



Common Ground Center

2020 Annual Report



Letter from the Director

2020 was a year that we would all prefer to forget. But within the pain, confusion and loss, there are important things to recognize and remember. Whether that's the memory of our loved ones or some small act of generosity, forgetting doesn't move us forward, it just unmoors us from reality. Indeed 2020 was a year where we all needed to take an unflinching look at ourselves; reflecting on our privilege, our biases and our democracy. That work has not been comfortable, but we must acknowledge its long overdue and ongoing necessity.

It will come as no surprise that CGC, like most small non-profits, found itself in dire straits as the pandemic started in earnest last March. Ninety percent of CGC's activities take place in the spring and summer, so we were just about to launch into our most critical time of year when we had to shut it all down.

Luckily for us, CGC is blessed with a wise and clear-eyed Board of Directors and flexible and creative staff. They spent innumerable hours guiding us through tough questions and kept our little organization on track to preserve our local programming and prepare us to return with vigor in 2021. We secured a first and second Paycheck Protection Program loan (one is now forgiven), a federal Economic Injury Disaster Loan, and a state recovery grant to carry us into this new year.

We were also deeply humbled by the level of support we received from members of our camp and local communities. You stepped up to help us during this difficult time and it was the difference for us. I encourage you to read family camp alumni Alex Mulcahy's words about why his family decided to convert their camp fees into a donation. As we prepare to re-open for a full summer of programming in 2021, we remember that the connections we make can often start a positive chain reaction stretching well into the future. Thank you for helping us to make those connections again.

With deepest gratitude,

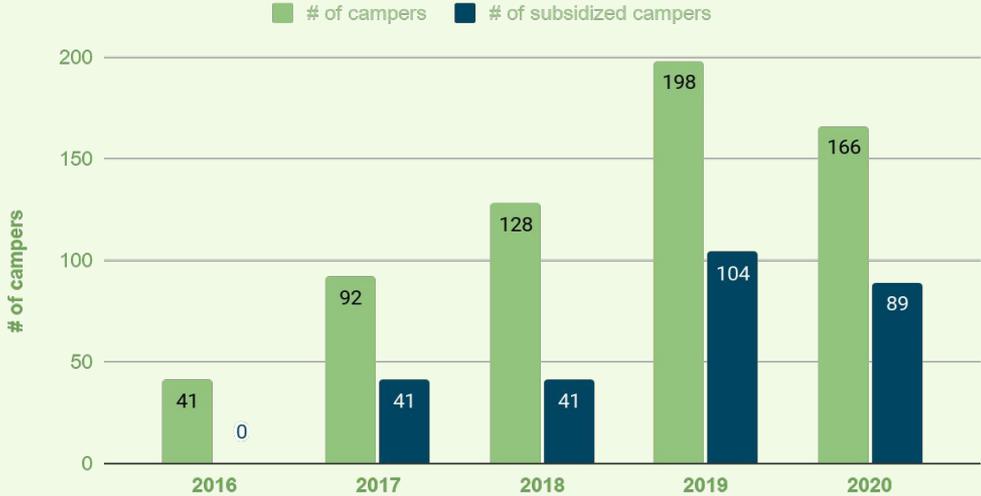


Connor Timmons, Executive Director

Adventure Camps

Our staff spent the early days of the pandemic trying to figure out what was salvageable for the summer. Based on the tight travel restrictions for the state of Vermont, we pivoted to expand our Adventure Camp. Traditionally this day camp is a one week offering in the summer, but since the calendar was opened up, we added three more week long sessions to ensure local children had a chance to get access to CGC's natural classroom. We were so excited that we could serve so many families despite the obstacles.

Adventure Camp Attendance



Adapting to COVID

After cancelling much of our in person programming CGC sought to achieve a balance. How to create the connections we're famous for without tying people to screens more than they needed to be. The result was a host of free online programming including:

- Teen Movie Night
- Kidville reunion
- Monthly Men's and Women's Groups**
- A workshop for parents around race
- Concerts & Storytelling
- Virtual Big Show!**



It became clear early on that local childcare facilities were in need of extra space to accommodate their programs. To help out with this, CGC partnered with two local providers to make sure young people had access to CGC's wide open spaces.



