

# directions

Journal of the Association of Nature Center Administrators

## the many benefits of ANCA ~ what's in it for you

We have been celebrating the 25th anniversary of ANCA for the past year and the celebration continued at the Summit in Kalamazoo. Some of the people responsible for shepherding its first steps were at the Summit, including Rich Patterson who was on the original steering committee formed to establish ANCA in 1989. Why did the committee establish ANCA? Because they wanted a professional organization that meets the unique needs of a nature center manager.

ANCA may be a “rookie” organization just starting its adult life but what a resume! In the last five years alone ANCA has produced four monographs, revised and reprinted the *Directors Guide to Best Practices*, significantly increased resources on the website, went from a newsletter and basic listserv to a newsletter, Enews, a Google Group, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram.

We have also established a mentor program with 70 active pairs, initiated 11 regional networks, surveyed members to improve services and products, and actively promoted our members on our website, to funders, and via social media.

ANCA is the only organization in the country specifically targeting



you, and we have a great track record of listening to member needs and responding. Everything ANCA does, all the products and services, does not happen without a lot of effort. We have a 13-member

(continued on page 13)

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Founded in 1989, the Association of Nature Center Administrators is a private non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and supporting best leadership and management practices for nature and environmental learning centers.

Serving more than 600 members, ANCA is the leader in the profession.



Rooted in Experience. Reaching for Excellence.

*Directions* is a quarterly publication of the Association of Nature Center Administrators, distributed to members of ANCA as a membership benefit.

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# Director's Notes

## Benefits, programs & services

Jen Levy  
Executive Director  
Association of Nature Center  
Administrators  
Logan, UT



ANCA's membership has grown, 18% last year, and the Beyond Boundaries Summit, held at the Kalamazoo Nature Center in August, was the largest to date with 289 people in attendance. Sixty-five were nature-based preschool administrators and teachers who joined us at the Summit as part of the Nature-Based Preschool Conference (read more on page 10). Many of those in attendance were new to ANCA and new to Summits. We are thrilled to have so many new members in the ANCA network and have devoted this issue of *Directions* to highlight the many benefits, programs, and services we offer our members.

People from many spectrums of the environmental education profession – presidents, CEOs, executive directors, managers, and educators from Canada, China, Japan, Taiwan, New Zealand, and 47 states throughout the U.S. – contribute to the vast network that is ANCA. To that end, we offer an array of services for new directors to veterans and our members can participate at different levels from reading our publications to interacting on social media and our discussion forums to meeting fellow members at regional gatherings to reaching out and serving on Peer Consult teams.

How have you been interacting with the ANCA network? I invite you to consider taking the next

step – interact with other members in our Google Group, attend a regional meeting, and share your experiences with other members through the Mentor Program, Peer Consults, or at the Summit!

We also invite you to take advantage of the many ways we promote our members (see page 12). For the past year we have been profiling our member centers via Twitter and Facebook. These weeklong campaigns, which include photos and text, have been among our most popular posts. Are you on the ANCA map? Click here for more information. Do you have some photos of your program staff in action? Share them on Instagram with the hashtag #ConnectingPeopleToNature.

What is ahead for our members? The ANCA Blue Ribbon Report will research what leaders in the nature center profession view as the societal and economic future of nature centers in the U.S. over the next 25 years. Dr. Corky McReynolds and Andrew Revelle, a graduate fellow at the University

(continued on page 3)

of Wisconsin Stevens Point, are currently conducting this research. The project will commemorate ANCA's 25th anniversary by looking ahead to the next 25 years. The project seeks to identify major trends and developments in staffing, fundraising, physical property, programs and services, organizational governance, and community roles in order to provide organizations with valuable information for their strategic planning processes. The most recent research on the state of American nature centers was conducted in 1989 by the Natural Science for Youth Foundation. This project will follow-up on many of the same concepts from that study, but in a modern context. The research methodology included a survey of the ANCA membership as well as in-depth interviews with nature center directors.

The current ANCA strategic plan includes the major strategy, "Become the Voice of the Profession." Before we take action on this strategy, we need feedback from the ANCA membership. As a start, we broke into focus groups at the 2014 Summit and asked the attendees, "what does ANCA as the Voice of the Profession mean to you?" We are in the process of compiling the discussions and while we will not be able to accomplish everything our members suggest, we will look for common threads and develop an action plan based on the commonalities that align with our overall strategic direction and are within our resource capabilities.

Finally, in response to requests from many of our "veteran members," we are in the process of

forming an ANCA Alumni Association. We partnered with Antioch University New England to work with an M.S. candidate, Andrea Wilkins, who researched retired professional associations and, after interviewing several retired ANCA members, made recommendations for an ANCA Retired Professional Association.

I want to share the following from Andrea's thesis; "Overall, it has been a joy to work with and to have the opportunity to talk with the very talented and altruistic group of individuals who make up its members. It is amazing to hear the dedication of these retired professionals and how they are committed to giving back to ANCA. I think a respondent put it best when they exclaimed, 'I think that the people who are moving forward in the organization and the emeritus people who are moving forward are the best combination for continued success of the organization.'"

