



## Friends of Huddart & Wunderlich Parks

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### Annual Impact Report 2019

#### Introduction

Friends of Huddart and Wunderlich Parks (“Friends”) is a locally-based non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the environmental and historic legacies of two exceptional county parks in Woodside, California. Our nature education programs encourage environmental awareness and outdoor education for both children and adults, while promoting enjoyment and conservation of these parks. Overall, Friends’ various nature and history education programs as well as community events meaningfully engaged an estimated 6,767 people in 2018, including nearly 2,400 youth for hiking and history field trips.

#### Huddart Park Nature Hikes

This program provides students in grades K-5 with nature-based hands-on opportunities to learn science. Thanks to your support, we were able to finish the 2018-2019 school year serving more young students than ever before. Highlights of our youth education programming include:

- *Total served.* A total of 1,150 students in grades K-5 came to Huddart this school year (September 2018-May 2019) for outdoor science education. While we served approximately the same number of students this year as last year, we were able to deliver the program to smaller groups of students from one classroom at a time, which allows for a more immediate and immersive learning experience.
- *Low-income students.* Access to our program for 758 students—about 67% of students served—was made possible through subsidized transportation and/or fee waivers, exceeding our goal of meeting the educational needs of 400 underserved, low-income youth.

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*“I loved the docents, their attention to science, their expertise, and their love of engaging inquiry. The hike was very appropriate in length and distance. I especially loved planning this hike for the last two weeks of school because it would be a great way to remind kids to keep exploring the outdoors during the summer!” ~ Participating Teacher*

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- *Student diversity.* Students were also more diverse this year. Our estimate is that 50% of students were Latino, 22% Caucasian, 18% Asian, and 2% African American. Through expanded outreach and partnerships, we were able to add eight new schools to the program. We also provided programming for several special education classes that serve autistic students.
- *Revamped curriculum.* Working with San Mateo County's Department of Education, we also refreshed our curriculum during the year to align even more closely with the Next Generation Science Standards. This effort helps ensure our programs meet teachers' needs for science instruction.
- *Program impact evaluation.* Friends' anticipated outcomes, as measured by post-program evaluation surveys, is for 90% of teachers to identify that the Huddart Park Nature Hike experience linked to classroom science. For the 2018-2019 school year, 100% of teachers rated our hikes "excellent" or "very good." We also heard that 93% of teachers saw clear links between the field trip and their classroom curriculum.



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One second grade teacher commented:  
*"The students unanimously agreed that this was the best hike and their favorite field trip all year! Huddart Hikes led by your expert docents brought to life our science standards in the most engaging way possible."*

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### **Folger Stable School Program**

Provided in collaboration with the San Mateo County Historical Association, the Folger Stable School Program provides California history-themed field trips for third and fourth graders at Wunderlich Park's historic Folger Estate Stable. This is our longest running school program, kicked off in 2010-2011, and it continues to grow. This school year, we served 1,319 students with these living history field trips. Each field trip includes experiential activities that reinforce the historical information presented and helps students learn how people lived on the land. Activities include apple-pressing, leather stamping, building a rock wall, and saddling a horse. Our docents support the program by teaching kids about the historical objects in the museum and showing kids how to tack a horse by bringing a horse or mule out to meet the students.

### **Expanded Hikes with the Friends**

In response to a growing national movement to connect health and nature, Friends kicked off a new approach last year to transform our traditional "parks" programming into broader parks prescription or "Parks Rx" programming. This new approach focused on eliminating barriers that can prevent people from accessing nature by offering customized outings for specific populations and connecting with new partners including health providers. Altogether, we helped 1,200 people with their health and wellness goals through this expanded program this year. Highlights included:



*Our January event with patients of the Healthy Life Style Clinic got the chance to meet Lightning\_, a miniature pony stabled at the Folger Stable, who frequently visits with youth on the living history field trips at Wunderlich Park.*

