



River Park Connections

Fall 2023



Final Fundraising Launched with Big Announcement

The River Center at Grant Park Update

Exciting news! At the Anniversary Celebration, the long-awaited announcement was made that the effort to construct a new nature learning and stewardship center in Mission Valley had reached the final stage!

A highlight of the announcement was Assemblymember Chris Ward's inspiring words about the importance of the project. He presented a \$2,500,000 ceremonial State of California check to the River Park Foundation's Board Chair, Mike Schneider, and CEO, Rob Hutsel. **The fundraising campaign has now raised more than \$9,000,000!**

Our CEO shared that the City of San Diego building permits have been issued so construction could begin as soon as enough funds are raised. What a great day!

It all started more than a decade ago with a conversation between the Grant family and our CEO.

The desire was a simple one, to connect people, especially kids, with nature and the river. The Grant family remembered growing up in San Diego and having opportunities that many kids don't get today – playing outside, getting their hands dirty, and having fun.

Could a former 17-acre sand mining site be part of the solution? The vision of the River Center at Grant Park was born.

The Grant family started this effort and remains its foundation. **And now they will match up to \$200,000 in donations to fill the fundraising gap!**

We invite you to join in with a gift today!

"Together we can create nature connections to last a lifetime."

Connect. Create. Conserve.



You Can Help Close the Gap

Together We Can Open Grant Park

Do you believe every child deserves a nature connection?

Here is your chance to be part of something and make a difference.

- **Make a donation and help ensure the River Center at Grant Park opens in 2024.** With your support deserving kids can have access to free nature-based learning experiences that will benefit them for a lifetime.
- **Exciting news! Your gift will have 2X the impact** as the Grant Family will match up to \$200,000 in gifts received before the end of the year!
- **Please consider donating \$20 or more - each gift counts!**

You can be a permanent part of this project for just \$200 or more. Special opportunities, such as an engraved brick along the park pathway, are available. Together, we can raise the \$200,000, secure the match, and finish construction.

HOW TO DONATE

CALL:
619-297-7380

MAIL CHECK TO:
The San Diego River
Park Foundation
PO Box 80126
San Diego, CA 92138

ONLINE:
Scan the code



22nd Anniversary Boots and Bloom Party 2023

Thank You to Everyone for Coming!

Thank you to everyone who attended our 22nd Anniversary Boots and Bloom Party! It was a beautiful evening celebrating the San Diego River community and what we have accomplished together to restore and conserve the amazing San Diego River and its watershed. Everyone enjoyed mingling, listening to jazz tunes, eating delicious food, watching an awards ceremony, and partaking in a silent auction with exciting prizes. We hope you were able to attend!



22nd Anniversary Boots and Bloom Party 2023

Thank You to Our Sponsors Who Made the Event Possible!



Meg & Mike Schneider



Ledford Enterprises, Inc.

Trish Butler & Cary Lowe

Philip R. Pryde, Ph.D

Karen Begin, Rob Hutsel & Alex

Thank You to All!



Thank you to Sabor Mexican Grill, Kiwanis Club of Grantville-Allied Gardens, and our volunteers!



Annual Award Winners 2023

We Were Pleased to Present these Awards at Our Anniversary Party!

Congratulations to our 2023 Awardees!

Volunteer of the Year: Al Field

Al has been an incredible part of the San Diego River community and pours his heart into caring for the river 40 hours per week! He has worked for nearly every section of the river to conserve natural habitat that serve as places of education and recreation for the community. Al's recent labor of love has been the Point Loma Native Plant Garden where he leads planting events and inspires others to become lifelong river supporters. We cannot thank Al enough for his extraordinary work.

Founder's Award: C3 San Diego

C-3 San Diego received the prestigious Founder's Award for more than 60 years of dedication to quality land use and community planning. They discussed a vision for the San Diego River and the importance of civic green space before the River Park Foundation was founded. Recognized as pioneers of civic engagement in San Diego, they played a vital role in setting the stage for a new vision of a regional San Diego River Park.



Thank You Anniversary Party Auction Donors!

