

# ANNUAL REPORT



F  
Y  
2  
0  
2  
2

# ABOUT US



## *Who we are:*

Trees Matter is a Phoenix-based 501 (c)(3) environmental education nonprofit. We see a need to provide resources to the public so they can properly choose, plant, care for, and advocate for trees. We hope to encourage a culture of tree advocates and stewards.

Our mission, is to inspire and promote an increased tree canopy in the Valley. Our vision, is a Valley where for now and the future, all generations have lifelong access to the benefits of trees.

## *What we do & what we believe:*

Trees offer many critical functions such as shade, pollution reduction, dust reduction, food, increased property value, carbon sequestration, increase in mental and physical health, and more. The Valley has an immediate need for an increased tree canopy; Trees Matter works to alleviate this need by **educating** the public on tree knowledge, and **distributing** and **planting** trees to residents and schools across the Valley.

For more information, visit our website: [www.treesmatter.org](http://www.treesmatter.org)

*Special thanks to our Outreach Manager, Ariel Stone, and our intern, Keetra Bippus, for creating this Annual Report.*

# MEET THE BOARD



**MIKE PFISTER**  
MEMBER



**ERIC HENDERSON**  
TREASURER



**TABITHA MYERS**  
SECRETARY



**ERIC MCINTOSH**  
MEMBER



**ANGELICA ZAMORA**  
MEMBER



**NICOLE RODRIGUEZ**  
MEMBER



**JOE BARBA**  
MEMBER



**E.J. COCHRUM**  
MEMBER



**EVAN ROBERTS**  
MEMBER



**JUSTIN KATZ**  
MEMBER

## *Note from the Board Chair, Michele Spear:*



"As a Health & Wellness Coach, I am always looking for foods we can eat and things we can do to improve our health. What Trees Matter does is important for your health and my health. You might wonder, "How can that be?"

Studies have shown that spending time in nature is important for our physical and mental health. Spending two hours outdoors every week is all it takes to reap benefits. Walk, hike, bike, have a picnic, meditate, enjoy a cup of coffee or tea - you choose how you spend your time in nature. The greener, the better. So, as you can see, all the trees that get planted because of the work that Trees Matter does make a difference. Trees Matter's work is important for you, for me, and even for those that will come after us since the trees will be part of nature for years to come.

Trees Matter could not do their work without you. Together we are stronger. We need your time, which you can do by volunteering at their events. We need your financial support, which you can do by becoming a monthly member. We need your voice, which you can do by sharing Trees Matter with people you know. Please help us continue to grow a greener environment that provides health benefits for years to come.

Thank you to the Board members and volunteers for generously giving your time. Thank you to the staff for carrying out the mission and vision of Trees Matter. Thank you to our donors and monthly members for generously giving your money. Thank you to all of you for being part of the Trees Matter community."

# MEET THE STAFF



**AIMEE ESPOSITO**

EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR



**ARIEL STONE**

OUTREACH  
MANAGER



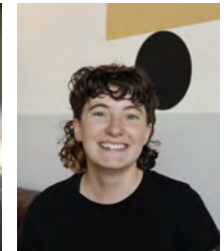
**PAULINA VU**

PROGRAM  
MANAGER



**BRITTANY RINEAR**

UTILITY PROGRAM  
MANAGER



**ALI GUTTENBERG**

PLANTING  
PROGRAMS  
MANAGER

**The McKinley Club Office:**  
734 W. Polk St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
(602) 689-2896

**Mailing Address:**  
PO Box 2648  
Phoenix, AZ 85002



# COMMUNITY BUILDING

## COLLABORATORS

(AZ)Land  
Alliance for Community  
Trees  
Arizona Community Tree  
Council  
Arizona State University  
Arizona Sustainability  
Alliance  
Arizona Nursery  
Association  
Cha Chas Tea Lounge  
Chispa AZ

## COLLABORATORS

City of Phoenix  
Desert Botanical Garden  
First Place Coffee  
Hands On Greater Phx  
Keep Phoenix Beautiful  
Phoenix Community  
Toolbank  
Salt River Project  
TigerMountain Foundation  
Treeland Nurseries  
Watershed Management  
Group

## GRANT MAKERS

APS  
Arbor Day Foundation  
Arizona Department of  
Forestry and Fire  
Management  
Arizona Game and Fish  
Arizona State University  
Cobblestone  
City of Phoenix  
Councilwoman Yassamin  
Ansari

