

KEEP AUSTIN BEAUTIFUL

2019 Annual Report



Mission

We inspire and educate all Austinites to volunteer together, beautify green spaces, clean waterways, and reduce waste every day.

Vision

Our vision is for Austin to be the cleanest, most beautiful community.

About

Keep Austin Beautiful is an award-winning nonprofit organization that is known for providing fun, impactful outdoor volunteer and learning experiences for youth and adults.

Clean Creek Campus students make seedballs.



Keep Austin Beautiful FY 2019 Board of Directors

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Facebook Austin

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YETI

Linda McCoy, Immediate Past President

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Ryan Valenza

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Adia

Dear Friends...

Thank you for your ongoing support of Keep Austin Beautiful! As thousands of new residents continue to make their way to Austin each year, the work our volunteers do becomes even more important.

Just as the city around us is changing, so too is the nature of our work. To fully capture the spirit of what we do and how our work continues to evolve, we decided to re-write our mission statement. Our new mission statement embodies the values that we hold true and provides a renewed sense of inspiration. We are excited to share it with you.

We inspire and educate all Austinites to volunteer together, beautify green spaces, clean waterways, and reduce waste every day.

What this means is that...

We believe children and teens who experience the outdoors and learn about reducing waste will become stewards of Austin green spaces and waterways. Last year alone we educated 11,000 students at 111 schools across the city, giving students hands-on experiences with the natural environment around them through in-classroom and service-learning projects.

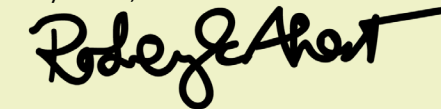
We believe people who volunteer together outdoors are more connected to nature and each other. Our volunteers, whose ages range from 3-80 years old, come from all over the city. Our projects bring together students, community groups, business leaders, and families on projects throughout the year, creating a sense of connectedness and shared responsibility for our city.

We believe all Austinites have a right to clean, safe, and beautiful green spaces and waterways. We are so lucky to have access to incredible green spaces and waterways. They truly make Austin a unique place to live. With access to resources, tools, and support, volunteers completed 700+ community improvement projects in every corner of the city, making a positive and lasting impact.

We believe when people learn about the impact of their actions on the environment, they will reduce their waste. There is no better way to learn about our impact on the environment than seeing it first-hand. Our volunteers have removed 78,000 pounds of trash and diverted 11,000 pounds of recycling from the landfill. One volunteer, who has been cleaning Barton Creek for 11 years, notices the difference the sustained effort and education makes, citing that people more often keep it clean today than they did years ago.

In the following pages, you will be able to see our mission in action, how all Austinites are coming together to make Austin a cleaner, more beautiful city, and how we are preparing our youth to be the city's next environmental leaders.

My best,



Rodney Ahart,
Executive Director
Keep Austin Beautiful





Volunteer cleans Lady Bird Lake on a paddle board.

Keep Austin Beautiful FY 2019 Staff List

Rodney Ahart
Executive Director

Sarita Alonzo
Operations Manager

Joe Anderson Jr.
Community Engagement Coordinator

Gaby Benitez
Education Programs Coordinator

Jake Bryan
Community Engagement Manager

Sierra Cashion
Community Engagement Coordinator

Alecia Casper
Senior Education Programs Manager

Cali Chidester
Community Engagement Coordinator

Jacqueline Cirincione
Educator

Alix Collins
Communications Coordinator

Andrew Gansky
Development Manager

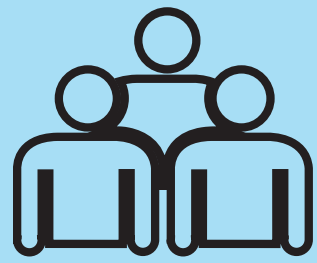
Shelley Hardeman
Director of Development

