Learning through our Expression,

Discovering through your Experience!
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But what happens when they turn to the media that seems to discourage courtesy, watching educated adults in positions of influence and power indulging in name calling, putting people down, or constantly pointing out others’ faults and never honoring their strengths? What are we to say to our youth - that it’s the way of the world now, that it is alright for them then to follow this path? Call me old-fashioned, but I don’t think this should be the norm. I think it leads to many people who hurt inside and have no defenses against negativity. Most of us do not know what is in the mind of another, and how they may respond to our interactions with them. We may not know the pain or hurt they may feel because of how we speak to them.

It is a new beginning, so let’s all please remember the simple things in life, the “please” and “thank you”, and “good morning” and most of all, the smile. We have a duty to be kind, we have a duty to be pleasant. Everything we do will be repeated by the children. They need our help, they need our guidance and they need our example. Let us banish bad behavior and replace it with common grace and courtesy. Let’s start with your family.

Geoffrey E. Bishop
Founder & Executive Director
In 2002 the world had become a different place, and we were thinking of how we could connect more with our local community. One of our staff members, Jodi Harris had talked with me many times on wanting to move from being an EE teacher to a Montessori teacher as she had noticed some differences between our Montessori clients and other school teaching methods. Those differences lay in the areas of students’ creative thinking abilities and students’ comfort levels with interacting with adults.

So we stated to explore the prospect of creating an Early Childhood program in one of our extra rooms in Mukwonago. We advertised and received an application from Sandra Freese, who eventually became our first Montessori teacher and mentor to Jody. Over the next six months with two trips to California to the Nienhuis factory to buy Montessori materials and many trips to Ikea for everything else, Jody, Sandra and I opened our doors to the first 6 students at Nature’s Classroom Institute Montessori classroom.

From those early days our numbers started to increase and within two years we were looking at starting an Elementary program and a second Early Childhood classroom. David Swanson and Megan Kerns, who were from our Environmental Educators program, decided to do their training in Montessori Elementary Education. So over the next year they both were certified in Montessori Elementary Education and started our Lower Elementary classroom.

As our Montessori school continued to grow through the next few years so did our Environmental Education program. This created a space issue, so working with the Board of our rental facility we started the design and building of a new facility that would have both increased our residence for our EE program and add an admin space and two new classrooms for our Montessori school. This was how the famous round room came into existence.

In 2008-09, the EE program ran into some difficulties when one of our larger clients (the Schaumburg School district) decided to no longer offer out of school trips that included overnight stays. In a swipe of a pen we lost the business of eight schools. When a door closes though, a window opens and we moved quickly to work with the Milwaukee Pubic Schools Montessori group and started our scholarship relationship with Public Montessori. This move has afforded us the opportunity to not only work with a large group of underserved students from Milwaukee but also allowed us to work with Chicago public Montessori schools.

With the growing presence of public Montessori schools in our program, Nature’s Classroom Institute become the Environmental education program of choice for Montessori schools across the Midwest. As our influence in the Montessori community started to gain momentum, our Executive Director Geoffrey Bishop was increasingly asked to present on the topic of returning children’s connection to nature and how schools could integrate Nature concepts into their classrooms. Geoffrey was invited to speak both in local and national settings.

During one of these lectures he was approached by a group from Korea, to visit Korea and train and speak to teachers and trainee teachers on reconnecting children to nature. This was the start of the international recognition that Nature’s Classroom Institute has developed for being a thought leader in connecting education to the natural world.

Between 2008 and 2015 the Montessori teachers and the Environmental Education teachers had been working collaboratively on a program called Eco Lab. This was a curriculum for the elementary program that combined all the sciences and the Montessori pedagogy into a one hour class each week for the two Elementary three-year cycles. This curriculum has now been fully developed into a training program that gives teachers the tools and the experience to integrate an outdoor science program in their schools. This curriculum is now used in private and public Montessori schools across the country and has been an increasingly requested workshop.