## GRANT MAKERS

First Place Coffee  
Microsoft  
One Tree Planted  
Snooze  
Sole Sports  
Target Giving  
The Nature  
Conservancy

## SCHOOL PARTNERS

Alhambra School  
District  
Osborn Elementary  
School District  
Paideia Academy  
Phoenix Elementary  
School District  
Tempe Unified School  
District  
Cartwright School  
District



# PROGRAMS

"This year has been another successful one for our SRP Shade Tree program, reaching into communities to educate homeowners on the benefits of shading their homes, and bringing our tree pick up events to new venues. We juggled major personal life changes and worked closely as a team to ensure excellence for the SRP customers we engage with! Seeing the impact this program has on their lives and neighborhoods really makes me proud to be a part of facilitating this program and helping it grow!" - *Brittany Rinear, Remote Communications Assistant*



**4352**

Households  
Educated on  
Tree Care

**4914**

Trees  
Distributed!

"The SRP Shade Tree Program is such an essential part of Trees Matter's mission of inspiring and promoting an increased canopy in the Valley. We are not only providing useful education on tree care and selection, but also providing trees and all their benefits to customers! Having an additional 5000 trees added to our canopy benefits everyone - the homeowner, the neighborhood, and so much more. It's always so much fun working with staff and customers who care so much about our home here in the Valley and are taking direct action to make Arizona greener and shadier!" -*Paulina Vu, Programs Manager*

## Shade Tree Program

Working in conjunction with the Salt River Project (SRP) utility company, we distribute thousands of free desert-adapted shade trees to SRP customers across the Valley every year. This is our largest program, and also our longest running program, as well. Participants can receive up to two free trees after attending a virtual workshop where they learn how to plant and care for their new shade trees. We conduct the tree distribution events in different parts of the Valley each time, to reach as many residents as possible. By the end of each year, we distribute approximately **5,000 trees** and educate over **4,000 Valley** residents.



*Events occur during the Spring and Fall seasons.*

# PROGRAMS

## Trees for Schools

Trees for Schools advocates to provide more tree infrastructure into schools while teaching staff and students on the importance of trees and tree care. It goes beyond simply planting the tree--the maintenance and care of the tree that follows is critical to the success of the tree. We are determined to educate schools on this by having the students, staff, and maintenance crews be an integral part of not only the planting itself, but also the knowledge on how to care for their new trees in the long term. We are happy to collaborate with school districts within the Valley to get more trees into schools!

FY2022 at a glance:

6

Schools  
Visited

186

Trees  
Planted!

400

Students  
Involved!



"Our Trees for Schools' program has seen immense success over the last year and continues to exponentially grow. Each season we are planting more trees at more schools across the Valley. We have also had the opportunity to plant more trees, educate more students and provide more funding towards maintenance needs than ever before. The Trees for Schools program has a robust future and I am excited to see where it will go in the next year."

-Ali Guttenberg, Planting Programs Manager

*This program is on a funded project-by-project basis and, therefore, school plantings happen throughout the year. Refer to our partnership and financial pages for more information to support this program!*

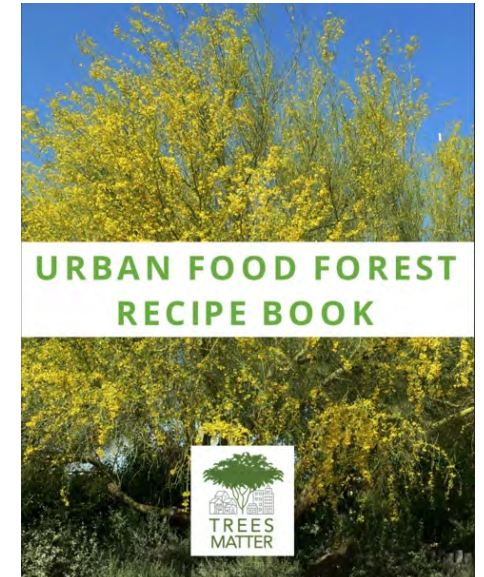


# PROGRAMS

## Urban Food Forest

The Urban Food Forest program is devoted to demonstrating the important function of community engagement that trees provide by showing how different trees can be harvested, processed, and prepared as a means of food. This is a resource-based program, with online free educational content available to help educate the public on the function of trees as a means of food. All Urban Food Forest resources can be found on our website, [www.treesmatter.org](http://www.treesmatter.org), or on our social media platforms, @TreesMatterAZ, on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and cooking videos on our YouTube channel.

