



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

CEO LETTER

“Roots and wings”. When I think back on 2022 and Nature Sacred, these are the words that spring to mind.

Over the past two years, we have witnessed many kinds of incredible growth — both that which can be measured in concrete numbers and that which is unquantifiable, yet equally impactful. Our community is growing, the footprint of Sacred Places is growing — and so is the movement to connect people with nature.

One vivid example of this growth is Nature Sacred’s 25th anniversary event that drew people from across the country and even beyond. These were people who gathered with us because they too believe in the unifying voice of nature, and moreover, wish to elevate this belief to action. Among us were individuals who have been involved with Nature Sacred from the very beginning as well as many new and passionate supporters — which made it a particularly poignant and appropriate moment for our Co-Founders to formally introduce Nature Sacred’s new Board Chair, Pascal Mittermaier. Together, Pascal and I shared our vision for growth in the coming years, including our goal to see 100 new Sacred Places in the pipeline by 2025 — and how we are right on track.

Nature Sacred understands that we humans are unique in our ability to reason — but that we are moved by emotion and story. We employ both in our approach to growing this movement to connect people and nature. We continue to invest in and share the growing scientific evidence of nature’s impact on our health and wellbeing — evidenced in 2022 in a first ever white paper that allows hospitals to quantify the financial impact of green spaces on their bottom lines.

We also published a book that’s been 25 years in the making: *BenchTalk: Wisdoms Inspired in Nature*. It is a curated collection of writings, journal entries that we call the most powerful evidence of all, left by visitors to Sacred Places. From thousands of voices over the years, a singular wisdom can be taken: these green spaces evoke something profound within us all.

Our work to ensure a healthier society with nature at the center has only just begun. Together, we will unlock the next chapter of impact, supporting 100 new Sacred Places, stewarding the next generation of Firesouls and so much more.

Thank you for joining us — the Nature Sacred team, Firesouls, Design Advisors and a growing community as we plant seeds for our next 25 years.



ALDEN E. STONER
CEO, Nature Sacred

MISSION

To provide the opportunity for a deeper human experience by inspiring and supporting the creation of public green spaces that offer a temporary place of sanctuary, encourage reflection, provide solace, and engender peace and well-being.



VISION

We envision a time when every urban community in the U.S. will provide people with opportunities for intimate, intentional daily doses of nearby urban nature through the creation of a system of nature spaces.





A NATURE SACRED GLOSSARY

SACRED PLACE

Sacred Places are green spaces designed using a process and model honed over 25 years; spaces created with a specific purpose: to provide mindful reflection and solace to intentionally improve health & wellbeing.



THE FIRESOUL

Firesouls are volunteer community leaders — catalysts for change who recognize the need and vital role a green space can offer within their community. They serve as community liaisons, ensuring that each Sacred Place is designed with the community's needs at the forefront.



BENCH & JOURNAL

In each Sacred Place, you will find a Nature Sacred bench, inviting visitors to take a moment of respite and enjoy the nature around them. Tucked under each bench is a little yellow journal, a place for visitors to connect and reflect.

What is Nature Sacred?



SERVICE PROVIDER AND PARTNER

We help enable the creation of Sacred Places where they are needed most.



NETWORK BUILDER

Our Nature Sacred Network now comprises more than 100 Sacred Places and Firesouls.