Between 2001 and the present-day Nature’s Classroom Institute has also developed a popular program for Adolescent students in Montessori schools. The program known as Land Lab has been developed with the help of several well-trained middle school teachers across the Midwest and our Environmental Education staff. Land Lab was designed to develop opportunities for adolescent students to look deeply into two important aspects of their development - the areas of social and emotional growth and physical and active human development. These are two areas that are lacking dramatically in adolescent education in the mainstream world. This program has afforded adolescent students a safe environment to experiment and to try new challenges and to advance their understanding of their own humanity and moral values.

In 2013 Nature’s Classroom Institute expanded its operation to integrate a new program in Texas. With the help of Retreat Central and our sales team lead by Sarah Marler, Sara worked with Geoffrey and our Education Director Liana Sonne and started the first weeks at NCI in Wimberly and in Bruceville, Texas. This move has been a changing point for the entire organization as it has led to a restructuring of who we are, and the way we run our programs. Having satellite programs has highlighted once again, our dedication to developing staff that work independently and for the mission of Environmental Education and Montessori Education. Three of our Education Directors that have been influential in the development of our programs outside of Wisconsin have been Liana Sonne, Bridget Stevenson and Britta Casey.

Since our move in 2013, Nature’s Classroom Institute has expanded its operations into California with the help of Mirko Sever as the Outreach Director and Britta Casey and Britany Sumner as Education Directors. Mirko works now as the outreach Director for both California and for Texas as well supports our training programs for Eco Lab. Our expansion into Florida with Austin and Britta Wood as Outreach and Education Directors has come online in the past year with two facilities in Parish and Brooksville Florida.

Our move to Hwy E....
NCI Through the Years

1995
Incorporated Nature’s Classroom Institute of Wisconsin in Spring Green, Wisconsin

1998
Moved to Mukwonago, Wisconsin and established Nature’s Classroom Institute Mukwonago

2002
First day of school at Nature’s Classroom Montessori

2007
Partnered with Korean Montessori Society to provide training and modeling for teachers in Korea

2010
Opened Nature’s Classroom Institute Wimberly & Nature’s Classroom Institute Bruceville in Texas
Collaborated with the Korean Montessori Society for global teacher training

2013

2015
Completed local permitting on new property and first NCI summer camp

2016
Broke ground on new property

2016
School year opened in new Montessori school in Mukwonago, WI

2018
Inauguration of Nature’s Classroom Institute Angelus Oaks and Nature’s Classroom Institute Pescadero in California
Connecting with the Greater Community - through our Winter Clothing Drive and setting up the connection with Senior Home in Mukwonago, WI

Partnering with Mukwonago Public Library to promote Montessori Week in March

Supporting Montessori colleagues in Slovenia and China by being an example for them in connecting the Outdoors and Indoors in the design of our unique AD program

Second annual fundraiser, Dinner in the Woods in Mukwonago, WI raised $64,179 after expenses

Beginning our Pathways to Excellence journey towards accreditation with AMS - we are working on Step 7

Adolescent Trip to Nature’s Classroom Institute Parrish in Florida
NATURE’S CLASSROOM INSTITUTE (NCI)

Founder/Executive Director

Board

NATURE’S CLASSROOM INSTITUTE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (NCI-EE)

Executive Director

Educational Directors

Outreach Directors

Environmental Education Teachers

NATURE’S CLASSROOM INSTITUTE MONTESSORI SCHOOL (NCI-MS)

Executive Director

Head of School

Office Manager

Montessori Directresses

Montessori Assistants

Site Maintenance

PABC (Parents Actively Building Community)

NATURE’S CLASSROOM INSTITUTE TEACHER EDUCATION (NCI-TE)

Executive Director

EE Educational Directors

EE Outreach Directors

MS Montessori Directresses
NCI is founded on the belief that all children need and deserve safe, beautiful and rich environments, built and natural, that allow them the time and opportunity to play, grow, learn and express themselves uninhibitedly.

