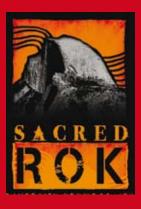
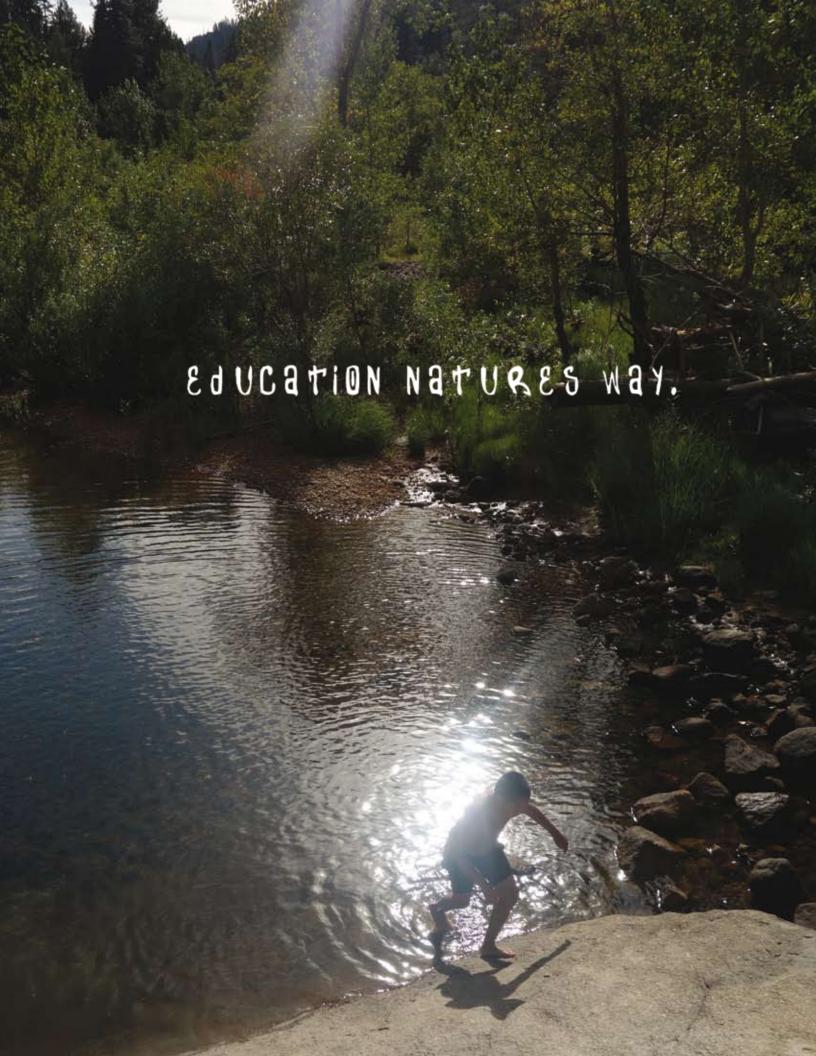


# ANNJARE PORT July 2018 - June 2019







# Who Are You? Letter from Ron Kauk, Executive Director

"Who Are You" the elder, Les James asked me point blank as we were in the flow of conversation. I wasn't so surprised that he asked, but I realized at that moment, no one had ever asked me that before. We were standing on the sacred ground of Wahhoga in Yosemite Valley, just west of camp 4—where, as a youth I lived free to be me and express myself climbing more or less every formation I could see.

My answer started by saying, "I am the natural world. I have been created just like the beauty of Yosemite. I have an incredible realm of intelligence inside my body, an immune system, a digestive system, heart, lungs. I am designed like the earth. My body is literally made of the earth. My DNA matches the trees, rocks, water, minerals." This was the beginning of my answer for our elder.

Why did he ask this? I feel that as a helper for the people he wanted me to understand our connection as human beings. He was sharing his commitment for the people, the ceremonies, the future, his deep-rooted connection as an indigenous man who knew his responsibility to be a caretaker of the Sacred.

I will continue to ask myself "Who am I" in order to be a better me and—like our elder did for me—I will try my best to help our youth be better human beings from the inside out, knowing how intelligent they are and to always respect themselves.

Rock climbing taught me how to think for myself and to respect natural laws. It was basically about survival. Now I understand that living on the earth is basically about survival as well. This has to be a part of education, not to simply repeat information in an indoor classroom, but to truly connect with the natural world we are inside and out.

