

An aerial photograph of a city grid serves as the background. In the foreground, two hands are shown in a close-up, one hand gripping a wooden handle while the other rests on top of it. The lighting is bright, casting shadows on the skin.

Connecting With Our Future FROM THE GROUND UP



GROUNDWORK
JACKSONVILLE

2018-19
ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the CEO



Dear Friends,

Since joining Groundwork Jacksonville just over two years ago, I have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support we have received from all facets of the community. People and organizations that understand access to clean green spaces and recreation, equitable housing and economic opportunity, and an authentic connection to their community and to one another is vital for our city to thrive.

This past fiscal year, Groundwork has made tremendous leaps forward in our vision to build the Emerald Trail and restore our urban creeks.

As the City's partner, Groundwork is spearheading the Emerald Trail with the first segment — the 1.3 mile Model Project — to be completed next year. I am especially grateful that the City has earmarked Emerald Trail construction funds in every year of the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to maintain the trail's exciting momentum.

Additionally, the City adopted our 30% design and engaged our consultant, Wood, for the McCoys Creek restoration. This is a significant step to ensuring we not only solve the creek's chronic flooding problems, but also create a beautiful, accessible and environmentally resilient amenity for all to enjoy.

We launched our first major campaign to raise \$1.45 million for design of the Model Project and the McCoys Creek branches, the western-most portion of the creek not included in the City's plans. To date, we are two-thirds of the way to reaching that goal.

Our Green Team Youth Corp Summer Apprenticeship continues to be a model not only among Groundwork Trusts but also for youth programs in our community. In addition to other important projects along the Emerald Trail, these teens were instrumental in helping RouxArt create the Sugar Hill Mosaic, the first of many public art displays we intend to create.

And lastly, we launched the CREST program which was inspired by residents asking for ways to serve their community and improve economic opportunities in their neighborhoods.

As you read through our first-ever Annual Report, I hope you will be as proud as I am of our collective accomplishments and excited for what the future holds for our wonderful city as we complete the Emerald Trail by 2029 or sooner.

Kay Ehas
Chief Executive Officer

Message from the Board Chair



It is my privilege to lead the Groundwork Jacksonville Board of Directors. This group of dedicated volunteers inspires me with their passion for our city and their willingness to share ideas, expertise and connections to further Groundwork's mission.

Just as the organization has matured and become more laser-focused on our vision, so too has the Board become more deliberate in our approach to community engagement and cultivation, offering new ways for individuals and companies to get involved.

This year the Board was instrumental in the creation of a membership program to expand Groundwork's reach and generate funds to increase operational capacity. This is an affordable way for individuals of all ages and socio-economic levels to support the organization for \$10 or \$20 a month.

In the spring, the Board hosted the inaugural First Mile Walk along the 1.3-mile Model Project of the Emerald Trail. This was a docent-led tour along the planned Trail to help participants envision the amazing impact the Trail will make on our city. We were thrilled and gratified with the huge turnout.

Lastly, the Board is working closely with CEO, Kay Ehas, on connecting the organization to individuals, companies and foundations that share our passion for Changing Places and Changing Lives.

I sincerely hope you take the time to read our Annual Report to learn more about what we are doing, and consider getting involved. Whether becoming a donor, joining our membership program, providing speaking opportunities for Groundwork, or advocating for our Emerald Trail Master Plan to city, state and federal leaders, there are countless ways that you can play a pivotal role in building the Emerald Trail, restoring our urban creeks and improving the health, recreation and economic opportunities for our city.

Kristina Nelson
Chairwoman

OUR MISSION

Groundwork Jacksonville, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our mission is to bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement and management of the physical environment by developing community-based partnerships which empower people, businesses and organizations to promote environmental, economic and social well-being.

OUR VISION

The Emerald Trail is a nationally recognized centerpiece attracting people to Jacksonville. It connects urban core neighborhoods that are valued as vital and desirable places to live, work, and visit. Jacksonville's urban core neighborhoods are economically diverse and economically healthy. Urban core neighborhoods have a community ethic of active living and an outdoor orientation. Working together, neighbors are engaged in creating and sustaining their clean environment.