With a profound conviction that by immersion in the natural world, as well as in aesthetically and carefully designed built spaces, children challenge themselves physically, mentally and intellectually, NCI is a committed advocate for children to be offered the learning opportunities to develop their inner caution meter, discover their limits and push their own boundaries.
Nature’s Classroom Institute’s mission is to prepare students to be vested learners by engaging their natural curiosities about the world. NCI adapts to the individual learner’s needs through an interdisciplinary approach utilizing its natural and agricultural campus. Rooted in Montessori ideals of independence and mutual respect, NCI is fueled by practical and authentic learning experiences that develop academically, socially and environmentally responsible problem solvers.

Through modeled values of a successful community, we immerse students in a dynamic learning environment. NCI inspires intrinsic learning and curiosity while nurturing mutual respect and understanding of oneself, others and the world.
Our Vision

NCI will inspire a life-long love of learning while promoting independence, self-motivation and authentic learning experiences.

NCI will promote respect for the natural world through immersion experiences in nature while sharing an understanding of the learner’s connection to the natural environment.

NCI will encourage the learner to become a part of his or her educational community and support discovery while instilling a love of learning.

NCI will support social awareness and building a community of ethical participants who understand and embody restorative justice.

NCI will support a socially responsible understanding of agriculture while promoting an awareness of food systems and animal husbandry.

NCI will provide an interdisciplinary curriculum that supports understanding and appreciation of the interconnectedness of the world.
Our Approach

By providing opportunities for leadership and independent work and through independence, motivational and life-long love of learning, NCI creates an environment that supports a positive perception of learning and encourages participation beyond minimum expectations.

By providing opportunities for immersion in and respectful exploration of natural environments, and through evaluating and understanding nature’s effect on people, NCI develops and promotes an inter-disciplinary curriculum that shows the fragility and importance of the natural world.

By providing explorations of roles within a community, and through supporting discovery, love of learning, and communicating reasons for learning, NCI encourages collaborative problem solving, critical thinking, and observation-based learning.

By providing a curriculum that promotes exploration of cultural diversity and social awareness, and through exposure to ideals of ethical community and restorative justice, NCI creates environments that allows discovery of self-potential, promotion of respect for all community members and restorative justice.

By providing concrete experiences within a curriculum that allows learners to work alongside adults who model social and moral responsibility, and through an understanding of the transfer and accumulation or loss of energy within the food systems, NCI encourages the exploration of animal husbandry, human relationships and social responsibility.

By providing a curriculum that supports relationships within interdisciplinary subject matters and through encouraging the study of the complex interconnected relationships that shape the world, NCI helps narrow the gap between philosophical ideals and tangible outcomes.
Testimonial

“My middle school students had an incredible Land Lab experience at the NCI-New Ulm site. We joined three other Montessori middle schools from around the state which allowed for excellent collaboration between the students and teachers. The instructors were well versed in the Montessori philosophy of Erdkinder and allowed the students choice of activities throughout the day. The land lab activities were engaging and educational. We are looking forward to our next Land Lab at NCI!”

-Nikki Conyers (Director), Westside Montessori School, Houston, TX

“The Middle School Students at Hill Country Montessori School in Boerne, TX have enjoyed your program for many years. Our curriculum takes us off campus several times a year, but each and every year the students always say that engaging with the staff at NCI was by far their favorite. NCI never misses when it comes to taking my curriculum and enhancing it with a creative twist. Each year, as our session approaches, the staff reaches out to me to see what particular social and emotional challenges our class has. This guides the team-building activities which are scattered throughout the program. Thank you NCI for always hitting the mark with kids and teachers alike!”

-Mary Kay Lively (Teacher), Hill Country Montessori, Boerne, TX
NCI-EE is founded on the belief that all children need and deserve safe, beautiful and rich environments, built and natural, that allow them the time and opportunity to play, grow, learn and express themselves uninhibitedly.

NCI-EE firmly believes that by immersion in the natural world, given the time, trust and opportunity, children challenge themselves physically, mentally and intellectually. NCI-EE is an advocate for children to be offered these learning opportunities in a safe and respectful manner to develop their inner caution meter, so as to become compassionate, committed and knowledgeable stewards of the planet.
Through modeled values of a successful community, Nature’s Classroom Institute Environmental Education (NCI-EE) immerses students in a dynamic learning environment which inspires intrinsic learning & curiosity while nurturing mutual respect and understanding of ourselves, others, and the world. NCI-EE challenges each participant to choose his/her areas of interest within our full complement of diverse subjects to explore new avenues of learning and one’s place within community.

