



2020-2021

**raft**<sup>®</sup>

RESOURCE  
AREA FOR  
TEACHING

**ANNUAL REPORT**

raft



# OUR MISSION

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.

## RAFT IMPACT STATEMENT

For the past 27 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 over 6,000 volunteers, financial and material donations from over 200 corporate partners, and support from individual donors every year, RAFT helps educators enhance and incorporate STEAM subjects and inspire joy through hands-on learning.





## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

This last fiscal year has continued to challenge educators, parents and the entire community that we serve here at RAFT. As most students finished the last school year primarily via distance learning with the hope that they could return to campus in Fall 2021, educators and parents began to realize children would experience varying degrees of learning loss and the need to get children re-engaged.

RAFT continued to support distance learning, educators' plans for school reopenings and parents who were deciding how their children would stay engaged and learning. We made sure we addressed educators' and parents' needs by expanding our early pandemic response and integrating those needs into our programs. A few highlights include:

- Continuing to equip teachers in schools using distance learning by delivering our popular STEAM Project kits.
- Opening our RAFT membership to parents to make it easy to get our affordable, educator-approved STEAM kits and many other resources, in addition to offering on-line ordering and or for in-person pick up.
- Preparing to bring back our in-person, high student-engagement Maker Mobile incorporating covid protocols so we can safely conduct this program at schools and sites throughout the Bay Area.
- Protecting our customers and all whom we work and partner with by achieving 100% of RAFT's staff vaccinated.
- Making numerous capital improvements to our facility to make sure the RAFT experience is better than ever for our members and volunteers coming back to RAFT after being away during the pandemic

While 2021 has brought its challenges, we've been able to face them head-on to become an even stronger organization - always driven by our mission and our vision to transform children's learning experiences to one that engages and inspires the next generation of innovators, problem solvers and creators. We're optimistic and excited for the coming year - and looking forward to bringing new initiatives that further support our teachers, children and community. We are grateful to you - all of our supporters - donors, volunteers, members and partners - for your ongoing trust and loyalty.

Warmly,

**Jason Morrella**  
CEO



**RAFT continued to support distance learning, educators' plans for school reopenings and parents who were deciding how their children would stay engaged and learning.**



# RAFT BY THE NUMBERS

## THROUGH THE YEARS

**27**  
Years of Serving the Education Community



**164,755**  
Students Reached

**61,353**  
Educators Served since 1994

**Over 56,500**  
Total Volunteers since 1994



**200**  
Corporate and Community Partners



**300** Tons of Materials  
Diverted from Landfill Annually

## 2020-2021

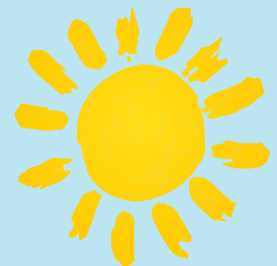
Supported  
**14,250**  
students and  
**780** teachers  
virtually with hands-on STEAM activities for  
at-home use.



**23**  
Makerspaces Built and Supported

**64**  
STEAM Project Kits Available

**New Summer Programming**  
to support hundreds of  
students, virtually  
and in-person






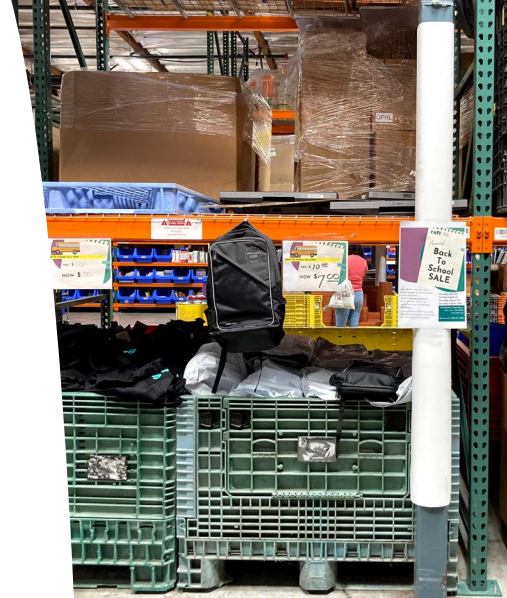
# LOCATION AND DISTRICTS WE SERVE

While RAFT serves our members and students throughout the Bay Area with our San Jose facility, 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





