

raft[®]

RESOURCE AREA
FOR TEACHING



Annual Report

2019-2020



raft.net



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

We anticipated that 2020 was going to be a different and exciting year for RAFT. We looked forward to developing new programs and services, growing our team, establishing exciting new partnerships, and making big capital improvements at our facility. Yes, special achievements were in store.

And then the pandemic hit.

Though the pandemic has changed many of our practices, many needs have remained the same. The need for affordable resources, hands-on activities and for students to continue to learn did not change. This past year has further highlighted how important our work is for the community.

As classrooms have moved to more digital environments, it became clear that there continues to be a digital divide, even in Silicon Valley. The reality that thousands of students and families do not have access to the internet reveals that additional offline and physical resources are desperately needed. Distance learning has also shown that learning does not just take place in a classroom or on a computer. The acquisition of knowledge can happen anywhere and, even in a digital classroom, the best education incorporates hands-on learning.

Our mission and our work have never been more important: helping educators transform a child's learning experience through hands-on education and inspiring the joy and discovery of learning. Distance learning opened new opportunities for RAFT to develop resources that are needed now more than ever. Through this report, you will gain insight into the work RAFT has been doing for the past year and what we are developing for the future.

RAFT is happy to be able to serve the education community, especially during these challenging times. We are able to do this thanks to our dedicated community of donors, volunteers, members and other supporters. Thank you for your continued backing and advocacy.

Warm regards,

Jason Morrella
CEO



Note: Photos throughout this report are from years throughout RAFT's history. Photos without masks and/or not adhering to social distancing were taken before the Covid-19 Crisis. RAFT remains committed to adhering to health and safety guidelines at the national, state, and county levels.



RAFT IMPACT STATEMENT

For the past 26 years, Resource Area For Teaching (RAFT) has provided hands-on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) learning materials, workshops, and a store offering low-cost supplies for over 8,000 educators and their 150,000 students annually in the Bay Area, Central California, and nationwide. With support from 6,000 volunteers, financial and material donations from over 200 corporate partners, and support from individual donors every year, RAFT helps educators increase their instructional time in STEAM subjects and inspire joy through hands-on learning.





RAFT BY THE NUMBERS

26
Years of Serving the Education Community

8,000
Educators Served Annually



150,000
Students Reached Annually

60,584
Educators Served since 1994



6,000
Volunteers a Year and
Over 55,000 Total
Volunteers since 1994

200
Corporate and Community Partners

300
Tons of Materials Diverted from
Landfill Annually by RAFT



80
Professional Development Trainings in 2020
Serving over 1,000 educators

17
Makerspaces Built and
Supported through
2019-2020



46
STEAM Project Kits Available



70,000
STEAM Project Kits and
Activities Distributed to Title-I
Schools during Covid Response

120
STEAM Learning Activity Sheets Created in
2020

300
Students Served in 2020
Virtual Summer Program

Voted by *Bay Area Parent*
as the Best Tutoring or
Education Support Program




LOCATION AND DISTRICTS WE SERVE

While RAFT serves our members and students throughout the Bay Area with our RAFT Store, professional development, and events, we have also made our materials and services available online to reach educators and students throughout the nation and around the world.



 **RAFT San Jose Headquarters**

 **Counties We Serve:**
Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda,
Contra Costa, Monterey, Santa Cruz



MISSION STATEMENT:

RAFT's mission is to help educators transform a child's learning experience through hands-on education to one that inspires the joy and discovery of learning.

OUR VISION:

RAFT's vision is to inspire the next generation of innovators, problem solvers, and creators, by providing educators with STEAM learning resources.

To learn more, please visit our new website at www.raft.net

Our Community:

RAFT is built upon our outstanding community of members, educators, administrators, families, donors, and corporate and community volunteers. Our community is unique in that it bridges the public and private sectors to accelerate STEAM learning outcomes for students, especially those most in need of engaging, comprehensive STEAM education. By inspiring joy through hands-on learning, RAFT brings the community together through the curiosity and wonder of experimenting, exploring, and learning.

Our History:

Mary Simon, a local educator, founded RAFT in 1994, after noticing the abundance of recycled materials, from Bay Area companies, that could be used in the classroom. To provide low-cost materials for hands-on lessons, Ms. Simon turned to commercial companies for their surplus items destined for landfill. She then opened the RAFT San Jose location in 1999 to provide bulk donated materials, Classroom Idea Sheets, and STEAM Project Kits to educators. Since 1994, RAFT has expanded our program offerings to include professional development and training, makerspace support, and even direct services to students, including a STEAM Summer School.