Many people believe “environmental education” is learning about natural science or participating in outdoor adventure activities. At Nature’s Classroom, our program encompasses so much more than that!

### NCI-EE Participating Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th># of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>1,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11%, 20%, 48%, 6%, 15%
Our Vision

NCI-EE will provide participants with opportunities for motivational learning.

NCI-EE will provide participants with opportunities for building community.

NCI-EE will provide participants with opportunities for positive agricultural and environmental outdoor experiences which create relationships with, knowledge of, and compassion for the natural world.
Our Approach

By modeling motivational learning behavior, pursuing exploration of teachable moments, providing opportunities for learner-taught experiences and self-reflection of these experiences and through **interest in subject matter**, we **improve positive focus and connection to learning** and focus on supporting student’s academic discoveries rather than imparting information.

By providing opportunities for leadership, self-reliance and unstructured exploration, and through supporting **independence, respect for peers and community impact**, we encourage serving the community, promotion of empathy through academic simulations and reflection of learner’s role within a community.

By providing opportunities for social and spatial exploration in a safe environment, and through **relationships, knowledge and compassion**, we promote practical application of learned knowledge in the natural environment and the practice of responsible and ethical stewardship and animal husbandry.
“I have nothing but positive things to say about our school’s experience with NCI. The activities were intentionally planned and catered to our curricular needs, and Mirko was so easy to work with and completely trustworthy. Thanks for a great overnight experience for our students!”

-Dakota Prosch (Teacher), Oglesby Elementary School, Chicago, IL

“My students do not typically have the opportunity to go to camp or be outside in nature. Therefore, Nature’s Classroom is many of their only time outside and away from their families. They learn independence, confidence and an appreciation for the outdoors. They repeatedly say that it is the best week of the year and our curriculum would have a gaping hole without it.”

-Dakota Prosch (Teacher), Oglesby Elementary School, Chicago, IL

“Nature’s Classroom taught my now-adult children to go exploring. For years they have planned and packed independently, rejecting parental input. Growing up, they travel further and further into the world, with ease, curiosity, and confidence. Nature’s Classroom got them started; their dad and I just got out of the way!”

-Anne Jordahl (Teacher), Lake Forest Montessori, Lake Forest, IL
“Our 7th grade class had an extraordinary experience with Nature’s Classroom. In addition to everything we learned during the trip, we were able to advance our understanding of environmental stewardship and connect it to Catholic Social Teaching and our role as stewards of creation. The NCI staff was professional, knowledgeable, and exceptionally well prepared for every activity. We look forward to our trip next year!”

-Mary Russell (Director), St. Cecelia School, Clearwater, FL

“My students were not ready to leave NCI. They learned to be independent and realized how much they could do for themselves. They loved getting into nature, away from their electronics. They were able to live in the moment, rather than focusing on what the next activity was. I saw students try new challenges out of their comfort zone with so much joy.”

-Shelby Simmons (Teacher), Community Montessori Charter, San Diego, CA

“It was an amazing experience to go to NCI this year. My students enjoyed the site and the adventures they took A LOT. The staff and Peaches were so on board and accommodated us very well. There were times when I had to call Peaches for an emergency after we were sent off to sleep. She was there in time to help us. There were many times when Ally and Peaches reached out to shy/young students who were not able to function in the group. They assured me over and over that it’ll be okay and they got it. They ALWAYS did. We’ll definitely be back to NCI and we’re so excited that they have a new location.”

-Fatma Kassem (Teacher), The Child Unique Montessori, Alameda, CA
“Educators trained at NCI become versatile, adaptable and highly sought after employees in education, non-profits and other professional organizations both nationally and internationally.”

