At the Sultana Education Foundation (SEF), creating transformative educational experiences is at the core of everything we do. By this measure, 2018 was a breakthrough year for SEF.

The penultimate year of our Vision 2020 initiative, 2018 saw the implementation of many programs first envisioned almost a decade ago. As 2018 came to a close, SEF was well positioned to meet its Vision 2020 goals, which include doubling our capacity (vs 2012) and creating a curriculum that takes students from PreK through high school. Notable accomplishments included expansions of our citizen science, tributary paddling, summer enrichment, and PreK programs.

Looking to the future, SEF took important strategic steps to continue strengthening and diversifying our programs. Among these are SEF’s commitment to creating the Lawrence Wetlands Preserve, expanding our program endowment, and implementing a major program staff expansion.

As we continue to grow, SEF has redoubled its efforts to build a more diverse organization while providing compensation and benefits that provide employees with economically feasible careers. Both priorities are essential to our long-term success.

In the decades ahead the sustainability of the natural world will hinge on the passion and investment of today’s students. At SEF, we work every day to introduce children to the Chesapeake Bay and encourage them to become stewards for this miracle in their own back yard.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Chris Havemeyer
Board Chair

Drew McMullen
President

Chris Cerino
Vice President

Our Vision
An informed and inspired community that acts to restore and preserve the Chesapeake Bay.

Our Mission
Provide transformative educational experiences in which students investigate the natural and human history of the Chesapeake Bay while exploring solutions to create a more sustainable ecosystem.
Since its founding in 1997, the Sultana Education Foundation’s (SEF) core activity has been providing hands-on field programs to schools in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed that complement existing classroom curricula in history and environmental science. The Foundation employs several core facilities to accomplish this, including its schoolship SULTANA, two mobile canoe/kayak rigs, and its LEED Platinum Holt Education Center in Chestertown, Maryland.

In 2018, SEF’s School Programs continued to expand, approaching the capacity goals laid out in 2012 in the Foundation’s Vision 2020 initiative. SEF’s flagship, the schooner SULTANA, continued to operate at capacity for the 15th straight year, while the Foundation’s Paddling Programs and Holt Center Programs meaningfully expanded.

In 2018, SEF also made considerable progress in implementing a comprehensive PreK-12 program progression for its partner schools, launching new programs like Watershed Watch, as well as expanding programs for early elementary school students at the Holt Center.

Several notable staffing changes greatly enhanced SEF’s ability to serve its school clients. Following the opening of the Holt Center in late 2016, 2018 was the first year during which the facility operated with its full complement of staff. In 2018, SEF also added a new senior paddling staff position, further expanding the capacity of these programs.

In 2018, SEF’s School Programs continued to expand, approaching capacity goals established in 2012 as part of the Foundation’s Vision 2020 initiative.
An Example of Commitment

In 2018, SEF lost a dear friend in Michael Lawrence (shown left with his dog Watson). Prior to his passing, Mr. Lawrence worked with SEF to establish the Lawrence Wetlands Preserve. His gift both allowed SEF to purchase the property and provided seed money for a new program endowment. Mr. Lawrence’s commitment to SEF is an incredible example of how thoughtful planning by a single individual can have a truly transformative impact. Photo - Aerial view of the Sultana Education Foundation’s Lawrence Wetlands Preserve. Photo by Tyler Campbell

The traditional strength of the Sultana Education Foundation (SEF) has been our ability to get students out onto the Chesapeake Bay. SEF’s schoolship SULTANA is perhaps the most productive educational vessel of its type in the Mid-Atlantic, and the Foundation’s newer paddling programs have proven uniquely effective at putting students on tributaries in their own community.

While on-the-water experiences are essential to any student’s understanding of the Chesapeake, much of what determines the health of the estuary takes place in the 64,229 square-mile watershed that surrounds and drains into the Bay. In 2018, SEF took a major step to improve its ability to help students understand the connection between land and water by committing to the establishment of the Lawrence Wetlands Preserve.

Named in honor of long-time SEF supporter Michael Lawrence, the 8.5 acre Lawrence Wetlands Preserve is located directly adjacent to the Foundation’s Holt Education Center, and features a variety of habitats, including woodlands, shrublands, wetlands, warm grass meadows, and a non-tidal, fresh water pond with an outflow leading directly to the Chesapeake. This “watershed in miniature” will allow even SEF’s youngest students to grasp how the Chesapeake is impacted by the land that surrounds it.

Several years of planning and work lay ahead before SEF’s vision for the Lawrence Preserve is fully realized, but we expect to begin hosting limited programs at the Preserve as early as 2020.
Providing Personal and Academic Experiences That Have Life-Long Impacts

Students: 241  
Student Hours: 13,225

For the past 15 years the Sultana Education Foundation (SEF) has worked to complement its programs for schools by providing this same student population with opportunities for extended educational experiences during the summer. The Foundation’s Summer Programs allow students to spend a week immersed in an experiential learning environment that also features opportunities for profound personal growth. The result is an experience that can have important, life-long impacts.

In 2018, SEF expanded the capacity of its Summer Paddling Programs and its Bay Discovery Camp for five to eight year-old students. Overall, SEF’s Summer Program capacity grew by 22% in 2018, with all of our programs operating at full capacity.

As part of an organizational effort to ensure that all of its programs for children operate on a need blind basis, in 2018 SEF continued to provide significant tuition discounts and financial aid for its Summer Programs, totalling more than $15,000. This included automatic 40% tuition discounts for Eastern Shore students participating in residential summer programs, as well as extensive financial aid awards.