In addition to funding and material donations, these partnerships with local businesses and corporations have brought thousands of volunteers eager to help RAFT and keep the cost of our materials and services low for educators. By innovatively repurposing these materials into top-notch activities tied to Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, RAFT developed a sustainable model to assist educators everywhere.

RAFT has enabled thousands of PreK-12 educators to effectively implement hands-on learning techniques that focus on improving science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) education. RAFT has grown to an organization with a \$3M operating budget, supporting thousands of students and educators throughout the Bay Area, California, and nationwide.



RAFT LEADERSHIP TEAM



Jason Morrella
Chief Executive Officer



David Muilenburg
Chief Operations Officer



Nivisha Mehta
Chief Development
Officer



Chase Davenport
Senior Director of
Education



Naa Anim-Appiah
Finance Director

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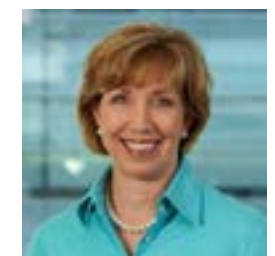
Edith Mourtos
(Luther Burbank School
Dist., Superintendent)



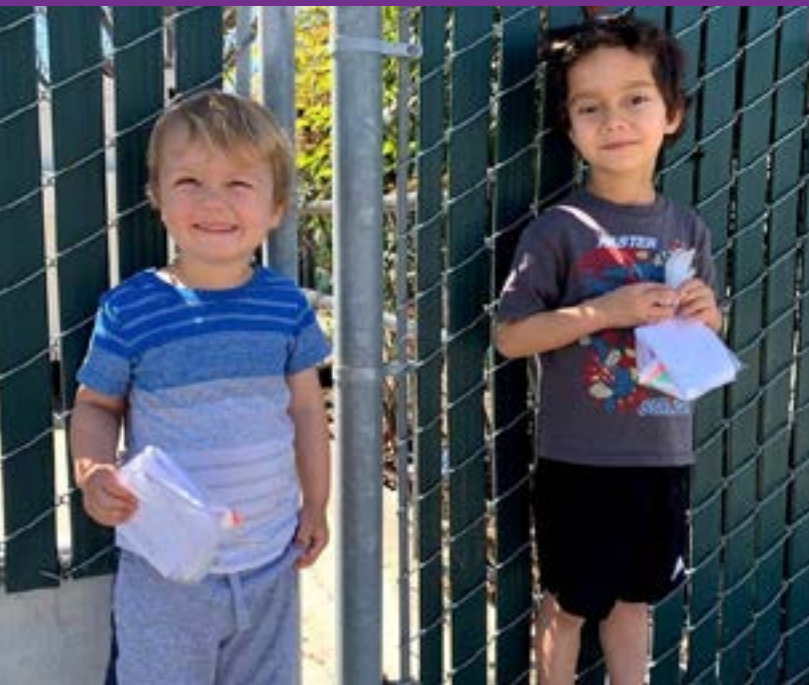
Sridhar Narasimhan
(Independent Management
Consultant)



Vidya Phalke
(MetricStream)



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RAFT COVID RESPONSE

STEAM Project Kits and Learning Activity Sheets:

In response to the pandemic, RAFT has helped Bay Area schools by providing **over 70,000 STEAM Project Kits** to Title-1 school meal distribution sites in Santa Clara County. Title-1 schools are those schools with a high percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch and are typically underserved and underfunded. By serving these sites, RAFT provided standards aligned learning materials to those underserved students, many of whom do not have access to the internet. Each kit includes materials required for a hands-on lesson that families can do together as well as assembly instructions in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Our work with these sites was highlighted in local news including KTVU 2 and the Mercury News.



RAFT also created over **120 new FREE STEAM Learning Activity Sheets** available to download online. These sheets lead families in engaging hands-on lessons that use common household items.

RAFT was able to provide these resources in the first few months of shelter-in-place through a number of generous grants from organizations including the County of Santa Clara, the Synopsis Silicon Valley Science and Technology Outreach Foundation, and Provident Credit Union.



"I want to let you know how much our students appreciate the STEAM Project Kits from RAFT. The kits provide an opportunity for our families to interact and explore the world of STEM together. They are a wonderful diversion from the online learning environment and enables us to create a balanced learning experience for our young scholars." - EDITH MOURTOS, SUPERINTENDENT OF LUTHER BURBANK SCHOOL DISTRICT.



