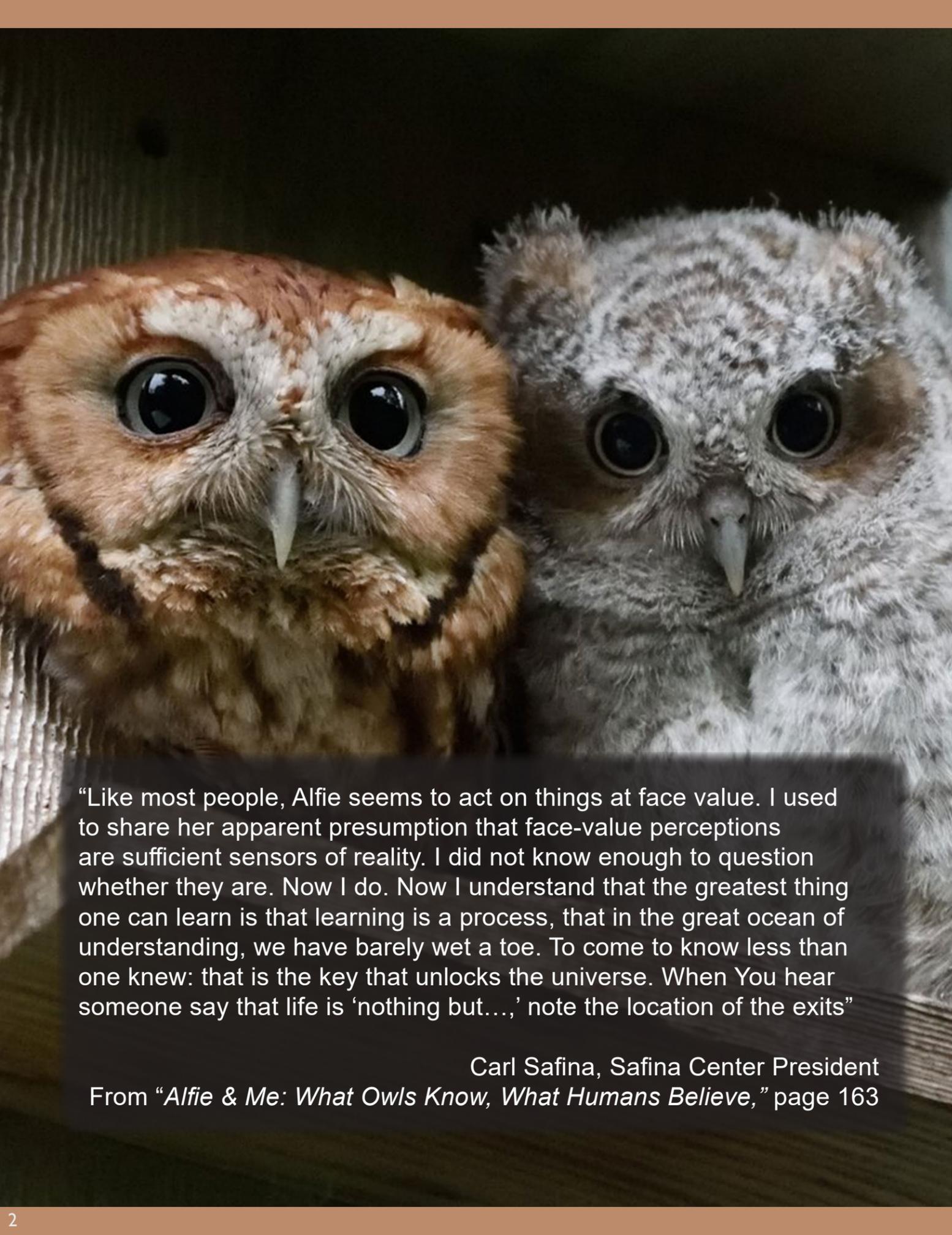




**2023 ANNUAL
REPORT
THE SAFINA CENTER**



“Like most people, Alfie seems to act on things at face value. I used to share her apparent presumption that face-value perceptions are sufficient sensors of reality. I did not know enough to question whether they are. Now I do. Now I understand that the greatest thing one can learn is that learning is a process, that in the great ocean of understanding, we have barely wet a toe. To come to know less than one knew: that is the key that unlocks the universe. When You hear someone say that life is ‘nothing but...,’ note the location of the exits”

Carl Safina, Safina Center President

From “*Alfie & Me: What Owls Know, What Humans Believe,*” page 163

The Safina Center

Mission

At the Safina Center we advance the case for life on Earth by fusing scientific understanding, emotional connection, and a moral call to action. We create an original blend of science, art, and literature in the form of award-winning books and articles, scientific research, photography, films, sound-art, and spoken words. We bear first-hand witness and then we speak up, we speak out, and we teach.

Our work is designed to inspire and engage others to devote their time and energies to conservation of wild things and wild places. Our creative works have proven their power to change people’s lives and their view of the world.

The Safina Center is a 501(c)3 nonprofit based on Long Island, N.Y., on Setauket Land.

Contents

Founder’s Message	4
Our Approach	5
What We Do	6
Our Founding	6
Remembering Our Supporters	7
Who We Are	8
Year in Review	14
Making Waves	17
Highlight	20
Alfie & Me	22
Fellow Spotlight	24
Praise for the Safina Center	25
Financials	26
Help Us Do What We Do	27
Our Generous Donors	28
Donor Spotlight	30
Chairman’s Message	31
Credits	31

Founder's Message

Values Drive Everything by Carl Safina

One day this spring my stepdaughter looked out the window and thought our Long Island house was on fire. Not far away I was at The Safina Center office, trying to see the sun. When Alexandra phoned me, it had to count as a “relief” that it wasn’t our house that was burning—it was Canada. That’s how far we’ve slipped.

I had three thoughts. One: didn’t my generation owe more to Alexandra’s than to hand her a world on fire? Two: What about all the birds, the most aerobic of all creatures, who needed to spend the day foraging for their babes in their nests, not gasping through the air that was rasping my own lungs? Three: This event made the Clean Air Act completely beside the point. We are overwhelming what had been our own safeguards.

Before the end of August when I wrote this, six thousand Canadian wildfires had burned more than 34 million acres in Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, and Nova Scotia. In the U.S., more than 39 thousand wildfires had burned about two million acres.

Then came Maui.

I’ve read that many people refuse to make a connection between the accelerating intensity and duration of these fires and the dryness caused by climate warming. Today I read something related: groundwater supplies are dropping across much of the U.S., already affecting yields of crops such as corn. “There’s almost no way to convey how important it is,” Don Cline, associate director for water resources at the United States Geological Survey, told The New York Times.

Actually there are many ways of conveying how important these things are. The problem is, many people are not open to the message. They’ve been taught to be closed. Everyone does what their values lead them to do. And all our systems deliver on the values that built them. Where there are problems, the underlying problem is: values.

The Safina Center addresses our values regarding nature and the environment in ways unlike any other organization. Our excellent staff and phenomenal fellows understand that if you can make people feel, they will come around to listening. Our multi-award-winning written works, photography, films, and speaking have in common our passion to engage people.