- Geoffrey E. Bishop, Founder & Executive Director

Reach of NCI-EE Staff
NCI-MS is founded on the belief that all children need and deserve safe, beautiful and rich environments, built and natural, that allow them the time and opportunity to play, grow, work, learn and express themselves uninhibitedly.

NCI-MS believes that children thrive when their need for independence is nurtured and when their learning is driven by themselves and its relevance to them. Therefore, NCI-MS is a committed advocate for children to have an education for life, surrounded by beauty indoors and outdoors, so that they may find their place in the universe, as part of a community of life-long learners.
Nature’s Classroom Institute Montessori School’s mission is to prepare students to be vested learners by engaging their natural curiosities about the world. NCI-MS adapts to the individual learner’s needs through an interdisciplinary approach utilizing its natural and agricultural campus. Rooted in Montessori ideals of independence and mutual respect, NCI-MS is fueled by practical and authentic learning experiences that develop academically, socially and environmentally responsible problem solvers. NCI-MS implements the Montessori philosophy and methodology where the environment stimulates intellectual, emotional, social, physical and cultural growth. The school promotes the development of self-motivation, independence, curiosity, cooperation, and concern for others within the framework of a strong academic program.

“I love this school because I can work outside. It’s awesome.”  
-Zella Melzl (Lower El. Student), NCI-MS
NCI-MS classrooms will provide authentic Montessori learning experiences.

NCI-MS will use authentic Montessori materials, in good condition, alongside natural resources to engage the learner with real life applications of knowledge acquired and foster a life-long love of learning.

NCI-MS will provide an interdisciplinary curriculum that supports understanding and appreciation of the interconnectedness of the world.

NCI-MS will provide a curriculum based on an appreciation of an understanding of the Natural World.

NCI-MS will provide students with opportunities to build community with emphasis on developing empathetic and compassionate citizens of the world.

NCI-MS will foster a dynamic, supportive home-school relationship based on Montessori principles of mutual respect.
By ensuring the classroom demographics are representative of the 3-year multi-age grouping, to foster peer learning, uninterrupted blocks of work time, guided choice work and child-centered learning where all enrichment programs are scheduled in a manner to keep the morning work cycle uninterrupted, and through allowing for free choice of work through the work cycle within the norms of respect to self, community and environment, we provide individualized academic content for each student based on their ability, development and interests.

By providing classrooms with the full complement of authentic Montessori materials appropriate for the age-level, and through a diligent maintenance of all learning materials in good and complete condition, we facilitate a safe, accurate and independent learning experience for a life-long love of learning.

By providing a curriculum that supports relationships within interdisciplinary subject matters and through an interdisciplinary curriculum, we support the understanding of the complex and interconnected relationships that shape our world.

By providing exploratory, sensorial, social and spatial exploration in a safe outdoor environment and through an appreciation and knowledge of the natural world, we facilitate consequential learning from the natural environment.

By providing opportunities for self-reflection of personal impact on the environment, with a curriculum that allows students to measure effects of service, and through compassion, respect for peers and community impact, we support respectful conflict resolution.

By remaining accessible for any meeting parents may want regarding their child’s school experience, and through community events that enable families to interact with each other, we establish, encourage and support a strong home-school connection.
“I love the community of Nature’s Classroom. It is one that fosters caring, awareness, empathy and responsibility at all levels, parent, teacher and child. I cannot imagine my child at any other school.”
-Heather Ancarrow (Parent), NCI-MS

“We love the outdoor exposure and activities, the great field trips throughout the year, the gallery night, desserts and demos and the theatre play...The open and self-directed learning is perfect for our son!”
-Meier Family, NCI-MS

“We cannot imagine a more fitting place for our three children to learn and grow--at their own pace, to their own interests...We treasure the experiences they are given to stretch their minds and their hearts. We’ve joined a community of families that is now an innate part of how we are raising our children.”
-Janusz Family, NCI-MS

“Right from the start, I was impressed by the extent to which his teachers knew him and understood his needs. The ability to move about and learn at his own pace has been vital to him. The small school environment has helped him develop strong friendships. He has flourished into a socially and academically confident young man who loves his school...”
-Rubingh Family, NCI-MS