This is the only way for future generations to come back into balance and to find harmony with the natural laws. This must be taken seriously to help our young people know who they are and the intelligence they have inside themselves to creatively respond by taking responsibility as human beings from the earth.

We are all about building community and working together we can make a difference in this world. By starting with ourselves, to consider like the elder asked me "Who are you;" we can recognize the intelligence we've been given to bring back the balance from higher education natures way.

As Executive Director of Sacred Rok, I cannot thank you enough for your support as we are all here learning together on how to make our world more beautiful and possible for the future generations.

Am Kank



## **Overview**

We are continuously learning from our experiences with the diverse groups of people that join us in what we like to call the ceremony of nature. These experiences are bringing us back to the basics, to our foundation as human beings within the natural world. By watching waterfalls and hiking up trails we can feel the rhythm of our heartbeat and be aware of our breath; we are connected with the natural timing, the kind we can observe from the mist of waterfalls swirling around in the wind.

Throughout our 10 years as an organization we have realized how essential it is for the development of an individual to nurture a relationship with nature early on; to evoke an intimate connection to a sense of place and themselves thus laying a foundation for the rest of their lives. This is what we consider as gaining a higher education nature's way thus bring us all back into balance with our responsibility as human beings.

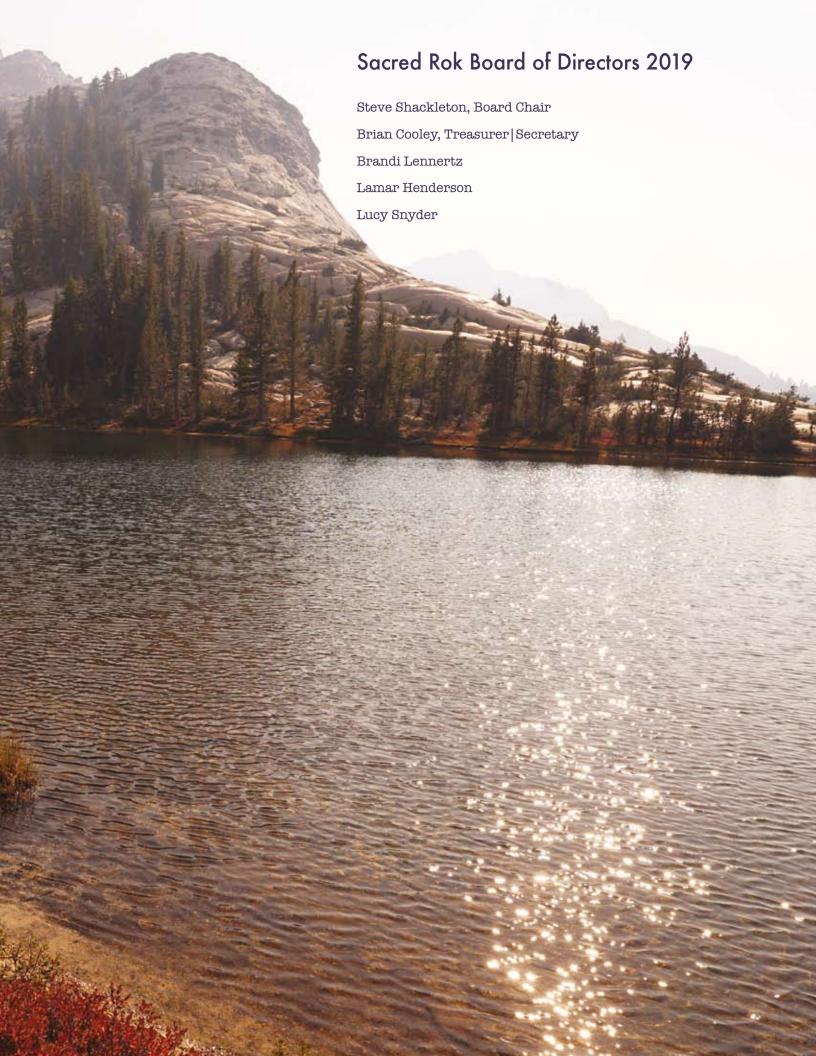
Since 2009, Sacred Rok has led trips for more than 500 young people, primarily incarcerated youth, foster care children, and low-income youth. Having time in nature with our small group approach, Sacred Rok transforms the lives of young people, one person at a time.

We like to encourage our youth to find their own unique way of expressing themselves and connecting to nature through their senses. By accepting them as they are and showing them respect and equality they become more confident and able to share how they feel and what they are experiencing. Instead of simply listening to a teacher or instructor, this type of experience engages the student with the subject matter and lets them experience and appreciate - for themselves - the natural rhyme of nature.