# 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

## RAFT BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Cecil Mak**, Chair  
(KPMG)



**Stefan Raffl**, Treasurer  
(Wonderbar Ventures, LLC)



**Sharon Hutchins**,  
Secretary (Intuit)



**Brooks Beard**,  
Vice Chair (VMware)



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(Netflix)



**Carolyn Carhart-  
Quezada** (Cognition)



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**Vidya Phalke**  
(MetricStream)



**Karen Rohde**  
(Human Resources  
Executive, Retired)



**Sundi Sundaresh**  
(GridGain Systems,  
Board Member)



**Kathy Yates**  
(Teachscape, Retired)

### Education Advisory Council:

RAFT launched our Education Advisory Council to provide on-going evaluation, consultation, advice, and recommendations to enable RAFT to meet its education objectives and accomplish its mission. Members will serve as thought-partners in the creation and assessment of new education strategies, including educator professional development and tools for their use with learners.

**MEMBERS:** Marie Bacher, Mera Burton, Cate Carahan, Keiko B Charif, Mandie Cline, Vern Cruz, Lisa Ernst, Will Franzel, Jennifer Janzen, Meredith Jones, Kim Lawrence, Traci Leathers, Jesse Lovejoy, Dr. Elida MacArthur, Suba Marti, Tami Moore, Anisha Munshi, Kimberly Pratt, Alondra Rios, Emmanuel Stewart, Lisa Swares, Mina Tai, Archana Venugopal, Samantha Young

### RAFT Advisory Board:

Created in 2021, the RAFT Advisory Board members serve as champions of RAFT, ensure our fundraising story and strategy is compelling, and encourage others to support RAFT, while working closely with the CEO to provide expertise and advice on organizational strategy and initiatives.

**MEMBERS:** Ned Barnholt, Bruce Chizen, Ann Danner, John Ebner, Nan Geschke, Sue Harrington, Dave House, Webb McKinney, Jason Morella, Randy Pond, Mary Simon, Doug Spreng, Donna Whitney





## RAFT & DISTANCE LEARNING

- Delivered over **120,000 STEAM Project Kits** to Title-1 schools to keep students engaged during distance learning.
- **30%** of the students RAFT serves are from Title-1 schools that support underserved communities. Title-1 schools are those schools with a high percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch and are typically underserved and underfunded.
- Developed over **120 FREE STEAM Learning Activity Sheets with over 10,000 downloads to date.** These sheets lead families in engaging hands-on lessons that use common household items.
- Developed **virtual professional development workshops** to help educators incorporate hands-on learning in the digital classroom.
- **Membership available to ALL** so our affordable resources are accessible to as many people as possible. Effective last year, all parents, educators, administrators, and everyone helping educate in the times of distance learning are eligible for a RAFT membership.
- **Virtual RAFT Maker Nights.** These events welcomed educators, students and their families to come together in community by participating in engaging, hands-on activities hosted by RAFT staff.
- **Engineering Design Challenges.** To help students stay engaged and creative, RAFT staff created Engineering Design Challenges. These challenges propose a fun challenge, such as Catching a Leprechaun. Students use household items and their creativity to solve the challenge.
- **Makerspace builds and Maker Mobile visits to schools.** As students slowly transition back to the classroom, RAFT visits schools to host makerspace builds and the RAFT Maker Mobile brings materials to school to host engaging, hands-on activities. After these events, students report enjoying the activities and feel confident about their work.



*"The RAFT project that Violet was so excited about doing really helped engage all of who she is. There was an explosion of creativity. She had to think for herself and come up with ideas and she really wasn't given that opportunity during online learning. It was like watching her be a kid again... We got to connect and it gave us a reason to come together outside of technology".*

- TANYA DUBLIN, PARENT AT RANCHO ROMERO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



# RAFT AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

## Great Nonprofits 2021 Top Rated.

RAFT is grateful to be a top-rated organization for Greater Nonprofits for 2021. We could not have received this honor without the endorsement from our education community.

## Guidestar Platinum Transparency 2021.

RAFT is proud to be given Guidestar's Platinum Transparency Seal of 2021. RAFT is committed to being transparent and showing our community how we serve our educators, parents and students.