In addition to Andrea's research, an informal meeting was conducted at the 2014 Beyond Boundaries Summit of the Emeritus Members in attendance to assess their interest and gather ideas for a retired association. I look forward to working with this group in the development of ANCAR (R for Retired!). Stay tuned for more on this exciting new program!

How can we help YOU? Please don't forget that the ANCA office is just a phone call away and we love to hear from our members. Please don't hesitate to call us at 435-787-8209 to share a success story, ask for help with a new challenge, or to connect with other members in the network for ideas, guidance, and support.



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# Networking:

## Mentor Program

The ANCA Mentor Program is designed to pair those ANCA members needing assistance (mentees) with more experienced ANCA members (mentors) who have the skills and experiences to address the mentees' questions and challenges. Mentoring is an exchange of knowledge between mentors and mentees that furthers the professional growth and success of both parties.

become a  
Mentor/Mentee

## Google Group

This forum is for people to share ideas, questions, challenges, and successes about the nature and environmental learning center profession. Anyone can join - you do not need to be a member of ANCA or Google. Many administrators from throughout the country use this service to post questions to other nature center professionals.



## LinkedIn

LinkedIn is like your online business card, as well as a resume and professional networking tool. While it can enhance your marketing and branding efforts, it is primarily helpful for personal development, learning and connections.



## ANCA's Mentor Program ~ It's a 2-Way Street

by: Amy Yeakel  
Extended Learning Coordinator  
Newfound Regional High School  
Bristol, NH

ANCA, like so many other organizations, is an ecosystem and as Barry Commoner said, "The first law of ecology is that everything is related to everything else." The mentor program is no exception. The connections, lessons, and networks link to many people, organizations, programs, and trends creating a web of life.

At the 2012 Summit held at the Chincoteague Bay Field Station I attended a session on the mentor program facilitated by Corky McReynolds and Ken Voorhis. I went to learn more about the program thinking I was at a point where I had experience to offer another nature center professional. But then the session got me thinking further and I concluded that yes, I was certainly ready and willing to be a mentor...but I NEEDED a mentor too!

I immediately approached Corky at the end of the session and he agreed to be my mentor. We were able to chat at that Summit and then continued for over a year and a half with helpful conversations and we also read a book about leadership together. One tool that Corky suggested was to make use of mind mapping strategies. He then suggested I read some information on-line and learn some background regarding the technique.

There are many ways to go about mind mapping including programs that just about do it for you. I am more hands-on, so I spent some time scribbling options with a sharpie on paper. Then I hung it on the wall and added and edited and a bit later I scanned it and sent it off to Corky. This technique was incredibly helpful for me. I am a visual person and arranging all my choices and options and the barriers to them, was very clarifying. The process really helped me to assess directions that I wanted to actively pursue and what was realistic given my other life parameters. But possibly the most rewarding result of this process was realizing that mind mapping would be very beneficial to my mentee. She in turn used the mind mapping technique. Given she is an artist hers was much more beautiful and reflected her talents and her love of nature. It was a classic example of the networks ANCA represents and facilitates.



Amy Yeakel and Corky McReynolds share a moment in their mentor/mentee relationship.

# Peer Consults:

ANCA offers professional expertise for addressing nature and environmental learning centers' issues. Since 1992, more than 100 nature centers from Alaska to Florida have benefitted from an ANCA Peer Consult.

With this unique service, a team of three to five seasoned nature center professionals, who have experience relevant to your situation, spend two days of intensive work at your center. They interview staff, meet with board members and stakeholders, inspect facilities, and engage in other activities important to your concerns. The Team then offers objective feedback and advice to you in an informal, dynamic, and respectful manner.

Each center faces unique issues. The consult host works with the ANCA staff and Consult Team Leader to identify key questions for the Team to address. Topics are

varied and have included starting a nature center, long-range and strategic planning preparation, organizational structure, facility and land use planning, board recruitment and training, review or brainstorming of education programs, exhibits, or interpretive trails, fundraising and fiscal management, and pretty much anything involved with running a successful center.

Organizations that host an ANCA Peer Consult receive the unique benefit of intense, focused input from nature center directors and senior staff from across the country. ANCA maintains a pool of more than 100 seasoned professionals from which your Consult Team will be selected.

We are currently accepting applications for our 2015 Consult Scholarships which will give a \$2,250 discounted fee to up to two awardees. **Click here** or see side bar for more information.