It has been shown that interactions with nature can deliver 'a range of psychological well-being, cognitive, physiological, social, tangible and spiritual benefits' and that 'access to green space and natural areas is important for facilitating activities that are beneficial to the human well-being.' (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3709294)

We strive to help youth build confidence and connection to a caring and nurturing community that loves and trusts them. Building community and breaking the cycle of violence and trauma takes time and commitment. This trust cannot be built overnight. We are committed to building long-term relationships between the youth and mentors who act as facilitators who instill the wisdom of nature. Our in-depth Fiscal Year Review for 2019





# 2019 Goals

Our Fiscal Year 2019 goals adopted by the Board of Directors reflect Sacred Rok's priorities and help guide our efforts:

**Programming & Activities** We are fostering our established relationships and buliding new relationships with young people and agencies. We are continuing our collaborations with our adult partners. and those of new groups, including like-minded adults. We are planning our ongoing camping and day trips and follow up activities

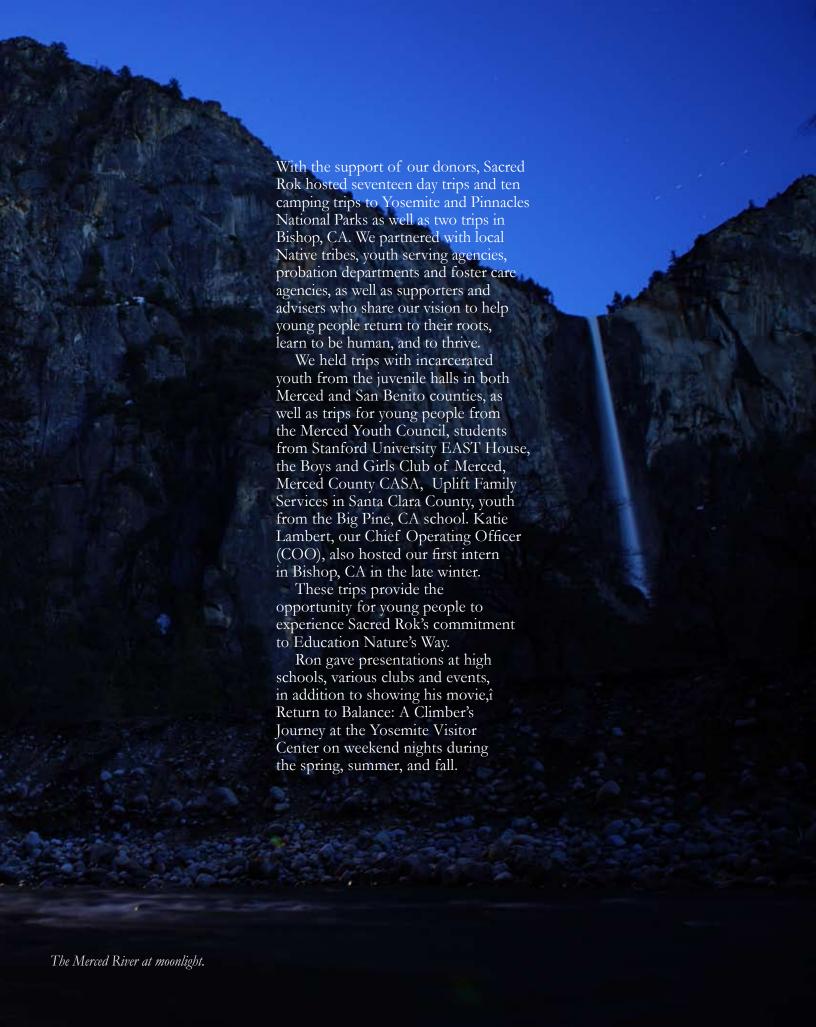
**Telling the Story** We tell our story on many different platforms. In our Annual Report for our suppoters, in booklets for groups we work with and in outreach presentations and videos for the general public. We also broadcast our activitires on social media platforms of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and our website, in our e- newsletter and blog.

