



Headwaters Science Institute is the latest grant recipient of the Tahoe Donner Giving Fund.

TAHOE DONNER GIVING FUND SUPPORTS YOUTH SCIENCE EDUCATION

BY MEGAN SEIFERT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HEADWATERS SCIENCE INSTITUTE

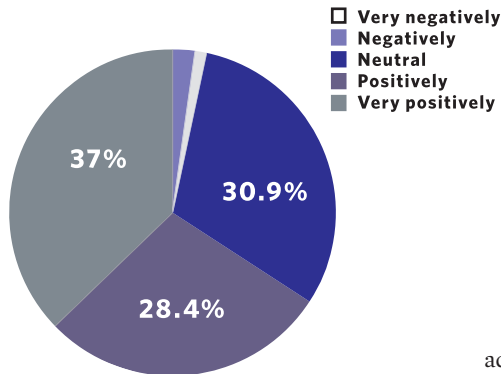


Headwaters Science Institute (HSI) is one of the non-profits that Tahoe Donner Giving Fund partially funded this year along with the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation. HSI is a Truckee-area education non-profit whose mission is to empower students to discover their potential for critical thinking and inquiry-based learning in an outdoor setting.

In one example of our programs from this past October, sixth grade students from North Tahoe Middle School created research projects exploring how human impacts are affecting Martis Valley. Truckee Donner Land Trust and HSI instructors guided students through the program.

HSI staff joined the students at their school earlier in the week to teach students about Martis Valley and help them design research questions. One of the unique things about all HSI projects is that students use their knowledge—in this case about human impacts from their earth science class—and about Martis Valley, to develop their

HOW HAS THIS PROGRAM CHANGED
YOUR VIEW OF SCIENCE?



own research questions. HSI staff members do not give students research projects; instead, students develop their own questions and hypotheses for each project.

After questions were created, students worked in small groups organized around different research topics. Projects ranged from comparing the health of a small creek to a nearby lake in the valley by collecting aquatic insects, to testing how slope angle and soil moisture affect the type of vegetation in any given part of the valley.

These projects culminated with groups creating scientific posters and presenting their findings at the Truckee-North Lake Tahoe S.T.E.A.M. Fair. Through these presentations each student was challenged to think critically about her or his research and also had the opportunity to share its implications with a broader audience.

The program was a success. The teachers said that their students

learned a great deal about the process of science as well as human impacts on the environment. In student exit surveys we learned that over 65 percent of the students felt that the program positively changed their view of science (see graph at left).

“HSI impressed the grants committee with the both the number of students served and the depth of their programs,” said Lois Ermak, Tahoe Donner Giving Fund Committee Member. “We were happy to partner with the Community Foundation to meet HSI’s full grant request,” she added.

HSI also works with Tahoe Donner Association’s summer camp program to bring more of their unique brand of experiential science to our campers. HSI will be working with select groups to give the campers an opportunity to investigate the amazing green space in and around Tahoe Donner.

The Tahoe Donner Giving Fund is chartered by the TD Board of Directors. All contributions are voluntary tax deductible gifts from TD members and friends. The Giving Fund is administered through the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation. For more information on the Giving Fund or to make a contribution, visit our web page at tahoedonner.com/giving-fund/. Contact tdgf@tahoedonner.com with questions or to volunteer for the Committee.



KAYAK AND SUP STORAGE LOTTERY COMING UP IN APRIL

Save the date! The lakeside storage lottery for the Beach Club Marina begins on April 18.

There are some changes to the lottery this year—details will be posted in the next issue of Tahoe Donner News, and will also be posted online and included in our regular e-blasts.

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