We also have a recipe book that highlights various trees that can grow here in the Valley (including native trees!), that also produce food through the fruit, pods, or seeds they produce! The book is organized by harvest season and features over 20 trees, with multiple unique recipe options for each tree. This book is available for purchase on our website at [www.treesmatter.org/Store](http://www.treesmatter.org/Store).





# PROGRAMS

## Resiliency Project

For those who risked and lost their lives to COVID-19, Trees Matter is paying tribute to them by planting and dedicating 100 trees in their honor. The Resiliency Project was born to commemorate those affected most from COVID-19, while also acknowledging communities of color that have been affected at disproportionate rates and providing greenery to their communities. Additionally, Trees Matter partners with the Tiger Mountain Foundation, an organization which provides opportunities for formerly incarcerated people to learn practical life skills while improving their communities.

In partnership with Tiger Mountain Foundation, Spaces of Opportunity, and Marked by Covid, we've created a memorial site in South Phoenix of 100 trees planted for those we've lost or who have been greatly impacted due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We've also asked the community to join us in submitting forms about their loved one, and we will inscribe their names on individual wooden tags that will hang from the 100 trees we planted for the memorial site. In addition, a memorial page was added to our website to honor them, and it includes beautiful stories and memories their loved ones submitted. We ask that you take a moment to look through the site, and read the touching stories written about each of them.

If you would like to honor a loved one through our Resiliency Project, we encourage our community to submit tree tag/memorial page submissions at [treesmatter.org/Resiliency-Project](https://treesmatter.org/Resiliency-Project)

Thank you to our intern, Bridget Abraham, for the hard work, dedication, and passion she put into creating this memorial page for our community.

To view the memorial page, visit [treesmatter.org/rpmemorial](https://treesmatter.org/rpmemorial)  
We also have a recognition page for those impacted, but have not passed away. To view the recognition page, visit [treesmatter.org/Recognition-Page](https://treesmatter.org/Recognition-Page)



*Trees Matter created name tags for those who wanted to dedicate and honor the lives of those lost from COVID-19*

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Mesquite Pancake Breakfast for Dinner

Every year, Trees Matter holds its annual fundraiser, the Mesquite Pancake Breakfast. At this event, our community joins us to taste the delicious flavor of mesquite through mesquite flour pancakes, which includes a full breakfast alongside. This fundraiser serves to support Trees Matter, and all ticket sales go to aid our mission to inspire and promote an increased tree canopy in the Valley. It's an opportunity for staff and board members to speak to our community, and it's also a chance for our community members to make an investment in us, as an organization.

In October 2021, we held our annual breakfast in the evening, at Snooze an A.M. Eatery, a local chain in Phoenix, AZ. With delicious food and over one hundred people in attendance, it was—and always is—a highlight of our year every time! **A special thank you to: Snooze, an A.M. Eatery for providing both the venue and food, that enriched the community's experience at the Breakfast,** to Avnet for providing the volunteers and matching donations for tickets, to our staff, interns, and board for supporting this event running smoothly, and to Teresa Villegas for creating our beautiful event poster.

## McPherson Award Winners

Congratulations to our McPherson Award winners for 2020 and 2021: Andrew Raub, Nicole Rodriguez, Joanna Repucci, and Roberto Friez!! "Getting so many trees in the ground right here in the historic Garfield neighborhood was a special gift. It took a lot of people working together to make the planting a success. I'm especially grateful to have gotten to know Roberto Friez before he retired from the City. Of all the time that I have spent volunteering, this community planting project is the one I am most proud of." -Joanna Repucci (lower right)



# VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

FY2022 at a glance:



## *A Note From the Outreach Manager*

"One of the first things people notice about Trees Matter is that our volunteers are a core part of our organization, always at the forefront along with staff. We wouldn't be able to do any of our programming or events without their support--our organization is truly volunteer powered! Our amazing volunteer community ranges from event volunteers supporting in large numbers, to interns working closely with staff, to arborists/Master Gardeners/etc. offering their expertise in tree knowledge to the community. As someone who works closely with our volunteers guiding them, working alongside them, and ultimately building lasting relationships with them, it truly is a highlight for me to see that we have such a high number of recurring volunteers every year. They are passionate, kind people who care about their community and feel connected to our mission. I'm honored to work with these individuals every year, and I look forward to growing our community!"