## Voted AGAIN Best of the Best Silicon Valley in Bay Area Parent.

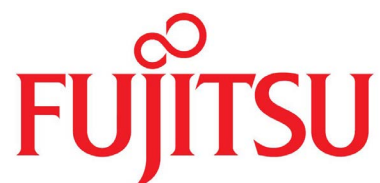
We're happy to announce that, for the second year in a row, we are the Gold Medal winner for Best Education Support in Bay Area Parent's Best of the Best Silicon Valley. We truly appreciate the votes of support from the Bay Area Parent community.

## StopWaste.

For over a decade StopWaste has been a strong supporter and advocate of RAFT. StopWaste is a public agency reducing waste in Alameda County. Thank you to StopWaste for making RAFT a grantee.

## PFU America (Fujitsu).

PFU America, Inc., the parent company of Fujitsu, made a material and monetary donation to RAFT as well as sharing our work with their community through a press release. Yasunari Shimizu, President and CEO, PFU America, Inc. shared that "this donation aligns with our commitment to our local community, as well as our global sustainability efforts. We hope that these efforts help support local educators ahead of another tricky school year for many students".





# PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

RAFT helps educators and parents help students develop 21st-century learning skills. As more students and educators transition back to the in-person classroom, RAFT's hands-on, STEAM resources are what educators and families need to keep their students engaged, learning, and joyful.

## **STEAM Project Kits and Design Challenges:**

Our kits and challenges make learning STEAM principles engaging and fun.

## **STEAM Learning Activities & Resources:**

Free activity sheets, idea sheets, lessons, and teacher tips for Pre-K to 8th grade activities. They are available online and many are available in multiple languages.

## **Professional Development:**

Educators continue to learn best practices for hands-on STEAM learning with our professional development workshops covering a range of topics, skills, and methods.

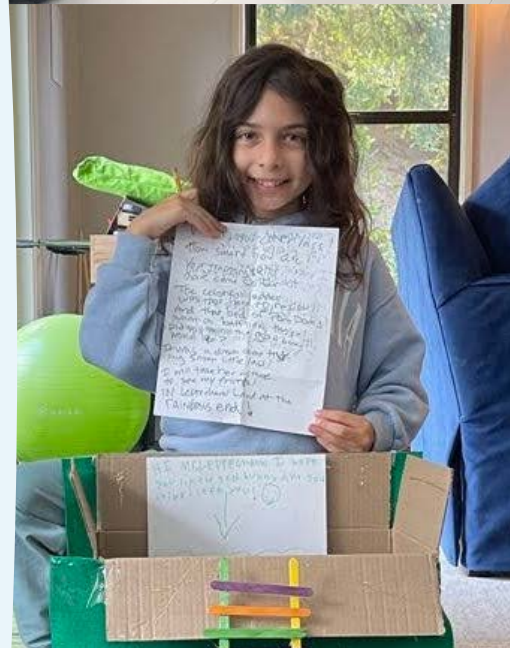
## **Makerspace Builds and Maker Mobile Events:**

RAFT is proud to partner with schools to help develop and create their own makerspaces to encourage student's curiosity and hands-on learning. Our Maker Mobile brings the resources and activities to schools for engaging, hands-on learning events.

**RAFT STEAM Summer and Afterschool Programs:** Our STEAM Summer Program develops each year and the foundation is being built for our afterschool programs. We are working on creating a "RAFT in a box" model that can be used at various community organizations that seek to accelerate STEAM learning opportunities for their students.

## **RAFT in the Community:**

Through partnerships, community events, and field trips, RAFT inspires the next generation of innovators, problem solvers, and creators.







## STEAM Project Kits & Design Challenges

### STEAM Project Kits Available: 64

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. 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 repurposed materials donated from Bay Area companies.

These kits are also packed by our volunteers to keep the cost of production very low. These quality hands-on learning materials are available for purchase online and in our store.

The past year, RAFT added four new kits that are also available online. Mural, Bread Bag Parachute, Articulated Leg (partnership with 49ers), and Makerspace in a Box. RAFT also created 7 new kits serving over 6,000 students in grades TK through 2nd grade. These kits will become part of our catalogue in 2022.

## Student Design Challenges

Created and facilitated by RAFT staff, students engage in these 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 1800 students in these challenges since shelter-in-place began.









## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Supported 14,250 students and 780 teachers virtually with hands-on STEAM activities for at-home use in 2020-2021.

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.



**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.**



# Makerspace Builds and New Maker Mobile Events

**Total Makerspace Builds Completed: 54**  
**Total Makerspace Programs Supported: 18**

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

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 helps 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 received a generous grant from the Sharks Foundation and Western Digital to create the RAFT Maker Mobile.





## RAFT STEAM SUMMER AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, RAFT has developed and provided in-person and virtual Summer Camp programs. In July 2020, RAFT shifted our summer school to a virtual summer camp to adhere to social distancing.



RAFT recruited students from ages 6-13 to attend our week-long, virtual summer camps. RAFT instructors conducted lessons and worked with students as they developed a STEAM Project to present at the end of each week-long session. RAFT staff shipped materials to each participant in advance to ensure students had access to hands-on materials for 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 educators can provide hands-on learning experiences during distance learning.

RAFT is currently developing our in-person and online Summer and Afterschool program for 2022, with the goal to replicate this program in schools and locations across the Bay Area, California, and the US.

### Student Testimonials

"I learned not to have a fixed mindset and have a growing mindset instead. I also learned to use what you have to make a prototype without using tape or glue. I also improved on the way to collaborate with teammates/team members."

"I learned how to improve my skills in making Original Design Challenges. I remembered how to put together the wind powered sail car. I got better at putting together the slides and presenting them."

"I would like you to know that this camp was awesome. It helped me practice collaboration in the summer."



# 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.

*"I'm super grateful for RAFT. We want students to have the skills to innovate within our society and have the life options that they choose. And we know that that requires an ability to communicate, work together, have an intuition for creativity and a spark for designing and I think the partnership with RAFT really enables us to deepen that for our school."*

- IVAN ROSALES MONTES, PRINCIPAL OF SAN ANTONIO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## 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.

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.

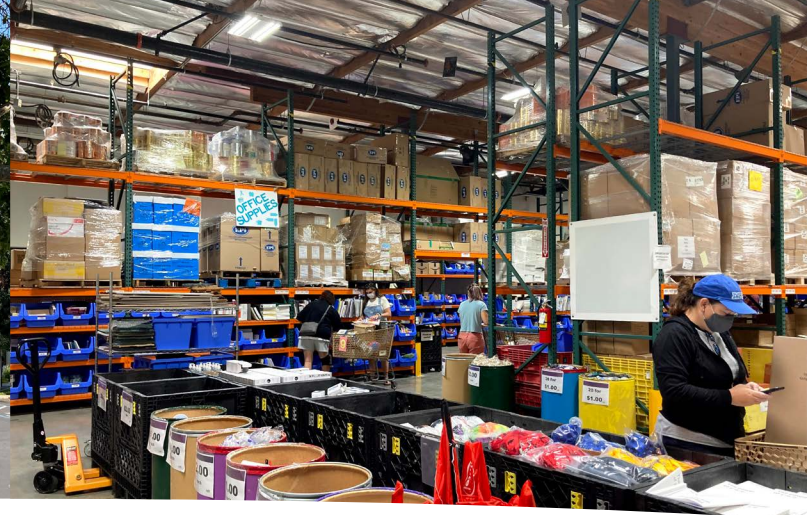
*"Really fun and rewarding working with you guys from idea to action to full on live virtual event."*

- MICHELLE LINK, STEAM FACILITATOR, STIPE ELEMENTARY

RAFT also offers field trips. RAFT's 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.







# 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 also offered two major parking lot sales to increase our membership and offer a socially distanced shopping option.

**Online Shopping:** RAFT has expanded our online shopping options to include our new and repurposed materials in addition to our STEAM Project Kits. Members have delivery and curbside pick-up options as well.

**Parents as Members:** With the enhanced learning being more important than ever, Parents are now welcome to become members and to shop at RAFT! Our pre-built STEAM kits - popular for years with educators and children especially during distance learning - makes it easy for parents to enhance their children’s hand-on learning experiences at home.

**Renovations:** RAFT continues our renovation plan started in 2019 by adding store directional signage, adding a new audio system and video wall to showcase our events and programs. By early 2022 we will have remodeled restrooms and thanks to a generous donation from one of our Corporate partners, RAFT will be 100% solar powered, furthering our “green” mission.