“I have been in Nature’s Classroom for eleven and a half years. I am grateful for my sense of leadership that I have learned here and for the freedom I have been given that has helped me develop a sense of responsibility.”
-Billy Webber (Adolescent Student), NCI-MS
Nature’s Classroom Institute Teacher Education program (NCI-TE) was founded on the belief that educators learn best when immersed in aesthetic, enriching and supportive environments that allow for diverse learning styles. NCI-TE believes that educators, like their students, deserve time and opportunities for passionate and creative learning that inspires life-long curiosity. NCI-TE advocates for educators to have time for rejuvenation and development so as to reach their best potential as joyful and engaged guides for their students.
Nature’s Classroom Institute Teacher Education is dedicated to enhancing the skills and motivation of the individual educator. Through immersion and practical experiences in alternative forms of instruction, including Environmental Education and Montessori principles, we develop and strengthen the educator’s ability to recognize and utilize teachable moments to foster natural curiosity. NCI-TE provides the opportunity for educators to experience diverse populations and diverse developmental stages. NCI-TE adapts to the individual educator’s needs and supports the investigation of his or her areas of interest through collaborative and individual work. NCI-TE supports educators in seeing themselves as architects of the many aspects of the child’s learning environment.

Training Locations include:
Shanghai, China  AMS Conference, Washington D.C.
Wuzhen, China  AIMS Conference, Chicago, IL
Shandong, China  WMA Conference, Madison, WI
Our Vision

NCI-TE will provide a learning environment for educators to observe peer teaching styles, methodologies and curriculum.

NCI-TE will provide and model a richly diverse community - culturally, socio-economically, behaviorally and developmentally.

NCI-TE will develop educator’s skill to facilitate an environment that supports collaborative learning.

NCI-TE will provide opportunities to support the educator’s recognition, development and utilization of teachable moments.
Our Approach

By providing open access to our learning spaces comprising of Environmental Education, Agribusiness, Field Study and Montessori programs and through educator observation, we promote exposure to alternative forms of instruction.

By providing opportunities to work in an inclusive environment, and through participation in diverse communities, we support and encourage working with children with learning and social challenges.

By providing a framework for recording and assessing student progress and through a formalized system for mentorship and feedback, we facilitate collaborative learning.

By providing philosophical freedom and time to follow and nurture a child’s special interest(s), and through teachable moments with freedom of lesson planning within focused objectives, we evaluate, and encourage an educator’s ability to encourage a child’s desire to explore deeper into their special interest.
“Geoffrey Bishop kicked off the Shanghai Montessori Conference to 400 teachers, administrators and Montessori Parents. He began with graphic images and music to adjust our “state of being” to the beauty of the natural environment. His presentation continued with the absence and sometimes fear children can have of the natural environment. His powerful images and his passionate presentation left the educators rethinking their outdoor environments, their philosophy of the outside play area and understanding the importance of the natural world in children’s lives. Geoffrey also did a workshop that was filled with eager educators wanting to learn more about how to make this transition to the outside environment at their school. People were “moved” by his presentation and many were asking him to come back and do more presentation on this topic. Geoffrey is an energetic and passionate presenter with great video’s, graphics and clear points on immersing children in their natural world. Everyone who heard him, left a different person, with a different vision of their role as an educator in relationship to the outdoor education of our future leaders.”

-Rosemary Quaranta, Head of School and Teaching Professor at Xavier University
NCI-EE & NCI-TE TOTAL EARNINGS

- Total Expenses - $1,013,431
- Total Income - $1,200,927
- Total Transferred to Montessori - $132,798
- Total Transferred to Property - $242,283

NCI-EE & NCI-TE INCOME

- Total Revenue - $992,435
- Fundraising Income - $190,834
- Teacher Training Income - $4,687
- Other Income - $12,970

NCI-EE & NCI-TE EXPENSES

- Occupancy - $526,752
- Program Supplies - $25,028
- Advertising - $8,715
- Travel - $51,868
- Insurance - $19,563
- Payroll - $246,799
- Fundraising Expense - $11,325
- Teacher Training - $4,158
- Other Expenses - $32,096
- Admin. Expenses - $87,127
NCI-MS INCOME