*Ariel Stone, Outreach Manager*

**2,734**  
Volunteer  
Hours!

**210**  
Volunteers!

**127**  
Recurring  
Volunteers!

### **Shade Tree Workshop & Distribution**

*These volunteers distribute hundreds of free shade trees to residents across the Valley, and help educate the community on tree care. These are large scale, fun events and we could not run them without volunteers!*

### **Tree Planting Volunteer Cohort**

*These volunteers plant trees throughout the year with Trees Matter. We need folks to help plant trees at schools through our Trees for Schools Program, and other plantings! New to planting trees? No problem, we will train you!*

### **Internships**

*Every semester Trees Matter recruits college students to join the team! Interns help coordinate and execute events, gain hands-on experience in a growing nonprofit, and learn about community engagement all while working alongside staff.*

# VOLUNTEERS

## Volunteers in Action



# VOLUNTEERS



## A Word from Our Volunteers

"The best part about being a volunteer is teamwork. This means working collaboratively to achieve our goals together. This made me want to be a part of Trees Matter. In addition, trees help us decrease stress, anxiety, and improve our overall health.

A walk in the park is more than a walk in the park when the trees put me at ease...I am able to breathe, am at ease...to gaze at the trees, the birds, the flowers and the bees...trees put me at ease. A ray of emotion, healing on a summer day...the vigorous movements of the leaves, the trees, the flowers and the bees...trees put me at ease..."

*-Moulikah Jordan (left)*

"I've been interning with Trees Matter for an entire year now and I've loved every second of it! Not only is it developing my business and job skills, but I'm helping out the community that I live in. The Trees Matter staff is so incredibly resourceful, kind and passionate about what they do. With such a small staff, they make a huge impact and I'm so glad that I can be a part of it!

*-Keetra Bippus (above)*

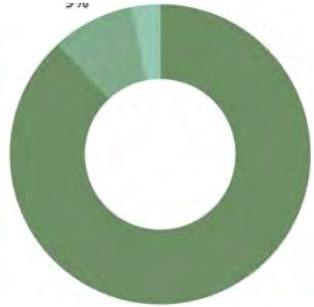
"Trees Matter has been instrumental to my success and making an intentional impact. My time as an intern allowed me to explore my passions and doing good for the community, while being part of an amazing team. I'm so thankful for my experience, and can't wait to continue to support Trees Matter for years to come!"

*-Bridget Abraham (above)*



# FY2022 FINANCES

## EXPENSES



Programs: **\$398,909.37**  
Management and General:  
**\$40,538.94**  
Development: **\$13,599.72**  
Total: **\$453,048.03**



88.05% Programs



8.95% Management & General



3.00% Development



52.7% Earned Income



46.8% Contributions



0.0003% Interest Income



0.5% In Kind Revenue

## REVENUE



Earned Income: **\$321,610.95**  
Contributions & Grants: **\$285,658.68**  
Interest Income: **\$189.81**  
In Kind Revenue: **\$2,900**  
Total: **\$610,359.44**



### Note from Executive Director, Aimee Esposito:

"Trees Matter has been gradually growing fiscally and programmatically for years. In my sixth year as Executive Director, we are in our strongest financial position ever. This year alone we increased revenue by over \$200,000 and spent about \$80,000 more than in the prior year. This means we were able to grow our impact, our staff, and invest in our local economy with over \$105,000 in trees and materials from local nurseries. Increased programming meant increased programming expense, about 2.5% and a little over \$81,000 more than last fiscal year. One of the most exciting aspects of our financials this year is the diversity in revenue streams. Last year we had about 88% in earned income and only 12% in contributions and grants. Thanks to grant makers, our monthly members and those of you who donated throughout the year, our contributions and grants went up to 47% and earned income is at about 52% - making us much less dependent on a few sources of income. Our goal for the next year is to continue to diversify our income, adding a brokerage account to accept gifts of stock, building a legacy giving program, and growing our membership engagement. We also plan to add staff that support our programming in planting and distribution of trees, including Spanish-speaking staff. We couldn't have had as good of a year without all our individual donors, members, grant makers, and business partners! Thank you for being part of our vision - A valley where for now and the future, all generations will have the lifelong access to benefits of trees."

