



Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA)

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary intends to demonstrate core values of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) throughout all its operations and to model these values as we advance our conservation mission. Senior staff meet quarterly to review challenges, ideas, and success stories, and each board committee chair includes an update on IDEA within each program area. This intentional journey will help us weave IDEA throughout everything that we do. We welcome your input to help us grow and improve.

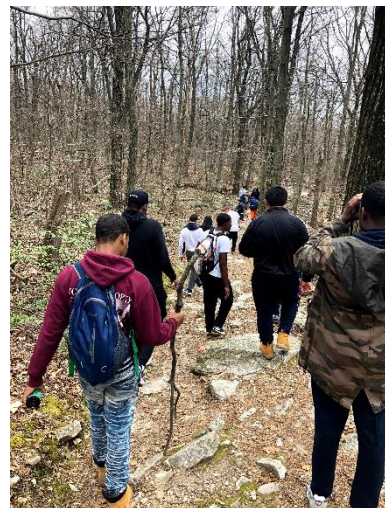
Accomplishments

- Established an IDEA Fund to encourage access and drive equity in the outdoors, support underrepresented communities in discovering the Sanctuary and raptors, and to address issues of representation and barrier removal.
- Awarded 10 IDEA Fund scholarships for Summer Nature Day Camp in 2023 including youth in the foster care system, youth of diverse ethnicities, youth in single parent households, and farmers. An IDEA scholarship was also provided for a participant in the Raptor Field Techniques Course.
- Raised funds to diversify the board by recruiting two racially diverse and international candidates. Ernesto Ruelas Inzunza, a Mexican ornithologist and professor, and Colombian forestry engineer and bird conservationist Ana Maria Castaño (pictured) are now entering their third year on the board.



Public Programs to Advance IDEA Initiatives

- An IDEA scholarship underwrote the cost of a private Raptors up Close program and visit to South Lookout using accessible Silhouette Trail for participants in the Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Program. All participants used wheelchairs due to spinal cord injuries.
- Hosted a free virtual program to celebrate Latino Conservation Week featuring award-winning author Soledad Cabellero.
- Hosted a nature photography course with David Greaves to support and promote Black Birders Week and advance inclusion.
- Hosted a sold out Accessible Hawkwatch in October 2023 using the accessible trail and graded viewing platform at South Lookout.



- Celebrated the Role of Women in the Lenape Culture during Women’s History Month with a program presented by the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania.
- Presented The Urban Bird Program of Latin America by Mexican conservation science trainee Tatiana Sanchez.
- Hosted a spring Accessible Warbler Watch to advance inclusion for people who use wheelchairs, as well as a Let’s Go Birding Together to celebrate Pride Month.
- Partnered with Kutztown University to create resources (social narratives/videos/activities) that will benefit visitors with sensory sensitivities.
- Created and selling Hawk Mountain logo/quote tee and decal in Spanish.
- Created World Migratory Bird Day materials available in English, Spanish, and French and Pollinator Week information in English and Spanish.
- Bilingual StoryWalks included La Abeja Y La Flor (The Bee and the Flower) and Senorita Mariposa.

Ongoing Visitor Services

- Maintained and promoted access to the closest overlook using Hawk Mountain’s nationally award-winning Silhouette Trail. This trail exceeds national park standards for accessibility in the outdoors.
- The ADA viewing platform at South Lookout allows people who use wheelchairs to enjoy the migration and connects visitors to a nearby ADA outdoor learning area, the Laurelwood Niche, for programs or informal gatherings.
- Opened in 2020 a new Amphitheater that features universal accessibility, ADA van parking, ADA restroom access, and the ability for people using a wheelchair to have multiple entry and seating options.
- Constructed an ADA trail that links the Visitor Center to the nearby Amphitheater.
- Partnered with the Kutztown University Visual Impairment Program to provide Braille booklets that can be used at no charge for those with visual impairments as a guide to the Native Plant Garden.
- Marked all accessible programs with an ADA symbol in print and online event listings.
- Published raptor coloring books in Spanish and French that are available free on the Hawk Mountain website.
- Completed visioning process for upgrades to Hawk Mountain Visitor Center with accessibility and inclusion at the forefront of the initial rendering.