Not sure what direction to take? An ANCA Peer Consult can help you determine your path. (Canyonlands Field Institute Peer Consult - September 2013)

Ruffner Mountain  
Nature Center

*"We contacted the folks at ANCA and they pulled together some of the best people in this business on very short notice. The consulting team spent two full days in the park and provided a detailed written report within one month. The process was fun, the cost was reasonable, and the results are tangible - we are moving forward with a revised proposal based on the excellent advice we received from these experts."*

*Thanks to ANCA and its volunteer consultants for providing a very valuable service to our profession!"*

## Peer Consult Scholarships ~ applications now being accepted ~

The Association of Nature Center Administrators is offering up to two Peer Consults to qualified organizations for a reduced rate of \$1,000 plus Consult Team members' expenses. These consults are designed to promote greater success in the nature center profession and to assist organizations that may not otherwise be able to afford the full consult fee.

**Application deadline  
October 31st**

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## Thank You to our Business Members!

We are grateful for the financial support and expertise of our Business Members. We hope the ANCA membership will consider these businesses when they are in need of market resources.  
Please visit their websites to see what they have to offer!

### Platinum:

- GWWO Architects
- Markel Insurance Company

### Gold:

- Common Ground Distributors
- KidZibits
- Split Rock Studios
- Studio Outside

### Silver:

- Acorn Group & Acorn Naturalists
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- microEYE INTERACTIVE
- Nature Watch

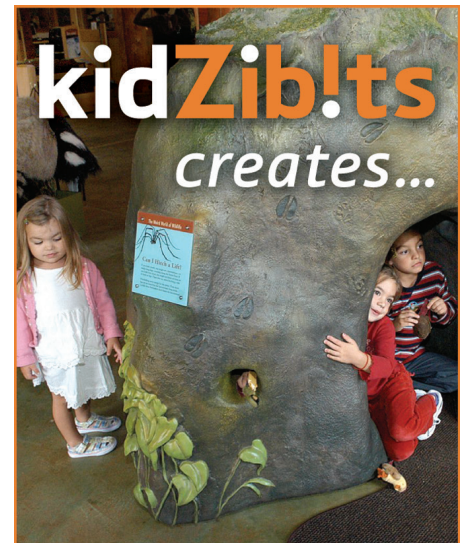
### Bronze:

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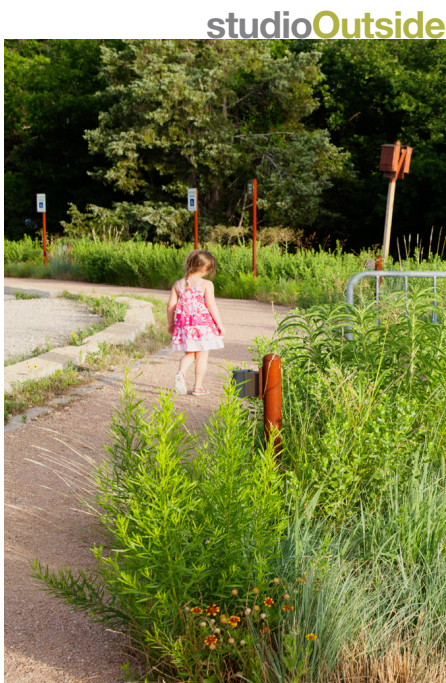
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# Meetings & Collaborations:

## Annual Summit

ANCA's Summits are held each summer at a nature center at various locations throughout the U.S. Summits are structured to bring nature and environmental learning center administrators together for information-sharing, mentoring, training, and professional networking. ANCA prides itself on offering a facilitated discussion format during the Summit, recognizing the tremendous value gained by sharing peer knowledge and experience of others in the field.

This year's Summit held at the Kalamazoo Nature Center in Michigan also hosted the Nature-Based Preschool Conference - a professional development opportunity for nature-based preschool teachers and administrators (see "Bright Ideas" on page 10).

Summit 2015 will be hosted by Elachee Nature Science Center in Gainesville, GA. Dates are Aug. 19-22 so mark your calendar now and save the dates!

## Regional Meetings

ANCA Regional Meetings are organized by an ANCA member organization and are designed to

offer peer-to-peer opportunities for professional development and networking within a geographic region. These meetings often include staff other than the top administrative staff and are typically one-day events. To date, eight regions have met - go here for more information on current and future meetings!

## Professional Leadership Institute

Do you operate a non-profit organization? Are you looking to grow your organization, network with colleagues, prepare for challenges, and focus your vision? Please join us at the Professional Leadership Institute (PLI), co-sponsored by the Delaware Nature Society and ANCA.

Since 1996, over 150 participants from across the nation have attended PLI. This year's Professional Leadership Institute at the Delaware Nature Society's Ashland Nature Center will be held January 13-17, 2015.

*Click here* for more program information.

## Residential Environmental Learning Center Gatherings

ANCA has helped support Residential Environmental Learning Center (RELC) gatherings since their beginning in 1996. The RELC gathering, offered biennially, brings together executive directors and education leadership staff from residential environmental learning centers from across North America. These centers share the unique challenges of running residential programs including finding, training and retaining staff; recruiting and preparing participants for multi-day overnight experiences; keeping budgets vibrant during challenging times; facility and food service maintenance and sustainability; program evaluation; and risk management. Sessions at the gatherings are open-space format which ensures conversations are of current interest and on target.