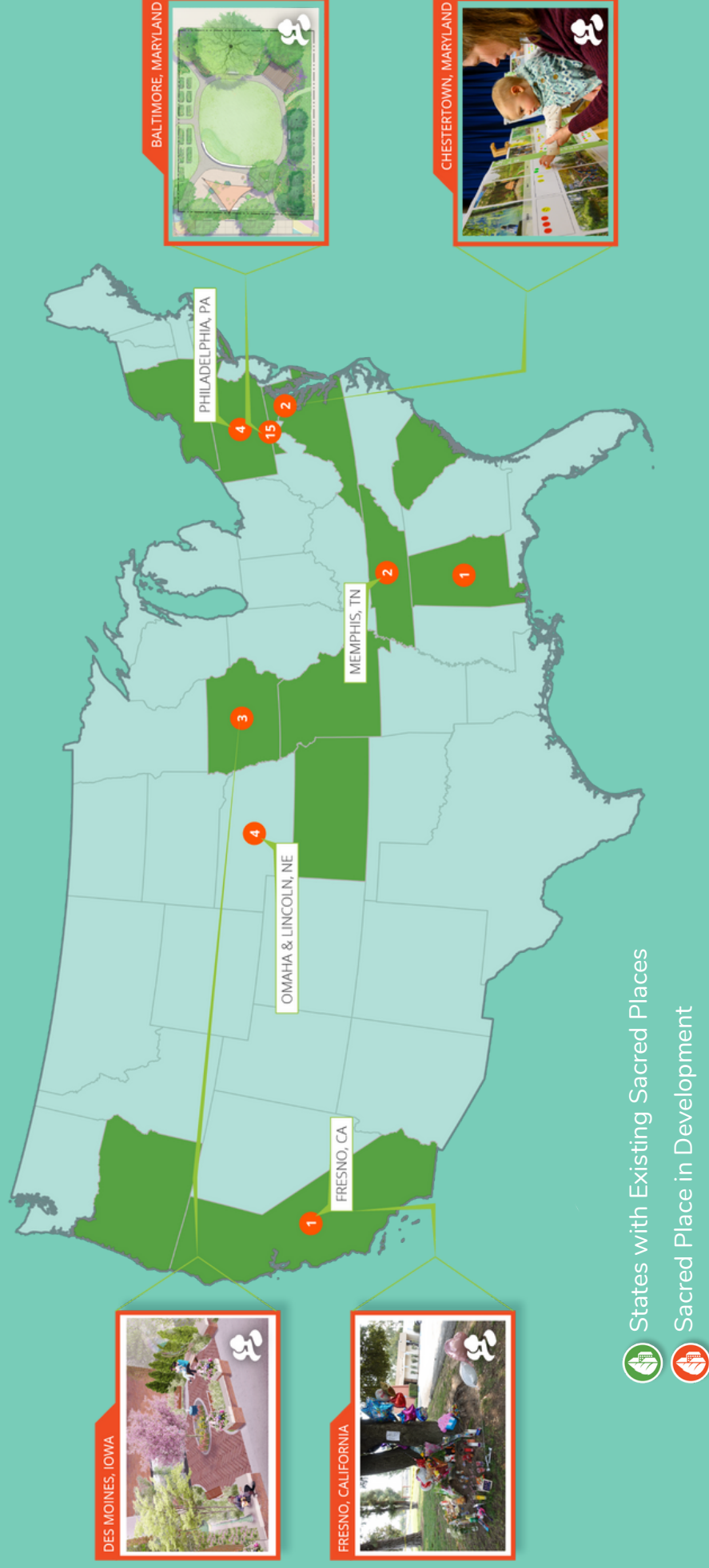
RESEARCH AGGREGATOR

We bridge academia and the green space movement.



Through over 100 Sacred Places across 40+ municipalities in 12 states and Washington, DC, Nature Sacred brings the healing power of nature to over 60 million community residents and visitors annually.

Where are Sacred Places Sprouting?



Learn more about these Sacred Places at naturesacred.org/map

Nature Sacred, Service Provider and Partner.

We support the design and creation of Sacred Places that can be found everywhere — from once-neglected urban lots to hospitals to school campuses. We help guide communities and organizations through the process of bringing their nature spaces to life.



44

**Sacred Places
underway toward
our 5-year goal of
100 new sites by
2025**



**18
PLANNING**



**6
COMPLETED
DESIGN**



**8
UNDER
CONSTRUCTION**



**12
SACRED PLACES
OPEN**

**118 Sacred Places
opened since 1996.**

Service Provider and Partner >

Community Healing Spotlight Urban Dreams | Des Moines, IA

Working to remove barriers to the success of its community members and help them achieve their goals, Urban Dreams saw the potential of a vacant lot next door to their offices to serve their mission.

Nature Sacred provided Design Advisory Services for this future Sacred Place, which will include features such as a performance stage, phone charging stations, Percussion Play instruments, a community garden, a little free food pantry, and an intimate memorial area with fruit trees and other plantings.