Conservation Science

- Hawk Mountain coordinated, marketed, and hosted an online professional development workshop for Conserve the Corridor partners (Mesoamerican count sites) and the public, led in Spanish by partners in Mexico and Costa Rica, and including our board member Ernesto Ruelas.
- Provided support for Dali Sparverius, a Costa Rican trainee, to speak on his education manual to advance raptor education in Central and northern South American communities.
- Dr. Laurie Goodrich was invited to present a talk at the International Bird Observatory Conference in Veracruz, Mexico, in October about the Hawk Mountain international trainee program, to audience of primarily Mexico, Central America, and South America biologists.
- Continued distribution of the Spanish-language Flight Guide for use as an educational tool at all the partner watchsites in Central and northern South America. Created by Hawk Mountain in 2021, the distribution remains underway along with lesson plans on how to use the piece as an educational tool.
- Trained nearly 500 individuals from 76 countries on six continents, offering visitors the chance to interact and learn from culturally and ethnically diverse young conservationists.
- Maintained stats that show more than 60 percent of trainees and graduate students are female, elevating the status of women to leadership positions in conservation fields.
- Advertised traineeship opportunities to North American universities with diverse student bodies through [handshake.com](https://www.handshake.com) and direct outreach and have received several applications.
- In 2023, trained 14 young raptor biologists during a three-month-long conservation science traineeship. Graduates represented Argentina, Costa Rica, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Zimbabwe, and the United States. One, Natividad Aguilera Alca, served as a leadership trainee, two were academic, and one focused on conservation education.
- Raised funds to cover international travel for up to five trainee graduates as part of 90th Anniversary trainee reunion and symposium to promote the program's diversity and reach.



Communications and Outreach

- Established an IDEA tab on the Hawk Mountain website and embedded links on education pages on ways to apply for financial assistance.
- Published a Spanish phrase guide for staff and board to improve wildlife interpretation at our lookouts.
- Installed a widget to ensure accessibility of the Hawk Mountain website, with features that include ability to adjust font size, colors, contrast, dyslexia features and more.
- Added captioning to social media videos and zoom programs, and updated DE&I and service animal statements for the website.

- Celebrated national recognition events such as Black Birders Week, Birdability, and Pride Month with a variety of free programs, bird outings, social media posts or awareness-raising messages and shares and intend to replicate new events this year.
- Held a meeting with a local LGBTQIA+ organization to improve use of inclusive language and plan a future training. As a result, added gender pronouns with an informational link to staff email signatures.
- Increased Spanish language materials, including a membership card, a Spanish-language episode of the podcast “The Hawk’s Call,” and the Spanish-language flight guide for use in Mesoamerica count and educational sites.
- Reviewed content and have worked to better document visually our current diverse audience in promos, general updates, and in online and print content.



Education

- Selected Spring Education Trainees affiliated with partner count sites in Veracruz River of Raptors and Kéköldi Indigenous Reserve, Costa Rica, and trained the first domestic Latino education trainee during fall 2021, the first black North American trainee in summer 2022, and continue to target diverse applicants. The spring 2023 Education Trainee is Diego Rodriguez, a counter at the Costa Rica watch site.
- Continued to offer free weekend programs to remove economic barriers.
- Continued the Stay-at-Home Speaker Series, a free virtual program during winter months that removes geographic and financial barriers. The webinars highlight diversity of partners local to global, including the work of the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals, Native Nations, and the Yurok Tribe’s efforts to reintroduce the condor in their tribal lands.
- Continue to partner with the Native American Heritage Programs to present two free programs per year since 2022.

This document represents a summary of accomplishments to date and is updated quarterly.
To support the IDEA Fund or to learn more, please contact:

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