Scripps Institute of Oceanography
California Native Plant Society, SD
Pier to Point Yoga & Wellness Center
San Diego Natural History Museum
Jimmy's Famous American Tavern
San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance
San Diego Whale Watching Tour
Martin and Cindie Offenhauer
The Elegant Truffle Chocolaterie
San Diego River Artists' Alliance
Cindie and Martin Offenhauer
Maritime Museum of San Diego
Ilan Lael Foundation
Cohen Restaurant Group
Fisherman's Landing
High 5 Career Coaching
Starbucks Mission Valley
San Diego Humane Society
Adams Avenue Bicycles
Dog Beach Dog Wash
Dirty Bird's Bar & Grill
La Jolla Music Society
Yard House Restaurant
Edwards Vineyards & Cellars
Paulette & Jerry Begin
Bird Rock Coffee Roasters
Ketch Grill and Taps
New Belgium Brewing
Karen Floyd Photography

Blondstone Jewelry Studio
Rancho Bernardo Inn
Point Loma Fish Shop
USS Midway Museum
Cheesecake Factory
The Rice Family
Modern Times
SpringHill Suites
Ryan Family YMCA
Sidecar
Cary Lowe
Yoga Six
Pizza Nova
Patagonia
Pizza Port
Top Jolt Cycle
Birch Aquarium
SUN MUD
Kilowatt Brewing
Dunkin' Donuts
Lumbercycle
Coronado Brewing
Toyota of El Cajon
Alan Grant
Jodie Hulden
Mike Schneider
Hodad's
Belmont Park
Geppetto's

Southwest Airlines
GoJump Oceanside
Cygnet Theatre
Golden State Ballet
Simon Andrews
Hilton Garden Inn&Homewood Suites
Lazy Acres
Via Maria
AMC
Sarah Hutmacher
Mary Beth Klauer
Louise Russell
Heidi Holman
Marie Keech
Stuart Glennon
Hubble House
John Bauer
Glen Perelson
Vicki DeLong
Andy Blue
Roxanne Katz
Bill Walton
Lori Escalera
Nicolette Birchall
Amy Schindler
Leigh Fenly

Save the Date: Annual Sock Drive

Join Us on December 9th!

Our fall census found there are currently 375 people experiencing homelessness in the San Diego riverbed.

That is a lot of people that will be impacted by cold and wet weather ahead.

Socks are the number 1 item requested. Your gift can help foster trust so they know someone is trying to help and cares.

Our goal is to give each person at least 3 pairs of socks. We invite you to join us for our 2023 Sock Drive.

Items can be dropped off before or during the event.



Date: December 9th

Time: 9 am - 12 pm

**Location: The San Diego River Park Foundation
Headquarters Parking Lot**

Leave a Lasting Legacy

Plan Now So What You Care About Lives On

Did you know that The San Diego River Park Foundation can be named as a beneficiary in your will or retirement plans?

We know several supporters already have. If you are one of them, thank you!

We can discuss with you how you want to make the greatest impact with your legacy gift. Perhaps you want to care for land for wildlife, make sure our Clean River program has the tools and supplies they need, support research, or advance trails.

If you would like information about including a gift in your will or trust, please contact Pat Rice, Senior Manager for Philanthropy and Government Relations at 619-297-7380 or patricia@sandiegoriver.org. Pat would enjoy speaking with you or getting together to answer your questions and discuss if a legacy gift is right for you.



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A WORD FROM OUR CEO

The Value of Nature Connections

Dear Friends,

Growing up in San Diego I was fortunate to be able to spend a lot of time outdoors. Our nearby canyon was my playground - building forts, having fun, and getting my knees dirty. Nature was just part of life.

I remember loading up our Chevy Nova station wagon and heading out for the summer. We visited National Parks and Monuments and other wonderful places. I always enjoyed the ranger talks and walks. These experiences were where my strong and lasting nature connection was born. I was learning and didn't realize it. I just thought it was really cool.

I wish every kid could have these nature experiences.

After many years, we are close to fulfilling the River Center at Grant Park dream. Thank you so much for your tremendous support during this journey. Together we will open Grant Park. I look forward to seeing the students smile as they experience the joys and wonders of nature.



Rob Hutsel



YOU'RE INVITED!

Join our digital
community of 50,000+

Follow us on social media to
stay up to date with our latest
adventures and efforts along
the San Diego River!



Find us @sandiegoriver



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EVERY CHILD DESERVES NATURE

The Campaign for
The River Center at Grant Park

Your gift will have 2X the impact

Help create nature connections
to last a lifetime

Learn more

