

Letter from Todd Lawrence	3
Our Mission	4
Our Strategy	5
Our Values	7
2024 at a Glance	8
Sustainability is for all of us.	
Our Impact	10
Education leads to action.	
Classrooms	12
Households	14
Workplaces	16
Nashville Environmental Justice Initiative	18
Nashville Food Waste Initiative	20
Collaboration makes us stronger.	
Our Donors	22
Donor Spotlight	24
Partner Spotlight	25
Board of Directors	26
Our Staff	27
We are good stewards of our organization.	
2025 Strategic Plan	28
Financials	29
Support our Work	30

Hello,

I want to tell you a story.

A mother signed up to volunteer with Urban Green Lab.

When it was her turn to introduce herself at the volunteer orientation, she shared that she was there for her son, who had been feeling overwhelmed lately by the state of his planet. To this mother, volunteering was a way to find solutions for her son and to try to make a difference in their home together.

To me, that's what Urban
Green Lab's champions are all
about – standing up for their
communities. Our champions are
the teachers, workers, residents,
and, yes, the mothers who want
their classrooms, households,
and workplaces to be more
sustainable. They're the everyday
residents who think and care

about food waste, public transit, and saving water. They share sustainability lessons, tools, and perspectives with their families and peers and collaborate with and mentor one another.

Urban Green Lab's 2024 annual report is a celebration of the over 500 champions reaching tens of thousands of Nashvillians every day who we've organized, trained, and connected over the last 15 years. And it's a reminder that it's all hands on deck to live more sustainably.

Todel Lawrence

Todd Lawrence, Executive Director







Our Strategy

Urban Green Lab is making sustainability education a part of life in Nashville. That means ensuring all of us have access to the best solutions for making choices that protect our planet, people, and prosperity in all the places where we learn – our classrooms, households, and workplaces. To do this, we organize champions, train them on how to share resources, and connect them with each other for deeper, more collective learning.

Urban Green Lab also leads special initiatives that capture the imagination of Nashvillians around current issues. Right now, that includes the Nashville Food Waste Initiative and the Nashville Environmental Justice Initiative.









Our Values

Sustainability is for all of us.

Sustainability is a human right, and our work is for everyone regardless of race, place, and identity. To us, living more sustainably is a journey rooted in compassion, inclusion, and justice.

Education leads to action.

We believe education is the first step toward taking meaningful action and that learning to live sustainably can be simple and fun. We empower people to try little changes that make a big difference.

Collaboration makes us stronger.

Nothing is achieved alone. Our diverse partnerships allow us to work creatively, accountably, and in harmony. We believe we go further together.

We are good stewards of our organization.

Taking good care of what we have is at the heart of who we are and what we do. We are committed to using your gifts of support responsibly and transparently to deliver credible work toward our shared goals.

2024 at a Glance

In 2024, we celebrated 15 years of Urban Green Lab! With a team of 10, we focused on delivering sustainability education in as many places as possible. The following program accomplishments go beyond the singular person trained or engaged; they represent systemic change happening in classrooms, households, and workplaces across Middle Tennessee.

Classrooms

94%

Of educators trained plan to integrate sustainability into their classrooms or programs

Households

125

UGL Volunteers trained on sustainability and how to share sustainability with friends, family, or neighbors

Workplaces

54

Organizations engaged to create or improve a culture of learning about sustainability in their workplaces

Special Initiatives

8

Stories of Nashvillians facing a changing climate recorded and archived for the Voices of Resilience oral history project







Sustainability is for all of us.

Our Impact in 2024

Staying true to our value that sustainability is for all of us, we aim to bring sustainability education into all the places we live, learn, and work. This happens through our programs and special initiatives and our digital footprint. Below is a snapshot of our direct

impact in 2024. However, our train-the-trainer strategy allows our reach to go far beyond a single person trained. To convey that reach, we rely on storytelling. Read Tegan's story on the next page to see our train-the-trainer strategy in action.

3,080

Moments of education through programs

8,125

Website users engaging with educational content

Zip Codes represented by program participants







Figures on this page represent best estimates.

Our Impact in 2024

Of survey respondents plan to share what they learned from us with someone else





Meet Tegan Terzich

Tegan is an interventionist at Cole Elementary School, a Metro Nashville Public School. After she attended an Urban Green Lab Sustainable Classrooms training for educators, she was inspired to start an after-school program centered around sustainability, affectionately named the "Planet Protectors" by students.

Once a week, the club meets to learn about different aspects of sustainability, such as waste, energy, and environmental protection. From their education, they identify a need at the school and work to meet that need. Last year, they implemented a school-wide recycling system, and this year, they are working on improving energy efficiency by turning off lights and closing blinds. The club has reached almost 60 students in just three years and even inspired one student to take his passion for sustainability and entrepreneurial spirit to his neighborhood by starting a garbage and recycling bin cleaning business.