**Resources:** RAFT members have access to a wide variety of educator resources needed for planning classroom lessons and activities. With the largest collection of die cuts in the Bay Area and many teacher workrooms at schools closing down, RAFT is the place for every educator to prepare their classrooms and support their students.

- **Educator Workroom:** Our Educator Workroom is a creative workspace equipped with a variety of materials and tools to meet educators’ needs. RAFT staff provides 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. We plan to upgrade our Educator Lab in 2022.





## 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
- Hand tools (screwdrivers, hammers, clamps, etc.)
- Power tools
- Wood scraps and precut lumber

## RAFT Fleet

RAFT's fleet of vehicles includes a 24 foot box truck and smaller transit 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 This Past Fiscal Year: 1,798

RAFT volunteers are a critical part of making our resources available and affordable to the education community.

This past fiscal year we were happy to partner with groups to host both virtual and in-person volunteer events that gave back to the education community in a big way.

With help from Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley and DPR Construction, RAFT has a new and improved volunteer center. Thank you to the volunteers for revamping our volunteer center and providing an inviting space for our volunteers and staff.

## Virtual Volunteer Events:

RAFT partnered with Provident Credit Union, Palo Alto Rotary Club, and First Tech to host virtual volunteer events for their teams. RAFT staff prepared materials for volunteers to package STEAM Project Kits and then hosted a virtual event where everyone met online to learn more about RAFT, the kits, and of course, to have fun!

## In-person Volunteer Events:

Alexza Pharmaceuticals. As part of their company's international day of Doing Good, Alexza partnered with RAFT for a volunteer event where enough kits were packaged to serve 3,000 students!

## How You Can Help:

Reach out to our team to learn more and to schedule your event: [volunteer@raft.net](mailto:volunteer@raft.net)





# FINANCIALS

## Total RAFT Revenue & Support FY21

Contributions	\$ 765,815
Fundraising Event	\$ 281,226
Membership dues	\$ 43,635
Store Sales	\$ 564,040
Education Revenue	\$ 102,208
Other Income	\$ 8,623
In-Kind Contributions	\$ 43,286
Net Investment Income	\$ 2,233,709
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>\$ 4,042,541</b>

Total RAFT Functional Expense Allocation	FY21
Program Expense	\$ 2,583,512
Management and General	\$ 329,401
Fund Development	\$ 345,593
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 3,258,506</b>

## PLANNED GIVING

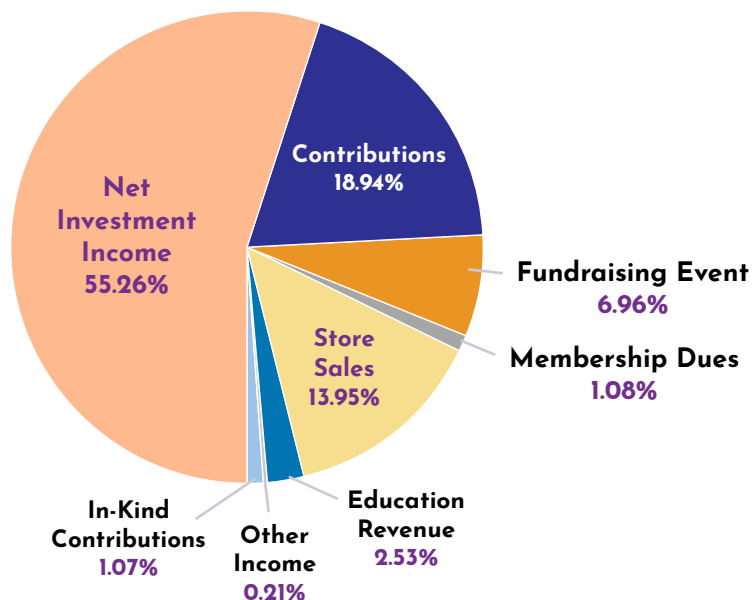
Ensure support for the next generation of innovators, problem solvers, and creators by making RAFT a part of your future plans.