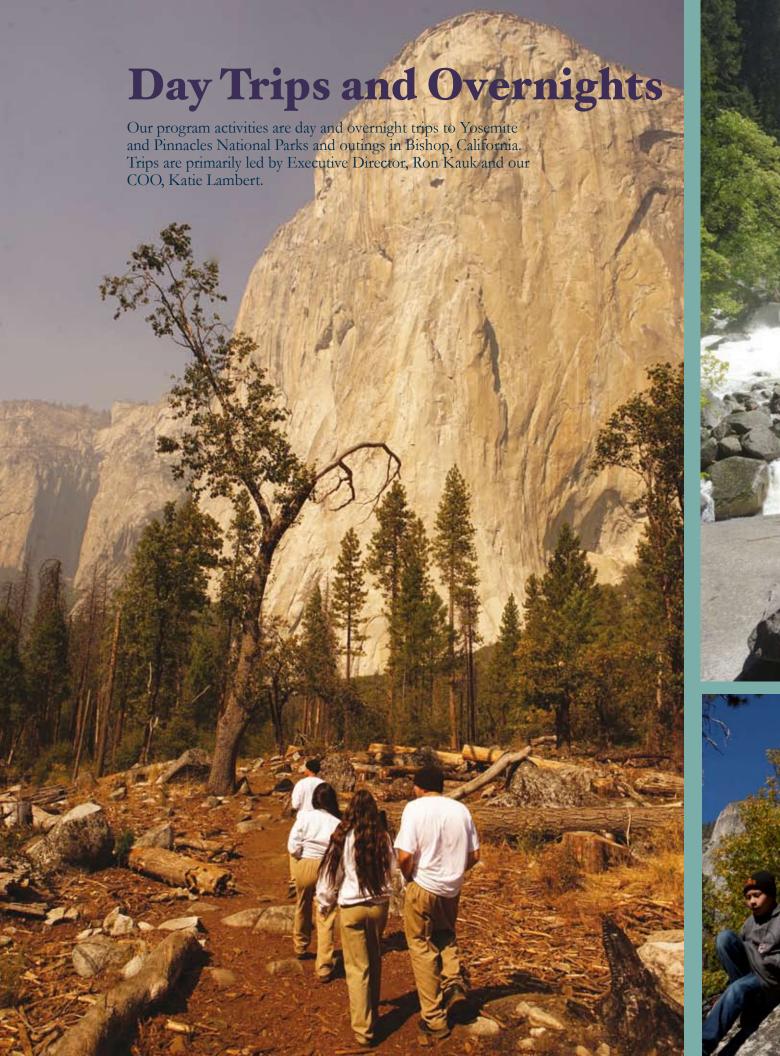
Building Organizational Capacity Ways we actively build our capacity include: documentation of experiences, including tracking and trip reflections. We are developing our administrative support through grant writing, support for financial capacity and accountability, fundraising and staff support

Long Term Goals Sustainability funding













Our model is to work with small groups of young people with their adult staff and mentors, and to lead multiple trips over the months, seasons, and years building trusting and respectful relationships over time. In order to keep a balance between adults and youth we limit each outing to 6 young people to be able to focus on the communication and connection amongst us.

Nature provides the curriculum and the structure ñ wind, weather, and water are our guides. A typical day in Yosemite Valley might include a stop at Fern Spring to fill water bottles and appreciate the ancient water flowing from the ground, a hike from Tunnel View up to Old Inspiration Point, or a walk to the base of El Capitan. Day trips in Pinnacles National Park include hikes on the many trails in one of our nation's most recent national parks.

Our overnight camping typically takes place at Yosemite's Tuolumne Meadows Campground. At 8,600 feet elevation, Tuolumne Meadows is only open in the summer months. A day in Tuolumne might include a hike along the Tuolumne River past Pothole Dome, a walk to Parsons Lodge and Soda Springs, a dip in Tenaya Lake, or a hike up the backside of Lembert Dome. Longer hikes include Cathedral Lakes, Elizabeth Lake, and Gaylor Lake.

### **Merced Probation**

Sacred Rok led seven day trips and one camping trip with Merced County probation youth who are incarcerated at Iris Garrett Juvenile Justice facility.

Sacred Rok's relationship with Merced County Probation Department Juvenile Hall and Bear Creek Academy (BCA) spans over a decade. BCA is a program for incarcerated youth who have been committed by the Juvenile Court and are incarcerated for at least a year at the Iris Garrett Juvenile Justice Correction Complex in Merced.

The probation department brings the selected youth based on good behavior to the park in the facility van. Day trips often include service work like trash clean- up or trail repair. Under the guidance of the National Park Service and funded by the Yosemite Conservancy, Sacred Rok and the Bear Creek Academy youth are helping to restore climbing and hiking trails as well as removing old asphalt from the valley floor trail, returning it to the natural dirt.