My own main work this year, my new book *“Alfie and Me: What Owls Know, What Humans Believe,”* is a book about what’s possible when we blur the boundaries between humans and the rest of the world. The book braids the very sweet story of our raising and release of an orphan owl who gets a wild mate and raises her own family in our backyard, with an exploration of how people in other cultures across the globe from ancient times to now have viewed the human place in nature and the world. Doing the research, I was repeatedly stunned at how much the ancient past influences our present ways of thinking and doing. Yes the book’s about owls, but, like all our work here, it’s also about values.



Carl Safina in Uganda © Carl Safina

Our Approach



Amy, James Brown, and Erik Callender at Rescate Wildlife Center just after completing four wildlife awareness sessions with 20 classrooms at IS 73 Middle School in Maspeth, New York. ©Erik Callender



Belén García Ovide and Marianne Rasmussen on their way to sample eDNA for the first time in Iceland as part of project eWHALE. ©Marianne Rasmussen

The Safina Center is unique amongst most environmental non-profits for its creative approach in inspiring hearts and minds. Our global and diverse team creates literature, films, visual art, music, educational content, research projects, and more, all with the goals of influencing the minds of those who are indifferent towards the injustices committed to the world’s wildlife, environment and people.

Our purpose is nothing less than making a case for life on Earth.



Amy Gulick recites her poem, “Fade,” from I Sing the Salmon Home (Empty Bowl, 2023). Amy’s photographs are on display behind her, part of “Honor: People and Salmon,” an exhibit by Northwest Artists Against Extinction. ©Holly Hughes.



Alain Rasolo sketches the Andregna waterfalls as the sun peeks out above the canopy. This year, he opened his art gallery at the Ranomafana National Park. ©Alain Rasolo

What We Do

People cannot engage in issues unless they see solutions. We shed light on solutions to the world's most pressing problems. We are guides and thought leaders. We spread hope and resilience in the face of human-induced climate change, biodiversity loss, and the decay of wild places by spreading the creative works of our team and answering the nagging question,

“What can I do?”

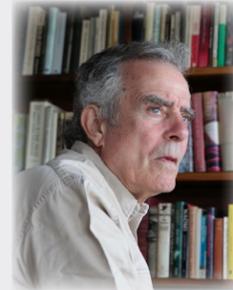
Our Fellows program supports and propels world-recognized writers, artists, photographers, filmmakers, and podcasters. Perhaps more importantly, our Launchpad (early-career) Fellows are — with your help — launching professional careers that will carry their important work into the coming decades.

We are pleased to have a wide circle of Creative Affiliates, highly accomplished and exceptionally creative people who share and amplify one another's messages and work, and the work of the Safina Center.

Our Founding

The Safina Center was founded by New York Times bestselling author and MacArthur “Genius Fellowship” winning ecologist Dr. Carl Safina in 2003, alongside Mercédès Lee, Mayra Mariño, and Carrie Brownstein. Carl Safina holds the inaugural Endowed Research Chair for Nature and Humanity at Stony Brook University.

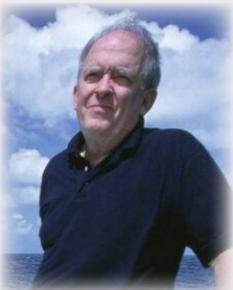
Remembering Our Supporters



John (Jack)
Macrae III

Carl Safina's longtime editor, Jack was a towering figure in publishing and a powerful international advocate for freedom and free expression. He worked with Lech Walesa and Václav Havel and traveled to Cuba and Iran on human rights missions. Jack changed Carl Safina's life and career by publishing (for Henry Holt Co.) his first book (and most of his others) and was a close friend and co-conspirator for 28 years.

Roger Payne's co-discovery that humpback whales sing changed the public perception of whales and turned the tide in the fight to end commercial whale hunting. Roger spent his early career researching acoustic perception in bats and owls and studying Southern Right Whales. Roger was a powerful force for whale well-being, and a friend of our Center. Roger spoke with Carl on the phone on the day he passed.



Roger Payne



Kenneth
Balcomb

Ken Balcomb devoted his life to whales and spent most of his career studying the Southern Resident orcas of the Pacific Northwest. He was a staunch and widely looked-to advocate of fishing restrictions and the removal of dams to reverse the declines of the salmon that the whales rely on. Ken is a key figure in Carl Safina's book *Beyond Words*.

Dagmar O'Connor, mother of Safina Center board chair Eric Graham, was a pioneering sex therapist and author. Dr. O'Connor was Director of Sex Therapy at St. Luke Roosevelt Hospital, a Lecturer at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, and a director of training at New York Medical College. She pioneered group therapy for women who have been sexually abused. Dr. O'Connor was featured at the World Economic Forum and on Donahue, The Oprah Show, and many others.



Dagmar
O'Connor, PhD

Who We Are

Staff



CARL SAFINA
Founding President



MAYRA MARIÑO
Business Manager



DR. KATHARINE THOMPSON
Fellows Program Manager



LOUIS PAGILLO
Media Manager

Creative Affiliates

We are pleased to have a wide circle of **Creative Affiliates**, highly accomplished and exceptionally gifted creators who share and amplify one another's messages and work, and the work of the Safina Center and our fellows.



ISABELLA ROSSELLINI
Model, Actress, Filmmaker, &
Farmer
New York | USA



JANE ALEXANDER
Actress, Writer, &
Conservationist
Nova Scotia | Canada



JON BOWERMASTER
Writer, Filmmaker, &
Adventurer
New York | USA



DR. KATHLEEN DEAN MOORE
Philosopher, Environmental
Advocate, & Writer
Oregon & Alaska | USA



LINDA LEAR
Biographer &
Environmental Historian
Maryland & South Carolina | USA



DR. LORI MARINO
Neuroscientist & Animal
Behavior Expert
Utah | USA



LUANNE RICE
Novelist
Connecticut | USA



PAUL WINTER
Musician & Musical Adventurer
New York | USA

Senior Fellows

ALASKA • ONTARIO • SOUTH CAROLINA • NEW YORK • HAWAII • TORONTO • COLOMBIA

To accelerate the creation of exceptional and transformative work, our **Senior Fellowship** helps support a small group of hand-picked distinctive leaders for three years, and our In-Residence Fellows for longer.



Amy Gulick
Senior Fellow, Alaska & Washington | USA

Award winning photographer and writer, and a founding Fellow of the International League of Conservation Photographers.

Hob Osterlund
Conservationist-in-Residence, Hawaii | USA

Founder of the Kaua'i Albatross Network, author, and documentary producer.



Dani Khan Da Silva
Senior Fellow, Ontario | Canada

Award-winning documentary photographer, director, and leader. Founder and Executive Director of Photographers Without Borders.



Jacqueline L. Scott
Senior Fellow, Toronto | Canada

Writer and PhD candidate at the University of Toronto researching the perception of the wilderness in Black immigration.