OUR WORK

Groundwork Jacksonville, Inc. (GWJax) was founded locally in 2014 as a partnership between the City of Jacksonville, the US National Park Service, the US Environmental Protection Agency and Groundwork USA. GWJax is one of 20 Trusts across the country, the only Trust in Florida and the first in the southeastern United States.

As the community's primary nonprofit organization focused on the environmental and economic renewal of Jacksonville's urban core neighborhoods, GWJax is bringing together the expertise, resources and partners to transform the city center into a vibrant and connected destination for residents, businesses and tourists alike.

Build a beautiful world-class urban trail system by 2029.

Restore Hogans and McCoy's Creeks to sparkling gems along the Emerald Trail.

Develop community leaders through the Green Team Youth Corps and CREST.

Engage residents in improving their historic urban neighborhoods.

Last year,

VOLUNTEERS cleaned **12,775 POUNDS** OF TRASH
from **HOGANS CREEK** during monthly creek clean-ups



photo courtesy Mark Krancer



THE EMERALD TRAIL

GWJax is leading the design and construction of the Emerald Trail, an idea championed by famed architect Henry Klutho in the early 20th century.

When complete, the Emerald Trail will connect 30-miles of trails, greenways and parks that encircle the urban core and link 14 historic neighborhoods and downtown to Hogans Creek, McCoy's Creek, the S-Line Rail Link and the Northbank and Southbank riverwalks.

The trail will link 16 schools, two colleges and 21 parks among other destinations like restaurants, retail and businesses, with an additional 13 schools and 17 parks located within three blocks of the Trail.

Like the Atlanta BeltLine and the Chicago 606, this signature outdoor destination will be a catalyst for social and economic development, health and recreation, mobility, tourism, public safety and neighborhood revitalization.

