

FY 2024 - 2025

# FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT





Inclusive Prom

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Executive Director, Kevin Bowie

Dear Charleston County Parks Foundation Supporters:

This past year has been extraordinary for the Foundation, and I am thrilled to share the meaningful work captured in our annual report for fiscal year 2024–2025. We refreshed our mission and vision to better reflect our purpose.

Our mission: To empower all people to experience Charleston County Parks and programs.

Our vision: To create opportunities for everyone to access and enjoy the benefits of our park system while preserving and protecting it.

In 2024–2025, we brought this mission to life by serving 9,071 people—a 60% increase over last year—through complimentary admission to parks, special events, and educational, cultural, historical, and recreational programs. The impact is real and lasting. As Maxine Jones, Executive Director of The Kids Pickle Foundation, shared after bringing a group of children to The James Island Climbing Wall:

*“They had a blast at The Climbing Wall. Conquering the wall and overcoming fear helped to boost their self-confidence. It was great hearing them encourage each other to keep going all the way to the top. The children said they were super-heroes. Thanks so much for your partnership and invaluable support.”*

We also expanded access with initiatives like the purchase of a GRIT Freedom wheelchair, giving visitors with mobility challenges the independence to navigate our beaches and parks on their own.

Over the last four years we have raised over \$1 million dollars to support our four funds (General, Genesis Swim Safety, Cultural History, and Nature Stewardship) and have reached over 20,000 people.

Thank you for your continued support. I look forward to seeing you in the parks!

With gratitude,

*Kevin F. Bowie*  
Kevin Bowie  
Executive Director



Leadership Environment Adventure Program

# MISSION

Empower all people to experience the Charleston County Parks and programs.

# VISION

Create opportunities for all to access and experience the benefits of our park system while preserving and protecting it.

# FOUNDATION FUNDS

The establishment of Foundation funds allows for greater focus on certain aspects of Charleston County Parks that require additional support.

## GENESIS SWIM SAFETY FUND

Supports aquatic safety programs to prevent drownings

## GENERAL FUND

Provides opportunities for those in the community who encounter barriers to access our parks, facilities, programs and services

## NATURE STEWARDSHIP FUND

Focuses on preserving, protecting and managing the natural resources throughout Charleston County Parks

## CULTURAL HISTORY FUND

Supports the cultural and historical research, preservation, interpretation, and education throughout Charleston County Parks

# YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

PEOPLE SERVED FY 2024- 2025: **9,071**



Adult Swimming Lessons at West County Aquatic Center

1

GENERAL FUND

\$124,111 FUNDED

4,226 SERVED



**SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS**

Funded a variety of summer camp scholarships throughout the county park system.



**TITLE 1 SCHOOL EDUCATION AND ADVENTURE PROGRAMS**

Provided support to offset the expense associated with participating in an educational and/or adventure field trip for Charleston County Title I schools.



**LEADERSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVENTURE PROGRAM (LEAP)**

Funded participation for local youth in this program, which focuses on teambuilding, environmental education, stewardship, outdoor adventure and a community service project.



Educational Environment Program

GENERAL FUND CONTINUED



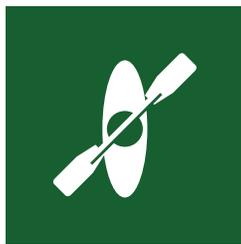
**PARK AND PLAY**

Providing support for mobile environmental education, fitness and outdoor activities in underserved communities using partner sites.



**ACCESSIBILITY**

Funded equipment in the parks for people with disabilities: self operated wheelchair, beach mats, communication boards for the nonverbal and equipment to manage sensory overload.



**SPECIAL OLYMPIC KAYAK TEAM**

Funded athletes for one training session weekly for the 8-week summer season throughout summer; ending with a statewide competition held at James Island County Park.



**SENIOR PROGRAMS**

Provided funding for senior citizen programs for rural East and West Counties. Includes dances, fitness series, interpretation programs, trips to the Holiday Festival of Lights and McLeod Plantation Historic Site.



Special Olympics Kayak Team

**2** GENESIS SWIM  
SAFETY FUND

**\$42,146**  
FUNDED

**454**  
SERVED



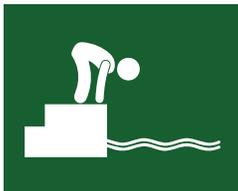
**SWIM LESSONS AT WEST COUNTY  
AQUATIC CENTER**

Scholarships offered to children and adults in the summer at West County Aquatic Center in Hollywood, SC.