Executive Director, Urban Dreams
Iowa State Senator
Board Member, Community Foundation of
Greater Des Moines



Site photo of the future Urban Dreams Sacred Place

Nature for Wellness Spotlight

Roberta's House | Baltimore, MD

With its mission to support children and families suffering loss, and provide a safe place for them to heal and recover, Roberta's House addresses grief as a public health preventive service. Nature Sacred partnered with Roberta's House to support their important mission by providing community engagement and design services for 2 Sacred Places.

The Meditation Garden, located adjacent to the Roberta's House building, opened in November as phase 1 of the design was completed. A small labyrinth features a brightly colored pathway, focal words to help people set an intention for their walk, and a little butterfly in the center, all three of which were specific requests or symbolic motifs for the Roberta's House community. The second location will be a rooftop Sacred Place providing a safe and healing space for staff and programs.

Firesoul Annette March-Grier



President & Co-Founder, Roberta's House
2014 CNN Hero



Design by Floura Teeter

Nature Sacred, Network Builder.

We bring together community leaders to spearhead the unique design, programming and events of each space, tending to them physically and spiritually through the Nature Sacred Firesoul Network, our long-term site stewardship program.



33 Enhancement & Enrichment Grants awarded

Enrichment Grants aid Firesouls in providing activities for their communities while Enhancement Grants help defray upkeep and special maintenance costs, as well as support the addition of enhancing features in Sacred Places.

26
New Firesouls

166 Firesouls -
total - in our
Network

18
Leadership
Development
Program offerings

Enrichment Grant Recipient Spotlight

Firesoul Kim Cain



Firesoul Ellen Sewell



Stringfellow Garden Ashland, AL

What did the grant support?

With more mild winters, Stringfellow Garden brought the community out into nature by hosting a series of events including The First Responder's Appreciation Dinner, Art in the Park, and Winter Nights Under the Lights.

Winter Nights brought the town, young and old, together with hot cocoa, sweet treats and a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Children were laughing and playing, and old timers were deep in discussion.

"Children were laughing and playing and old timers were deep in discussion. As I looked around, listening to music, I was brought to tears that our little park was the catalyst for this experience."

KIM CAIN



Enrichment Grant Recipient Spotlight



**Wangari Gardens
Washington, DC**

What did the grant support?

Wangari Gardens celebrated the end of the growing season with a community fall festival in October. Over 100 people enjoyed the dedication of the orchard, costume contest, live music, pumpkin & face painting, and guided walks learning about plants. The festival also featured food from local, small businesses and mission-aligned local groups.

“Turnout was the highest this year of any past fall festivals, and we heard more and more neighbors remembering and anticipating this event.”

STEPHANIE
EYOCKO





Time Capsule Program

In celebration of our 25th anniversary, Nature Sacred offered a special grant program available to all Sacred Places. The Time Capsule Program provided funding to create a community time capsule as well as a gathering to celebrate together.

The Nature Sacred Board of Directors and team joined the fun by creating our own time capsule and burying it behind the signature bench at the first Sacred Place - Inspiration Point on the Chesapeake Bay Foundation headquarters in Annapolis, MD.



Time Capsule Spotlight

Village Learning Place in Baltimore, MD celebrated its own 25th anniversary with an all-day birthday bash on November 5. The free community event featured yoga, story time, a neighborhood parade, local musicians, cornhole tournament, art and so much more - all taking place in their Sacred Place.

Firesoul Liesje Gantert shared "**We couldn't celebrate 25 years without recognizing Nature Sacred. They were with us at the very beginning. They have continued to support us and create programming to bring our neighbors together in an outdoor space.**"

Nature Sacred, Research Aggregator.

We distill and share reams of research, all of which builds compelling evidence for the creation of Sacred Places in communities across the country. In addition, we archive thousands of journal entries collected in the yellow journals placed in every Sacred Place.

Working with a Weil Cornell health economist, we produced the first ever- calculator that estimates the financial impact of hospital green spaces through the mitigation of burnout and stress. The results are eye-opening.

This paper was made possible by The Chesapeake Bay Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program which is funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, and the Chesapeake Bay Trust. Released June 2022.