Emerald Trail Legend

-  NEW TRAIL
-  PROGRAMMED CONNECTIONS
-  EXISTING TRAIL



BEFORE



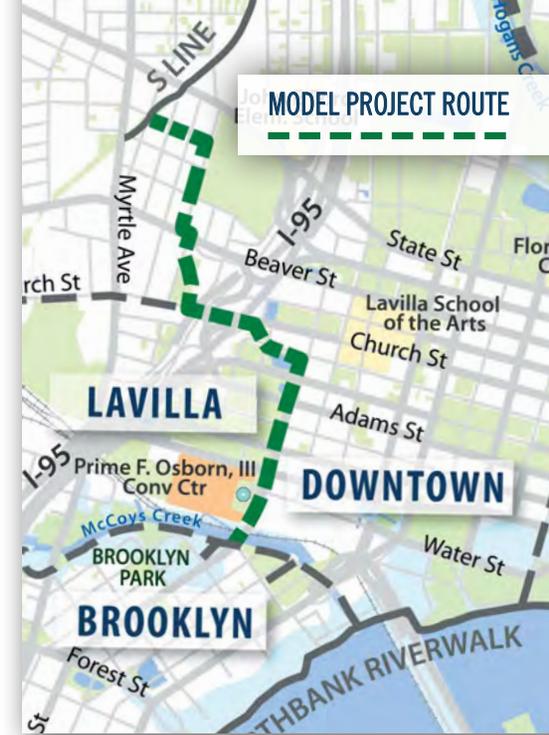
AFTER

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

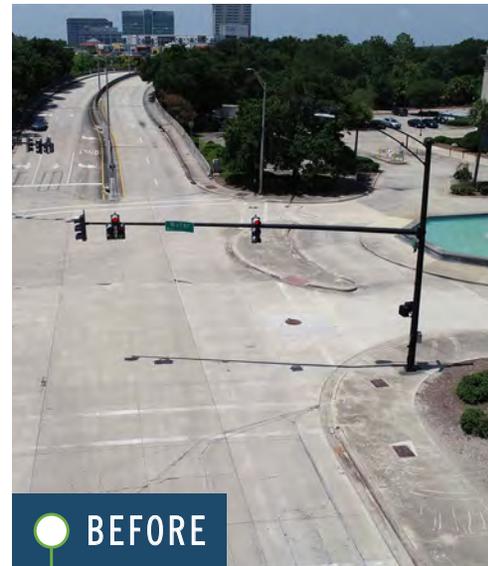
THE EMERALD TRAIL TAKES SHAPE

Groundwork achieved several major accomplishments related to the Emerald Trail. GWJax, along with the PATH Foundation and KAIZEN Collaborative, presented the Trail Master Plan to the community in July 2018. The plan was the result of six months of work with the Steering Committee and Neighborhood Working Group. It was privately underwritten by a \$50,000 donation from JTC Running (JTC), as well as through grants from Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Giving Forward Community Endowment Fund at The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida.

GWJax took a huge leap forward on our journey to build the Emerald Trail by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the City to manage and oversee design and permitting of the project. Then in March 2019, the Jacksonville City Council adopted the Trail Master Plan including branding and design standards. The Council also voted to fund the 1.3-mile Model Project which will begin construction later this year.



More than 300 people attended the public meeting at FSCJ downtown campus to learn about the Trail Master Plan and provide feedback.



BEFORE



AFTER

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



FIRST PUBLIC ART DEDICATED ALONG THE TRAIL

An important part of our vision for the Emerald Trail is to create public art that celebrates the historic neighborhoods it connects. GWJax, in collaboration with Kate and Kenny Rouh of RouxArt, created the Sugar Hill Mosaic to honor the historic Sugar Hill neighborhood, once the center of African-American prosperity in Northeast Florida. The Sugar Hill Mosaic is located on the S-Line Rail Link under the I-95 overpass at 13th St., between N. Davis St. and Moncrief Rd.

The **FIVE FEET HIGH, 96 FEET LONG** tile and glass mosaic features six themed panels containing more than **41,000 INDIVIDUAL TILE PIECES.**



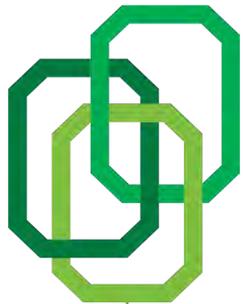
HUNDREDS TURN OUT FOR HISTORIC FIRST MILE WALK

GWJax celebrated the national Opening Day of Trails in April with a historic First Mile Walk of the Emerald Trail Model Project. The docent-led walk, from the Convention Center through LaVilla and ending at Engine 15 in the Railyard District, attracted more than 300 participants.

GWJAX KICKS OFF INAUGURAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

In May 2019, Preston Haskell, founder of Haskell, and Debbie Buckland, Jacksonville Market President of BB&T (now Truist), co-hosted a reception for local business leaders to introduce GWJax and kickoff a \$1.45 million campaign to design the Emerald Trail Model Project and the McCoys Creek branches.

To date, GWJax has raised **\$881,500** toward this campaign goal which we hope to achieve by summer 2020. The race is on!



MCCOYS CREEK RESTORATION

Once the centerpiece of the historic neighborhoods just west of downtown, McCoys Creek has become a neglected and forgotten eyesore. Within this economically vulnerable neighborhood, dozens of roads and structures regularly flood.

GWJax and the City are working together with renowned creek restoration expert Wood and urban ecology expert SCAPE on a plan that will reduce flooding and create a picturesque recreational destination along the western segment of the Emerald Trail. The plan applies a naturally meandering channel design that will improve water quality and create habitat for fish and wildlife, while providing recreational opportunities and creek access for residents and the community at large.

In addition, GWJax is leading the restoration of the McCoys Creek branches, a section not included in the City's budget. The branches creek restoration design will be completed by summer 2020.



McCoys Creek Restoration Project 30% Design

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



More than 150 people attended the Inaugural Creek Fest family event along McCoys Creek.