SEF’s Summer Program capacity grew by 22% in 2018, with all of our programs operating at full capacity.
In 2018, the Sultana Education Foundation (SEF) launched Watershed Watch, its most ambitious program ever for middle school students. Created in partnership with three Kent County schools - Kent County Middle School, Kent School and Radcliffe Creek School - Watershed Watch immersed 7th grade students in a year-long examination of Radcliffe Creek, a small tributary of the Chester River. Using Radcliffe Creek as a case study, the goal of Watershed Watch is to help students understand how watersheds function, how human activity impacts downstream water quality, and how communities can help improve both their local tributaries and the Chesapeake Bay.

Envisioned as an ongoing program with Kent County 7th grade students, the inaugural year of Watershed Watch kicked off with a three-day Professional Development Program for 7th grade teachers in the summer of 2018. During the first half of the 2018-2019 school year, students from SEF’s three Watershed Watch Partner Schools worked with SEF staff in their classrooms on watershed mapping and water quality testing, and took part in data collection field programs on Radcliffe Creek. This work will continue in 2019, culminating in a final project/report to be presented in a public forum at the close of the school year.

Watershed Watch is the first of what will ultimately be several Citizen Science programs offered by SEF. The goal of these programs is to more closely integrate the SEF experience with ongoing classroom work, and to involve students in collecting, analyzing, and presenting data that can have real-world applications.
Providing Opportunities for Individuals and Families in our Community

Participants: 7,646
Participant Hours: 8,575

The Sultana Education Foundation’s (SEF) Public Programs provide opportunities for individuals, families, and the general public to participate in programming similar to what is offered to our Partner Schools. Opportunities include educational sails aboard the schooner SULTANA, paddles on the John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, and participating in nature programs at SEF’s Holt Center.

An important addition to SEF’s public program offerings in 2018 was Toddler Time, an introductory nature program targeted at children ages three to five. Toddler Time proved a significant success, attracting more than 800 children and their guardians/family/parents to a series of weekly themed programs.

Always a centerpiece of SEF’s public program calendar is the Foundation’s Downrigging Weekend, which has grown to become one of the largest annual festivals of its type in the United States. In 2018, Downrigging saw over 1,000 visitors sail as part of a fleet of Tall Ships visiting Chestertown for the festival.

Multiplying Impact by Partnering with Classroom Teachers

Teachers Served: 90
Participant Hours: 1,092

While the number of participants in SEF’s Teacher Training programs may seem small, the long-term impact of these programs is hard to overstate. The 90 teachers who worked with SEF in 2018 will go on to teach thousands of students over the course of their careers. These teachers will also return to SEF year-after-year with students to participate in the Foundation's School Programs. The content knowledge and pedagogical techniques teachers learn during SEF’s training programs make an enormous impact in their ability to integrate field programs into traditional classroom work.

In 2018, SEF relied on the support of NOAA and the National Park Service to help underwrite its Teacher Training programs, and established a new partner relationship with the Stroud Water Research Center in Pennsylvania.
2018 PROGRAM DATA

Participants - 15,232

Student Hours - 40,156

Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2018

Revenue & Support

Program Contracts & Tuition $181,080
Membership & Contributions $784,358
Grants $194,024
Investment Income $190,891
Other $1,387

Total Revenue $1,351,740

Expenses

Program Services $916,963
General & Administrative $207,322
Fundraising $152,253

Total Expenses $1,276,538

Change in Net Assets from Operations $75,202
Investment Loss, Net of Endowment Draw ($332,483)
Total Change in Net Assets ($257,281)

Net Assets at Beginning of Year $7,172,708
Net Assets at End of Year $6,915,427

Notes
1. Student hour equals one student participating in one hour of programming.
2. Participant measures are based on participant numbers rather than student hours.
3. USDOE designation indicating high percentages of children from low-income families.
4. Data is inferred from demographic information provided by participating schools.
5. Includes Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, and Talbot Counties in Maryland.

Reconciliation with Vision 2020

When compiling current data, SEF employs methodology significantly refined from that used for its Vision 2020 initiative. Current methodology does not include data from programs implemented by partners, includes only instructional time, and uses actual rather than averaged program lengths. When normalized to account for these changes, SEF has increased its total number of student hours approximately 90% since 2012.

A copy of the Sultana Education Foundation’s audited financial statement and IRS Form 990 are available at sultanaeducation.org or by calling 410-778-5954.
In 2018, the Sultana Education Foundation’s ANNUAL GALA was our biggest fundraising event of the year. Thanks to all the individuals who generously attended and contributed to the event. Your contributions are critical to our mission of providing educational programs to students and teachers in Washington, DC and Prince George’s County, Maryland.

Our annual GALA is our thank you to the community for their support. It is a time for us to share stories, enjoy the company of friends, and raise critical funds. We could not have done it without you.

We sincerely thank all of our donors and sponsors for their support. Special thanks to the Janus Foundation, which continues to support our work through a gift to the Sultana Education Foundation in honor of our 2018 ANNUAL GALA.

We also extend our thanks to our partners and collaborators who make our educational programs possible. Our heartfelt thanks to those who contributed to the ANNUAL GALA:

- Pittman Group
- Essential Energy
- The Chesapeake Society
- The Bolide Society
- The Inglis Society
- The Chesapeake Society
- The Bolide Society
- The Inglis Society
- The Chesapeake Society
- The Bolide Society
- The Inglis Society

Your generous support helps us to continue providing educational programs that inspire a love of learning and instill a commitment to environmental stewardship. We are grateful for your commitment to our mission.

Thank you for your support! We look forward to seeing you again in 2019.
The keel for the schoner SULTANA was laid on October 25, 1998. Dominic Dragotta, pictured above, still volunteers for the Sultana Education Foundation. Photo by Lucian Niemeyer.