Incorporating nature into workspaces is increasingly popular, whether it be through plants in the office, natural views, or locating close to parks and greenspace. In this paper, we break down the latest evidence, its implications for the workplace, and emerging trends.

This paper is a collaboration with The International WELL Building Institute. Released August 2022

BenchTalk: Wisdoms Inspired in Nature



For 25 years, stirred by nature, people from all walks of life, young and old, have been jotting down their wishes and worries, their grief and gratitude in little yellow journals.

Waiting to be discovered by passersby, these waterproof journals are tucked beneath benches in Sacred Places. The entries left behind are a snapshot of what happens when we pause, if only for a moment, in nature.

Drawing from the thousands of entries that have been archived from prisons, hospitals, universities and neighborhoods, we selected some of the most memorable to publish as "BenchTalk: Wisdoms Inspired in Nature". From the whimsical to the profound, these entries are a poignant, powerful and personal reminder of our common humanity.



Marking 25 Years: Party in the Garden

On October 8, 2022, members of the Nature Sacred community gathered for a not-to-be-repeated event celebrating our 25th anniversary, honoring our Co-Founders and sharing our vision for the next 25 years and beyond.



Nature Sacred CEO Alden E. Stoner



Nature Sacred Co-Founders Tom and Kitty Stoner



Incoming Board Chair
Pascal Mittermaier

Thank you to our Sponsors,
Celebration Co-Hosts and
everyone who celebrated with us!



LandCare
DLA Piper
Winchester Construction
Brightview Senior Living
Drum, Loyka & Associates, LLC
Performance Home Automation
Diplomatico Rum
Hannon Armstrong
Four Rivers Garden Club
Highstarr
Palate Pleasers
Withum

Celebration Co-Hosts

Joan and Eric Bernthal
The Brenton Family
Wendy and Hal Denton
The Dodge Family
Katie and Jib Edwards
Jill and Jon Eisner
Alan and Penny Griffith
Jane and Esko Korhonen
Burks Lapham
June and Paul Schorr



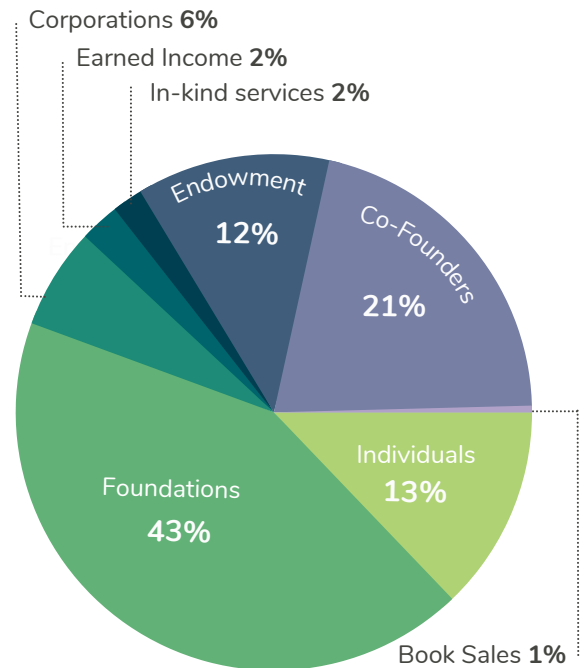
2022 Financials

All figures are based on unaudited financials.

Statement of Activities January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022

SUPPORT & REVENUE

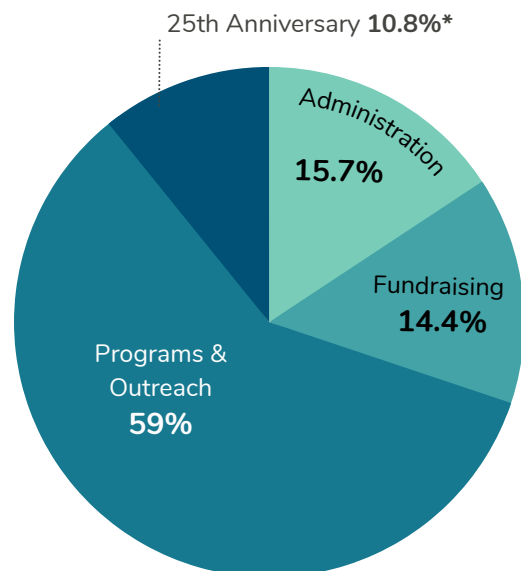
| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Individuals | \$273,680 |
| Foundations | \$910,275 |
| Corporations | \$134,700 |
| Fee for Service | \$53,000 |
| Book Sales | \$8,853 |
| Co-Founders Capacity Grant | \$450,000 |
| Endowment [5% distribution] | \$257,747 |
| In-Kind Services | \$40,840 |
| Total Support & Revenue | \$2,129,095 |



