Connecting People and Nature: History, Education, Adventure

Canyonlands Field Institute is an outdoor education nonprofit organization in Moab, Utah, established in 1984.
Note From the Director

My first year leading CFI was wonderful. Right off the bat, I was impressed by the staff’s dedication to quality programs. The apprentice program continues to serve as one of our greatest contributions to the outdoor education industry. This winter, seven CFI staff alumni joined up for a three-week trip down the Grand Canyon in December. Additionally, I met several outdoor education leaders this year who all started at CFI. On our full-time staff, Dave Montgomery sadly moves on. For those who know him, he exemplifies the spirit of CFI.

Thank you for supporting our mission as a member. Everything within this report is made possible through your continued generosity.

Jory Macomber
Executive Director

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

2021 was a year of reflection and growth. Because CFI holds diversity as a core value, we must think critically about the ways we contribute to the inequity of the outdoor education industry. We are extremely fortunate to be guided in this self-assessment by Justice Outside and the Lawrence Hall of Science through the two-year Working Towards Racial Equity workshop. This series of intensive workshops is designed to foster equitable, inclusive, and culturally relevant thinking within organizations like CFI. This journey is both difficult and urgent and we feel lucky to have members, staff, and partner organizations who support and guide us. CFI strives for accountability, which is why we will be creating an annual report of our efforts to be part of solutions that move the outdoor education industry toward authentic inclusion. If you would like more information about how CFI is working to address inequity in the outdoors, contact us and we will send you our 2021 Outdoor CEO report.

Apprentice Program

The success of our field programs would not be possible without the hard work, dedication, and talent of our Apprentice Naturalist Guides. As we gear up to welcome our 2022 class of Apprentice, we look back on the past 35+ years of CFI’s apprenticeship program. Our mission, inspiring care for wild places and renewing the human spirit, applies to the thousands of students, young and old, who have passed through CFI programs over the decades. It especially applies to the Apprentice as they take their first steps toward a future career of outdoor guiding, nonprofit management, and education.

Commercial guide training can cost anywhere from $500 to $2,000 for courses lasting a few weeks at most. Recognizing this financial barrier, CFI takes a different approach to professional development. Our guide education mimics the student-centered, hands-on educational process that shapes
our curriculum. Over the course of the season, Apprenti are immersed in the skills needed to run multi-day expeditions, and learn the educational techniques to create life-changing experiences for their students. Apprenti receive housing, a stipend, and a clear progression to full time employment as a CFI guide. Mollye Zahler, a 2021 apprentice, is returning to CFI to inspire the next generation of outdoor leaders in 2022 as a program manager.

The apprenticeship is one of many applications of CFI’s mission. A strong educational staff directly results in a strong program.

If you, or anyone you know is interested in supporting this program or becoming an Apprentice Naturalist Guide, reach out to Alex de Moor, education@cfimoab.org. If you are a former CFI Apprentice, please reach out! We would love to hear about your path after CFI. Thank you!

“...The apprenticeship attracts and is occupied by people from a variety of backgrounds and experience levels. I came to CFI with a couple years of outdoor leadership and facilitation experience and no rafting or technical guiding experience. As an apprentice I was given a set of technical skills and the space, time, and support to develop those skills. By the end of the season, CFI gave me the trust and the responsibility to combine these abilities as a trip leader. Over the season I developed the skills to occupy a role in which all the logistical, educational, and risk management decisions were up to me. The ability to do that with a degree of confidence (and nervousness) speaks to CFI’s ability to foster growth and support apprentices in developing their strengths.

Through the Working Toward Racial Equity workshop presented by Justice Outside and the Lawrence Hall of Science, CFI has begun critical work at examining how power, privilege, and supremacy culture has shaped the apprenticeship role, and how it can be reshaped to be more accessible and equitable for both the apprentices and our students. CFI supported me in participating in a Professionals of Color workshop series with educators and professionals from many other organizations across the country. It was a beautiful opportunity to build community and envision a future in this industry that we are excited to be a part of. Additionally, the program supported me to develop critical skills in communication, boundary setting, and advocacy.”

Mollye Zahler
– 2021 Apprentice Guide, above, and at the oars, left.
School and Youth Programs

Our youth programming this year was immensely successful thanks to our inspiring naturalist educators. We left our comfort zone and embraced the beautiful outdoors of canyon country with over 1,400 children this year. We hosted 54 unique programs for schools at Professor Valley Field Camp and on the Colorado, San Juan, and Green rivers. After cancelling school programs in 2020, we were grateful to bring so many people outside in 2021.

This year we worked with many partners old and new! We are grateful to come together with others to achieve our collective mission of making our community better. Thank you to the local businesses who donated to support summer camp. Shout-out to the Moab Valley Multicultural Center, Moab Museum, Youth Garden Project, Grand County Schools, and BEACON Afterschool Program who teamed up with us to provide educational programming in 2021.

“I started to realize that this is big and this is history, and I started to pay attention, and I learned so much.”

Jade – 2021 Native Teen Guide-in-Training Participant

“These canyons were echoing with the laughter and with indigenous humor, and it was not only filling the canyons with laughter but was really filling my heart and the other guides’ hearts. Really just replenishing the faith in humanity.”

Avery Old Coyote – Guide

School and youth programs get kids unplugged and outside.
Thank you to our Board Officers and Trustees for your invaluable service and continued support of CFI’s mission.