Kike Calvo
Senior Fellow, Colombia & USA

Award-winning photographer, writer and children's author. Founder of Colombia Photo Expeditions.



Erik Callender
Senior Fellow, New York | USA

Educator, children's author, and television host. Founder and host of the PBS children's television series "*Menghayati!*"



Paul Greenberg
Writer-in-Residence, New York | USA

New York Times bestselling award-winning author of six books on the environment and technology.



Launchpad Fellows

ICELAND • MADAGASCAR • KENYA • USA

Our **Launchpad Fellowship** is designed to kickstart projects undertaken by promising young venture-level talent, helping launch early careers and create an affiliation of like-minded kindred spirits. The fellowship honors Kalpana Chawla, a dynamic, nature-loving astronaut who perished aboard the space shuttle Columbia in 2003. After her passing, her family established an endowment to The Safina Center to be used for this purpose. The Launchpad Fellows carry on the conservation ethic of Kalpana through their work.

Belén Garcia Ovide
Húsavík | Iceland

Marine scientist, guide, sailor, and ocean conservationist. Researches whales and ocean plastics while inspiring others through ecotourism sailing trips.



Katlyn Taylor
Hawaii & California | USA

Whale watching guide and marine biologist. Podcast host sharing stories about whales and oceans.

Jasmin Graham
Florida | USA

Shark scientist focused on ecology and evolution. Environmental educator and President and CEO of Minorities in Shark Sciences.



Alain Rasolo
Toamasina | Madagascar

Wildlife artist focused on showcasing Madagascar's rich biodiversity through painting, travel sketchbooks, and comics.



Eliza Milio
California | USA

Organic farmer, environmental educator, and conservation specialist focused on sustainable agriculture and climate awareness.



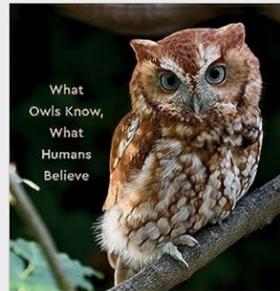
Alex Chege
Lamu Archipelago | Kenya

Photographer and PhD candidate studying the evolutionary history and ecology of coastal primates through Stony Brook University.



Year in Review

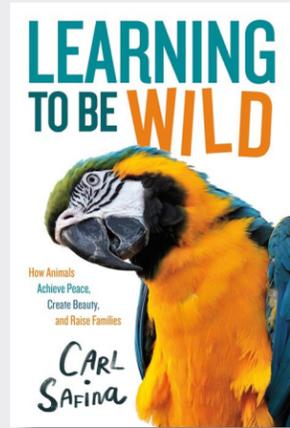
Books



Alfie & Me
Carl Safina

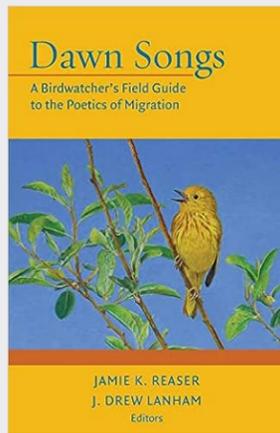
Carl Safina's most recent book about raising, then releasing an orphaned owl and the relationships between humanity, nature and the world.

Published in hardcover by W.W. Norton, October 2023.



An adaptation of Carl Safina's 2021 book and New York Times "Book of the Year" *"Becoming Wild"*, aimed towards younger readers.

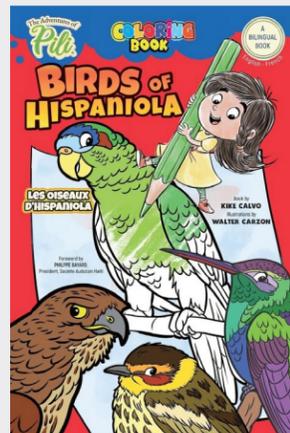
Published in hardcover by Roaring Brook Press, August 2023



Dawn Songs
A Birdwatcher's Field Guide to the Poetics of Migration

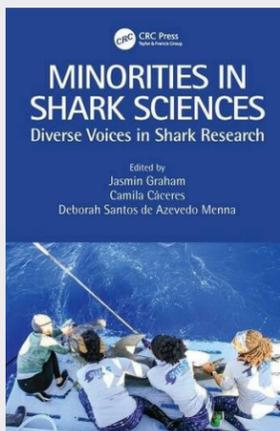
An anthology of poems and essays featuring over 60 writers, edited by J. Drew Lanham and Jamie K. Reaser. It explores the intersection of humans and nature through birdwatching.

Published in paperback by Talking Water Press, January, 2023.



A new entry in Kike Calvo's dual-language children's book series *"Adventures of Pili."* Available in English and French, and Creole and French versions.

Published by Blurb, March 2023.



MINORITIES IN SHARK SCIENCES
Diverse Voices in Shark Research

A showcase of the work done by BIPOC people in shark sciences and conservation. Edited by Jasmin Graham, Camila Cáceres, and Deborah Santos de Azevedo Menna.

Published in paperback and hardcover by CRC Press, November, 2022.



Hob Osterlund captures the beauty of the avian species at the Kilauea Point Wildlife Refuge, from Hawaiiin natives to seasonal migratory birds.

Published in hardcover by Impact Photographics, 2023

Education



The Amani Children's Home, founded by Safina Center Fellows Program Manager Kate Thompson, supports and inspires the scientific and creative spirits of children and teenagers in Northern Tanzania ©Kate Thompson



Katlyn Taylor distributed 450 copies of Carl Safina's children's book *"Nina Del Mar and the Great Whale Rescue"* around Monterey County, California, where the story takes place. ©Katlyn Taylor



Jasmin Graham is the president of Minorities in Shark Sciences, which hosts regular classes for local students, a summer camp, and field workshops. Jasmin hosts PBS' *"Sharks Unknown."* ©Cassie Wegeng

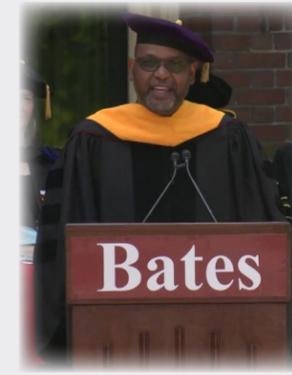
Events



Jacqueline L. Scott presents the "Take Me Outside" Keynote Presentation at the National Outdoor Learning Conference 2023. ©TakeMeOutsideCanada



Carl Safina presents "Animal Minds and Cultures" at Wild Dolphin Project's sixth annual Wild Ocean Science event on February 25th, 2023. He's joined by Miles O'Brien and Dr. Denise Herzing. ©Sandra Effertz



J. Drew Lanham presents the commencement address at the Bates College 2023 commencement. ©Bates College

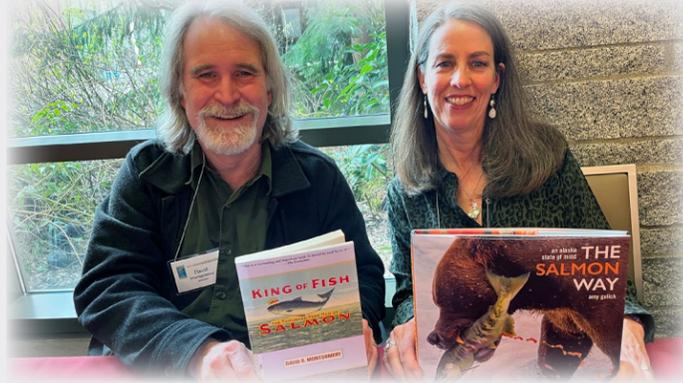
Our work is designed to inspire and engage people to devote their time and energies to the conservation of wild things and wild places.