EXPENSES

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Administration | \$267,029 |
| Fundraising | \$245,096 |
| 25th Anniversary Celebration* | \$183,937 |
| Programs & Outreach | \$1,003,158 |
| Total Expenses | \$1,699,221 |

*In 2022, expenses included costs associated with the one-time 25th Anniversary Celebration. These expenses were off-set by a Co-Founders Grant, allowing 100% of the funds raised to go toward operations and programming.



2022 Financials

All figures are based on unaudited financials.

Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2022

ASSETS

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Cash | \$138,648 |
| Investments | \$9,146,883 |
| Other Assets | \$18,252 |
| Total Assets | \$9,303,783 |

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Current Liabilities | \$26,653 |
|---------------------|----------|

Net Assets

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Donor Restricted | \$1,737,693 |
| Board Restricted (Endowment) | \$5,184,860 |
| Unrestricted | \$2,354,577 |

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Total Liabilities & Net Assets | \$9,303,783 |
|---|--------------------|



Planting, growing and thriving thanks to...

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Agape Fund | Francis P. Chiaramonte, MD Family Foundation | LandCare |
| The Ariowitsch Family Foundation | Chesapeake Bay Trust | The Levitt Foundation |
| ASD Fund | Clayton Baker Trust | The Meadow Fund |
| AWE Fund | David and Marjorie Murtagh Cooke Foundation | Morgan Charitable Foundation |
| Bartlett Trees | Margaret O. Cromwell Family Fund | Palate Pleasers |
| Patricia Purnell Baum Trust | Diplomatico Rum | Performance Home Automation Inc. |
| Georgie and Ted Berkinshaw Charitable Fund | DLA Piper LLP | The Richman Foundation |
| The Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation | Drum, Loyka & Associates, LLC | The Riverbridge Partners Fund |
| The Blackburn Foundation | Suzy and Eddie Dunn Fund | Jacob S.Shapiro Foundation/Jane and Stanley Rodbell |
| Brenton Foundation and Family | The Eisner Family Fund | Katharine E and Thomas H Stoner Fund |
| Scott Brickman Family Fund | R. S. Evans Foundation | United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3 |
| Brightview Senior Living | Godschalk Family Charitable Fund | Winchester Construction |
| Brinton Family Fund | Michael and Ann Hankin Family Fund | Withum |
| Brown Advisory | Jonathan and Karry Hatch Family Fund | Yonker Family Charitable Fund |
| The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation | Highstarr | |

...100% of our Board, and the generosity of all individuals and contributors who make this work and impact possible!

New Sacred Places at the Staff Courtyard and Women's Space of the Hospitality Hub in Memphis, TN opened in October 2022.





A new Sacred Place at Marvin Gaye Greening Center in Washington, DC opened in July 2022.

2022 Leadership

Board of Directors

Tom Stoner, Chair
Kitty Stoner, Vice Chair
Dick Blackburn, Treasurer
Fred Smith, Secretary
Ami Aronson
Nichole Battle
Scott Brickman

Edward Dunn
Michael D. Hankin
Lauren Marshall
Pascal Mittermaier
Fred Smith
Glen Stewart

Jack Bloodgood, Founding Director, *in memoriam*
Chuck Foster, Founding Director
Chelle Stoner, Founding Director

Kirby Lane in Baltimore, MD hosted The Parks Annual Community Appreciation Day with Crabs in the Park, which also celebrated the park's anniversary, in August 2022.



**NATURE SACRED
ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

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The first-ever Sacred Place was established in 1996 here at Inspiration Point at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's headquarters.