Professional Development for Distance Learning

In light of shelter-in-place, RAFT also shifted our professional development offerings to be accessible online as well as to address specific issues during distance learning. RAFT offers a series of virtual professional development opportunities focused on building a virtual community of makers and problem solvers using RAFT's STEAM Project Kits and resources in the remote classroom. Additionally, RAFT works with schools and teachers to deliver RAFT kits and materials to students by mailing materials directly to students or distributing them via meal distribution sites. By working with schools to distribute these materials, we are ensuring all students have access to hands-on learning experiences.



Summer Program

In July 2020, RAFT offered **our third year of a STEAM-based summer program.**

In light of shelter-in-place, RAFT shifted the program to a virtual series of four week-long sessions and delivered hands-on materials directly to students. This pilot model served as an example for



future summer and after school camps to include online and distance learning options. This program was instrumental in creating RAFT's professional development offerings on how to incorporate hands-on learning into the virtual classroom during distance learning. RAFT plans to expand this offering in the future to reach many more students.

RAFT Store

Finally, RAFT has had to change our retail presence in our RAFT Store. Following social distancing protocols, RAFT has created an appointment system for members to shop at our retail space and use a limited number of tools (such as laminators and die-cuts). **For the first time ever, RAFT implemented curbside pick-up and delivery for our members. We have also expanded our online store offerings from only offering our STEAM Project Kits to now include all our educational materials for sale.** During the late summer and early fall, RAFT held two parking lot sales to attract new members and provide materials for educators as they started the school year. Both sales were successful, and RAFT will continue to adjust our offerings to adhere to social distancing protocols.

Membership

For the first time in 26 years, RAFT has made our educator resources available to ALL educators, INCLUDING PARENTS. Effective August 2020, all parents, educators, administrators, and everyone helping educate in these times of distance learning are eligible for a RAFT membership.

RAFT IN THE NEWS

G E N T R Y

Gentry: We are happy to share this article from Gentry that highlights the work we have been doing to support the education community during these stressful times. Even in shelter-in-place, hands-on learning is critical and we are happy to be able to make these resources affordable and accessible for all. <https://gentrymagazine.com/raft/>



Voted Best of the Best Silicon Valley in Bay Area Parent:

We're happy to announce that we are the Gold Medal winner for Best Education Support or Tutoring Program in Bay Area Parent's Best of the Best Silicon Valley. We truly appreciate the votes of support.



The Mercury News Highlights RAFT's at Home Resources:

Thank you to The Mercury News for showcasing our resources for at-home learning. These resources are FREE and are created to help families keep engaged while using common household items. [Read the full article here.](#)

KTVU Channel 2 Highlights Our Kit

Distribution: Thank you to KTVU Channel 2 for highlighting our work at Title-I schools. We have been distributing thousands of STEAM Project Kits at meal distribution sites while students are sheltering in place. [You can learn more about our work by watching the video here.](#)

RAFT Press Conference April 2020: In these unprecedented times, we at RAFT are trying to do our part to help support our community. We have held a press conference to let others know what we are doing to support educators, families and students at this time. Over 70,000 learning activities have been distributed to students without internet. [Learn more here.](#)



PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

RAFT assists educators in helping students develop 21st-century learning skills. In response to COVID-19 and shelter-in-place protocols, RAFT opened our membership to all parents and guardians who may be helping students learn from home in addition to traditional educators. RAFT offers the following programs:



STEAM Project Kits:

Our kits include assembly instructions, suggested activities, and materials. They can be purchased online or in the RAFT Store.



STEAM Learning Activities:

RAFT provides free activity sheets, idea sheets, classroom lessons, and teacher tips for Pre-K to 8th grade activities. Our activities are available online and are constantly being updated. Many of these activities are available in multiple languages, including Spanish and Vietnamese.



Professional Development:

Workshops and other resources for educators covering a range of topics, skills, and methods. In light of shelter-in-place, RAFT has shifted our workshops to a virtual format while still incorporating hands-on materials and practices.



Makerspace Support:

Makerspaces are a great way to encourage curiosity and hands-on learning. RAFT offers workshops and other resources for the design, build, supplying, and training for Makerspaces and Maker Education.



RAFT in the Community:

Whether a RAFT Maker Mobile visit, participation in your event, or a field trip to RAFT, we love supporting our community.



RAFT Summer Camps:

Whether in-person or virtually, RAFT's summer camps inspire joy through hands-on learning with a focus on STEAM and Design Thinking.