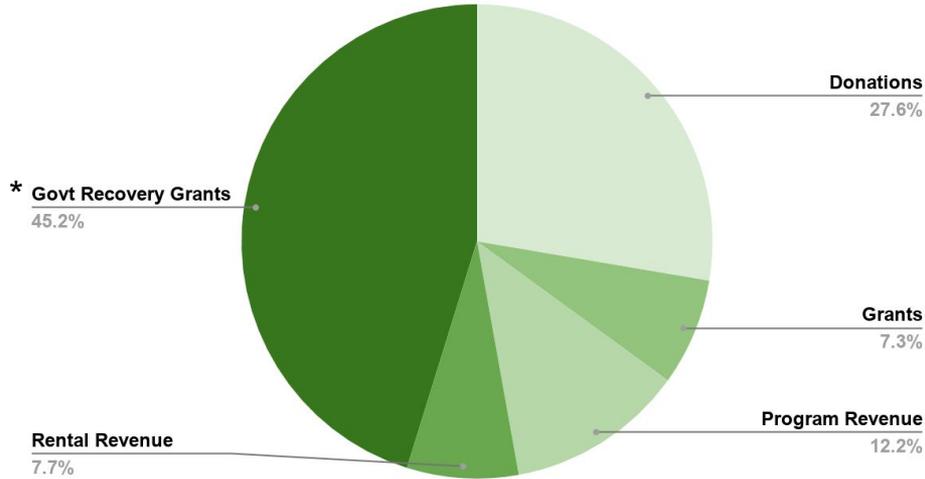
Charles Goodnight Ph.D April 26th, 1955-September 28, 2020

Charles Goodnight left us suddenly this past September, and it's safe to say that our community is still reeling from his loss. Over the years, Charles was a camper, construction volunteer, board member, Men's Group mainstay and fixture on the porch for afternoon chats and clever repartee. As a tenured Biology professor at The University of Vermont, Charles inspired class after class to be curious about big questions and to prove their answers with solid scientific evidence. Charles' willingness to try new things at camp epitomized what we hope for in our campers: a spirit of adventure, a deep well of curiosity and a smile to meet any challenge.

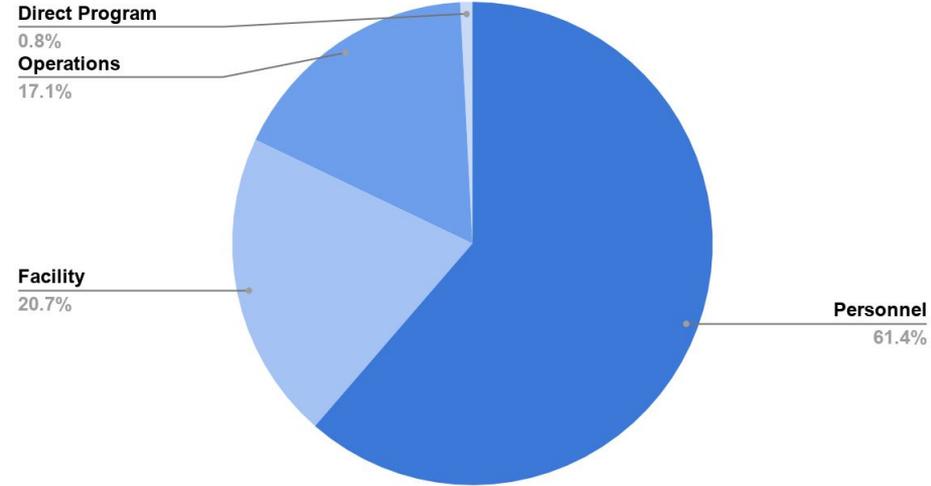
Charles' proudest legacy comes in the form of his family. Charles is survived by Lisa and Sylvia, his brilliant and equally charming daughters, both of whom grew up at Camp Common Ground, and Lisa married her husband Ryan here in 2014. Charles was ecstatic about the arrival of his beloved granddaughter Sloane in 2019. He never missed an opportunity to share anecdotes about his daughters' successes; his love for his girls was a such an integral part of who he was.

We will miss you old friend, please save us a spot next to you on the porch.