Outreach



Jasmin Graham
CO-FOUNDER, MINORITIES IN SHARK SCIENCE

Jasmin Graham featured on CNN for her work as the co-founder and president of Minorities in Shark Sciences. ©CNN



Amy Gulick shares the stage with Dr. David Montgomery at the Turning the Tide for Ecology Catholic Earth Day Summit at Creation Care Network at Seattle University. ©Amy Gulick



Katlyn Taylor hosts the Whale Nerds, a weekly educational podcast focused on whales and our world's oceans. ©WhaleNerds



Paul Greenberg moderating a conversation with Patagonia's Yvon Chouinard and Commissioner of Public Lands for Washington State Hilary Franz. ©Ilienferno Productions



Dani Khan Da Silva's story about indigenous knowledge and orcas featured on the front page of Canada's Globe & Mail. ©Dani Khan Da Silva



Hob Osterlund's photograph of a female Laysan Albatross pair featured as one of the "Favorite Female Bird Shots From the 2023 Audubon Photography Awards." ©Hob Osterlund

Making Waves

Complicated problems require creative solutions. The Safina Center's staff responds with just that. We show what's at stake in ways that deliver emotional impact. We don't just inform people; we transform people. This page highlights a sampling of products and activities that the Safina Center has engaged in this year.



"All these genetic clues can bring us closer to understanding how whales live and how a fast changing environment is affecting their lives, to raise awareness and find ways to protect them.

I am excited to embark on this new scientific journey and explore new ways to contribute to the protection of our beloved underwater world on which we all depend."

*- Belén García Ovide,
"The Underwater World in a Drop of Seawater"*

◀ Belén García Ovide preparing to take water samples from a whale fluke print in Iceland's waters. As part of the eWHALE project, Ovide collects samples of seawater to test for environmental DNA, which can provide details about specific whales, species, families and even diets. ©Marianne Rasmussen



▲ Belén García Ovide and Bettina Thaling preparing the filters for the sea water filtration ©Marianne Rasmussen

ALAIN RASOLO

Public Works

Opened art gallery at Ranomafana National Park, Madagascar



Art gallery at the entrance of Ranomafana National Park in Madagascar ©Alain Rasolo

ALEX CHEGE

Photography

Produced and published the “Intertidal Zone” photo series, highlighting coastal ecosystems

BELÉN GARCIA OVIDE

Conservation

eDNA surveillance with the eWHALE project

Assisted in Skjálfandi Bay, Eyjafjörður and Grímsey Island’s designation as a Mission Blue “Hope Spot”

Assisted in the creation of the Skjálfandi Marine Protection Group

Events

Conservation in Iceland presentation - Explorer’s Club

Spring and Hope Exhibitions with Ocean Missions

“Island SOS: Iceland - Citizen Science on the Seas” - BUEI Talks

KATLYN TAYLOR

Writing and Podcasting

Editor for Wild Monterey Bay

Hosts “WhaleNerds” podcast

Events

WhaleNerds Del Monte beach cleanup event

WhaleNerds Spring Monterey Bay whale watching tour

JASMIN GRAHAM

Education

Minorities in Shark Sciences second annual summer camp

Minorities in Shark Sciences spring break camp

Over 100 new users on Gill Guardians learning program

Television and Video

Director of “Sharks Unknown with Jasmin Graham” on PBS Terra

Interviews

“This nonprofit is making waves for more diversity in shark science” - CNN feature

“Young scientists working to diversify marine biology field” - Scripps News feature

Events

“Gill Guardians: An Elasmobranch Conservation and Education Hub” virtual presentation - Save Our Seas Distinguished Speaker Series

KIKE CALVO

Books

“The Girl who Planted a Forest” - launch of the new bilingual “Adventures of Luna” children’s book series

Multiple free indigenous language audiobooks on YouTube

Multiple bilingual book releases in the “Adventures of Pili” series

Activism and Education

Tour Guide for Colombia Photo Expeditions’ “Corpus Christi” expedition

Thousands of books donated and distributed throughout Colombia, Melanesia, Haiti and more



Kike Calvo reads to children of former members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. ©Kike Calvo

JACQUELINE L. SCOTT

Events

“Race and Space Walks” presentation - York Region District School Board.

“Race and Nature for Outdoor Educators” presentation - Outdoor Learning Store.

“Take Me Outside” Keynote address - 2023 Outdoor Learning Conference.

“Built it Black” presentation - Black in Environment Week.

“Sociology of the Environment and Social Justice” presentation - University of Toronto, Dept. of Sociology.

“Race and Space in Marine Conservation” presentation - Ocean Wise.

Writing

Continuation of regular articles on “Black Outdoors” blog

“Uncovering the Black History of 10 Ontario Rivers” - The Narwhal

Interviews

“Decolonize your garden” - The Conversation

“It’s only natural Jacqueline L. Scott would be out there removing barriers” - National Observer

Interviewed on CBC Radio

AMY GULICK

Exhibitions

9 month showing of “Salmon Way: an Alaska State of Mind” exhibit at the Seattle Aquarium

“Honor: People and Salmon” exhibit at Kittredge Gallery, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA and Patagonia, Seattle, WA

Salmon Walk outdoor interpretive exhibit, Ketchikan, AK.

Events and Presentations

“The Salmon Way: An Alaska State of Mind,” Keynote presentation - American Fisheries Society Conference

“The Salmon Way: An Alaska State of Mind,” Keynote presentation - 2023 Catholic Earth Day Summit

“The Salmon Way: An Alaska State of Mind” North to Alaska Presenter Series, Princess Cruises

“Photography for Conservation” presentations to two photography classes hosted by the University of Washington

Writing

“Heart of the Wilderness: Finding Peace in the Present” - Denali Dispatch

Interviews and Features

“Amy Gulick, The Salmon Way” - Save What You Love Podcast with Mark Titus

Podcast Interview - Outdoor Adventure Series Podcast.

Photography featured in “The New Big 5: A Global Photography Project for Endangered Wildlife”

Activism

Amy’s work inspired EPA decision to use the Clean Water act to block Pebble Mine

Amy’s work inspired U.S. Department of Agriculture’s decision to restore Roadless Rule protections to more than 9 million acres of the Tongass National Forest

HOB OSTERLUND

Books and Photography

“Birds of Kilauea Point” book released

Photograph honored as one of Audubon’s favorite female bird photos of 2023

Radio

Host of “Manu Mondays” on KKCR radio

Conservation

Assisted in the launch of the Kauai Wildlife Coalition

Continuous conservation and monitoring efforts across Kauai



Hob Osterlund, founder of the Kaua’i Albatross Network, with a Laysan albatross ©Hob Osterlund

DANI KHAN DA SILVA

Education

Teacher - Photographers Without Borders’ “Storytelling School Colombia” expedition.