The 2015 RELC gathering will be held January 16-20 at the Pocono Environmental Education Center near Dingmans Ferry, PA. Learn more on page 9.

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...share successes and lessons learned from experience

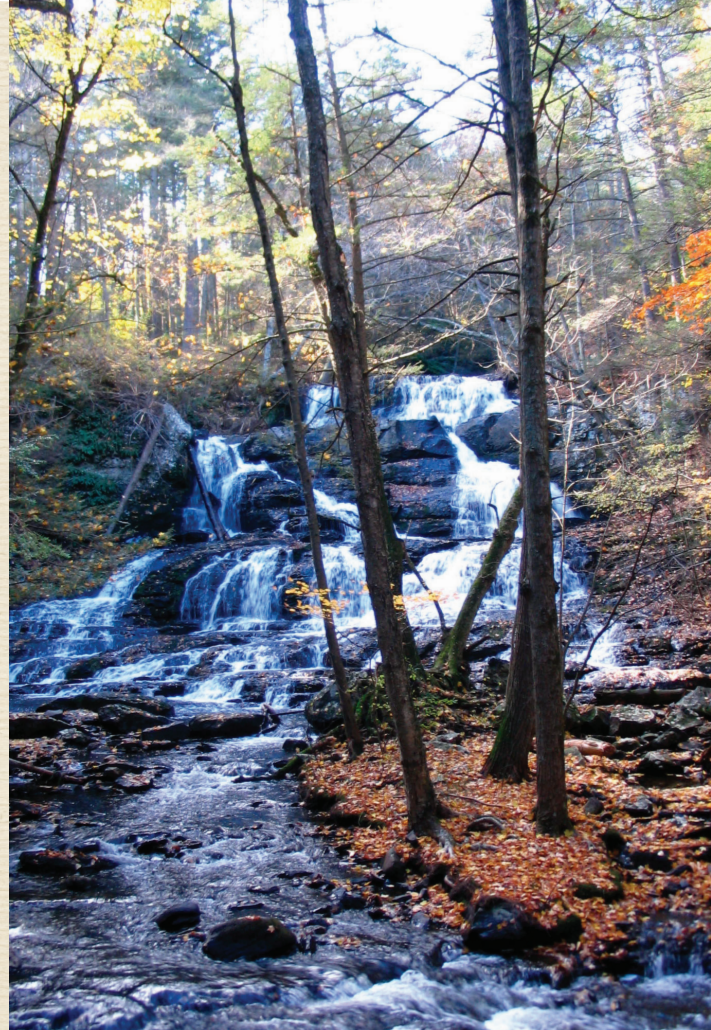
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**FRIDAY, JANUARY 16 – TUESDAY, JANUARY 20**

The Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) is proud to host the 2015 RELC Directors' Conference. This conference is a biennial gathering of residential environmental education center directors, program directors, and program coordinators. The RELC gathering advances residential environmental education through thoughtful exploration of current issues with a goal of increasing the effectiveness of current and next generation leaders.

The RELC Director's Conference uses a unique, highly successful format in which the topics for the workshops are jointly selected by the attendees during the initial Saturday night session.

PEEC has been an independent residential environmental education center and the education partner of the National Park Service in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DWGNRA) for over 40 years. PEEC's 38 acre campus is situated within the boundaries of the DWGNRA and includes

unique hemlock gorges, streams and ponds which feed the scenic Delaware River. Diverse lowland and upland forests, unique flora and fauna, rock formations containing 400 million year old fossils, ponds teeming with life, and habitat for over 265 species of birds are also found in the DWGNRA.

**Conference Registration Fee:**

\$295 includes all meals, accommodations, and conference registration. Please visit <http://peec.org/rele> to register online or download a PDF version for mailing. For more information, please call 570-828-2319 or email [peec@peec.org](mailto:peec@peec.org).

Offered with the support of ANCA, the Association of Nature Center Administrators



## Bright Ideas ~ Nature-Based Preschool Conference Brings Field Together

Natural Start Alliance  
Natural Start is a project of the North American Association for Environmental Education

For only the second time ever, a Nature-Based Preschool Conference designed specifically for educators and administrators of nature preschools was held this month in Kalamazoo, MI, in conjunction with the Association of Nature Center Administrators (ANCA) annual Summit.

The gathering was first hosted at Chippewa Nature Center's nature-based preschool in 2012. "It was so exciting to have this group of nature-based preschool folks back together," said Rachel Larimore, Director of Chippewa Nature Center's nature preschool and the conference's founder. "There's no question nature-based preschool teachers and administrators have unique professional development needs, and this conference is helping to meet those needs. I can't wait for the next one!"

Larimore and an advisory team of leaders in nature-based education came together to bring the conference back in 2014. The Natural Start Alliance provided funding to subsidize registration costs for educators.