MCCOYS CREEK 30% DESIGN ADOPTED BY CITY

GWJax hired environmental engineering firm WOOD to develop the 30% design for McCoys Creek featuring a natural channel design approach to creek restoration, flood prevention, habitat renewal, and water quality improvement. Not only did the City adopt the design, Wood was selected through the City's qualification process to complete the design to 100%.

INAUGURAL MCCOYS CREEK FEST ENGAGES THE COMMUNITY

GWJax, along with Wood and SCAPE, hosted the inaugural McCoys Creek Fest to share preliminary McCoys Creek designs and gain community input into the types of recreation and amenities the community would like to see offered. Their collective input was incorporated into SCAPE's 30% Recreation Plan which is now complete.

GWJAX SIGNS MOU WITH CITY FOR MCCOYS CREEK RESTORATION

GWJax signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the City to be its key partner for McCoys Creek restoration design and community outreach and engagement, in addition to leading the branches design and restoration.



Branches Recreation Plan at Hollybrook Park

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GWJAX RECEIVES OVER \$665,000 IN MCCOYS CREEK RESTORATION GRANTS

Groundwork Jacksonville was awarded a \$58,400 grant from the Delores Barr Weaver Fund at The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida toward funding the 30% design and master plan for the McCoys Creek restoration.

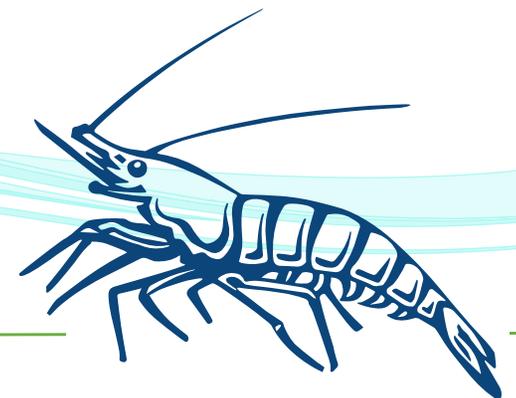
In addition, GWJax received a \$250,000 National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) for the design of the McCoys Creek restoration project. GWJax was one of 35 NCRF projects awarded to advance innovative nature-based approaches to improve the resilience of coastal communities. While awarded in 2018, the grant deliverables are being implemented in the 2019/2020 fiscal year.

GWJax also was awarded \$357,280 through the Community-based Restoration Program of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). The three-year grant from 2019-2021, will complete Phase 2 of the McCoys Creek inlet restoration design from the mouth of the St. Johns River to Myrtle St. This includes daylighting the creek under the Morris Publishing Group property and creating access along the Emerald Trail.



The goal is to increase water flow and allow fish passage upstream while promoting natural habitat for fish, plants and wildlife.

As part of the grant, GWJax will work with Jacksonville University on a fish study focused on Atlantic sturgeon, summer flounder, sheepshead, red drum, pink shrimp, brown shrimp, white shrimp, American shad, and American eel populations.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Central to Groundwork's mission is a commitment to bring members of the community together collaboratively in visioning, advocating, shaping and implementing programs and activities. GWJax works to assess the needs of community members, and not only understand how they are affected by the issues being addressed, but also involve stakeholders in the development of programs and solutions. Whether it is hosting events like Creek Fest, participating in neighborhood association meetings, attending community events or visiting residents in their homes, GWJax's intent is to continually listen, learn and adapt to ensure programs are inclusive and equitable for residents whose voices have often gone unheard.

Last year, **GWJax** participated in **38** community outreach events reaching more than **2,200** citizens including residents and businesses along the trail and McCoys Creek.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GWJAX LAUNCHES CREST – LEARN, EARN & LEAD

GWJax launched the CREST program — Community Restoration and Environmental Stewardship Training — in response to input from North Riverside residents during McCoys Creek community engagement meetings.

The goal is to build environmental stewardship and empower community leaders through workshops, field trips and advanced job training. Currently five CREST apprentices are now working as Water Monitoring Technicians with the COJ Environmental Quality Division conducting McCoys Creek water sampling. Each is paid a grant-funded stipend from GWJax.