**PORTABLE POOL**

Supported the mobile pool and swim instruction to children in under-resourced areas of Charleston County.



**SWIM TEAM**

Sponsored the West County Wahoos swim team as they competed in the Coastal Carolina Aquatic Association Summer Swim league.



**SWIM CLUB**

Offered opportunities for Charleston County Parks Summer Camp children to become better swimmers and increased participation and diversity on the Wahoo Swim Team.



Portable Pool

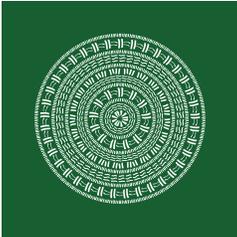
<b>3</b> NATURE STEWARDSHIP FUND	<b>\$18,666</b> FUNDED	<b>N/A</b> SERVED
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**CHARLESTON COUNTY PARKS NATURAL RESOURCE ENHANCEMENTS**

Funded the removal of invasive plants and the planting of new indigenous trees, shrubs, and flowers throughout the park system, ensuring sustained access and opportunities for years to come.

<b>4</b> CULTURAL HISTORY FUND	<b>\$35,110</b> FUNDED	<b>213</b> SERVED
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**MCLEOD PLANTATION HISTORIC SITE RECREATION PROJECT AND CEMETERY INITIATIVES**

Funded cultural and historical field trips and art programs at McLeod as well as the preservation of cemeteries at Caw Caw Interpretive Center and the Sankofa Memorial Garden at McLeod.

<b>5</b> SK8 FORWARD PROJECT	<b>\$4,908</b> FUNDED	<b>343</b> SERVED
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**SK8 FORWARD**

Introduced skateboarding to young people who may encounter barriers accessing proper instruction, equipment, and access to SK8 Charleston.

# PROVIDING PARK ACCESS FOR OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

**SERVED FY 2024-2025: 3,835**

A Fathers Place	Let's Walk, Lincoln Community Center
Camp Happy Days	Mary Ford Elementary
Camp Rise Above	Metanoia
Charleston Promise Neighborhood	Minnie Hughes Elementary School
City of Charleston's Camp Hope	Mt. Zion Headstart
Closet of Hope	Parents as Teachers Charleston County
Defined Empowerment	First Steps
Doors to Dream	Pattison's Academy
EB Ellington Elementary	Ronald McDonald House
Every 1 Voice Matters	South Carolina Department of Children's Advocacy
Florence Crittenton	South Carolina Department of Mental Health
HEART SC	Trident United Way
Kids Pickle Foundation	
Landmarks for Families	

“Our experience at Splash Zone was absolutely thrilling and refreshing—a perfect escape on a hot Charleston day. Our scholars truly enjoyed themselves and haven’t stopped raving about the amenities, the incredibly friendly staff, and of course, the lazy river!”

*Roshanda Colbert - Director of Operations at Metanoia, a nonprofit organization dedicated to community development through safe, nurturing after-school and summer enrichment spaces for children, quality, affordable housing and economic re-energizing of disinvested North Charleston neighborhoods.*

# FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS



## THE GIVING TREE

Raised \$17,531

The Giving Tree art installation will be erected at Old Towne Creek County Park in the spring. This work of art crafted from wood with carvings of leaves and other local wildlife provides an opportunity to purchase an adornment and engrave a special message honoring a loved one.



## HOLIDAY CARD

Raised \$51,890

Each year the Foundation's holiday card features a custom illustration highlighting the natural beauty of one of our parks. It is sent to over 30,000 of Charleston County Park's Gold Pass Members and Foundation supporters as a holiday greeting and opportunity to donate. The 2024 card featured an image of Old Towne Creek County Park.



## GOLF TOURNAMENT

Raised: \$29,000

The Foundation organized our second annual golf tournament on April 7 at Charleston National Golf Club!

## FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED



### COTTAGE GIVEAWAY

Raised \$3,900

In June, the Foundation raffled off a weekend stay in a 3-bedroom cottage at James Island County Park during the opening weekend of the Holiday Festival of Lights.