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:

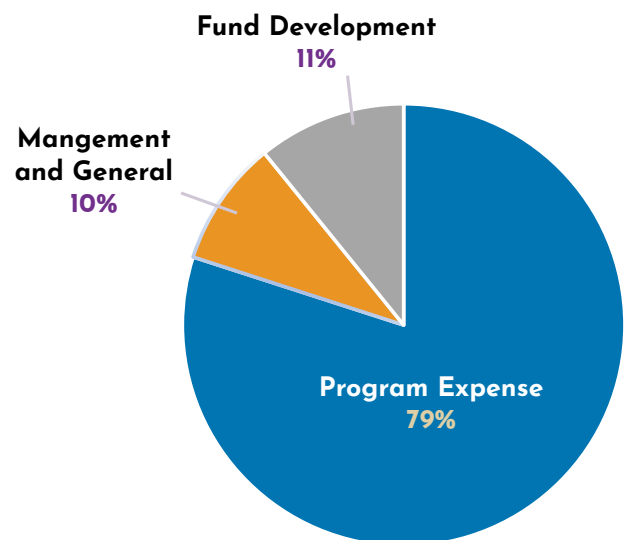
1. **Wills and Trusts**
2. **Life Insurance or Retirement Plan**
3. **Real Estate**

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](mailto:development@raft.net).

## FY21 RAFT Revenue & Support



## FY21 RAFT Expense Allocation





# FOUND AT RAFT

## RAFT'S ANNUAL EVENT *VIRTUAL*

### SEPTEMBER 22, 2021

**raft** RESOURCE AREA FOR TEACHING

## RAFT Special Event Found at RAFT

Funds Raised through Virtual Fundraiser: **\$314,000**  
 Number of Online Attendees: **116**

On September 22, 2021 RAFT hosted its annual, special event. The virtual event highlighted how RAFT helps educators, students and their families transition back to the classroom successfully.



RAFT raised over \$314,000 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, please visit [www.raftspecialeventlive.com](http://www.raftspecialeventlive.com). To learn more about our RAFT STEAM Hall of Fame inductees and view videos from the event, please visit <https://raft.net/2021-found-at-raft/>

**Event Committee:** Ann Danner, John Ebner, Jillian Forusz, Susan Harrington, Sharon Hutchins, Webb McKinney, Sridhar Narasimhan, Andrea Whittaker



### THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

**ROLLER RACER SPONSOR**

**intuit.**

**PUFF ROCKET SPONSOR**

**Chegg.org Impact Fund**

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Morgan Stanley

Susan Wojcicki and Dennis Troper

**HOVERCRAFT SPONSORS**



Ann & Alden Danner



Bruce & Gail Chizen







Ned & Jimi Barnholt




**FUND-A-NEED DONORS**

Brooks and Sarah Beard  
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 Anne and Ross Murphy

Private Ocean  
 Stefan Ruff  
 Sreeram Balakrishnan and Resoo Ramaswamy  
 Karen and Bruce Rolde  
 Mary Simon  
 Douglas Spring  
 Sundi Sundarab  
 John and Justice Travis  
 Kathy Yates and Peter Troop

**Save the Date for next year's event on September 21, 2022**





# DONOR SPOTLIGHT

## **John Ebner. Partner at KPMG and RAFT Event Committee Member.**

*I've been involved in several wonderful non-profits over the years, but RAFT and its focus on STEAM education has always been special to me. Math was my least favorite subject in school, at least in part because I failed to understand any real life applications. Math was never fun. RAFT's focus on hands-on learning and helping teachers teach the way kids love to learn immediately appealed to me. The fact that RAFT built kits from recycled materials just made it more rewarding to support RAFT. I've been involved with RAFT now for over 10 years, and I've seen firsthand how much educators and disadvantaged communities need RAFT. I'm still amazed at the level of support in the Bay Area from leading companies that share a similar belief in the importance of RAFT's mission and its ability to recycle materials, but I know we can do more. STEAM is so important to the future success of today's young people that ultimately my hope is that RAFT and its mission spreads across the US.*