STEAM PROJECT KITS AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

STEAM Project Kits available online: 46

RAFT provides STEAM Project Kits that address Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) concepts while aligning to Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards. Many of RAFT's kits serve a wide range of grades with adjusted prompts for each age. Each kit includes required materials, assembly instructions, and suggested activities. Our kits are affordable and accessible for all educators and students because they are largely made from bulk materials donated from companies around the Bay Area. These kits are also packed by our over 6,000 volunteers a year to keep the cost of production very low. These quality hands-on learning materials are available for purchase online and in our store.



Distance Learning Offerings:

Since shelter-in-place, RAFT has expanded our STEAM Project Kit offerings to better serve the educational needs during distance learning. RAFT also now offers custom kits for educators aligned to the distance learning curriculum used at home. Our services include thought partnership, materials sourcing, packaging and shipping materials to the educator's organization or directly to students.

- **Student Engineering Challenges:** Created and facilitated by RAFT staff, students engage in engineering challenges that take advantage of household materials and/or use RAFT supplied materials. Challenges can be live or asynchronous, students can opt-in and are supported by RAFT office hours to engage students directly and take some of the burden off educators. RAFT has already served over 600 students in these challenges since shelter-in-place began.
- **Educator Planning and Custom Kits:** RAFT supports educators with creating individual project kits aligned to distance learning curriculum and to be used at home. RAFT supports educators in planning the lessons and sourcing materials for the custom kits. We then package and deliver the materials directly to educators and students.



STEAM LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR HOME AND CLASSROOM

STEAM Learning Activity Sheets Available Online: 120

STEAM Learning Activity Sheets: Since shelter-in-place, RAFT began adjusting our Learning Activities to specifically serve parents and students learning from home. RAFT has created over 120 STEAM Learning Activity Sheets to address STEAM subjects through hands-on learning. These sheets serve as free, downloadable, online tools that guide parents, guardians, and students PreK through grade 12.

Classroom Activities

Classroom Activities, Lessons, and Tips: RAFT also offers other free downloadable resources for their use in the physical and virtual classroom including the following:

- **Classroom Idea Sheets: 700** Classroom STEAM Idea Sheets provide activities and strategies that provide educators with practical methods for effectively presenting engaging content.
- **Teacher Tip Sheets: 33** sheets provide ideas and strategies for a wide range of classroom-oriented facilitation topics. Topics include engagement, classroom management, assessment, incorporating practices from various content areas, and more.
- **STEAM Lesson Units: 20** STEAM Lesson Units for grades K-8; these lessons are designed for both classroom and makerspace settings, and in some cases can be adapted to virtual settings.





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING:

**Number of Professional Development Sessions in 2019-2020:
80 serving over 1,000 educators**

RAFT believes in providing the training necessary for educators to continue to develop their skills and be comfortable with hands-on learning techniques and STEAM subjects. We tailor our professional development support to meet the specific needs of schools and districts. Whether it's in support of a multiple-year district-wide initiative or a small scale pilot, we meet teachers where they are and work in partnership throughout the school year.

RAFT offers in-person, virtual, as well as hybrid workshops. Each workshop takes advantage of our warehouse of bulk materials and extensive catalog of learning activities to explore STEAM topics and design challenges that follow grade-level standards and best practices. All of our workshops are hands-on and participants leave with ideas and materials for implementation in the classroom. RAFT training hours can often be applied towards continuing education units issued through San Jose State University. RAFT offers workshops for individual members as well as for schools and organizations.

Whether it's in support of a multiple-year district-wide initiative or a small scale pilot, we meet teachers where they are and work in partnership throughout the school year.



RAFT IN THE COMMUNITY

Partnerships: RAFT partners with schools, school districts, county offices of education and nonprofits to support educators and students. RAFT helps build teacher comfort, capacity and confidence in implementing hands-on student-led learning through workshops, ongoing professional development, curricular resources and events with these partners. We help schools create and run pilot programs exploring hands-on STEAM integration in anticipation of school-wide implementation.

"Being a Title-1 school, this model of thinking and this model of lesson design allows our students to have access to STEAM topics and resources. We're in the heart of the Silicon Valley, but unfortunately segments of our population are underrepresented in the corporate and the tech world. RAFT provides us the ability to make sure that our students have the concept to explore these career options and improve their social mobility."

- Vern Caruz, Principal, Stipe Elementary

Community Events and Field Trips: We support community events such as STEAM showcases, family STEAM nights, and Generations Day. At these events, RAFT provides STEAM Project Kits, design challenge materials, and support staff to engage participants in hands-on STEAM activities.