Sara Law
Community Engagement Manager

Keith Sears
Volunteer Coordinator

Penny Smith
Education Programs Coordinator

Nicole Tenneyuque
Operations & Administrative Coordinator



19,100
Volunteer Engagements

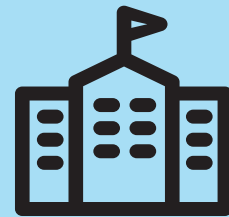


10,700
Youth Educated

60,000
Hours of Service



111
Schools Impacted



11,000
Native Trees Planted



78,200
Pounds of Litter Removed



700
Community Projects Completed

11,200
Pounds of Recycling Diverted



63
Invasive Plant Removal Projects

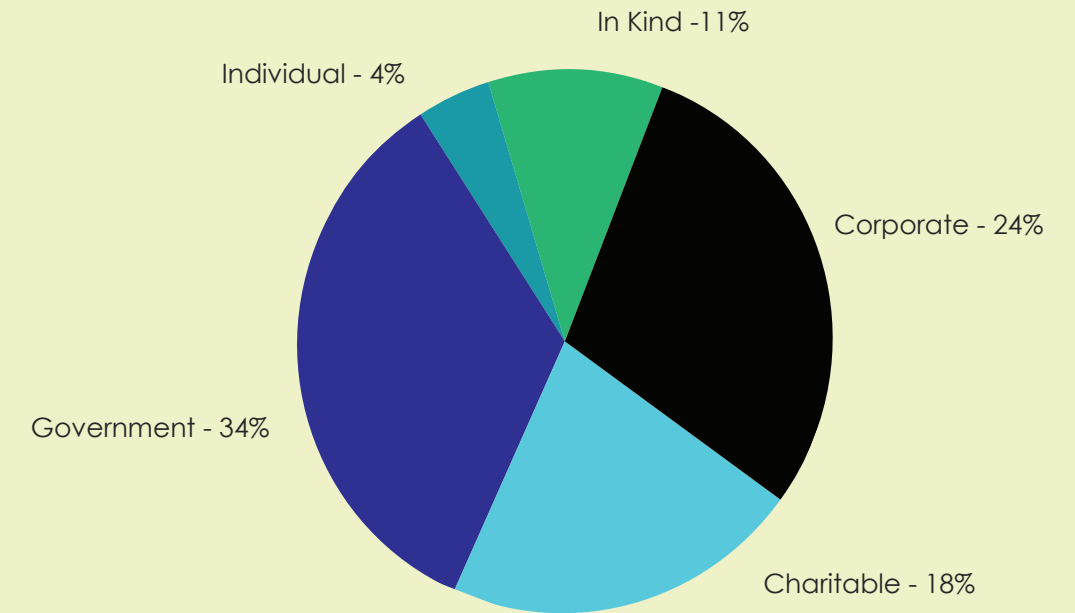
100
Adopt-a-Creek Partners

Financial Responsibility

FY 2019 Revenue*

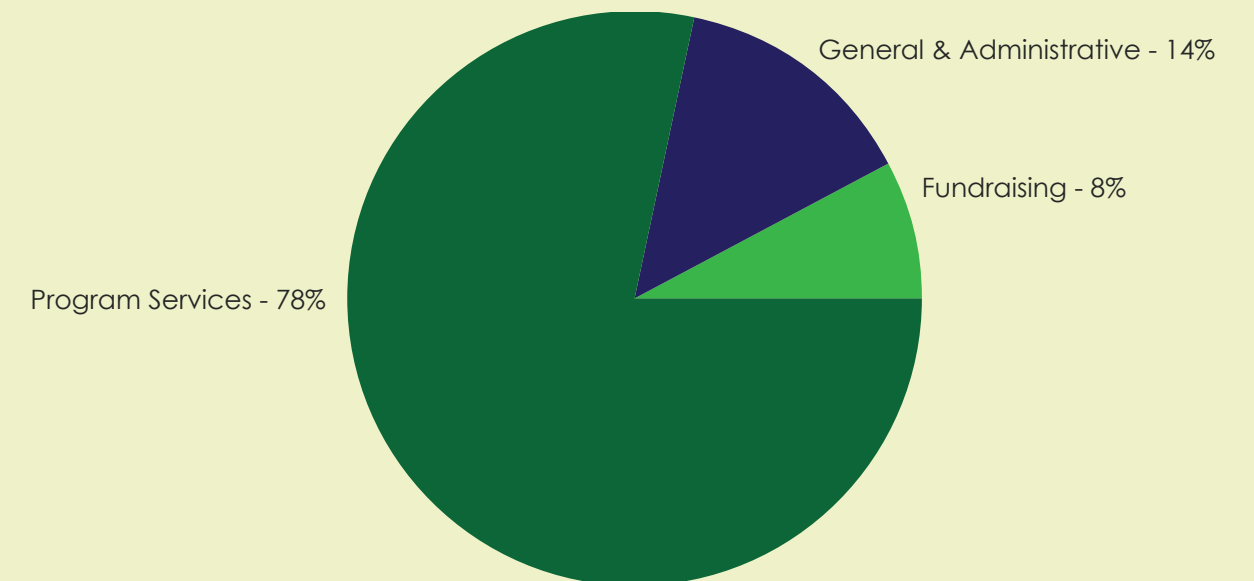
Corporate	\$303,351
Charitable	\$222,628
Government	\$355,052
Individual	\$44,507
In Kind	\$108,930
Total	\$1,034,468

We could not accomplish all that we do without the many contributors who support our mission with funds, products, and services.



FY 2019 Expenses*

Program Services	\$813,460
General & Administrative	\$143,997
Fundraising	\$80,648
Total	\$1,038,105



*Pre-audited financials

Volunteering Together

Our programs bring Austinites together to make an immediate and tangible difference in our city. People of all ages and backgrounds work together to make Austin cleaner and more beautiful, while building stronger community connections. Reflecting on a creek cleanup in Roy G. Guerrero Park, one volunteer remarked, “We enjoyed the camaraderie of the people that were there. We also enjoyed the feeling of having accomplished something that helped the environment and the park.” This past year we **engaged 19,100 volunteers in 60,000 hours of service.**

