our Impact on Educational Outcomes in Our Community has Grown

**“When we see land as a community to which we belong,
we may begin to use it with love and respect.”**

Aldo Leopold

Over the past 25 years, as the Aldo Leopold Nature Center (ALNC) has carried out Leopold’s Legacy and interest in our mission has grown, we have expanded our programs and increased our reach. In our first year, we provided approximately 4,000 educational experiences. **Today, we are honored to provide more than 70,000! Those experiences include:**

- School Field Trips: 23,000
- Summer Camps: 20,000
- On-site Programs: 10,000
- Off-site Programs: 7,500
- Walk-in visitors, birthday parties, scout groups and others: 10,000

Understandably, ALNC’s greatest impact is here in the Madison area, where about 35% of our school field trip visitors are Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) Elementary School children, ranging in age from 5 to 12 years old. In addition to MMSD, kids from nearly every district in Dane County attend field trips at ALNC and we attract students and families from as far away as LaCrosse and the Milwaukee area.



With growing interest in our programs and site, it has become clear that renovating our current facilities to better meet the needs of our students and community will help us best address what we believe are two fundamental and extrincably linked challenges in today's world: the health of our planet and the health of our children.

In today's fast-paced society, many kids grow up in urban settings and spend several hours a day on their devices, where they have few opportunities to experience the natural world and reap the numerous benefits spending time in nature provides. Budgets and program costs also play a role, as school funding and income don't always provide the means for children to get outside and experience new opportunities.

The Bridge to the Future Campaign will meet these challenges head-on and expand access to all of ALNC's environmental education programs by providing additional onsite and offsite opportunities, field trip and transportation subsidies, accessible learning labs, increased scholarship funding and by opening a nature-based preschool for children ages 2 to 5.

By reconfiguring our space to optimize our ability to teach and inspire, every student will have a better learning experience. The Bridge to the Future Campaign will result in approximately 10% increased classroom space for both field trip and summer camp programs.

Keeping field trips affordable is central to our mission, but school districts everywhere are facing increasing budget pressures and field trips are often the first programs to be cut. Every field trip costs the nature center approximately \$12 per student, but we only charge \$8 per student. By subsidizing our field trips, we are mitigating costs to the school districts so that teachers can continue to offer the rich, nature-based ALNC experience to their students.



How the Bridge to the Future Campaign will Impact Educational Outcomes



A NEW NATURE-BASED
PRESCHOOL FOR CHILDREN
AGES 2-5



INCREASED SCHOLARSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES



EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR ALL
DESPITE PHYSICAL, FINANCIAL OR
GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITATIONS

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NATURE CENTER

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