CREST apprentice training on water sampling with the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection

GREEN TEAM YOUTH CORPS

The Green Team Youth Corps works to instill environmental stewardship and leadership skills among teens in underserved urban core neighborhoods. The program is open to youth ages 13–18, who live in, worship or attend school within one of GWJax’s Emerald Trail impact neighborhoods. They earn an educational stipend as well as community service hours for volunteer work.

During the nine-week summer apprenticeship, the Green Team is busy improving their community and connecting with their environment through work and play. They are introduced to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) and enjoy recreational and enrichment activities like kayaking, fishing, financial literacy, resume-building and more.



Six Green Team members spent their spring break camping in Ocala National Forest and working with the Florida Trail Association on trail maintenance at Juniper Springs

“ Green Team has helped me to be more open to taking a leadership role. I have met so many people who have been very generous with their time and knowledge.



They have really made an impact on me. ”

TREASURE HARRIS
Three-time Green Team Apprentice



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TEENS LEARN HISTORIC PRESERVATION AT KINGSLEY PLANTATION

The Green Team lime washed three historic cabins of the enslaved at Kingsley Plantation and learned about the importance of historic preservation.

GREEN TEAM WORK ALONG THE S-LINE RAIL LINK

The teens completed the city's longest bioswale, installed 44 feet of the flagstone pathway and planted 53 pollinator plants on the S-Line Rail Link.

TEENS HELP MAINTAIN YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Kaleb Gailyard, Kenard Robinson, Madison Morgan, Treasure Harris and their youth leader, Carmen Jennings, joined Green Team ambassadors from three other trusts at the 6th Annual Yellowstone Groundwork USA Experience in August 2018. The teens worked on several deferred maintenance projects to help Yellowstone meet its restoration goals, including installing new trail heads. They also toured the park and swam in the "Boiling River," among other once-in-a-lifetime experiences.



The Green Team and GWJax's program manager Shanell Davis-Bryant working hard and enjoying the mountain views of Glacier National Park.

GREEN TEAM REBUILDS HISTORIC GARAGES AT GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

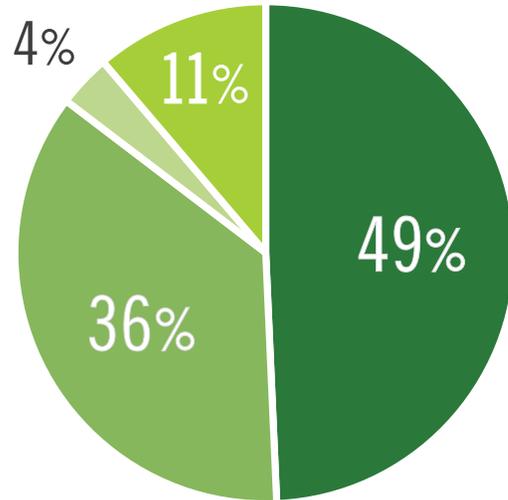
This past summer, four Green Team members traveled to Glacier National Park where they joined Groundwork Milwaukee as part of the Groundwork USA's work to maintain our National Parks.

The teens assisted with deferred maintenance by rebuilding two historic garage doors at the ranger station. They also participated in one of the National Park Service's largest citizen science projects - Common Loom Citizen Science.

FINANCIALS

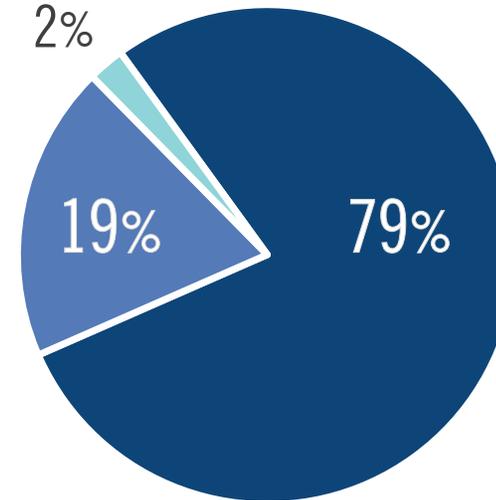
The following is for the fiscal year July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