June-December 2021

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Evelyn Tewksbury
Rob Thomas
Eliza Van Wetter
Valere Woodruff
Victoria Yee
Nick Zachary
Mollye Zahler

It is with great sadness that we will say goodbye to Operations Director, Dave Montgomery. We will always value Dave’s hard work and investment in our mission over the last 10 years. From hiring guides, to managing facilities, to teaching Apprenti how to drive a stick-shift, Dave’s dedication and steadfast passion for CFI’s mission has inspired countless employees. While it’s always hard to say goodbye, we are excited for Dave as he takes his next steps. “There it is.”

We welcome Nicole Croke to the CFI Team as the new Operations Manager.

Seminar Guest Faculty
Lyle Balenquah
Jeff Clapp
Larry Cesspooch
Arnold Clifford
Tim Graham
Jamie Hollingsworth
Kevin T. Jones
Greg Nunn
Steven R. Simms

Thank you to our guest faculty for your commitment to educating our participants with meaningful content.
Adult Adventure Seminars

CFI led six seminars that explored the Colorado Plateau with inspiring guest experts. We took educational excursions to Ruby Horsethief Canyon, Cedar Mesa, Bears Ears, Range Creek, Rainbow Bridge, and the Moab area. About one of our trips, participant Glenna Hopper said: “This trip was both educational, enlightening, and relaxing. I couldn't have had a better trip and it will stand out in my memories as one of the best group trips I've ever participated in.”

We are getting excited for this year's adult seminar opportunities! Your membership includes a discount on these Adult Adventure Seminars, and programs are filling quickly, so sign up soon!

PVFC and Castle Rock Ranch

This year CFI implemented over $100,000 worth of facility improvements to Professor Valley Field Camp with support from the Utah Office of Economic Opportunity and several kind donors. The improvements bring PVFC in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in several areas. Camp accessibility has been improved with the installation of ADA-compliant paths, a teaching deck, and sleeping areas. We also repaired fencing (to keep the cows out!) as well as installed drip line irrigation to improve the camp's plant life.

The residential portion of Castle Rock Ranch was handed over to CFI at the end of 2021. We look forward to developing new programs at the Ranch.

Stewardship

Thank you to everyone who volunteered with us in 2021. This year we hosted seven fun and educational volunteer events and partnered with five organizations to invest in Moab. From ecological restoration, to trash cleanup, to permaculture planting, we enjoyed working with all our partners. Stewardship is a Core Value of CFI, and we love integrating it within our outdoor educational curriculum. We will continue to prioritize stewardship in all our programming to inspire the next generation. Keep an eye out for fun ways to get involved with CFI in 2022!

Financial Statement

Fiscal year ending September 30th

- 2021 Revenue: $943,989
- 2021 Expense: $893,689

- 3% Rental Income
- 11% Forgiven PPP* Loans
- 34% Programs
- 52% Contributions & Grants
- 28% Management
- 72% Program Services

* Paycheck Protection Program
Figures are from 2020 IRS Form 990 for FY21. Expense figures include depreciation. CFI’s Federal Identification Number is 87-0418027.

Grantors

- Alpenglow Foundation and John Hobby Catto Family
- Aspen Business Center Foundation
- Ruth H. Brown Foundation
- City of Moab
- The David Kelby Memorial Foundation
- Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation
- Fanwood Foundation West
- George S. and Dolores Dore Eccles Foundation
- Grace and Walter Bird Charitable Fund
- Grand County Economic Development
- Grand County Education Foundation
- Jones Family Charitable Foundation
- Maki Foundation
- Moonflower Community Coop
- Paul T. Walton Jr. Charitable Foundation
- Santa Fe Tobacco Foundation
- Val A. Browning Foundation
- Union Pacific Foundation
- Utah Division of Arts and Museums
- Utah Division of Finance
- Utah Office of Economic Opportunity
- The William H. and Mattie Wattis Harris Foundation

Local Business Sponsors

- Adrift Adventures
- Deeter Accounting
- Holiday River Expeditions
- Larson & Company
- Mild to Wild Rafting & Jeep Tours
- Moab Chevron and Stu’s Deli
- Paddle Moab
- Real Green Clean
- Red Cliffs Lodge
- Sheri Griffith Expeditions
- TerraSophia LLC
- Western River Expeditions
- Wild West Voyages

Program Partners

- BEACON Afterschool Program
- Back of Beyond Books
- Community Rebuilds
- Grand County School District
- Moab Astronomy Tours
- Moab Museum
- Moab Solutions
- Moab Valley Multicultural Center
- Underdog Animal Rescue and Rehab
- Utah Office of Tourism
- Youth Garden Project

Thank you to Grantors, Businesses, and Partners for continued support of our mission.
Plateau Society Members and Donors

Thank you for your continued sustaining support of our organization and its programs.

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Jim Moody
Steve & Susan Prescott

Our heartfelt thanks to all who support Canyonlands Field Institute.
Canyonlands Field Institute is a 501(c)3 not for profit outdoor education organization established in 1984.

Mission:
CFI provides quality outdoor education on the Colorado Plateau to inspire care of wild places and renew the human spirit.

Vision:
A world where the people, wildlife, plants, and waters of the Colorado Plateau are healthy and vibrant.

Values:
Respect: For each other and for the natural world.
Reciprocity: Awareness of our interdependence.
Experiential Education: Empowering children and adults.
Teamwork: Creating tomorrow’s leaders.
Reverence: For the beauty and mystery of the Colorado Plateau.
Responsibility: For each other and for the planet.
Diversity: Is essential to understanding.
Stewardship: Living lightly upon the land.