## **Sue Harrington. Harrington Family Foundation and RAFT Event Committee Member.**

*Education has always been a major focus for us. We were originally drawn to RAFT because I was a teacher for many years; 3 of my 4 grandparents were teachers, so the attraction to RAFT was a no-brainer! I was immediately convinced of what a huge support tool RAFT is for teachers on many levels. Teachers have always used their own money to purchase supplies for their students. Not only does RAFT provide educational materials at an affordable cost, but also lesson plans and other services. These are provided at a reduced cost as well, since much is provided through volunteer services. RAFT's business model was also very appealing to us and it makes sense environmentally since most supplies are donated or repurposed. We are happy to support RAFT's important and innovative work.*



## **Brooks Beard. Vice President & Deputy General Counsel at VMware and RAFT Board Member.**

*I have always felt it is important to give back to our communities, particularly for those who are fortunate enough to be in a position to help others. With two young kiddos of my own at home and a wife who is a preschool teacher, RAFT's focus on hands-on STEAM learning and projects truly resonates with me, as I see how much my kids enjoy that type of engagement in the classroom. It gets them excited about learning. And I also see how my wife is able to more effectively connect and engage with her students using hands-on STEAM learning. By supporting RAFT, I believe I'm helping teachers prepare our next generation of scientists, engineers, artists, and leaders. I also appreciate that RAFT provides support using recycled and donated materials, which also helps our environment. This helps build into the learning process for kids the importance of our natural resources and their role in being stewards of the environment.*



# NIGEL BALL AND CHARLES GESCHKE TRIBUTE

## Nigel Ball

Nigel Ball was a true example of the Silicon Valley community with a celebrated career in the tech industry and also the nonprofit realm. After 25 years at HP, Nigel worked as RAFT's Marketing Director as an Encore Fellow. Eventually he transitioned back to the tech industry, working at Oracle Corporation, but continued to serve on the RAFT Board of Directors for multiple terms.



RAFT's mission of providing hands-on STEAM education held a special place in Nigel's heart, and he was always willing to serve in whatever role RAFT needed. In 2018, Nigel served as Interim CEO. He incorporated RAFT's commitment to hands-on learning into his role, from managing marketing and development goals, to tinkering with new STEAM Project Kits, to helping in the store, and even driving the RAFT truck to pick up material donations.

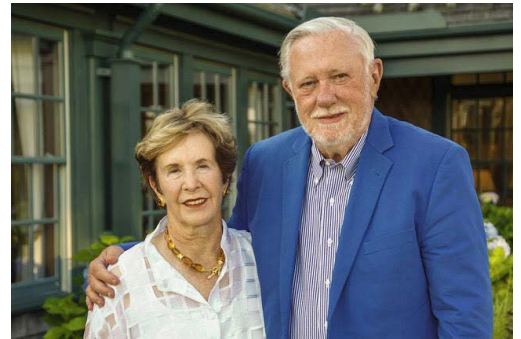
RAFT was Nigel's favorite cause, and he was always excited for our next chapter in supporting our education community. RAFT is happy to have honored Nigel as a RAFT Hero. He will be greatly missed and RAFT will always remember his lasting impact.

*"During the many years that I had the joy of knowing Nigel, I found him to be a kindred spirit. He shared my passion for RAFT and found similar joy in supporting teachers as I do. He jumped in wherever he was needed, and served as RAFT's Director of Marketing, as its Interim CEO, as a leader on the board, and as my mentor and friend. Moreover, he pitched in as a truck driver, painter, video producer, and more! In fact, there was nothing he wouldn't do. He was well-loved by everyone on our staff and we all will truly miss him."*

- MARY SIMON, RAFT FOUNDER

*"It is hard to imagine anyone other than RAFT's founder, Mary Simon, who has contributed more to RAFT than Nigel. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, and also by RAFT. We are very grateful for all of Nigel's contributions to RAFT over the years."*

- WEBB MCKINNEY, FORMER BOARD CHAIR



## Charles Geschke

RAFT would like to celebrate Charles Geschke's incredible accomplishments and dedication to our community.

Dr. Geschke founded Adobe with Dr. John Warnock in 1982 and changed how we share, create, and interact with information forever.

His legacy embodies the utmost accomplishment in STEAM, including being recognized as an industry leader as well as receiving the National Medal of Technology and Innovation.

In addition to these achievements, Chuck and his family have been pillars of the Bay Area community for their support of STEAM education. In September 2020, RAFT recognized Dr. Geschke and his wife Nancy for their years of supporting our educational community by naming them our RAFT STEAM Heroes of the Year.



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