We are proud to engage community groups, nonprofits, schools, businesses, and city departments through our volunteer programs. A perfect example of diverse groups coming together for a common goal is the work happening in the Country Club Creek Greenbelt. In June, we provided resources to the South East Austin Trails and Greenways Alliance (SEATAG), Buzzmill Lumber Society, City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department, Austin Resource Recovery Department, and Austin Ridge Riders to support their ongoing work of transforming the greenbelt into a beautiful strip of land that connects parks in South Austin via paths and mountain bike trails. During this particular work day, volunteers used tools provided by Keep Austin Beautiful to remove Ligustrum and clean the nature trail. Their combined effort made great strides in reducing both invasive species and litter within this valued stretch of parkland.

Beautifying Green Spaces

Access to green spaces makes Austin a beautiful place to live. Our parks, hiking trails, and walking paths give Austinites the chance to connect with nature without having to leave the city. Volunteers work actively to keep our green spaces clean and beautiful by removing litter, planting trees and seed balls, and implementing various beautification projects. Together they **removed 78,200 pounds of litter and diverted 11,200 pounds of recycling from landfill.**

After many Fourth of July festivities left trash along Austin’s greenbelt trails, Austin-based retailer Spreetail took the initiative to organize their own cleanup, using trash grabbers and cleanup supplies from Keep Austin Beautiful. Many of the company’s employees are avid hikers. Group member Natalie Guidry mentioned that they treated their cleanup like a treasure hunt, and “were excited to find trash that [they] could remove from the Green Belt to restore it to its natural state.”