During shelter-in-place, RAFT has also hosted virtual events to engage families in hands-on-learning while

also building a sense of community as students and families find ways to connect with each other. Michelle Link, Stipe Elementary's STEAM Facilitator, gave the following review: "Really fun and rewarding working with you guys from idea to action to full on live virtual event."



RAFT also offers Field Trips. RAFT School Field Trips help develop skills and knowledge in multiple content areas and grade bands. Interactive tours teach students to learn to identify materials based on their attributes and engage in hands-on activities and design challenges aligned to standards that explore real-world phenomena.

Education Advisory Council: In July 2020, RAFT launched our Education Advisory Council. The purpose of the RAFT Education Advisory Council is to provide on-going evaluation, consultation, advice, and recommendations to enable RAFT to accomplish its mission and meet its education objectives. Council members will contribute knowledge and expertise in developing new ideas and resources to address the needs of RAFT's members and community. Members will serve as thought-partners in the creation and assessment of new education strategies, including professional development for educators and tools for their use with learners.





MAKERSPACE PROGRAM AND NEW MAKER MOBILE

Makerspace Builds Completed in 2019-2020: 4 Makerspace Programs Supported: 17

A makerspace is a physical space where students and educators can engage in hands-on learning without having to worry about the dynamics and organization of a typical classroom setting. Makerspaces come equipped with all the tools and materials necessary to engage in a variety of hands-on learning experiences such as science lab materials, woodworking tools, sewing machines, and so much more. RAFT supports schools in their makerspace programs in a variety of ways including the following:

- Design Consultation and Implementation Plan
- Community Makerspace Builds
- Makerspace Support and Training
- Hands-On Materials and Materials Management

RAFT Maker Mobile:

In February 2020, RAFT received a generous grant from the Sharks Foundation and Western Digital to create a RAFT Maker Mobile. The RAFT Maker Mobile comes equipped with all the tools, materials, and staff support to deliver our unique programming as a classroom extension. This van will help close the equity gap by serving under-resourced schools by providing high-quality training and learning materials that usually are not available to these schools. RAFT's Maker Mobile will visit Title-I schools, which typically have a higher percentage of underserved students, for Maker Education lessons, training, and



events. These activities will include design challenges and STEAM instruction while using hands-on tools, such as laser cutters and woodworking tools, to ensure these students have access to quality hands-on education.

RAFT STEAM SUMMER AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Students Served in Summer Programs to Date: 355

In July 2018 & 2019, RAFT partnered with Infinity Collegiate Academy to pilot a STEAM-focused summer school. In July 2020, RAFT shifted our summer school to a virtual summer camp to adhere to social distancing.

RAFT staff recruited students from ages 6-13 to attend our week-long summer camps. RAFT instructors provided hands-on lessons and worked with students as they developed a culminating STEAM Project to present at the end of each week-long session. RAFT staff shipped materials to each participant to ensure students had access to hands-on materials during this virtual program. This program provided 720 instructional minutes to aid students in retention of STEAM subjects over the summer. This program also helped RAFT create professional development sessions on how to provide hands-on learning experiences during distance learning.



RAFT is currently developing our Summer and Afterschool program for 2021 to serve in-person and online, with the goal to replicate this program in schools and locations in the Bay Area, the state, and the US.

Student Testimonials:

"I learned about the engineering process, how fins stabilize rockets, and that online school can be pretty fun, even if you aren't with each other."

"I learned how to be more creative, what STEAM is and how to make bottle rockets."



RAFT STORE

Retail: 32,000 square foot facility

Located in San Jose, the RAFT Store is a member-based shopping and resource environment where educators of all varieties come to shop, collaborate, and learn. We have been called the “Costco” and “Home Depot” of educator supplies, where our low-cost and unique offerings help our members stretch their dollar and maximize the impact for their students. RAFT shifted to appointment-based shopping at our San Jose location to adhere to social distancing protocol. RAFT also offered two major parking lot sales for back-to-school to increase our membership and offer a socially distanced option.

Online Shopping:

RAFT has expanded our online shopping options to include our donated materials in addition to our STEAM Project Kits. Members have delivery and curbside pick-up options as well.





Renovations:

In December 2019, RAFT began a major renovation of our RAFT Store, which included adding racking to increase our capacity for material donations, renovating our Educator Workroom, and creating the new Educator Lab space:

Educator Workroom:

Our Educator Workroom is a creative workspace equipped with a variety of materials and tools to meet educators' needs. RAFT staff and knowledgeable volunteers provide assistance, and our members have the opportunity to collaborate and learn from other RAFT members.