# FY2022 FINANCES

## Monthly Donors

Stephanie Adams  
Mario Aniles  
Cypress Ashford  
Joe Barba  
Alex Benchimol  
Nancy Bennett  
Andrew Bernier  
Christina Chavez  
E.J. Cochrum  
Christopher Coffman  
Jason Coghill  
Kathy Coleman  
Bunny (Ruth) Davis  
Shirley Dieckerman  
Jocelyn Dustan  
Joel Edman  
Aimee & Gaelle Esposito  
Heather Franek  
Lorena Gloria  
Tanya Hughes  
Andrew Knochel  
Karen Loschiavo  
Jo-Ann Lowney  
Lora Martens  
Eric McIntosh



Trees Matter thanks everyone who attended our first-ever Membership Mixer last year at Garden Bar in downtown Phoenix! With over 50 guests in attendance, we were able to connect with familiar faces, as well as new ones!

We would also like to give a special thank you to the participants who decided to become a monthly member at this event! Your support enables us to continue fulfilling our mission to inspire and promote an increased tree canopy in the Valley every day.

Lastly, thank you to Garden Bar and the Cocktail Collaborative for making this event possible.

We look forward to holding more of Membership Mixer events in the future!



## Monthly Donors

Bill McLain  
Cynthia Mercado  
Tabitha Myers  
Barry Nomann  
Ian O'Grady  
Janice Palmer  
Joseph Palomino  
Jess Patrick  
Jarid Perrin  
Ashley Prevallet  
Tanya Rincon  
Evan Roberts  
Shana Robertson  
Nicole Rodriguez  
Rebekah Sanders  
M Melanie Searle  
Rebecca Smith-Gross  
Steven Snyder  
Michele & Greg Spear  
Kraig Tolliver  
Nikki VanRy  
Linda & Larry Williamson  
William Woolery  
Laura Zgoda

# ACHIEVEMENTS & RESOURCES

## Tree Education Sheets

*Trees Matter is dedicated to giving you access to as many resources as possible. Visit our website for PDF files containing information on how to plant and maintain trees, how trees impact different social, economic, and environmental factors, and figure out which desert-adapted shade tree type is right for your home. You can also learn about different food-producing trees in Phoenix's Urban Food Forest, plus learn recipes and harvesting information!*



## Advocacy

*Many of you are interested in how you can advocate to protect, plan, and plant more trees.*

*We've created email alerts that will provide information on important meetings to show up to, who to call for potential tree related issues, updates on tree advocacy news, and other ways to use your agency to help speak for the trees!*



## Tree Database

*Our Tree Database is new, and continues to grow and develop! We have compiled a list for you of commonly available trees in Arizona which are also suitable for planting in Maricopa County!*

*This is intended to give more information about the characteristics of the trees to help you decide which tree is suitable for you. Find out more information on our website!*



## Ask an Arborist

*Have a question about your tree? You can post your question to our Facebook forum, and our Arborist will give you an answer!*

*The purpose of this forum is to share information and provide a way for our volunteer certified Arborist to answer questions regarding trees. Our Ask the Arborist Forum exists on our Trees Matter Facebook page.*





# VISIT US



## Visit Our Website!

*Our mission is to inspire and promote an increased tree canopy in the Valley. If you would like to learn more about our organization, our mission, volunteer and support opportunities, and upcoming events, please visit our website. There are also a lot of free resources we offer that you can utilize today!*

[Treesmatter.org](http://Treesmatter.org)



## Get Involved!

*Sign up for an opportunity!*

*Offer your time at SRP Shade Tree Workshop & Distribution Events, help Trees Matter behind the scenes through administrative support, join the Tree Planting Volunteer Cohort, internships, and More! We are always looking for new volunteers to help increase the tree canopy in the Valley!*

[Treesmatter.org/volunteer](http://Treesmatter.org/volunteer)



## Donate!

*Become a one time donor or a monthly donor. Trees Matter exists through the generosity of our supporters who donate time and funds. Through community support from folks like you, Trees Matter can continue our mission-based work and develop community-based programs to increase the tree canopy in the Valley!*

[Treesmatter.org/One-Time-Donation](http://Treesmatter.org/One-Time-Donation)

[Treesmatter.org/Monthly](http://Treesmatter.org/Monthly)



## Subscribe!

*Interested in receiving our monthly e-newsletter? Join our community and have secure access to our e-newsletter, updates on special events, volunteer opportunities, and access to certain resources. You can also follow us on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to keep up with all the work we are doing around the Valley!*

[Treesmatter.org/subscribe](http://Treesmatter.org/subscribe)



[TreesMatter.org](http://TreesMatter.org)