In 2015 the youth created *BCA Mission: I'm Possible* to share their stories about their experiences in Yosemite with Sacred Rok. Their mission is to seek wisdom by learning from nature, finding their purpose in life, to be more responsible, and respectful while being human. We are proud to collaborate with the Juvenile Justice system to help them share their experiences and stories as a way to self-awareness and self-respect.





### San Benito Probation

Sacred Rok Led three day trips to Pinnacles National Park and hosted a camping trip in Yosemite National Park with youth from San Benito County Probation.

This is our fourth year working with San Benito Juvenile Hall. We continue our ongoing relationship with day trips to Pinnacles National Park, and camping trips in Yosemite. Ron Kauk and Sacred Rok board member Steve Shackelton, former Superintendent at Pinnacles National Park and former Chief Ranger at Yosemite National park, lead the trips to Pinnacles.

The opportunity to be with these young people in the classroom of nature provided by these parks has been one of the best learning experiences for everyone involved. Being in nature allows us to learn from each other, providing a sense of unity that can benefit our community.

We are honored to continue this journey of Education Nature's Way with these youth.

### Merced Youth Council

Sacred Rok Led one day trip and one overnight trip with the young people from the Merced Youth Council.

## Merced Youth Council youth

The Merced Youth Council represent the youth of Merced by communicating with the City Council in order to promote youth involvement, their general welfare and to improve the overall quality of life for the future of Merced.

This is our third year working with the Merced Youth Council. We continue to have ongoing camping and day trips with this group. It's always a great inspiration to be with these young people - we're open for any adventure that might come our way. We continue to learn from each other; they have so much to say when given a voice.

This relationship is another example of the importance of having an ongoing commitment that builds off of each trip. Each time together we strengthen our bond and support our ability to commune, communicate and build a stronger community.

Sacred Rok is honored to support the Merced Youth Council and their continued development.





"The days were filled with adventures and the starry nights were super peaceful. I enjoyed every moment in Yosemite because I got the chance to disconnect from deadlines and stress. I was able to connect with my surroundings and just enjoy the nature around me. When I went back to Merced, I came home as if I hit rest button in my brain. I felt refreshed."



"I have never been on a hike before that was my first time experiencing this type of journey. I thought it was pretty cool. I felt free. I was able to see a lot of different things out there. We saw a baby fox wondering around the park, a pair of squirrels asking for food. Everything was so green and we were surrounded by giant rocks and we even saw a beautiful waterfall. We went through caves and explored all over the park. We basically hiked all day and just kept going forward, it was a wonderful day."

Probation Youth



### Stanford University EAST House

Sacred Rok led two overnight trips to Yosemite National Park with Stanford University students who reside in EAST House.

This was our second year working with students of the EAST House. Kenji Hakuta, Sacred Rok Secretary and Treasurer of the board as well as emeritus professor from Stanford University, connected Sacred Rok with students from Stanford University through a program run by the Stanford Faculty Emeriti Council that connects retired faculty to students in the undergraduate Residential Education program. An idea was born to connect Stanford students with Sacred Rok. Our connections to nature resonated with their need to slow down and reflect. We found solitude along various spots known to Ron along the Merced River, Cascade Falls, and El Cap Meadow. We made time for the students to walk barefoot, write and sketch.

"This has been a great experience to get back in touch with nature. It used to be a huge part of my life and I had a great balance, but I lost it when I came Stanford. I'm glad I got to reconnect here as well as go at my own pace. I hope I learn from this experience and adopt it to my adult life- just remember what's important."

Stanford Student





### Boys and Girls Club of Merced County

Sacred Rok led two day trips with young people from the Boys & Girls Club of Merced County. This was our 8th year working with this organization and has been one of the most fun groups of young kids to be with.

In late April Sacred Rok was joined by six youth ages 7-9 from the Merced Boys and Girls Club for a day of exploring in Yosemite Valley. Being with this age group provides a unique experience as they are on the cusp of very deep and permanent development.

At this stage in life there is a tremendous amount of intelligence in our youth to absorb things and this is why we know that bringing youth into nature during this time is paramount to helping them develop a healthy foundation into a healthier, whole, human being.

It was profound to be out with this group of little kids - it not only evoked a sense of wonder and interest in them but also helped spark our adult imaginations.

## **Uplift Family Services**

Sacred Rok led two overnight trips to Yosemite National Park with a foster home from Uplift Family Services.