Educator Lab: RAFT's Educator Lab is an innovative space with a variety of resources and equipment for developing unique designs and creating new teaching tools. Educator Lab events include skills-based workshops, STEAM showcases and community events, and guest speakers series.

Materials and Tools Available for Educators in our Educator Workroom and Educator Lab:

- Ellison dies
- Paper cutters
- Embossing and crimping tools
- Bookbinding equipment
- Laminators
- Computer with printer
- Photocopier
- Universal laser engraver
- Glowforge
- 3D printer
- Hand tools (screwdrivers, hammers, clamps, etc.)
- Power tools
- Wood scraps and precut lumber

RAFT Fleet: In Summer 2020, RAFT purchased a 24 foot long truck and sprinter van to collect material donations from our 200 corporate and community partners and deliver our materials to local schools and educators.



These two vehicles will serve our community along with our RAFT Maker Mobile. Keep an eye out for the RAFT fleet in your area.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Number of Volunteers onsite and virtually since shelter-in-place: 637

Over 55,000 RAFT volunteers have served over 500,000 hours since 1994 to build STEAM Project Kits and get hands-on materials into the classroom.

RAFT has relied on 6,000 in-person volunteers from over 200 corporations annually, and RAFT continues to seek additional partnerships. We shifted our volunteer model to provide remote and virtual volunteering opportunities including the following:

- Volunteers pick up the materials for our STEAM Project Kits from RAFT and package the kits at home. All materials and instructions are provided and adhere to safety guidelines.
- Volunteers can complete our at-home STEAM Learning Activities or STEAM Project Kits and fill out a feedback form along with pictures of the activities which may be used for our marketing materials.
- Volunteers have also translated our STEAM Learning Activity Sheets into other languages so more students can be reached.
- RAFT also offers limited openings for in-person volunteering at our facility while adhering to social distancing and safety guidelines.



FINANCIALS

Total RAFT Revenue & Support FY20

Individuals, Corporation and Foundations	\$ 724,200
Annual Special Event	\$ 191,342
Membership dues	\$ 23,995
Professional Dev't Workshops	\$ 102,247
Store Sales	\$ 512,307
Other Income	\$ 23,304
In-Kind Contributions	\$ 51,394
Total Revenue and Support	\$ 1,628,789

Total RAFT Expense Allocation	FY20
Program Expense	\$ 2,378,300
Management and General	\$ 273,221
Fund Development	\$ 322,274
Total Expenses	\$ 2,973,795

FY20 revenue was under expectations due to the pandemic as RAFT, like many in retail and education, experienced a large drop in revenue. We also had planned much needed capital expenditures to our San Jose facility which are only FY20 and FY21 expenses and will not be annually recurring. We are optimistic schools and our store may be back close to regular operations come August.

PLANNED GIVING

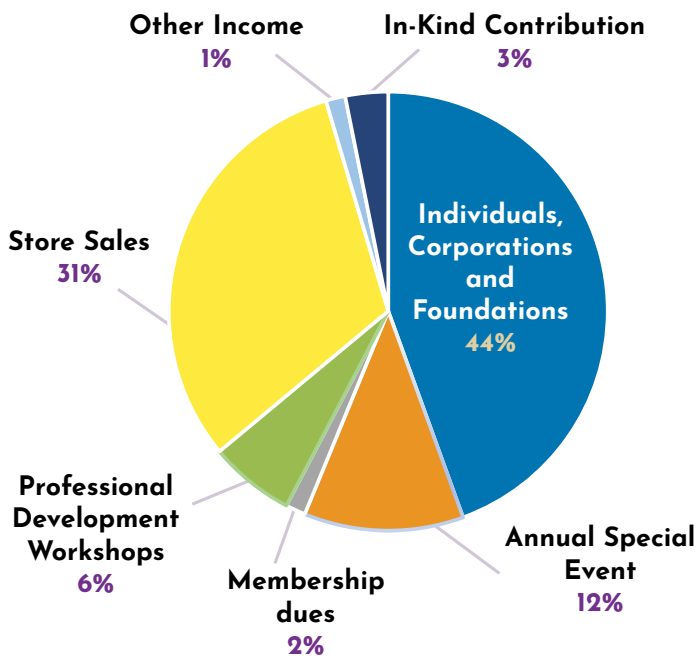
Ensure support for the next generation of innovators, problem solvers, and creators by making RAFT a part of your future plans.