Revenue



SOURCE	\$ RAISED	%
Government	\$ 324,318	49%
Foundations	\$ 237,178	36%
Individuals	\$ 73,888	11%
Corporations	\$ 22,470	4%
TOTAL	\$657,854	100%

Expenses



TYPE	\$ ACTUAL	%
Programs/Projects	\$ 451,284	79%
Operations	\$ 110,513	19%
Fundraising	\$ 13,617	2%
TOTAL	\$575,414	100%

VOLUNTEERS

GWJax could not fulfill its mission without the help of hundreds of volunteers. Not only do volunteers provide muscle, they also bring needed skills, expertise and renewed energy. Last year, volunteers dedicated more than 2,000 hours to GWJax projects including:

- Removing nearly six and a half tons of tires, shopping carts, trash and debris from Hogans Creek before it made its way to the St. Johns River
- Cleaning and maintaining the S-Line Rail Link Biodiversity Corridor
- Helping to place more than 41,000 tiles on the Sugar Hill Mosaic
- Serving as subject matter experts and mentors for the Green Team summer apprenticeship
- Assisting GWJax staff on administrative tasks such as database entry
- Canvassing neighborhoods to share information and invite residents to participate in visioning meetings and GWJax-sponsored events

Volunteers also increase community ownership. The Emerald Trail Steering Committee and Neighborhood Working Group devoted six months to the planning and review of the Emerald Trail Master Plan. Likewise, McCoys Creek Task Force volunteers continue to provide valuable community input into the creek's restoration design.

Lastly, volunteers save money. Each pound of trash collected by volunteers represents \$1.21 in cost avoidance for the City. Based on the industry standard that the value of each volunteer hour is \$24.13, GWJax volunteers contributed nearly \$50,000 to GWJax in 2018-19.



Corporate teams like GE volunteer for service days along the Emerald Trail.

Volunteers put the finishing touches on the Sugar Hill Mosaic.



(TOP) Volunteer site captains, Alicia Smith, Fran Garrison, Diane Graese, and Eric Byrnes lead the monthly Hogans Creek clean-ups.

(BOTTOM) Hollybrook Apartments residents volunteer to share their insight into the needs of the North Riverside community.

Thank You to Our Amazing Volunteers

PARTNERS

Brooklyn Neighborhood Association
CDM Smith
Christ Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
City of Jacksonville
 Environmental Quality Division
 Office of the Mayor
 Parks, Recreation and Community Services
 Public Works & Planning Dept. Transportation Section
Community First Credit Union
Community Foundation for Northeast Florida
CSX
Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville - Art in Public Places
Don't Miss A Beat
Durkeeville Historical Society
Duval Audubon Society
Duval County Extension Office
Duval County Public Schools - School Behavioral Health
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Florida Department of Transportation
Florida State College at Jacksonville
Friends of Hemming Park
GlobalJax
Groundwork USA
Haskell
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Jacksonville Arts and Music School
Jacksonville City Council
Jacksonville Electric Authority
Jacksonville Public Library
Jacksonville Sheriff's Office
Jacksonville Transportation Authority
Jacksonville University
Jacksonville Urban League
Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens
Jessie Ball duPont Fund
JTC Running
Kids Hope Alliance
LISC - Jacksonville
National Park Service
National Parks Conservation Association
Native Fresh
New Town Success Zone
North Florida Land Trust
North Riverside Community Development Corporation
Northeast Florida Community Action Agency
Phoenix Arts District
Rail Yard District
RouxArt
Safe Kids Northeast Florida
Sanctuary on 8th Street
Springfield Preservation & Revitalization
St. Johns Riverkeeper
St. Johns Water Management District
The HoneyPot Bike Collective
Timucuan Ecological and Historical Preserve
Timucuan Parks Foundation
UF Health Jacksonville
United Way of Northeast Florida
US Environmental Protection Agency
Vestcor

Thank You to Our Community Partners

DONORS

\$250,000 +

National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

\$50,000 - \$150,000

City of Jacksonville

Delores Barr Weaver Fund at the Community Foundation for Northeast Florida Foundation (*Anonymous*)

Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board
Kids Hope Alliance

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Friend of Springfield
Groundwork USA
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
JoAnn Tredennick & Jack Meeks

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Arbor Day Foundation
J.F. Bryan, IV Fund
Florida State College Jacksonville (*In-Kind*)
Lindsay Powell Design (*In-Kind*)

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Edna Sproull Williams Foundation
Lucky's Market
REI
Timucuan Parks Foundation (*In-Kind*)
Wells Fargo Foundation

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Lewis, Longman & Walker, P.A.
National Parks Conservation Association (*Donation and In-Kind*)
Office Environment and Services
UF Health
University of Florida Jacksonville Physicians

\$1,000 - \$2,499

William & Sandy Bond
Karen & John Burr
Cheryl Stevens Cummer
David Damiani
James G. Dobson
Every Little Bit Fund
Timothy Gaskin
Trevor Lee
Stinson Lenkerd
Reed & Kristina Nelson
David P. Roman
Neely P. Towe
Christy Valentino

\$500 TO \$999

James Love
Network for Good
Patricia M Houlihan & Richard G. Skinner III Fund
Don Robertson
Carrie Wetzel

UP TO \$500

Benevity (*Anonymous*)
Benevity (*Match*)
Celeste Ayers
Barbara Barrett
Stephen Bowes
Brian Bush
Matthew Carlucci
Beverly Chapman
Stephen Cobb
Stephen Cox
Jada Cummings
Jean Dickson
Sharon Dixon
Lee Durban
Kay Ehas
Charles Fetzer
Finger, Nelson & Maguire, PLLC
Jeffrey Foster
Carey Helper
Marc Hudson
Jesse Johnson
JWB Real Estate Capital LLC
Lindsey King
Ed Malesky
Chiquita McDuffie
Leslie Pierpont
Nancy Powell
Safe Kids of Northeast Florida (*In-Kind*)
James Schwarz

Priscilla Smith
William Sorenson
George A. Spencer, CPA, P.A.
Michael Todd
Mary Toomey
Ryan Troutman
United Way of Northeast Florida (*Donation and In-Kind*)
Maria Warren
Christopher Watson
Christine Whitney
Gilbert & Nancy Wright
Paula Wu

(Fiscal Year July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019)

Thank You to Our Generous Donors

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**JOIN. BUILD.
CONNECT.**

GroundworkJAX.org

BECOME A MEMBER

GWJax relies on the support of sustaining Members to build the operational capacity that makes our work possible. **JOIN** us as we work to **BUILD** the Emerald Trail, restore McCoys and Hogans creeks, **CONNECT** our urban neighborhoods and create the next generation of environmental stewards. Visit our [website](#) to join today.

Thank You to Our Charter Members

SUPPORT



OUR STAFF

Kay Ehas
Chief Executive Officer

Shanell Davis-Bryant
Program Manager

Tylyn Recore-Dagsaan
AmeriCorps Member

Gloria McNair
Community Engagement Specialist

Meghan Fiveash
Development & Membership Coordinator

Monty Selim
Trail Project Manager

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Environmental Coordinator

Kerri Stewart
Vice President & Chief Customer Officer - JEA

VOLUNTEER

We have many ways for individuals, youth, groups and corporate teams to volunteer. Visit the [Support](#) section of our website to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

DONATE

GWJax's work would not be possible without the generosity of individuals and companies throughout the community. Your tax-deductible gift is an investment in the health of our environment and our citizens, as well as social, economic and cultural opportunities for generations to come. [Donate](#) through our website or contact Kay Ehas to learn more.

SHARE OUR STORY

Consider hosting a house party, inviting GWJax to speak at your business or civic group or connecting us to companies that can provide in-kind professional services.

PO Box 13295 | Jacksonville, FL 32206 | 904.598.5605 | [GroundworkJax.org](#) | [@GroundworkJax](#)

#GWJax #EmeraldTrailJax #ChangingPlacesChangingLives