This was our fifth summer working with Uplift Family Services, a foster care and adoptions agency in the Bay Area. Between Christmas and the New Year we had five teen boys and their advocates from Uplift Family Services in Santa Clara county. Four of the youth were here for their second trip and for one 12 year old it was his first.

The three days we spent together filing our water bottles at the spring, splitting firewood, hiking up Yosemite Falls trail and talking around the fire at night felt really good, much like an extended family. Sacred Rok and Uplift Family Services are committed to continuing our relationship. In alignment with our goal to build solid foundations and community we've also helped with team bonding and consulting with the adult staff members of the various organizations and agencies we work with

"I will always remember the very first trip we took with Sacred Rok a few years ago. The night we returned I received an e-mail from one of our foster/adoptive parents saying she didn't know what happened on that trip, but she had never seen or experienced such a level of peace in her soon to be adopted daughter.

I was not surprised. It happens over and over with our trips with Sacred Rok. These ishiftsi are also sustained in the youth, and not just an immediate after effect of the trip. Nature promotes the ihomeostasisi which is necessary for youth who have experienced trauma in their lives. The natural, uninterrupted rhythms of nature restore that sense of balance as well as allow for changes and growth in the mind, body and soul."

Stephanie Antonioli, Program Manager, Uplift Family Services







# Camp Kitchen From Kerie Lambert, Camp Cook

As Sacred Rok furthers its relationship with food and nutrition we have also incorporated a new cook to help on some of the outings. We warmly welcome Ruth Smiley, owner of Blue Oak Ayurveda, to the kitchen.

A good meal is a great reason to gather around, talk about your day, and connect with those around you. The Camp Kitchen at Sacred Rok is an especially warm and cozy place, because Ron always has the fire going, and by the time kids and chaperones return from their days venture, or wake on a brisk morning, food and warm drink sound very good indeed!

I am delighted to nourish the visiting youth and their chaperones with meals on Sacred Rok trips, and the kids often want to help with preparations and the dishesonot because they feel like they have to, but because they are genuinely interested and want to participate in life at camp. These connections to our food, helping each other, and working outdoors to meet our basic needs are based in a slower age-old way of living in harmony with nature, where we don't feel a need to control natural forces, but learn to work with them instead.

# **Impact**

Research shows the positive impacts on the brain and behavior from time spent in nature. According to a study conducted by The Sierra Club it has been shown that outdoor education programs are of great benefit to youth. For many of these youth this is the first time they've had an experience in a natural setting. Findings also show that participation in an outdoor program was associated with higher ratings of conflict resolution skills and cooperation (www.sierraclub.org/insidetheoutdoors).

Deepening the sense of connectiveness with nature helps to address other forms of alienation in a person's life. Stephen Kaplan and Rachel Kaplan report that participants in wilderness activities experienced a sense of peace and an ability to think more clearly; they also reported that just being in nature was more restorative than physically challenging activities. (Kaplan, R, Kaplan, S, and Ryan, R. With People in Mind: Design and Management for Everyday Nature. Island Press, Washington D.C., 1998).

Robin Moore, director of the National Learning Initiative and professor at North Carolina State University, points out that children who have experiences in nature learn about nature through their direct experience. She states, "Children live through their senses. Sensory experiences link the child's exterior world with their interior, hidden, affective world. Freedom to explore and play with the outdoor environment through the senses in their own space and time is essential for the development of an interior life...."

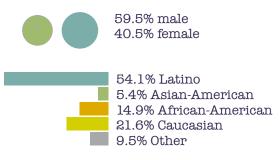
We find that as the youth in our Sacred Rok outings go at their own pace and rhythm as they walk the trails, swim in the lakes, enjoy sunrises and sunsets; the experience helps them to calm down and make sense of the beauty around them. They find an inner harmony from the relationship with nature, and with this comes self-confidence and a sense of wonder.

The environment of our parks allows young people to step away from their day-to-day urban environment and its stresses. This creates the space for them to share with each other and the trip leaders about the value of nature - learning to respect nature and through that, to respect themselves. Repeated trips allow them to develop trusting relationships with the adults.

In our trips, youth have expressed that they feel different - "This is the highlight of my life"; "I have never been on a hike
before- that was my first time experiencing this type of journey",
"I thought it was pretty cool. I felt free." We provide the sanctuary
space for youth to reflect on their own aspirations and goals.