Writing and Photography

“Kayah and the Orcas” featured in The Globe and Mail

Film

Filmed and Presented Patagonia’s “We are the Water”

ERIK CALLENDER

Events

Presentation at Green Chimney’s “Birds of Prey Day”

Television and Video

Host of the “Species Adventures” YouTube channel

Filmed and produced “Menghayati!” with PBS

PAUL GREENBERG

Writing

“The Case For Making Earth Day a Religious Holiday” - TIME, with Carl Safina

“Zero to Jackrabbit: Taking on a Legendary Adirondack Trail” - Adirondack Life

“Our City Could be one of the World’s Greenest, But it Won’t Be Easy.” - New York Times Opinion, with Gernot Wagner

“Embrace the Nonna State.” - Back 40/Food and Environment Reporting Network

“My High School Haters.” - The Atlantic

“What Gen X Really Learned from Charlie the Tuna.” - AARP The Arrow

Continuation of regular essays on personal Medium Blog

Events and Interviews

“Four Fish: The Future of the Last Wild Food” presentation at NYU in Athens

WNNO Louisiana radio interview

Featured on “Lone Star Outdoors Show” podcast

J. DREW LANHAM

Honors and Events

2022 MacArthur Genius Fellow

Named one of the most influential Black Americans by Root

2023 Bates College Commencement Address

Honored by the Georgia Museum of Natural History

Books

Edited and contributed to “Dawn Songs: A Birdwatcher’s Field Guide to the Poetics of Migration”

Writing

“J. Drew Lanham answers the Orion Questionnaire” - Orion

“Behold the Roseate Spoonbill, a Deeply Weird Bird” - Sierra

“Day 19: a Season of Hope and Feathers” - NYT

Highlight

The Case For Making Earth Day a Religious Holiday

By Paul Greenberg and Carl Safina

Published on the TIME Ideas page, April 21, 2023.
<https://time.com/6273684/earth-day-religious-holiday/>

Earth Day is upon us—that forlorn little non-holiday that some years sandwiches itself between Easter and Passover, or other years trails in the wake of those “real” holidays. If the Super Bowl is America’s unofficial national day of celebration, Earth Day is the collective yawn that brings a shrug. No recipes offer Earth Day chips and dips to serve when friends and beloveds gather in celebration of the miracle of a living planet. Because they don’t. Not even ours.

For the two of us environmentalists—one of us nominally Jewish, the other a recovering Catholic—we find the ill-defined nature of the only day honoring the place that makes life itself possible more than a little sacrilegious. So, on this 53rd Earth Day we thought it useful to pose what a real Earth Day should represent and how it could form a central time for a new approach to worship.

Before we step further into that loaded word, let’s back up. Even as Earth has sizzled—New York City had its warmest January on record and a February more like April—the idea of honoring this planet with its miraculous coating of life has somehow fizzled.

It wasn’t always that way. The first Earth Day, co-chaired by Republican Senator Pete McCloskey and Democratic Senator Gaylord Nelson in 1970, brought more than 20 million people—a tenth of the U.S. population of the time—to the streets. According to a CBS News Special Report of the day, many high schools announced they would

excuse absences. Earth Day 1970 remains, reputedly, “the largest single-day protest in human history.”

We remember when air in big cities still hurt our young lungs, and rivers were so polluted they repeatedly caught fire. The spirit then was to protest against chemical pollution and smog. Within a few years of that first Earth Day and the national sentiment behind it, President Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency and Congress passed unprecedented environmental laws that have greatly improved human health in our cities and communities and prevented the extinction of hundreds of species.

But Earth Day may have fallen victim to its own success. Even though we face new and seemingly overwhelming environmental issues—the extinction crisis, the toxic chemical crisis, the climate crisis, acidification of the seas, the plastics tsunami—the spirit of the day is no longer mass protest. Yet current environmental problems pose existential threats to planetary and societal stability, even to civilization itself. One day out of 365 to mark the entire planet is too far a cry from the reverence and recognition owed the beleaguered planetary basis for our entire existence, for all known life.

So, what would an earth-reverent belief system look like with Earth Day at its center?

To begin with, let’s take a look at what established religions get right and where we might take a cue.

Perhaps the first step might be, um, unearthing the nature-centered origins of our existing religious holidays. Most of us know in the back of our minds that Christmas and Hanukkah fall around the time of the winter solstice; that Easter and Passover are celebrated in tandem with the arrival of spring; that Sukkot and Diwali mark harvest and summer’s last warmth, and Eid follows the path of the moon. These holidays have origins in gratitude. Gratitude for the sun returning. Gratitude for the harvest that could avert the starvation winter might bring. Thanks for when it did avert it. We could conceivably reframe these holidays as days of thanks for what the natural world gives and reminders that our responsibility for what remains is an ongoing covenant.



Carl Safina and Paul Greenberg
©Carl Safina

Next, we might look at what religions do to help us form community and mark life’s important benchmarks: birth, maturity, marriage, and death. What if we were to come to celebrate these benchmarks for what they are biologically? Birth, that ecstatic co-joining of atoms and molecules resulting in sentience might prompt a ritual of truthfully and factually recounting how inanimate becomes animate. Instead of (or in addition to) bar/bat mitzvahs and confirmations, would it be too much to expect our children to go beyond the average daily 20 minutes most American children spend outdoors, and commit to memory the names and descriptions of local plants and animals, or learn the considerations involved in correctly planting a tree? The covenant of marriage might be an opportunity to remind young couples to consider the burden children place upon the planet and to make vows of sustainable patterns of behavior going forward. Death, finally, might be recognized for what it is—a returning of atoms and molecules to the cycle. In the cycle of life, the coming apart is as miraculous a process as the joining. We still don’t really know how nothing became something and formed a universe in which random pulses of energy and matter coalesced into beings writing

op eds. In short, there’s plenty of mystery to go around.

Are we proposing a whole new religion? We’re not quite sure. Maybe an old one. The core of all religious feeling is the sense that we are part of something much larger in space and deeper in time than ourselves. The world is certainly that. At any rate we do know that spiritual inquiry, just like scientific inquiry, is not static. Likewise a whole new continent of scientific knowledge has been revealed to us since America’s first and second religious Great Awakenings. It seems perfectly reasonable and spiritual to us that in a New Great Awakening this new knowledge-continent be incorporated into a progressive wisdom of life, death, and the universe.

In short, we must make nature central to our belief system with Earth Day or any number of earth-focused ceremonial days serving as regular reminders of what we owe our home planet. It’s symptomatic that many people seek nature in parks or on a dreamt-of photo safari. In a world of commodification, we presume nature must be a commodity, accessible by transaction. We’re accustomed to thinking that, just as cornflakes can be found in the cereal aisle, nature is stocked in places like Yellowstone. But nature isn’t just a place. And it shouldn’t be relegated to one box on the same calendar where “pick up dry cleaning” gets more ink.