2020 Income



2020 Expenses



* CGC received recovery grants from the state of Vermont for \$44,241 and a \$77,540 PPP loan which has been 100% forgiven

CGC also secured an Economic Injury Disaster Loan from the Small Business Administration for \$149,900 in September 2020. This is not reflected in the income graph.



Paying it forward

Alex Mulcahy reflects on the power of sharing what we love

We came for the food.

Sure, the swimming, the hiking and the crafts that were featured in the Camp Common Ground brochure my wife had picked looked like fun, but as the parents of a four-year-old and a one-year-old, it was the promise of a week's worth of vegetarian meals and the liberation from doing the dishes that sounded

like paradise.

I had never gone to camp when I was a kid, so I have to admit I was overwhelmed by the hyper-social nature of Camp Common Ground. However, I quickly saw the magic that was occurring as a result of these group exercises. It felt like being part of a social experiment designed to foster friendships and camaraderie—and it was working.

And then ... financial problems hit. I have a small business and things began to go from bad to worse. I was unsure if the business would survive. At home, **we started looking at bills and how we could cut every cost possible.**

We were pretty torn up about what to do with Camp Common Ground. **We didn't want to lose the connection, but we just did not have the money.** We applied for financial aid and we were given a generous package. We decided to go.

Thankfully, the business got back on its feet. When it was time to apply for camp the next year, we felt confident we could pay our way. We began paying in installments, and had about two thirds of the cost paid when the pandemic hit.

At a time when we were entering lockdowns, the communal nature of Camp Common Ground made it seem even more vulnerable.

We knew what we wanted to do.

When we were at our most vulnerable, Camp Common Ground lent us a hand.

Of course we would return the favor and donate our deposit.

When asked at the end of camp for a one word synopsis of his week at Camp Common Ground, my son said "love." And **in love, it can feel just as good to give as it does to receive.**

Thank You!

We are grateful to all those who have stepped up in the past year to help support the families and children who benefit from the work we do. Thank you all so much!

