



HIGH 5 ADVENTURE LEARNING CENTER 2021 Annual Report

March 2022

Dear Friends of High 5,

This has been some year.

For the people we serve, for High 5 and for the world 2021 will be long remembered. So many challenges have been met, so much loss has been endured, so many new experiences have happened – both good and bad. Through it all, we have held fast to our mission of service to **Connect. Empower. Lead...Be the Example** in our work and in our daily lives.

The past two-plus years have been a time when so many have discovered the best within themselves. That best has been enough to endure COVID's trials, to help others in meeting their own challenges, and to see them extend help to others. As everyone who knows High 5 understands, a lot of our work is about creating moments of insight and discovery (epiphanies), both the small ones that fit in the pocket of a fifth-grader who learns the value of teamwork in overcoming fear to master a challenge course element, and the large ones shared by a group of school administrators working together to discover how their individual strengths combine into a whole that is so much greater than the sum of its parts. With that as an introduction, let me share some of those 'ah-ha!' moments from the past year.



"The hard work we accomplished yesterday was possible because the work High 5 did with us, brought out who we are as humans, the people skills we needed to tackle the very challenging issues of opening our schools for the fall. It worked, we had the difficult conversations and got it done."

School Principal, New Hampshire

"While my students were highly engaged and having fun, I was learning things about them that I hadn't known before. Knowing those things allows me to be a better teacher to them."

Teacher, Arizona

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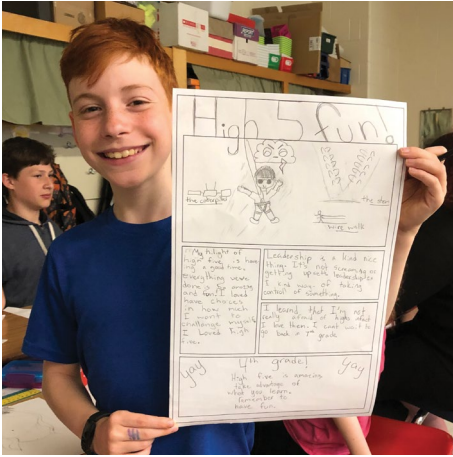
"This is my first experience with you all and I am so grateful I get to be a part of this. I have learned so much from the High 5 staff, and my students are beginning to learn more about themselves and each other in ways I haven't seen before. They are more supportive of each other."

Teacher, New Hampshire

As you can see from these captured moments, at High 5 we practice what we preach: **Connect. Empower. Lead...Be the Example**. You will find more information about our people and programs in the pages that follow, as well as a brief look at High 5's financial strength, including a list of those who supported us so generously during the past year.

Sincerely,

Jim Grout, Executive Director



Two Big Steps Have Widened our Path

In addition to our traditional in-person programming, embarking on a new journey with our new digital efforts will help us continue to achieve our vision of **Connect. Empower. Lead... Be the Example** by reaching a wider audience. Our efforts in 2021 – and our two big steps – have led to new relationships and collaborations with organizations where educators gather, including the New England League of Middle Schools, the New Hampshire Association of School Principals, the American Federation of Teachers, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, BOOST Collaborative and the MA Department of Public Health, to name a few.

The growth of professional development resources continues to remain a priority for us:

- From the inception of the Edge of Leadership Program, our vision has included developing a replication model based on the Keene Lab School Program. Our two steps forward have springboarded this plan towards reality. In 2021 we began developing an Edge of Leadership Teacher Training and Certificate program, which we hope to launch in 2023.
- Our partnerships with Keene State College and Plymouth State University continue to offer CEUs and college credit for High 5 programs. We're also exploring relationships with other schools as we expand our professional development opportunities.

- We'll continue to develop our digital capabilities to expand our reach to adventure and experiential educators in new ways, by both adapting some of our traditional resources for an online platform, and by developing completely new offerings.

A Year of Education... Two Steps Forward

Collaborating and Innovating to Create Impactful Learning Experiences

2021 was a year of program adaptation and expansion. In a year full of chaos and uncertainty, we took two very big steps forward:

- The Training & Team Development and Edge of Leadership teams began evolving into one **High 5 Education Team**, combining the vast talents and skills of both teams to better meet the needs of our customers and to better reflect our future vision of working with a broader educational audience.
- We built a new digital platform and launched *Rebuilding After COVID*, a professional development program aimed at addressing the needs of schools and teachers in building back effective learning communities, supporting social-emotional learning, and providing resources for the current times.

The result: new opportunities, new creativity and collaborations, and increased flexibility to meet the evolving needs of our customers.

For example, our two steps forward helped to make up for the loss of connection and community caused by a second year affected by COVID. Drawing on the Education Team's expertise, we successfully maintained connections with students and teachers by moving to remote learning and developing online educational opportunities and resources. And when schools and communities began gathering in person again, we supported them through these equally chaotic times by adapting activities and sharing resources to provide quality programming despite the limitations of in-person COVID protocols.