Plan today to leave a legacy for the future! By making RAFT part of your future plans you are helping to inspire the next generation of innovators, problem solvers, and creators. There are a number of ways to support our efforts through planned giving, such as:

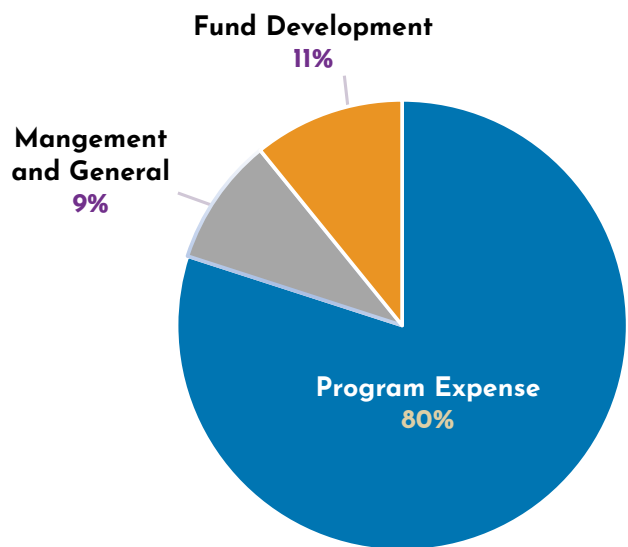
1. **Wills and Trusts**
2. **Life Insurance or Retirement Plan**
3. **Real Estate**

If you are considering a legacy gift or have included RAFT in your estate plans, we would love to hear from you, please contact us at development@raft.net.

FY20 RAFT Revenue & Support

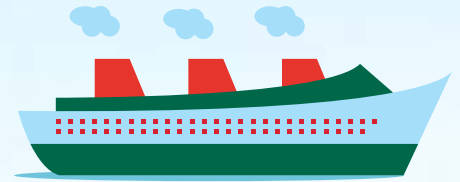


FY20 RAFT Expense Allocation



RAFT SPECIAL EVENT

All Aboard the **SS RAFT!**



Funds Raised through Virtual Fundraiser: \$278,000
Number of Online Attendees: 181

RAFT's annual special event went virtual this year in response to COVID-19 and shelter-in-place. On September 23, 2020 the SS RAFT took sail. During the "All Aboard the SS RAFT" virtual event, guests were able to learn more about RAFT, honor people and organizations that have had a profound impact on the education community, and learn what RAFT is doing to support joy in learning during these uncertain times. RAFT raised over \$278,000 to support our programs and honored 10 inductees into RAFT STEAM Hall of Fame, including our RAFT Heroes, STEAM Teachers of the Year, and Volunteers of the Year.

If you would like to watch the event and learn more about our RAFT STEAM Hall of Fame inductees and view videos from the event at <https://raft.net/a-successful-voyage/>.

RAFT Heroes:



Chuck & Nan Geschke



Ann Danner



Mary Simon

RAFT Volunteers of the Year:



Wayne & Jean Suzuki



California Retired Teachers Association, Area 5 Division 6

RAFT STEAM Hall of Fame:

The RAFT STEAM Hall of Fame recognizes individuals, and organizations, that support the advancement of STEAM hands-on education in the classroom. RAFT recognizes our heroes who have been champions of RAFT and the education community, our outstanding volunteers, and those teachers that have provided exceptional STEAM education.

RAFT STEAM Teachers of the Year:



Meredith Jones,
Mission Park Elementary



Lisa Ernst,
Alice Fong Yu Alternative School



Lisa Sawires,
Walt Disney Elementary



Kimberly Pratt,
St. Leo the Great School



Kim Lawrence,
Bollinger Canyon Elementary





All Aboard the
SS RAFT!

RAFT's Special Event
September 23, 2020 | Virtual
raft RESOURCE AREA FOR TEACHING

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Special Thank You to Our Event Committee:

Ann Danner, John Ebner, Jillian Forusz,
Susan Harrington, Webb and Christina McKinney,
Sridhar Narasimhan, Michelle Sklar,
and Andrea Whittaker

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Chuck and Nan Geschke:

"We have always supported educational institutions. RAFT does the wonderful work of connecting care for the environment through the reuse of materials to valuable, engaging, hands-on learning opportunities for students and teachers. The pandemic has heightened the need to support people in economically disadvantaged parts of the Bay Area and we are happy to support that effort."