In all, 65 educators and administrators from 19 states, 2 Canadian provinces, and the District of Columbia attended the gathering, where they networked, shared what's working in their schools, and brainstormed ways to

tackle challenges. The conference included peer-reviewed sessions, facilitated discussions, and tours of both Kalamazoo Nature Center's Nature's Way Preschool and the nearby Outdoor Discovery Center's Little Hawks Preschool.

Participants discussed everything from challenges, to working in inclement weather, to innovative ways to document and assess learning in outdoor learning environments, to addressing policy challenges in the field. The conference also included a panel discussion on innovative approaches to nature preschools, highlighting in particular nature centers who have partnered with local school districts and Head Start centers to offer communities new nature-based options in preschool.

A benefit to holding the conference in conjunction with the

ANCA Summit was that nature center administrators could attend both gatherings. "Combining the two groups really was a natural fit," explains Jenn Wright, Vice President for Education at the Kalamazoo Nature Center and a co-chair of the ANCA Summit. "Many nature preschools are part of nature centers so there is already cross-pollination happening. In addition, we have seen an increased interest from centers who are intrigued about the option of starting a school. By combining the two groups, we were able to serve both audiences through this inclusive opportunity. It really was a win-win!"

Stay tuned for more from the Natural Start Alliance on this gathering, nature preschools, and plans for the next Nature-Based Preschool Conference.



photo by Travis Williams

## Fellowship Brings International Flavor to Kalamazoo

Jeanne Gural  
Executive Director  
Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge  
Medford, NJ

I had the pleasure of meeting Cindy-Lee Cloete at this year's ANCA Summit. She attended the Nature-Based Preschool Conference as part of the Natural Start Alliance team, helping them with their work to bring environmental education to more infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Cindy joined Natural Start this summer as part of the Mandela Washington Fellowship program that brings a select group of young African Leaders to the United States to study and work with US agencies and organizations. The Fellows also participated in a summit at the White House, where they met with President and Mrs. Obama and other leaders.

I found her story compelling, and found her to be enthusiastic, realistic and committed. I could see the determination in her eyes when she was telling the story of how, in South Africa, conservation and natural history is something thought of for whites only, and usually rich whites only. At a young age, she realized how wrong this thinking was, as all people are affected by the environment and how close she and her family were living to the Earth. She now believes they—the black South African children and adults—should also be taught about their own natural history and ecology through environmental education, and that is how they will learn to care for it. She said they deal with life-and-death issues every day, from a young age, but that the natural environment can no longer be thought of as someone else's to take care of. She said that most of her family never considered the environment, as they thought the rich whites would always handle that, that it was not for them to worry about.

It was striking when she said this, as this is not something I've even considered. She then shared that one of her focus areas is young women. She said she wants to engage them in an inclusive environment so that young girls can feel comfortable being a part of a movement for the environment.

Her internship in DC is coming to a close, but I hope that her involvement with ANCA at the Summit will help her take home new ideas, as she plans to open her own center to get more people, most especially young women, out and learning. If you would like to connect with Cindy directly when she returns to South Africa, you can reach her via email at [cindylee@naturesvalleytrust.co.za](mailto:cindylee@naturesvalleytrust.co.za).



# Promotional Opportunities:

As a benefit to our members, ANCA offers several ways to promote member centers and programs. Join us as we spread the word about all of the great ways our members connect people with nature!

## Reciprocal Admissions Program

ANCA offers a reciprocal benefits program for members. If you choose to join this optional program your members can receive discounts at participating nature centers. You can download a pdf version of the Reciprocal Admissions Program List or an Excel spreadsheet (all are updated monthly). to share your successful programs with the ANCA community!

## Featured Photos

Put a face with your name. Submit a photo of your center to be featured in ANCA materials. Photos may be used in our quarterly newsletter, *Directions*, on the ANCA website, for social media posts, and in other ANCA communications. Credit will be given to the photographer and your center.

## Social Media Profiles

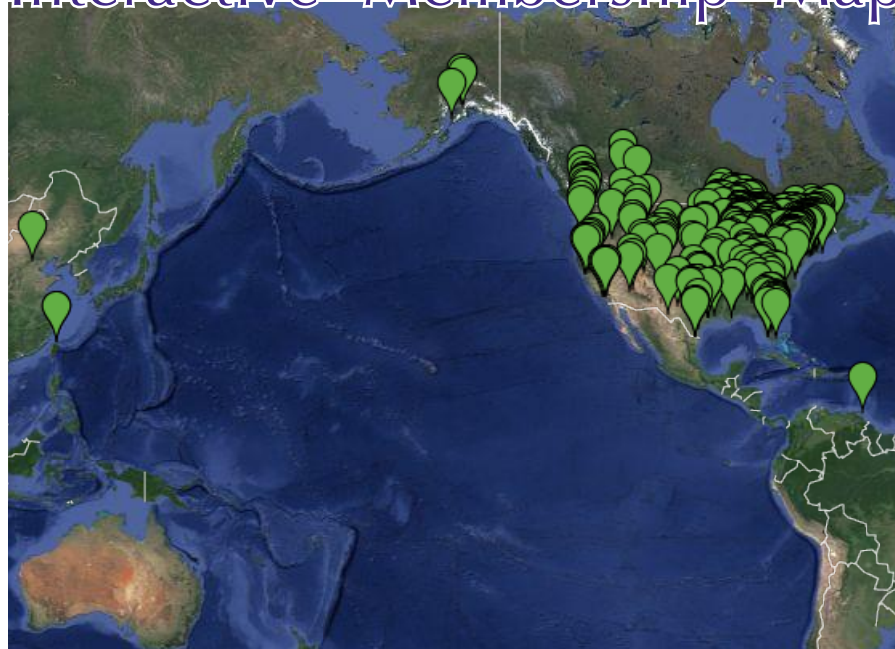
We want to profile your center! Contact us to have your center featured in a week-long profile on the ANCA Facebook and Twitter pages. This is a great opportunity to share your successful programs with the ANCA community!