### EVENING AT McLEOD

Raised \$10,165

The annual special event, featuring musicians from the Charleston Symphony in support of the Foundation's Cultural History Fund, invites guests to experience the rich historical significance of McLeod Plantation Historic Site. This fund will help cover the costs for Cultural History programs in the parks and some restoration of the Sankofa Memorial Garden at McLeod.



### SPRING MIX & MINGLE

Raised \$5,975

In June, the Foundation hosted a gathering at a board member's house to thank our generous donors and invite others who may be interested in learning more about the Foundation.



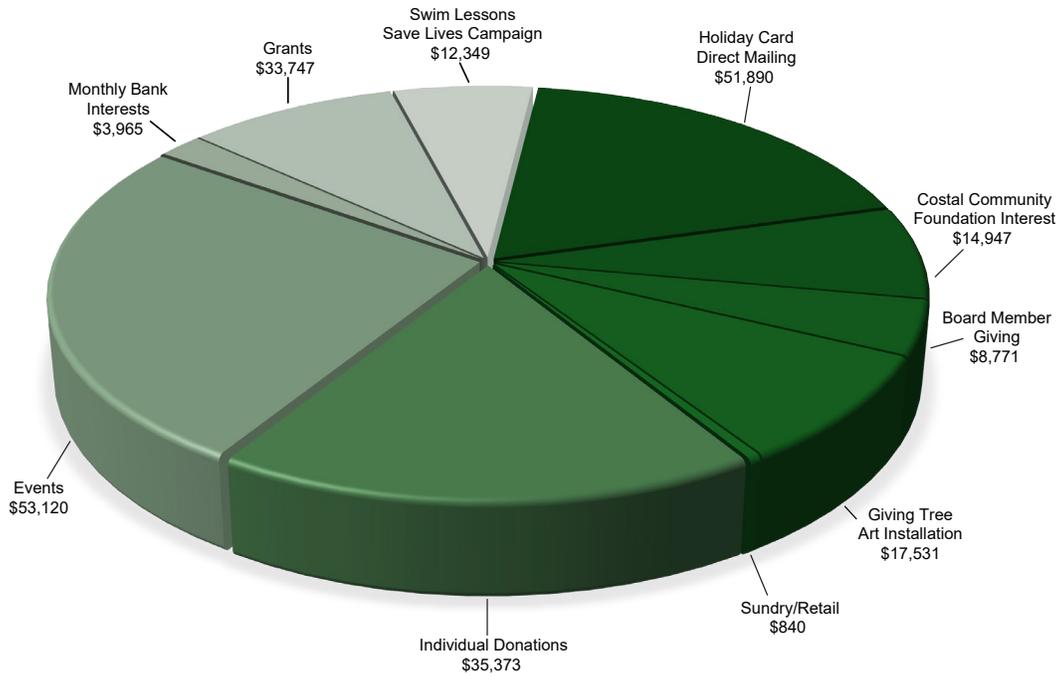
### WREATH FUNDRAISER

Raised \$4,020

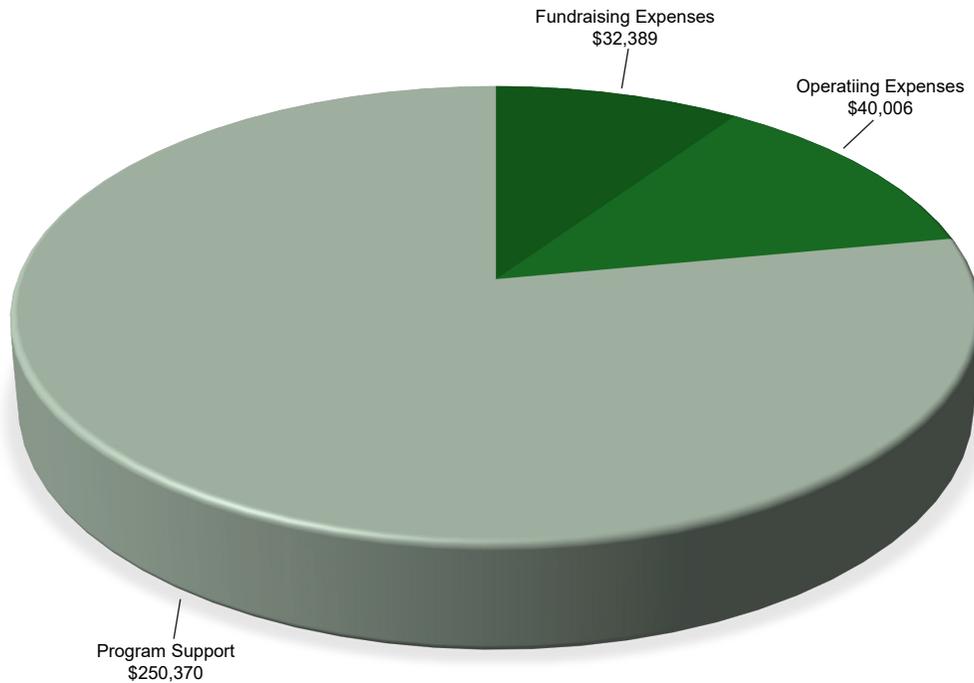
The Foundation sold fresh wreaths and stationery at the Holiday Festival of Lights.