- Total Revenue - $404,478
- Fundraising Income - $37,940
- Speaking Engagements - $630
- Other Income - $6,137

NCI-MS EXPENSES

- Insurance - $2,067
- Professional Fees - $2,060
- Property Improvement - $8,869
- Program Supplies - $32,634
- Interest Expense - $3,589
- Utilities/Telephone/Misc. - $27,033
- Payroll - $297,911
- Adolescent Expense - $4,430
- Bad Debt Expense - $9,362
- Training/Seminars - $8,164
- Fundraising Expense - $2,714
- Administrative Expenses - $75,893

NCI-MS TOTAL EARNINGS

- Total Expenses - $474,728
- Total Income - $460,350
- Total Funds Received From EE - $132,798
- Total Funds Transferred to Property - $15,100
Each year, students at NCI are given positive experiences in nature. For some children, with little or no access to nature, Nature’s Classroom opens their eyes to the wonders of nature, often for the first time.

“The first time I saw the stars.”
“The first time I climbed a tree.”
“The first time I held a chicken.”
“The first time I heard a coyote howl.”
“The first time I ate a tomato from the garden.”

Help us Fund:

New Facility
Montessori Classroom Materials
Environmental Education Supplies
Environmental Restoration
Farm Buildings & Implements
School Garden & Animal Care
Montessori High School Program
Science Laboratory
Arts & Humanities
Community Outreach
Educational Field Trips

Today, NCI is asking for your help to support our programs. Through your donation, NCI will be able to continue to serve youth locally, nationally and internationally as we continue to develop and grow.
One-Time Giving
The easiest of all gifting options, simply log on to www.discovernci.org and click the "Donate" button or use the enclosed envelope to mail your donation. Your tax-deductible donation will be used to support continued academic programming at Nature’s Classroom Institute and Montessori School.

Employer Matching
Many employers offer matching gift programs that will double or even triple a donation’s value. Before you complete your individual donation, please check with your company’s human resources department to find out if your employer will match your gift to NCI.

Planned Giving
Planned giving is an opportunity for you to arrange a major gift to Nature’s Classroom Institute and Montessori School. A planned gift creates a lasting legacy in your name while distinguishing your wish to share NCI’s commitment with present and future generations.

Fundraise for Nature’s Classroom!
Not able to provide a fiscal donation at this time? Show your support by becoming a Nature’s Classroom ambassador and fundraising through your social media and email networks. Simply email info@nciw.org and let us know of your interest!
For Every $100 Donated to Nature's Classroom Institute and Montessori School

- Payroll: $59.11
- Insurance: $0.41
- Infrastructure: $30.15
- Program Materials: $8.34
- Professional Fees: $1.99

For Every $100 Donated to Nature's Classroom Institute Environmental Education

- Payroll: $26.38
- Insurance: $2.71
- Occupancy: $56.71
- Program Materials: $8.22
- Professional Fees: $4.76
- Fundraising Expense: $1.21
Nature’s Classroom Institute (NCI) hosted Dinner in the Woods, our major fundraising event at our school in Mukwonago, WI. The fundraising concept is based on a clear understanding of who NCI is and what we represent. Integrating the natural environment into everything we do is a critical part of the culture of our organization. NCI’s premier Dinner in the Woods event was a great success! Our guests were greeted by a line of valet parkers who created an atmosphere that was welcoming as well as convenient. From there they entered a magical experience with our large circus style marquee, an outstanding array of silent auction items and delicious hors d’oeuvres. This year, the servers were all NCIM alumni - bringing an added charm to the evening. The decor was picturesque and reflected the fun, natural theme of the evening. Families, EE friends, staff and visitors enjoyed a mouthwatering meal from LD’s BBQ of East Troy with live music provided by the popular Craig Baumann and his band. With the amazing support of our school families and our Environmental Education friends and clients, our silent auction, tickets sales and outright donations, we raised $80,000 to support our Montessori program.
“As a former Nature’s Classroom instructor, elementary teacher, and now principal, I can’t stress enough the importance of NCI in the lives of young children. The work that NCI does in connecting students to the land, making history tangible, and fostering teamwork and communication is irreplaceable.”