Centers we have featured so far

## Online Resources for ANCA Members

- Archived issues of *Directions* newsletter from 2001-present
- Sample documents and resources including policies, procedures, guidelines, and job descriptions developed by your fellow ANCA members.

## Interactive Membership Map



Put your center on the map! Add photos or a video of your organization to your map pin and search for other ANCA members in your area.

- 25 Best Practices Tips. To acknowledge the sharing of best practices over the past 25 years, we are compiling “best practices” lists that present 25 Tips on a variety of management and leadership topics. Started in September 2013, we have now produced 13 outstanding tip sheets written by veteran nature center leaders.

include: Patterson Park Audubon Center, Howell Conference and Nature Center, Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, Trinity Audubon, Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge, Prairie Bus Ecology Tour, Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, The Wilderness Center, Tenafly Nature Preserve, Camp McDowell, Hitchcock Nature Center, Kalamazoo Nature Center, and Environmental Learning Center.

## Market Resources

Not only do these companies and organizations provide a wide range of products and services that relate to nature centers, environmental education, interpretation, and much more, they also help support ANCA and all our member services programs. See page 7 for a list and links to their websites.

working board, a national advisory council, ANCA members serving on committees, and a staff of three.

ANCA works hard to generate earned income (46% of our budget), and increase membership (24% of our budget). The remaining 30% of our income must come from contributions.

We have 25 years under our belts and are looking to the next 25. Our plans include the publication of additional monographs, to increase the number of and the scope of activities in our regional networks, to explore electronic formats for our publications, and increase the amount of funding available for Peer Consult and Summit scholarships.

ANCA is an organization of people who deeply care about the environment, nature centers, and the people who manage nature centers. We are all in this together. You are on the front lines and ANCA is here to help you. In celebration of this anniversary milestone, we are asking every member to make a donation to ANCA. We are going to work for 100% participation.

We have an ambitious goal of \$50,000 and it will take all of us working together to make this happen. The first \$32,000 will go to annual operating and the remainder to the endowment. ANCA's endowment is valued at \$205,000 and the annual distribution supports our programs and services. By helping us build the endowment you help to build sustainable funding for ANCA's future and move our strategic plan forward.

Celebrate 25 years of service to you and help ANCA set the

stage for the next 25 years. Help us make a statement to funders with 100% participation from our members. Please consider making a donation of \$25 or more.

Why give to ANCA? We asked four of our members, Pat Welch, Paul Tebbel, Shannon Forsythe, and Jeff Lamontagne, why they give to ANCA.

Tell us about your ANCA experience so far what encouraged you to donate?

Pat: I have been involved with ANCA for a very long time and I think my first gift to ANCA was at the 1997 Summit in Jamestown, New York when David Junkin donated \$10,000 as a matching challenge. We matched his donation that night!!

Every year since then, I have made a donation to ANCA and am proud to be an annual Ever Green Society donor. Why did I give and continue to give? Throughout my career, ANCA members, their knowledge, passion, vision and commitment to our profession, have continually inspired me. I have received great advice, found shoulders to lean on when needed, and learned from the best. I give because I want to support an organization that has been an important part of my life for 25 years and I give because I want to make sure that ANCA inspires, advises, supports and provides professional development to the next generation of leaders.

Paul: I have been part of ANCA off and on for almost 20 years. My fellow ANCA members have been my best trainers and mentors throughout my career. And I

hope I have provided the same for others. Until now, my efforts have been as a board member, presenter, and flag waver for ANCA. Now I am in a position to give more.

Shannon: I joined ANCA when I accepted my current position and by far, ANCA Summits have provided my most valuable professional development experiences so far. Our nature center is one part of a much larger agency with a multi-faceted mission (in other words I work with a lot of non-nature folks!). I think because of that, ANCA is even more valuable to me as a network of like-minded peers and mentors since I don't necessarily have that type of network at my agency.