We’ve got to convey to everyone that the planet whose rotation and revolution creates all 365 days is worthy of a recognition that spans all 365. Recognition of the planet was born in protest. Going forward it must be about reverence, about respect for the living world that makes human life, too, possible. Celebrating the whole world as a living miracle really should be more fun—and more win-win—than even the most-watched football game.

“We must make nature central to our belief system with Earth Day or any number of earth-focused ceremonial days serving as regular reminders of what we owe our home planet.”

Alfie & Me

Carl Safina's newest book, *Alfie & Me: What Owls Know, What Humans Believe* is the touching story of the remarkable impact a little orphaned owl had on the people around her. The book explores what's possible when we blur the lines between humans and the rest of the world.

"Like all babies, this new owl didn't arrive with instructions. But we had a parenting philosophy. We frequently let 'her' join us, whether in the backyard or the kitchen. We wanted plenty of stimulation and freedom of movement to develop an active mind and a strong body. Meanwhile, we'd back her up; we'd keep her safe and well."



Alfie at 1 week



Carl receives an owly kiss

"I went to her ivy tower and peered up into the leafy shadows and braided branches. Alfie was visible up there. Seeing me, she immediately shook her feathers into place and gazed down attentively. I got the piece of fish that she had not touched. She descended, ate it, and accepted a bit of head rubbing. When I turned my cheek, she leaned out, returning a little preening. I readied my cell phone for a selfie, turned to face her, and pursed my lips — and got an owly kiss."

"Carl Safina has written a book of great wisdom and beauty, full of drama and insight. How right to choose an owl, symbol of learning, to help us see anew the twinned truths of compassion and connection—gifts our kind desperately needs to keep our world alive."

—Sy Montgomery, author of "The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness"

"Little Alfie unleashed a meditation about life itself and how our culture has shaped our way of seeing the world and our place in it. A unique book that is scientific and spiritual at the same time."

—Isabella Rossellini

"This is a book about a foundling owl, and infinitely more. As it turns out, the universe and all its mysteries, our relationship with our wild kin and a better future for ourselves and the planet—all are reflected through the prism of an eight-inch ball of feathers named Alfie. Carl Safina has never been more eloquent, or more urgent. 'Alfie & Me' is masterful."

—Scott Weidensaul, author of "A World on the Wing: The Global Odyssey of Migratory Birds"



Fellow Spotlight

Safina Center Fellow Erik Callender is a wildlife educator and herpetologist. With the support of his fellowship with the Safina Center, Erik is producing season two of his PBS children's television program *"Menghayati!"*

Wow! What a fantastic, challenging, awesome time it's been since starting this fellowship. And what a great responsibility to animals, people, and our planet we all have. The day after this fellowship began, I flew directly to Costa Rica. This trip started off with a live video call with a Wildlife Rescue Center to share animals with children in New York, and so it began! The dream of connecting children worldwide to nature was expanding into a new country in new ways that went beyond what I thought was possible.

After sharing more than 50 video conferences full of Wild Sloths, Vipers, and Emerald Green Basilisks, there was no time to take a break. Filming for the second season of our television program *"Menghayati!"* was also happening. This fellowship made it possible for a big part of this show to be completed. It gave me the resources to create and be on a path to completion. I am learning that the process of creating a television program changes every day. There were many times where I felt a little discouraged and wondered how we would actually finish.

In those moments I'd meditate and look within. Often after I'd do this the day would shift. And like magic, I'd meet some amazing person who worked with animals, or come up with another idea for our show!

One of the best moments — and there were a lot — was when I arrived in Cahuita (a town in the Caribbean of Costa Rica) to a Wildlife Lodge. A week or so after arriving I said out loud in front of Fernando, the owner of the lounge, "It... would be so cool to film sea turtles for our PBS show". At that moment Fernando said, "Erik you know the Sea turtle project for the leatherback turtles starts 5 minutes from here in a week!"

At that moment he handed me the number to the president of the Cahuita Turtle Rescue! And just like that, I was connected to the only rescue group in this town and had the privilege to walk the beach every night for a month!

Because of this time here we were able to film these turtles and highlight and learn more about their entire project. Four more projects manifested in a similar way, including the Scarlet Macaw reintroduction project, Green Macaw project of Manzanillo and the Sloth Monitoring program!

Meeting all of these wonderful conservation-minded people and creatures was made possible thanks to this fellowship, and a little magic.

However, what feels like the most important revelation during this time was the fact that there is a rhythm to life that I am not able to describe in words. Being a Safina Center Fellow feels like an action of life and love for all creatures on our planet. A true gift.

"Being a Safina Center Fellow feels like an action of life and love for all creatures on our planet. A true gift." — Erik Callender



First time seeing leatherback sea turtle tracks on Black Beach in Cahuita Costa Rica ©Erik Callender

Praise for the Safina Center

"'Beyond Words' has resonated with me as a call to action that I feel transcends the genre of non-fiction to almost that of a spiritual text. Thank you for your dedication to championing the oneness of life that all beings on this planet share."

— Britt, 2023

"Through beautiful and intriguing stories about animals' lives, you highlight things that should be obvious, and yet they aren't for the majority of us."

— Federico, 2019

"I'm a biology student from Spain who is very interested in ethology, and I have to say that your book is such a joy!"

— Gonzalo, 2023

"Safina is one of the best writers out there. He is a brilliant writer who made me soar with elation over what we have and despair with what we are losing in our natural world."

— Kara, 2023

"Learning about the concepts you introduce on organismal relationships and environmental conservation has forced me to entirely reconsider my perceptions of what it means to be a human being. Needless to say, your thoughts and words have truly touched me and have immensely ignited my curiosity."

— Emily, 2023

Financials

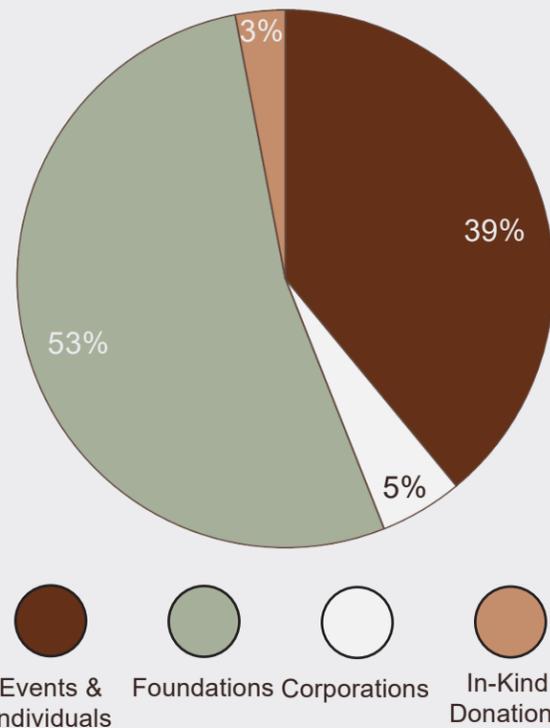
Help Us Do What We Do

Statement of Financial Position

As of May 31, 2023

Assets	
Current assets:	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$378,786
Investments	1,140,937
Promises to give	50,000
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	5,103
Property and equipment, net	406,862
Total assets	\$1,981,688
Liabilities and net assets	
Liabilities:	
Accrued expenses	\$30,058
Fiscal sponsorships	71,151
Total liabilities	101,209
Net assets:	
Without donor restrictions	1,750,479
With donor restrictions	130,000
Total net assets	1,880,479
Total liabilities and net assets	\$1,981,688