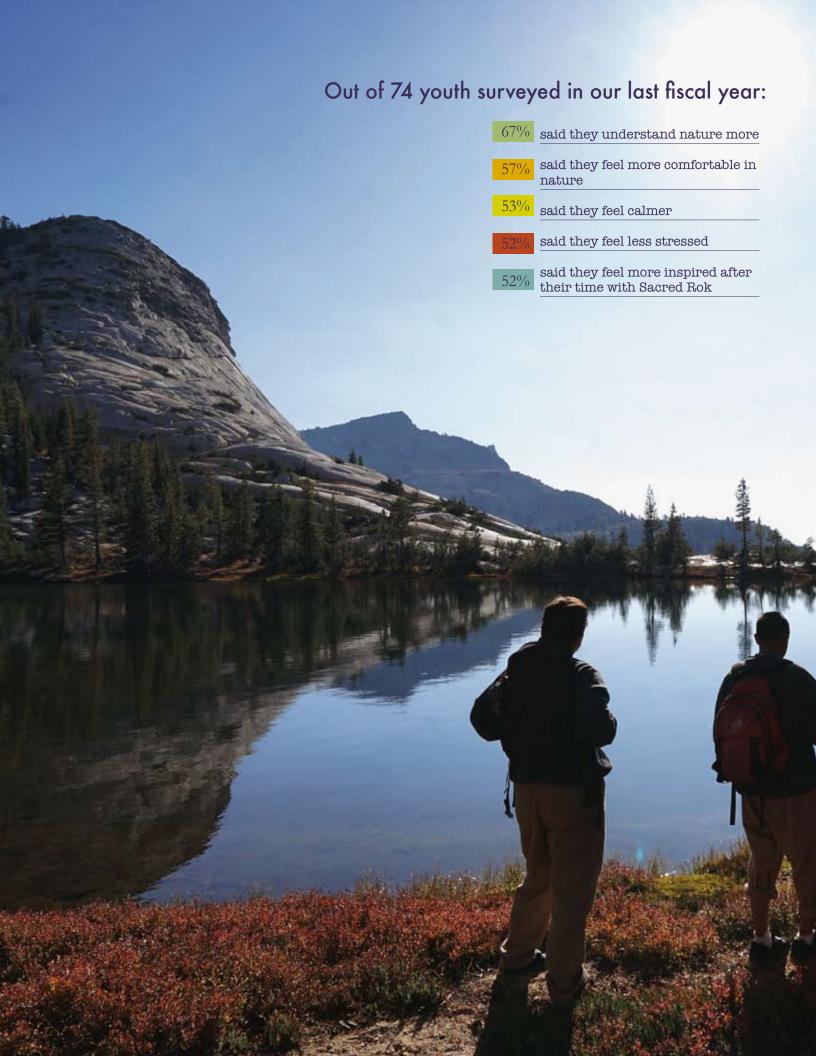
We want them to feel good about nature and themselves, feel at peace and less stressed, build long-term relationships with trusted adults, and return to their home community empowered to make positive choices at home and school. Our surveys and reflections from the staff/mentors seek to measure these outcomes.

### Gender and Ethnicity



Right: Observing the Toulumne Meadows High Sierra during the California fires.







# Supporters

We are grateful for the many donations that we receive. Working together to support the future generations is a commitment we all share and we thank you for your continued investment in our shared futures.

### Top Of the Rock \$15,000 and Above

Clif Bar Family Foundation Gumerlock Family Foundation William H Moffat Jr. Foundation

### Sponsors \$5,000-\$15,000

AC Israel Foundation Patagonia Paul Gyugyi RandE Holdings The North Face

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Vicki & Howard Cabot



## **Financials**

In the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2019, Sacred Rok received \$180,737.17 in revenue and had \$111,278.05 in expenses, for net income of \$69,459.12. The balance sheet showed \$200,222.57 in assets

Our primary funding in FY 2018 was foundation funding (\$100,750.00, 66% of our revenue), followed by individual contributions (\$41,809.84, 23% of our revenue), corporate contributions (\$26,630.00, 15% of our revenue), and government contracts (\$11,391.71, 1% of our revenue).

The Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet are shown on the following pages.