Jeff: The 'Old Guard' at the Summit, being there to help involve others, was quite noticeable. I have a natural resources degree and law degree and went into environmental consulting. My second career was over a decade long and now I really want to get back to environmental work, environmental education, and making a difference. I got my current job three years ago and was encouraged to go to the ANCA Summit and I did! I felt like I was talking with people that have gone through the same issues I was going through and I wasn't alone struggling with this sense of isolation. I gave money because I understand and deeply appreciate the importance of a modest donation back to the organization that nurtures professionals. It is my personal contribution.

What Best Management Practices has ANCA provided for you?

Pat: Just being constantly reminded by ANCA that we aspire to best practices has had a huge impact on me. The values of continuous improvement and seeking the highest standard are core to the ANCA culture. The mantra of “best practices” reminds us as leaders to strive for quality and to search for models of excellence.

Paul: My favorite best management practices from ANCA have always been fundraising skills. Every Summit I’ve attended included excellent fundraising presentations, and I come back to work inspired to keep trying new ideas while continuing to do the fundamentals to the best of my ability.

Shannon: I have a stack of the Best Practices guides on my desk, so what guidance to best practices hasn’t ANCA provided!?

How does ANCA sharpen your leadership skills?

Pat: The professional development provided by ANCA is extremely valuable, I have learned a lot from the ANCA Summits and publications. But priceless is the opportunity to interact with outstanding leaders and learn from their example. I have learned tremendous lessons by watching colleagues in action, discussing successes and failures, and discussing different approaches to common challenges. No organization does this better than ANCA!

Paul: The people who provide

ANCA Summit programs all focus excellent energy on building their staff. Being a good leader is about empowering those who work for you and ANCA believes in that.

Shannon: When I attend a Summit, I always leave feeling more confident in my ability to lead and that I’m at least on the right track. This group is full of successful leaders and a wealth of knowledge and experience, and I have found that every person I have spoken with is so willing to share and discuss nearly anything! While developing leadership skills takes individual growth and experience, it is beyond helpful to have a network of strong leaders to learn from.

Jeff: Emphasis on professional development and workshops that spoke to me as a manager. I have had a lack of these types of opportunities and now feel more certain and confident in my comments during meetings and staff related issues.

Anything else you want to share with us?

Pat: I highly recommend volunteering to serve on an ANCA committee or help with a specific task. It is one way of saying “thank you” to an organization that benefits us so much. It is also a great way to continue learning, to interact with other ANCA members on a different level, and a wonderful way to invest in ANCA’s future. I have to say that my volunteer work for ANCA has been some of the most rewarding experiences of my career and I have learned and gained so much more than I have ever contributed.

Paul: It is wonderful seeing the past directors and leaders of ANCA staying involved in the organization. The energy and presence of these dedicated individuals, which truly helps to push ANCA to be better and better.

Shannon: We recently had a change in administration at our agency, and I’m ecstatic that our new directors are very supportive of our mission and want to see us grow and succeed. We’re working on a strategic plan on the agency level and then will move towards master planning for the nature center, and I’m sure I will be turning to ANCA members for guidance, and possibly look for a Peer Consult to help us move in the right direction.

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# Peer Consults - We know the business. We're in it too!

ANCA offers consulting assistance to nature centers and other environmental education organizations at very reasonable rates.

The cost includes transportation, lodging, and meals for the team, plus a \$3,250 fee that goes toward supporting ANCA's professional services. Our board of directors and members provide these services with no personal financial gain, while you gain the advantage of advice and guidance from some of the profession's most respected and experienced leaders.

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- Fundraising and fiscal management
- Green building
- Exhibits
- Starting a center
- Organizational structure

## Join the Team!

ANCA's Consult Services are a success because of it's members' participation on Consult Teams. Please consider sharing your experiences and lessons learned.

Consult Team members donate their time but all expenses are paid. Participating in a Consult is a great way to see other parts of the country, learn about other nature centers, and take home valuable knowledge for your own center.

So don't delay!!!

PLEASE fill out the skills survey in the Member's Section on ANCA's website at [www.natctr.org](http://www.natctr.org).

To find out more about ANCA's Peer Consults contact:

Ann Rilling  
Marketing & Communications Director  
970-375-7090  
[arilling@natctr.org](mailto:arilling@natctr.org)

# ANCA Membership - a Great Investment in the Profession

## Who Should Join ANCA?

The Association of Nature Center Administrators is intended to serve professionals who provide the vision and leadership to carry out the development and administration of an environmental learning center's mission, goals, and objectives.

Although most members are center directors, other senior staff will find it valuable for their own work and career development.

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- Networking with Nature Center Professionals
- Free job postings on ANCA's web site

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The ANCA Business Membership and Summit Sponsorship Programs allow businesses to be part of the ANCA community on many different levels.