Operating Revenue



In 2011, we established an endowment fund to honor the memory of our dear friend and board member, Dr. Eric Gilchrist, as well as astronaut Kalpana Chawla, who took Carl Safina's first book into space with her aboard the ill-fated Columbia shuttle. Their steady support for The Safina Center has continued beyond their passing through bequests that now serve as the seed for our endowment.

Their generosity continues to inspire us.

Four Ways to Contribute

Online:

Visit: <http://safinacenter.org/donate>

Telephone:

Call: +1-(631)-675-1984

Mail:

Please send you tax-deductible donation to:

The Safina Center
80 North Country Road
Setauket, NY 11733

Please make your check payable to:
"The Safina Center"

To the Safina Center Endowment Fund:

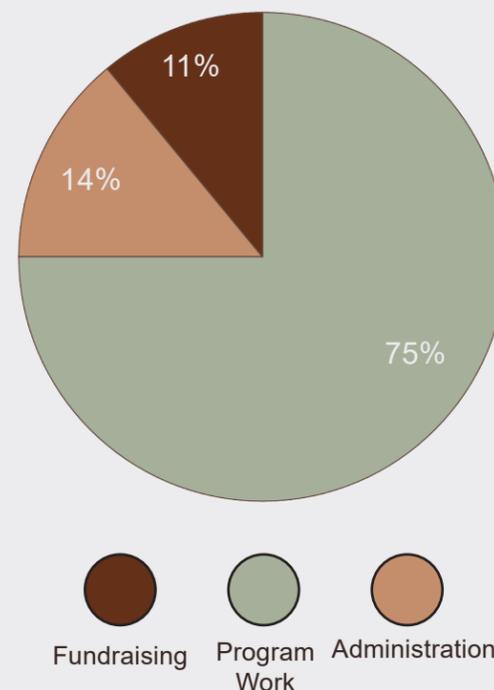
Please contact Mayra Mariño, business manager:

by phone: +1-(631)-675-1984
or via email: mmarino@safinacenter.org

Statement of Activities

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Public support and revenue			
Contributions	\$283,307	\$130,000	\$413,307
Event Income, net	126,057	-	126,057
In-kind contributions	19,420	-	19,420
Investment return, net	18,963	-	18,963
Total public support and revenue	447,747	130,000	577,747
Net assets released from restrictions	106,000	(106,000)	-
Total public support and revenue including net assets released from restrictions	553,747	24,000	577,747
Expenses			
Program work	436,295	-	436,295
Supporting services:			
Administration	78,945	-	78,945
Fundraising	66,788	-	66,788
Total supporting services	145,733	-	145,733
Total expenses	582,028	-	582,028
Change in net assets	(28,281)	24,000	(4,281)
Net assets - beginning of year	1,778,760	106,000	1,884,760
Net assets - end of year	\$1,750,479	\$130,000	\$1,880,479

Total Expenses



©Dani Khan Da Silva

Thank You to Our Generous Donors

Up to \$1,000

William Akin
Russell Welch and Brenda Andrewson
Nancy Badkin Antlitz
Victoria Anstead
Averill Babson
Marilyn Badkin
Janice Badkin Elze
Florence Bartels
Sarah Bellinson
Rodney Berens
Judy and Ennius Bergsma
Jackie Black
Barbara Block
Richard Block
Elise Boeger
Rema Boscov
Jon Bowermaster
Dr. Maria Bowling
Malcolm and Waveney Bowman
Gerald Boyer
Tina Brown for KAN
Elliot Cafritz
Tom and Lee Caggiano
Canios Book Store
Chris Carrieri
Sarah Chasis
Pamela and Malcolm Childers
John Colbert
Marlene Cole
Jeanne Compitello
David and Margaret Conover
Jeffrey and Rebecca Cook for Pili Project
John and Judy Day
Nancy and John Debellas
Susan Dierker
Robert DiGiovanni
Anne Doubilet for TSC and Pili Project
Sylvia Earle
Ruth and Peter Emblin
Marcia Endres
Mr. And Mrs. William Enright
Dana Esposito
Steven Carhart and Martha Farmer
Drew Fellman
Betsey Fowler
Eric Gilman and Susan Burr

Arthur Gingert
Carla Girolamo in honor of dear sister, Eileen Neumeier
Martin Heeney Dietz and Daniela Gonzalez
Eric Fischl and April Gornik
Jesse Grantham
John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker
Paula Tucker for KAN
Nina Griswold
Wendy Hapgood
Rose Marie Harper
Robert and Lydia Harris
Ann and Wayne Haskell
Mary Heeney and Louis Dietz
John Heminway
Steven and Lise Hintze
Emily Hoffman In memory of Dagmar O'Connor
Bruce Hoover for KAN
Robin Huffman for KAN
Julia Hubbel
John and Veronica Hunter
Rodney Jackson and Darla Hillard
Theodore and Barbara Janulis
Robert Judelson Foundation
Rainer Judd
Kauai Albatross Network
Lauren Kahn
Jeff Kelber
Joyce King
Mark and Julie Koch
Linda Lear
James Lehner
Wade Lusby
Anne MacDonaugh
Paul Marsolini
Jody and John Martin
Peter May
David and Marilyn McLaughlin
Kenneth McPartland
McPartland Family Farm
Joan Miyazaki and Jeffrey Levinton
Leslie Minniti
Tom and Sally Murphy
Lucille Betti-Nash
NY Community Bank Foundation
Susan O'Connor for KAN Project
Linda Orkin in memory of Lucas Matthiesson

Hob Osterlund
Thomas and Pasqualin Palmieri
Patricia Patel for KAN Project
Seliesa and Thomas Pembleton
Leonard Peterson for KAN
Leslie Wayne and Donald Porcaro
Ellen Prager
Jane Pratt
Patricia and Daniel Rathman
Robert and Katherine Reuter
Fran Recht
Luanne Rice
Brooke Richert for KAN
Stephen and Lisa Robertson for KAN
Andrea Rosen
Charles and Mary Jane Roskosz
Isabella Rossellini
David Rothenberg
Schaffner Family Foundation
Silas and Antoinette Seandel
Keith Sendall for Pili Project
Deborah Schenker for KAN
Dr. Marco Seandel and Dr. Julia A. Grimes
Schatz Family Fund for Pili Project
Martha Shaw
Paul Shepson
Rebecca Shuford
Donna Siegel
Ann Smith
Rena Sokolow (in memory of Ted Kennedy, great dog)
Jeff and Diana Spendelow
Jane Stern for KAN
Stop and Shop
Laura Stanfill for KAN Project
Stellar Blue Fund
Michael Testa
Edwina Von Gal
Aeren Waters for KAN
Jessica Weber
Carolyn Weinberger
Wild Birds of the East End, Inc.
Ann Dunne for Wild Wisdom Foundation
John and Mary Jean Winkler Charitable Fund
Marianne Wudarsky
Rosalind Young for KAN Project