## Profit and Loss July 2018 - June 2019

INCOME Corporate Contributions Foundation Grants Government Grants and Contracts Individual Contributions Interest Total Income GROSS PROFIT	26,630.00 100,750.00 11,391.71 41,809.84 155.62 \$180,737.17 \$180,737.17
EXPENSES Fund Raising Organizational Operations Admin Support Bank & PayPal fees Business Fees, Dues Contract Services Outside Contract Services Total Contract Services Insurance - Liability, D and O Office Supplies Postage, Mailing Service Printing and Copying Telephone, Telecommunications Total Organizational Operations	\$4,353.17 1,000.00 28.14 172.50 300.00 173.70 473.70 8,723.00 206.89 650.08 10.77 661.71
Outreach/Education Design Printing Total Outreach/Education	2,349.55 1,866.50 464.03 \$4,680.08
Program Food and camping supplies	6,474.22
Program Staff Employee Salary Gross wages Health Insurance Independent Contractor Payroll tax refund Payroll taxes Workers Comp Total Program Staff	31,500.00 28,416.65 544.62 6,500.00 279.37 5,067.00 6,426.23
Travel Mileage Reimbursement Vehicle reg mtnce ins Total Travel Total Program	3,963.48 1,705.18 5,668.66 \$90,318.01
Total Expenses	\$111,278.05
NET OPERATING INCOME NET INCOME	\$69,459.12 \$69,459.12



Below is a functional analysis of expenses, in accordance with the new Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) financial reporting rules for nonprofits.

EXPENSES	FY 2018-2019 Expense	Day and Overnight Trips	Outreach and Education	Fund raising	Admin
Employee Salary (ED and COO)	\$59,916	\$38,945	\$11,983	\$2,996	\$5,992
Payroll tax, benefits, Workers Comp	\$11,758	\$7,643	\$2,352	\$588	\$1,176
Camp cook	\$6,500	\$6,500			
Trips-food and supplies	\$6,474	\$6,474			
Mileage	\$3,963	\$2,576	\$793	\$198	\$396
Vehicle maintenance and registration	\$1,705	\$1,108	\$341	\$85	\$171
Outreach (posters, videos, etc)	\$4,680		\$4,680		
Fundraising	\$4,353			\$4,353	
Admin support	\$1,000		\$300	\$300	\$400
Insurance	\$8,723	\$4,362	\$1,745	\$436	\$2181
Postage and printing	\$661	\$330	\$132	\$33	\$165
Telephone and Internet	\$662	\$331	\$132	\$33	\$165
Books, Office Supplies	\$207	\$103	\$41	\$10	\$52
Misc fees, contract services, etc	\$674	\$337	\$135	\$34	\$169
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$111,278	\$68,711	\$22,634	\$9,067	\$10,866

Notes - Liquidity Management/Cash Flow Disclosure

- 1. Total liquid assets: As of June 30, 2019, Sacred Rok has \$160,303.85 in cash.
- 2. Management of Liquidity: Sacred Rok has \$30,000 in liquid assets in the Director's Discretionary Fund. Sacred Rok does not have a cash reserve. However, if there is a cash flow crunch, the Board would ask the Director for authorization to utilize a portion of the Director's Discretionary Fund to cover operating expenses.
- 3. Sacred Rok strives to keep liquid assets on hand to meet 3 months of regular operating expenses.
- 4. Financial Assets available for general expenditures within next year by July 2020: \$130,303.85, sufficient for approximately 14 months of operations.

# Sacred Rok Balance Sheet as of June 1, 2019

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
TriCounties Bank	151,290.47
WePay	0.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$151,290.47
Other Current Assets	
Supplies Inventory	1,754.19
Undeposited Funds	7,681.72
Total Other Current Assets	\$9,435.91
Total Current Assets	\$160,726.38
Fixed Assets	
Camper	43 310 00

Camper 43,310.00
Accum Depr - Vehicles -8,762.00
Total Camper \$34,548.00
Furniture and Equipment 4,936.53
Accum Depr - Furn and Equip -1,320.00
Total Furniture and Equipment \$3,616.53
Total Fixed Assets \$38,164.53
TOTAL ASSETS \$198,890.91

#### LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Liabilities
Total Liabilities

Equity

Opening Balance Equity 732.75
Retained Earnings 130,030.70
Net Income 68,127.46
Total Equity 198,890.91
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY \$198,890.91

Notes—Categorization of Assets/Notes on Balance Sheet

#### 1. Restricted Assets:

#### a. Donor-restricted assets:

- The North Face
- Clif Bar Family Foundation
- Patagonia
- Gumerlock Family Foundation
- William H Moffatt Jr Foundation
- United Way of Merced County
- Merced County Probation Department
- San Benito County Probation Department
- In-kind (camper)

### b. Board-restricted assets:

- \$30,000 Director's Discretionary Fund to be expended at Executive
- Director's direction, required to be in line with the Sacred Rok mission
- Furniture and equipment, supplies