- *Community outings.* Friends' community outings continued to be popular, with 857 people attending a range of scheduled programs. For example, we expanded our partnership with the Peninsula Open Space Trust to host two Family Nature Days. We added new themed outings to appeal to more people and to help them get started with exercise outdoors, such as working with the Sierra Club to offer a monthly mindfulness and hiking program.
- *Disadvantaged youth.* Last summer, we partnered with two youth service organizations to bring 149 at-risk children to the parks including children living in LifeMoves family homeless shelters and low-income youth participating in San Mateo County's Big Lift literacy booster program. During the spring, we worked with these partners to create an expanded series of summer outings, which are underway now. The first of these occurred in June with 25 youth; three more events are scheduled in July. Altogether these events will ensure we exceed our target of serving 100 homeless and disadvantaged youth.
- *People with disabilities.* We also partnered again with the VISTA Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired this year, serving 19 clients in their Shared Pathways program, with a customized hike that addresses their specific needs for support to access the outdoors.
- *Partnerships with health providers.* We were especially proud of the new partnership we established with local pediatrician Dr. Rachel Borovina, who runs the Healthy Life Style Clinic at the San Mateo Medical Center, part of the San Mateo County Health Department. Her clinic works closely with low-income families to support healthy life style choices. In January, we hosted a special program for Dr. Borovina's patients followed by a family nature day in April for clients of all the public health clinics in the County, serving 145 children and adults and meeting our target of engaging 50 to 100 people through new outings. These events included

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*"...Thank you for your participation in our 'clinic to nature connection.' The welcome we received from the volunteers set a tone of warmth and caring. Everyone enjoyed a magical experience that has inspired many families (and staff members) to explore the restorative powers of the outdoors."*  
~ Dr. Borovina

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“Walk with a Doc” hikes (delivered in English and Spanish), bilingual meditation, outdoor games, and healthy refreshments.

### **Investing in Future Program Growth by Recruiting and Training New Docents**

Part of what makes our programs such a success is the support we get from a dedicated group of volunteers who act as docents, guiding small groups of students and park visitors to explore the forest or learn about horses and the history of the Folger Stable. We were especially grateful to have the support of 51 specially-trained docents, including four new ones this year. In addition to the one-on-one training and peer support for new docents, we offer all docents educational opportunities to keep their interpretive skills fresh and engaging. This past year we offered workshops on interpretation techniques related to geology, earthquakes, amphibians, and oak woodlands. We also provided two trainings on cultural relevancy and on working with English language learners, so our docents can incorporate best practices to reach all students in our programs.

### **Plans for the Coming Year**

Friends is an ambitious, small-scale, community-based organization that operates with only two part-time staff members and 51 volunteers. We provide our programs very cost-effectively; last fiscal year, 84% of total expenses directly supported services for the community. We particularly appreciate the program support provided by the Harvey L. and Maud C. Sorensen Foundation for a suite of programs that benefits the community.

In the coming year, our plans call for expanding the Huddart Park Nature Hikes to serve more low-income students with a special focus on serving elementary schools in Redwood City and East Palo Alto. We are looking to bring on a part-time program assistant, hoping to find someone fluent in Spanish, that can help with outreach as well as deliver programs to more people.

We also look to continue and expand partnerships with community-based organizations to support robust programming. Current partners include doctors with the County’s Public Health System, the County’s Big Lift literacy booster program, LifeMoves’ family shelters, and the Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. We are also exploring how to create customized outings that meet the needs of additional populations, for example, working with veterans’ organizations or adding programs for the Boys and Girls Club of San Mateo County. These partnerships help us break down barriers to accessing nature in the coming year. Program Director Kym Teppo also attended the Healthy Parks Healthy People conference this spring and is following up with ideas and contacts to further strengthen our Parks Rx programming.

We are also marking the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the preservation and renovation of the historic Folger Stable in Wunderlich in 2020. We are planning a series of events that highlight the past ten years and share where our programs are growing, culminating in a celebratory barn dance anniversary event in August 2020.

# 2019 REPORT

## FRIENDS OF HUDDART & WUNDERLICH PARKS



**Nature Hikes**  
1,418 33%

**Park Rx**  
256 84%

38% **Volunteer Hours**  
1,674

**Folger Stable Visitors**  
 15% 4,362

**History Field Trips** 10%  
1,339



**8,268**

Community Members Served

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Docents  
  
Donors  
  
Friends

	2018	2019	% Change
Folger School	1219	1339	10%
Huddart Hikes	1063	1418	33%
Museum Visitors	3027	3570	18%
Speaker Series	215	95	-56%
Hike with Friends	328	185	-44%
Park Rx	41	256	524%
Stable Tours	214	187	-13%
Family Nature Days	550	613	11%
Volunteer Hours	1210	1674	38%
People Served	6872	8268	20%