Restoring native habitats is just as important as keeping them clean. Volunteers with Pines and Prairies Land Trust assisted in restoring a monarch waystation that had been overgrown with King Ranch Bluestem, an invasive grass. They used tools from Keep Austin Beautiful’s Tool Shack lending library to remove the grasses and make room for the native prairie they restored by planting seeds of native grasses and wildflowers. All of their efforts helped to restore the native Monarch butterfly habitat, to attract and support the butterflies as they migrate through Austin annually.

Clean Lady Bird Lake volunteers at Zilker Boat Rentals.



Cleaning Waterways

One of the most unique features about Austin is the abundance of waterways – lakes, creeks, and rivers flow through the city and provide residents and tourists alike with an escape from the hustle and bustle of urban life.

More than **219 miles of waterway have been cleaned and restored** by Keep Austin Beautiful volunteers in the past year. Individuals and groups, through regular and sustained work, keep our waterways healthy in two primary ways. First, they remove litter, preventing it from moving further throughout Austin’s various watersheds. Second, volunteers plant native plants and grasses and implement erosion control projects to restore riparian habitats.

Austin Youth River Watch, a longstanding participant of the Keep Austin Beautiful Adopt-a-Creek program, had more than 95 volunteers working to restore the Buttermilk Creek Greenbelt during Martin Luther King Jr. Day weekend. They and their volunteers removed trash from the creek banks and the creek itself, in addition to planting native grasses along the river bank to reduce erosion. Youth and adults enjoyed their morning out: “We loved using Keep Austin Beautiful’s trash pickers! It was both fun and rewarding to see the impact we made in our community,” said an Austin Youth River Watch volunteer.

Students across Austin are learning about the importance of environmental stewardship. In partnership with Austin’s Watershed Protection Department, our educators provide elementary students with classroom and field instruction on recycling, compost, and the importance of healthy watersheds. Students from Baldwin Elementary School enjoyed getting hands-on experience with their service project. Teacher Amy Klein commented that she loved seeing children put on waders and get in the creek, citing that one of her students said it “was the most fun he had ever had because it was something he didn’t think he’d ever get to do in his ‘whole lifetime!’”

Reducing Waste Every Day

What’s better than removing litter from our public spaces? Making sure the litter doesn’t get into our green spaces and waterways in the first place. Every year, we educate students of all ages throughout Austin, inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards. Last year alone we **educated 10,700 students in 111 schools throughout the city.**

Through classroom lessons and field projects in local creeks and parks, our students see firsthand how litter impacts their communities. For those that cannot participate in one of our staff-led programs, they can borrow Activity Kits to learn independently. A group of Wolf Scouts did just that and used our Watershed Model as an interactive way to learn about the effects of land pollution on bodies of water. They used this activity as a way to enhance one of their camping trips. On one of their hikes the scouts were able to connect the lesson to what they were seeing around them.

Students are also armed with the resources they need to make a difference in their schools and communities beyond our programs. Akins Early College High School Green Teens set out to increase awareness around their campus by educating their fellow students on how to properly recycle and compost. They requested more compost and recycling bins from Keep Austin Beautiful so that they could place more receptacles around campus, and also created signs to place on the bins to indicate the various types of items that can be placed in each bin to encourage students and teachers to use them properly.

In addition to teaching students how to protect and preserve our environment, our programs foster a genuine love for the natural world. Every year, our Green Teen students go on a camping trip. For many, this is their first time camping, sleeping in a tent, or even traveling out of Austin. Last year students spent a weekend camping at Guadalupe River State Park. There, they took a guided hike with Friends of GRSP down Honey Creek. A majority of the students cited their experiences on the hike as their highlight of the trip. Students also explored the river for benthic macroinvertebrates, eagerly donning waders and grabbing nets before setting out. They even lugged a laptop and microscope to the riverbank to study their finds further. It is experiences like this that instill a curiosity for the natural environment and a passion for preserving it.

Casis Elementary School students learn about watershed health.



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Barrington Elementary School completes a project using Tool Shack tools.