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Please contact Ann Rilling, Marketing & Communications Director for more information:

[arilling@natctr.org](mailto:arilling@natctr.org)  
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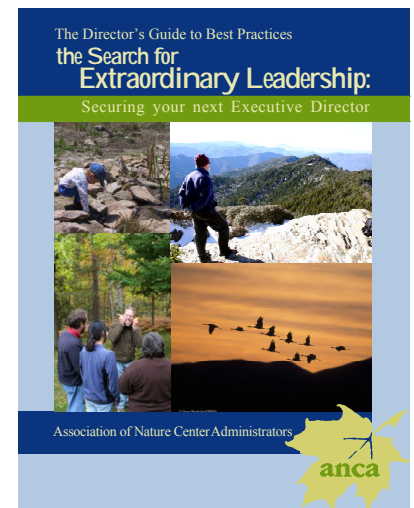
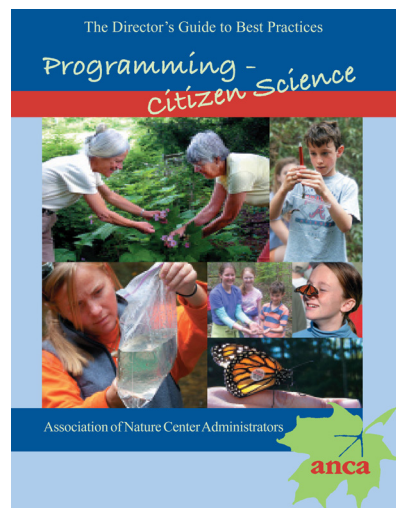
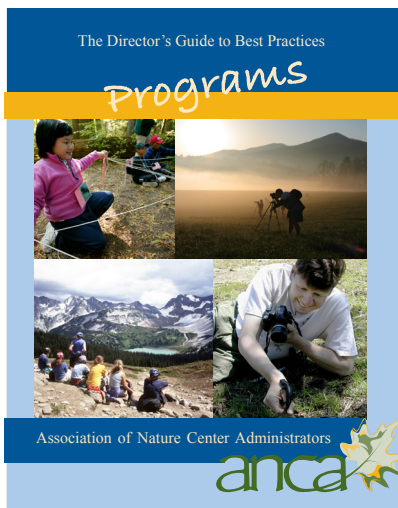


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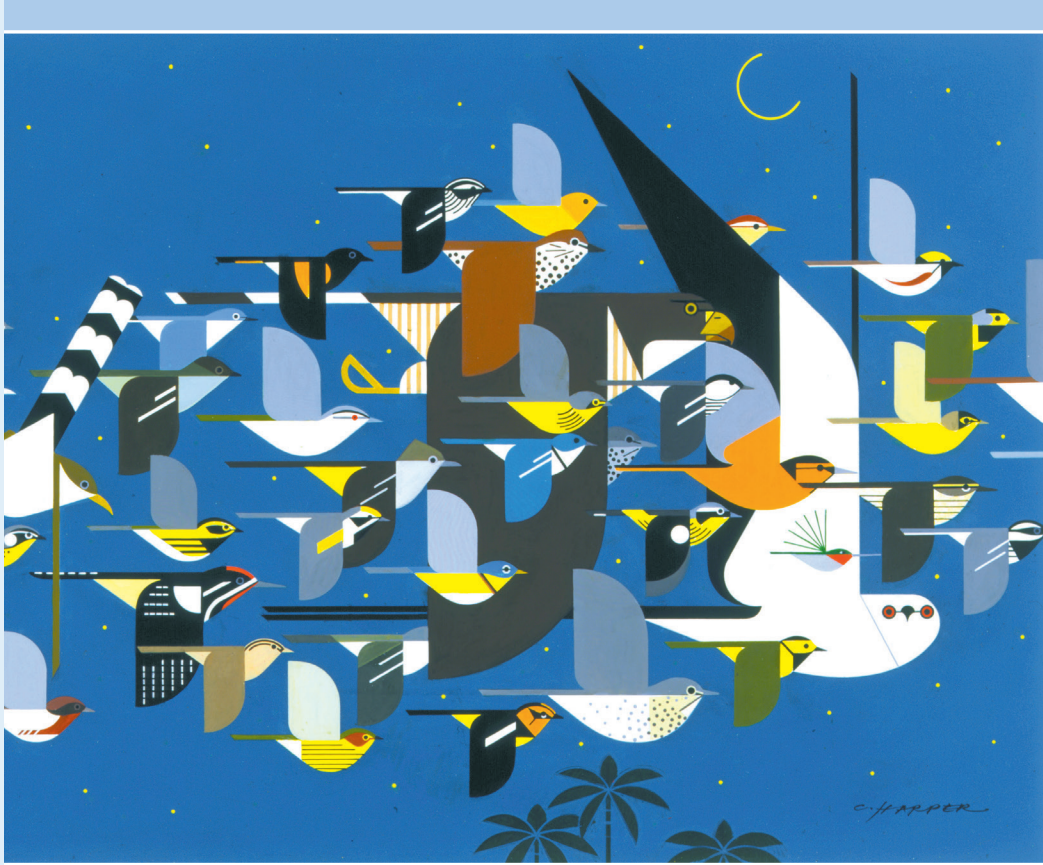
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