Donna Whitney and the Whitney Foundation:

"We have supported RAFT since 1997 because we feel teachers need and deserve to have help with supplies and lessons for their classrooms. Teachers have always spent their personal money for classroom supplies and RAFT provides supplies, services and ideas at an affordable cost. Plus, it is an environmentally sound thing to do as many supplies are being repurposed, at least once, instead of being sent to the landfill."



L-R: Uwe Kladde, Donna Whitney, Suzanne Whitney Smedt, Thomas Whitney, and Andrea Vos

There is a great need to assist teachers by providing supplies and lessons for Hands-On Learning for the classrooms. RAFT leverages their resources by charging a nominal amount for their products, charging school districts for services, if they can pay, and using volunteer organizations to assemble products and help in various ways to defray some of the costs of running RAFT. RAFT has ways of being self sustaining.



Webb and Christina McKinney:

"My two main passions are education and the environment. My wife is a retired teacher and my original career plan was to be a teacher, but I ended up in the tech business instead. I joined the RAFT board in 2004 because it was so closely aligned with what I thought was important in education, along with the strong environmental focus in our business model."

RAFT is unique in our focus on hands-on learning, and STEAM. We help teachers teach better as a result of our professional development, teacher work areas, and our very low cost educational materials. Our materials are so low cost because they are overwhelmingly produced with recycled contents, and made available through predominantly volunteer labor. No other organization can come close to RAFT in the value of what we provide at our low cost. This is particularly important because, unfortunately, teachers generally have to pay for classroom materials with their own money. We are very grateful for the support we are receiving from the community."

Ann Danner:

"My relationship with RAFT began before it even existed when I met Mary Simon and quickly became enchanted with her creativity and determination. Her vision became mine: to help teachers teach the way kids love to learn, by building and making things with their own hands. Becoming a part of her support group in founding and growing Raft made me a life-long supporter. It's almost impossible to describe Raft; you have to see it. The huge array of wonderful materials and ideas, the supportive staff and volunteers ready to help, all focused on making STEAM concepts come alive for children. It makes you want to join the ever-expanding legion of supporters!"



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RAFT is able to provide our programs and services thanks to the generosity of our donors and sponsors. Donations from corporate sponsors, foundations, and individuals means we can offer our programs at a lower cost, and for no cost to those educators and students in underserved communities who need our support the most. If you would like to make a donation to RAFT to support the following programs, visit <https://raft.net/donate/>.

RAFT Engineering Challenges - \$5,000

Our Engineering Challenges provide an engaging experience for distance learning while inspiring students to explore design-thinking and expose them to STEAM subjects in a hands-on way. **Your support at this level will contribute to the development of 2 online engineering challenge videos for an entire virtual classroom of 30 students.**



RAFT Maker Mobile -\$2,500

With more activities switching to outside environments for health safety, RAFT's Maker Mobile makes outdoor classrooms come alive! **Your support at this level will help us bring our Maker Mobile to a school for an entire week, potentially serving hundreds of students.** Our Maker Mobile serves under-resourced schools by providing high-quality training and learning materials in an effort to close the equity gap. The RAFT Maker Mobile comes equipped with all the tools, materials, and staff support to deliver our unique programming as a classroom extension.

RAFT STEAM Summer Camps - \$1,000

Whether virtual or in person, help send students to our STEAM Summer Camps. **Your support at this level will provide scholarships to 4 students for a one week session at our online or in person STEAM Summer Camps.** Our STEAM summer camps target underserved or Title-1 school students. This will ensure they have access to STEAM learning resources to bridge the equity gap during the summer months.

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Support RAFT by helping to fund the creation of professional development videos. **Your support at this level will help fund the production of 4 professional development online workshops.** These videos will be made available to educators and families helping with distance learning.

Sponsor RAFT Memberships for Educators and/or Parents- \$250

Help us make our resources and materials accessible to as many people as possible by covering the cost of a RAFT membership. **Your support at this amount will support 10 educators/parents with a RAFT membership for a year.** Members gain access to STEAM learning resources and supplies they need for distance learning. Other membership benefits include being able to shop at the RAFT Store, discounts on STEAM Project Kits, access to the Educator Workroom as well as access to online professional development training and videos.

Support Delivery of STEAM Project Kits - \$100

Whether online or in person, hands-on learning plays a critical role in education. You can help get our STEAM Project Kits into the communities that need it most by sponsoring sending kits to Title-1 schools or to help cover the shipping cost to families who purchase our kits online. **Your support at this level will ensure 20 STEAM kits get in the hands of students who need it the most.**



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