National Life Foundation ◦ Thomas G & Andrea Mendell Foundation ◦ Abbey LaMay ◦ Abigail Finley ◦ Adrienne Raphael ◦ Aimee Nichols ◦ Alejandra Barrenechea ◦ Alex Mulcahy ◦ Alyx Lyons ◦ Amanda Schack ◦ Amie Whitcomb ◦ Amy Coe ◦ Andrea Pearce ◦ Angela Zaikowski ◦ Anita Pandolfe Ruchman ◦ Ann Hutchins ◦ Anya Schwartz ◦ Arlene Kriv ◦ Ashley Flory ◦ Audrey Robinson ◦ Bennett Chan ◦ Beth Rusnock ◦ Brittany Ciullo ◦ Bruce Balistrieri ◦ Bruce Rublee ◦ Cait Reed ◦ Calia Marshall ◦ Candace Cheatham ◦ Amy Coe & Carol Rohl ◦ Cassie Lindsay ◦ Chad Wright ◦ Charles Goodnight ◦ Chelsea Condos ◦ Cherie Marshall ◦ Christopher LaMay-West ◦ Cicely Carew ◦ Clare Walker ◦ Colleen Cannon ◦ Colleen Sturdevant ◦ Connor Timmons ◦ Cooper Anderson ◦ Cottrell ◦ Dan Liebman ◦ Danielle Madison ◦ Darlene Sweeney ◦ Dave Snow ◦ David C Nagel ◦ Denise Aronzon ◦ Dennis Woos ◦ Derek Doucet ◦ Douglas Hillmer ◦ Dr. Colleen Colbert ◦ Edorah Frazer ◦ Eileen and Bob Schmidt ◦ Eleanor Horowitz ◦ Elin Melchior ◦ Elizabeth Lorris Ritter ◦ Elizabeth Skarie ◦ Ellen Krug ◦ Ellen Reed ◦ Ellen Schwartz ◦ Ellen Yount ◦ Emily Gibbs ◦ Emily McManamy ◦ Erin Buckwalter ◦ Erynn Albert ◦ Ethan Seidman ◦ Eve Blane ◦ Fabiola Bergi ◦ Francis Timmons ◦ Garrett Heyns ◦ Gena Zollman ◦ George W Mergens Foundation ◦ Grace Per Lee ◦ Greg Farr ◦ Gregory Smith ◦ Hannah Gavin ◦ Harrison Reynolds ◦ Heather Ni ◦ Heike Jonassohn ◦ Isabella Batts ◦ James Heery ◦ Jan Dalton ◦ Jan Jennings ◦ Jan McCleery ◦ Jane M Stabler ◦ Jane McGurty ◦ Janet and Bill Dreitlein ◦ Janet Francis ◦ Janice Chung ◦ Jasmine Easter ◦ Jason Garvey ◦ Jeffrey B.L Meller ◦ Jen Doyle ◦ Jessica M Philippe ◦ Jim Mendell ◦ Jim Harry ◦ Joan Grenier ◦ Joanne Holman ◦ Joanne Lasker ◦ Joel Katz ◦ Julianne Spears ◦ Julie Lowell ◦ Julie Rose ◦ Kailee Brickner-McDonald ◦ Kara Gallagher ◦ Karen Jackier ◦ Kate Hallen ◦ Kathy Kaler ◦ Katie Brillantes ◦ Krista Siringo ◦ Kyle Bodge ◦ Laura & Nick Smith ◦ Laura King ◦ Leah Flore ◦ Leslie Ferrer ◦ Linda Meredith LaMay ◦ Lisa Stevens-Goodnight ◦ Lori Casey ◦ Lori Cragin ◦ Lupe Perez ◦ Lynn Stewart-Parker ◦ Lynne Lisa ◦ Madeline Constantine ◦ Magalie Neff ◦ Marcia Golden ◦ Mari Cordes ◦ Marianne DiMascio ◦ Marianne Estrela ◦ Marie Lavendier ◦ Mario Dennis ◦ Mark Paperno ◦ Marshall Miller ◦ Martha Siegel ◦ Mary O'Brien ◦ MARY SERICO ◦ Mary-Claire De Haven ◦ Matthew Cropp ◦ Matthew White ◦ Maura Donnelly ◦ Maureen Marovitch ◦ Melynda Schudrich ◦ Mendell Family Foundation ◦ Merck Foundation ◦ Michel Thibodeau ◦ Michelle Roth ◦ Miriam Jacobs ◦ Nancy Hershatter ◦ Naomi Macioce (Moran) ◦ Nathan Richardson ◦ Nathaniel Schudrich ◦ Nicole Clause ◦ P. Anne McBride ◦ Paloma Sylvan ◦ Pamela Goldstein ◦ Patricia Fontaine ◦ Patrick Doyle ◦ Patty Heather-Lea ◦ Peg Kamens ◦ Ray Wrona ◦ Reb Pearl-Martinez ◦ Rebecca Blane ◦ Rebecca Marshall ◦ Regina McCalmont ◦ Renee Meunier-De Pastino ◦ Richard O'Brien ◦ Richard Wells ◦ Rito Balducci ◦ Rob & Pat Baylor ◦ Rob Marsh ◦ Robyn Baylor ◦ Ron Yara ◦ Russell Mendell ◦ Sam Silverman ◦ Samantha Langevin ◦ Sara Boyden ◦ Sara Sudol ◦ Sara Woodall ◦ Sarah Bouchard ◦ Sarah Caliendo ◦ Scott Meyer ◦ Selina Alko ◦ Shannon Timmons ◦ Sharon Behar ◦ Siobhan Philbin ◦ Stephanie Victoria ◦ Stephen Scholle ◦ Steven Flax ◦ Susan Klaiber ◦ Susie Piatkowski ◦ Suzanne Hanna ◦ The Frances & Harris Block Foundation ◦ Todd Taska ◦ Tony Cooper ◦ Tony Falotico ◦ Valerie Dearing ◦ William Huckabay ◦ Wilson Taylor ◦ Yvonne Bauer ◦ Zoe Bronstein-Paritz ◦

Common Ground Center is a nonprofit, multi-age arts, education, and outdoor recreation center. We are dedicated to environmental sustainability and strengthening diverse families and communities through unique program offerings and facility rentals.

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♥ **Support CGC** (& see our community video):



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