-Ben Blair (Principal), Rogers Park Montessori, Chicago, IL

“There is nothing I can do in my classroom that is as impactful as Nature’s Classroom Institute. Their experience was positive and the impact long lasting. As a staff member my experiences have trickled into my teaching. I use the same language, activities, and strive to provide opportunities for discovery.”

-Geralyn Cesarz (Teacher), Cudahy Middle School, Cudahy, WI

“For inner-city kids, Nature’s Classroom provides an important connection with nature that we just don’t get when living in the heart of Chicago. But it’s so much more than nature and the variety of classes taught by an amazing staff of counselors. The counselors form bonds with the students where they are providing content of new information in a way that is understandable to the kids - they really get to the level the students are. Even more, my students are exposed to the manners needed to live closely with others outside their families, including sharing living space, setting the table and passing food, and caring for inside and outside living spaces.”

-Ms. Gorzen (Teacher), Oglesby Elementary, Chicago, IL
Friends of NCI

2894 On Main
Adriana Haslam
Adventure Rock
Affeldt Family
Alcuin Montessori
Alpine Montessori
Alpine Valley Resort
Amelia Island Montessori
Americana Flower Station
Ancarrow-Dingeldein Family
Andy Braun
Arby’s Restaurant
Archgate Montessori
Atlas Academy
Bartolotta Restaurants
Bay View Montessori
Bernard Zell AnsheEmet Day School
Bethany Judd Photography
Betty Brinn Children’s Museum
Birch Lane Elementary
Blessed Sacrament Junior High
Bratz Family
Briana Kyle
Brickton Montessori
Brookfield Party Rental
Bucky’s Fine Meats & Sausage
Carrie Benzinger
Cave of the Mounds
ChaTT Autism Therapies
Christensen Family
Citizens Bank-Mukwonago
Cozycomb
Craig Montessori School
Crystal Lake Montessori
Cudahy Middle School
Dague Family
Dean Bressler
Deepa Shreekumar
Discovery World
Doolittle Family
DoubleTree Hotel, Madison
DoubleTree Hotel, Milwaukee
Downtown Montessori School
Drummond Montessori School
Drury Hotels
Eagle Springs Pub
East Troy Brewery
East Troy Chamber of Commerce
Elite Performance
Chiropractic
Ervin Family
Everything Bundt Cake
Fairview Elementary School
Fork in the Road
Foster Family
Fox Valley Montessori School
Frederick Family
Gardens of Woodstock
Gateway Montessori School
Geoffrey Bishop
Grass Family
Grassway Organics
Green Bay Packers
Green Rabbit Clay Studio
Guild Family
Haslam Family
Hawks Family
Helen Holtz
Highlights Magazine
Hill Country Montessori
Hill Valley Dairy
Holtz Farms
Hoyt Heinemann
Infinity Dance
Inklink Books
Innovation Montessori Ocoee
Intercultural Montessori
Language School
International Christian Montessori
Montessori Academy of Costa Mesa
International School of the Peninsula
Jack Link’s
James Johnson
James R Taylor & Sons
Janet Berry School
Janssen Family
Janusz Family
Jessica Keller
Jessie Vyvyan
Joe England
John Amato Ford
Joliet Montessori
Katelyn Bratz
Keystone School
Kindi Academy
Klement’s
Knopow Family
Koskinen Eye Clinic
Kowalczyk Family
Krzesinski Family
Kym Smith
La Casa Montessori
La Crescent Montessori Academy & STEM School
Lake Country Acupuncture
Lake Mary Montessori Academy
Laverne O’Grosky
LePort Montessori School - Irvine Spectrum
LePort Montessori School - Solana Beach
Lincoln Prairie School
Lori Rice
Lovelight Flowers
Lowlands Group
Lupine Montessori School
M+B Designs