\$1,001 to \$5,000

American Endowment Foundation - Gulick Scott and Karen Amero
The Susan A. and Donald P. Babson Charitable Foundation
Cheung Family for Pili Project
John M. and Linda Clark
Sue Lonoff Decuevas
Sandra and Peter Desimone
Fischer Family Foundation for Pili Project
Four Harbors Audubon Society
Mr. and Mrs. B. Eric Graham
Kristine and Gordon Graham
Caryn Hoadley
Robert Hoguet
Roy Humphreys
Anonymous Individual
Joseph and Jeanne Jehl
Bert Kerstetter
Melissa Kirby
Dr. Adel B. Korkor
Paul and Patricia Kuehner Family Foundation
Lindblad Expeditions for Pili Project
Michael Light
Peter Looram
Josephine Merck
Mark and Lory Newhouse
Randy Podolsky for The Podolsky Family Foundation
Susan and David Rockefeller
Pauline and Rob Rosen
Roger Sant and Doris Matsui
Schmitz-Fromherz Family Fund for Markus Fromherz and Heike Schmitz
Gail Stewart
Stellar Blue Fund
Touch Inc
Trevor Family for Pili Project
Cynthia Tuthill and James Orr
Herman Wenz
Michelle Westmorland
Jeffrey Zitsman and Elaine Abrams

\$5,001 to \$20,000

Andrew Sabin Family Foundation
Anonymous Foundations
Robert Campbell
The Applewood Fund at Community Foundation of Santa Cruz

The Charles Engelhard Foundation
Marjorie Findlay and Geoff Freeman
Fondation Emsemble-For Gilman
The Goldie Anna Charitable Trust
Lee Gruzen
Hollomon Price Foundation
Hella and Scott McVay
Roslyn Milstein Meyer and Jerome Meyer
Nicholas Naylor-Leyland
Lindblad Expeditions
Bill Miller & Associates, Inc.- Bill Miller and Shirley Ruch
Yvon and Malinda Chouinard for the Marin Community Foundation
Peach Pit Foundation in honor of Jeff Rizzo
Repass-Rodgers Family Foundation
Dr. Gabriela Ines Rozenberg and Dr. Scott William John McPhee
Susan Englehard and Roy O'Connor
Schultze Family Giving Fund for Pili Project
Wanderlust Fund - Kristin Hettermann and Sven Olof Lindblad

\$20,001 to \$50,000

Anonymous Foundation
Susan Cummings-Findel (Sunshine Comes First)
The Ida and Robert Gordon Family Foundation
Marine Stewardship Council
Gillian and Peter Neumeier-Neumeier Taylor Foundation
Alfred and Jane Ross Foundation
Edward Taft for Pili and KAN

\$50,001 to \$300,000

Anonymous Foundations
Avalon Park and Preserve
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Paul Simons Foundation
Ann Hunter Welborn and David Welborn (The San Diego Foundation)

In-Kind Contributions

Lindblad Expeditions
David Peikon

Donor Spotlight

Q&A with Susan Cummings-Findel, founder of Sunshine Comes First

Tell us about Sunshine Comes First, and what made you decide to start the foundation?

Sunshine Comes First refers to the importance of the sun, all living things need the sun's energy to grow and thrive on planet Earth. We want to provide the most marginalized children and people in the world with an energy that creates hope. I was a child raised in an orphanage so I know what it is like to be marginalized. I grew up under unfortunate circumstances, my husband's upbringing was totally opposite. Even so, we found we have a common interest in improving life on our planet.

What moved you to support the Safina Center?

The Safina Center aligns with our mission. The fact that through Carl's writing, he works to protect all living things in the ocean and on land. When I moved to America as a pre-teen, I devoured everything to do with nature: National Geographics, Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom, nature programs, anything having to do with the natural world. The Safina Center's mission aligns with my own life philosophy.



How would you say your work intersects with the Safina Center?

I can only do so much as an individual, so supporting the Safina Center strengthens my own life mission. The Safina Center aligns with my commitment to protect the most vulnerable life on Earth. Many conservation organizations do a lot of talking and promoting of themselves. As a funder you have to monitor what they are doing. The Safina Center and Carl walk the talk. It is an honor to support the Safina Center because I feel a mutual trust in what they are doing. Their actions speak louder than words. They literally put words into action.

What sort of hobbies and activities do you find fulfilling that help balance life?

To have friends who are actively trying to improve our world through conservation, the humanities, and anything that protects the Earth makes me feel balanced. I'm also an avid gardener and I have a relationship with all the living things I find in my garden. They all have the right to exist. The reason why my garden thrives is because I respect the needs of all: birds, bugs, bees, worms, squirrels, etc. We all should have a closer relationship with the living world. It saddens me to feel that we humans are detached from nature. We would be so much healthier and balanced if we were all more connected to nature. I'm also a photographer and the ability to take photos of the natural world on our property gives me a lot of joy.



Chairman's Message

Every day we see signs of humanity's impact on our planet. It's frightening—new reports of devastating storms, fires, and flooding that affect humans and other species. As our population continues to grow, our impact grows as well. Slowly, imperceptibly, our impact is a mass extinction event. Above us, on earth, and below the surface, we are changing life on every plane & dimension. How do we know this? It's because of people like The Safina Center Fellows and Carl Safina, Paul Greenberg, and others that the rest of us even know this is happening.

"FACTS ALONE CAN'T SAVE THE WORLD. HEARTS CAN. HEARTS MUST. WE'RE WORKING TO MAKE SURE THAT HEARTS DO."

Human hearts need to be moved. More of them need to be inspired to act more forcefully and with more tangible actions. The work of the Safina Center is simply something we need more of as humanity is ambling toward our own extinction. We all need more inspiration from writing, art, video, music, and data in ways that move us to action.

As Carl says...



©B. Eric Graham

— B. Eric Graham
Chairman of the board

Credits

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

B. Eric Graham — Chairman of the Board
Dr. Carl Safina — President
William Miller — Treasurer
Rainer Judd
Sven-Olof Lindblad
Jane F. Ross

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Louis Pagillo — Designer and Writer
Mayra N. Mariño — Editor
Wayne Printing Inc. — Printing



STAFF

Dr. Carl Safina — President
Mayra N. Mariño — Business Manager
Louis Pagillo — Media and Outreach Manager
Dr. Katharine Thompson — Fellows Program Manager



The Safina Center
**2023 ANNUAL
REPORT**