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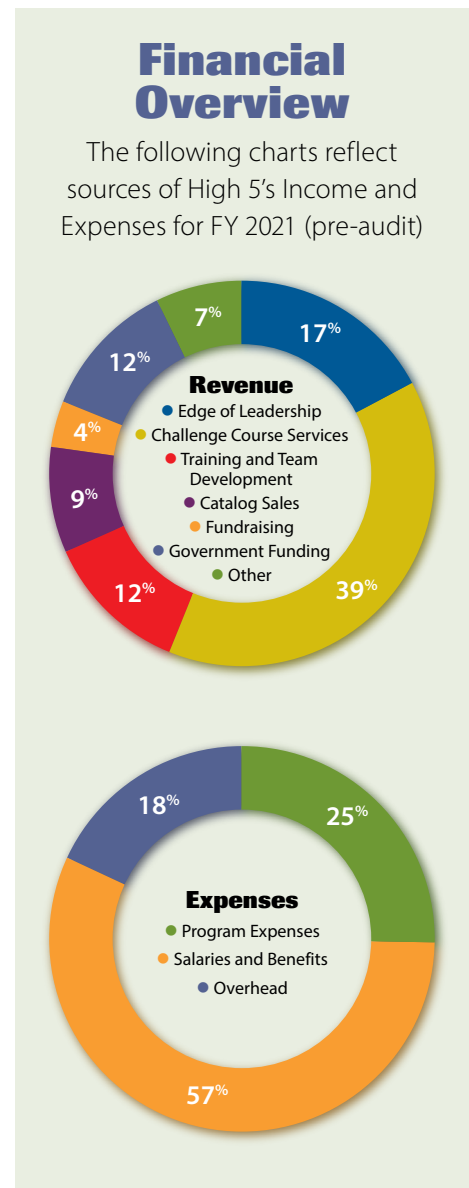
Challenge Course Services

Creating and Building Spaces For Learning and Discovery

School and camp closures caused by the pandemic paused the Challenge Course Services (CCS) team’s 2021 regular schedule of building, inspection and maintenance work, but created a unique opportunity to pivot to research and development. The CCS team is dynamic and welcomes innovation – their work evolves and expands in response to meeting the changing needs of customers. High 5’s growth has led to our currently working with 300+ adventure programs. The partnerships we develop with customers have brought rich opportunities to learn about what customers need, what works for them and what challenges they have that we might be able to address through adventure.

We believe that our CCS department builds challenge courses that are tools and spaces for learning and discovery, and that have the potential to change peoples’ lives. So in 2021, we spent time wondering: what *other* tools and spaces can we provide to customers that foster learning and discovery, and have the potential to change lives? We don’t have answers yet, but the opportunity to explore this big question has the potential to innovate experiential education. We’ll keep you posted!

A unique feature of High 5’s work and culture is the information sharing and cross-department cooperation that happens daily on our campus. When Edge of Leadership staff created the prototype for a new product to replace the limited functionality of the traditional Spider’s Web, CCS refined the design and facilitated the production of the KYooB, a lightweight device that is portable, easy to use in the classroom, and far more versatile in the number of activities it supports and the group size it can accommodate. Understanding educational program goals and the role equipment plays in meeting them—whether a high or low challenge course element, climbing wall, or KYooB—allows us to be innovative and efficient in meeting our clients’ changing program needs. This example represents our evolving thinking around integrated programming and offerings between our teams, with the ultimate goal of providing existing and new customers impactful and creative spaces in which to learn.



A Record Year of Giving

In 2021, High 5 moved forward on many fronts, despite COVID's challenges. That spirit of accomplishment in the face of so many obstacles inspired our supporters, including individuals, charitable foundations, and corporations to underwrite our work with their most generous gifts. Our motto: **Connect. Empower. Lead...Be the Example** seems to have motivated them to lead by their own example, helping us almost double our annual support over last year. **Thank you all!**








Thank You for Your Support!

2021 Annual Fund Individual Donors

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Customers Served by Industry

High 5 is grateful to serve so many non-profits, as well as for-profit organizations. Last year, our customers represented these primary industry segments.

- 50% Schools/Youth Leadership** 
- 35% Outdoor Ed/Camps** 
- 8% Colleges/Universities** 
- 2% Businesses/Sports Teams** 
- 5% Therapeutic Organizations** 

Our Mission

High 5 Adventure Learning Center is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to helping individuals, schools, teams, and communities use adventure experiences as an effective tool for improving the way

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Lead.

they live, learn, work and lead together. High 5 provides educational experiences for all ages that develop a sense of connection and community in a learning environment of discovery, challenge, and fun.

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- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
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