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

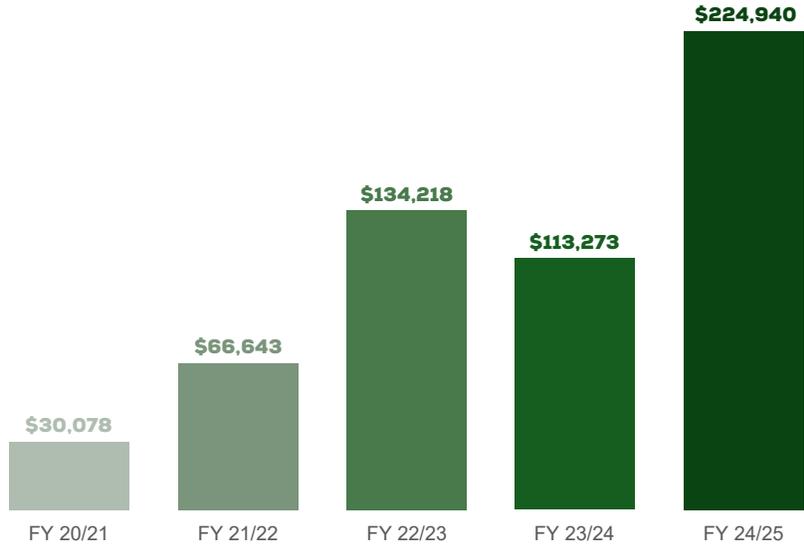
## FY 24/25 REVENUES - \$232,533



## FY 24/25 EXPENSES - \$322,765



# FOUNDATION SUPPORT TO CHARLESTON COUNTY PARKS



Camp Hope

Camp Hope



# WAYS TO GIVE

The Charleston County Parks Foundation has several funds for the betterment of the community. Your gift to the Foundation helps us to provide access for all to enjoy Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission's facilities, programs and services. Donations to the Charleston County Parks Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Our Federal ID is 57-0913949.

## DONATE TO OUR FUNDS

- General Fund
- Genesis Swim Safety Fund
- Cultural History Fund
- Nature Stewardship Fund

## HONOR & MEMORIAL GIVING

- Nature Stewardship Fund
- Giving Tree
- Planned Giving
- Legacy Giving



Swim Lesson

# CHARLESTON COUNTY PARKS FOUNDATION BOARD

## BOARD OFFICERS

Stephanie Monroe Tillerson  
**Chair/Treasurer**

Seth Levy  
**Vice Chair**

Lisa King  
**Commission Liaison**

## BOARD

Gary Christmas | Barbara Denton | Jacquelyn Smashum Heyward  
Jeff Odom | Eva Ravenel | Ronald Ravenell

## Term Ended in FY 24/25

Dale J. Aren  
**Former Board Member**

Jason Barton  
**Former Board Member**

# PARENTS AS TEACHERS THANK YOU

“A heartfelt thank you to the Charleston County Parks Foundation for generously supporting our Parents as Teachers end-of-year celebration at Wannamaker County Park! Because of your contribution and commitment to community partnerships, our families were able to gather, connect, and celebrate a year of growth in a beautiful, nature-filled space. Access to safe and welcoming public spaces makes a big difference in the lives of children and families, and we’re so grateful to be able to create meaningful memories together. Thank you again, Charleston County Parks Foundation, for helping us make this special day possible!” Parents as Teachers, Charleston County First Steps



Parents as Teachers, North Charleston Wannamaker County Park





**CHARLESTON**  
COUNTY PARKS  
FOUNDATION

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