Classrooms

Urban Green Lab's Classrooms Division trains educators of all kinds on sustainability and how they can bring a sustainable lens into their classrooms with our TN state standards-aligned Sustainable Classrooms Curriculum. Training educators creates opportunities for year-round learning about sustainability, empowering students to make lifelong sustainable choices.

In 2024, we surpassed over 345 educators trained in our Sustainable Classrooms program, from non-classroom educators at the Nashville Public Library to teachers from Meigs Middle and Pearl Cohn High School. We launched a new community-building initiative, Sustaining Educators, to regularly gather trained educators for connection, continued education on sustainability, and support from our team.

19

Educators trained in our Sustainable Classrooms program 9

New locations/schools with Sustainable Classrooms trained educators 94%

Of educators trained in 2024 plan to integrate sustainability into their classrooms or programs

- Hosted Sustaining Educators, our first Learning Community event for Sustainable Classrooms trained educators to gather and meet peers, build momentum, and share best practices for teaching about sustainability
- Partnered with Nashville Public Library to train librarians from seven library branches using our Sustainable Classrooms Curriculum
- Joined World Wildlife Fund as a partner city in the Food Waste Warriors project, a three-year project funded by the EPA to expand education on food waste reduction and reduce food waste in public schools in Nashville, Memphis, Baltimore, and Gwinnett County, GA
- Presented at Metro Nashville Public School's 2024 STEAM & Science Content Day
- Hired our new Sustainable Classrooms Manager, Sofia Guerrero



Our responsibility as educators, parents, leaders... is to instill in the next generation the belief that their actions matter.

LISA YOUNG SUSTAINABLE CLASSROOMS EDUCATOR





Meet Lisa Young

Lisa Young is a Sustainable Classrooms Trained Educator, and she sees her partnership with Urban Green Lab as the basis of her passion for sustainability. "If I hadn't taken that first training, I wouldn't have built relationships with so many people and organizations in the sustainability community."

When she witnessed her students rally around and encourage another student, saying, "It doesn't matter what I do. I'm just one person," it clicked. "Our responsibility as educators, parents, and leaders isn't just to pass down knowledge about the environment. It's to instill in the next generation the belief that their actions matter," said Lisa. "Now, when I start planning a unit, I'm asking myself: How can I help my students understand the world around them?...How can I show them that they hold the power to make a difference—both for the better and for the worse?"

Households

The Households Division provides sustainability education, tools, and resources to Nashville residents through Sustainable in the City and the UGL Volunteers program.

In 2024, we relaunched Sustainable in the City as a podcast transitioning from the webinar format to feature the stories of everyday Nashvillians living sustainably. Through seven UGL Volunteer trainings, we added 125 volunteers to the program, bringing us to a total of 180 UGL Volunteers trained on sustainability and how to share sustainability with their communities. Through partnerships with community-driven organizations, we brought our training for Nashville residents out into the community, expanding access to education on living sustainably.

1,159

Listens of <u>Sustainable in</u> the City as a podcast 125

<u>UGL Volunteers</u> trained to expand sustainability education across Nashville 22

Middle Tennessee zip codes represented amongst the UGL Volunteers

- Collaborated with organizations like the Nashville Public Library and the YMCA
 of Middle Tennessee to host trainings and expand access to sustainability
 education, reaching diverse communities across Nashville
- Launched Sustainable in the City as a podcast with Nashville Department of Waste Services, transitioning from its previous webinar format
- Released eight episodes of Sustainable in the City, featuring nine Nashvillians sharing their small actions that make a big impact for Nashville
- Created resources each month for UGL Volunteers to continue learning and connecting
- Improved the UGL Volunteer training with differentiated, accessible, and engaging messaging







As UGL changed, I wanted to know its new model and connect with other volunteers adopting that model. Also, I like being in a room with folks dedicated to acting on sustainability ... and donuts.

KÄREN WIECKERT UGL VOLUNTEER

Meet Kären Wieckert

Kären Wieckert was born thinking about the environment, but sometimes she struggles to get other people involved in sustainability like she is. Through becoming a UGL Volunteer, Kären has gained access to resources and connections that have grown her knowledge of sustainable living and given her insight into how to talk with people about sustainability and the resources to start the conversation in a way that draws them in to learn more.

Right now, Kären is passionate about waste reduction and extended producer responsibility, so she has focused on reducing her household trash to the point that she doesn't come close to filling her curbside bin. That piqued her neighbor's interest, so she talked with them about waste reduction and recycling using resources provided by our UGL Volunteer program. Now, she and her neighbors are producing less household waste. Soon, the whole street will be on board thanks to Kären simply sharing her passion with her neighbor.

Workplaces

Our Workplaces Division works with businesses, nonprofits, schools, and government offices to implement sustainability education for employees. We help workplaces organize green teams, teach them about sustainability, and connect them to community resources that make a difference for their organization. We accomplish this through the Nashville Sustainability Roundtable, workplace sustainability trainings, and B Tennessee.

In 2024, our Workplaces Division engaged with organizations and stakeholders to explore ways to advance their sustainability efforts further. With input from our community, we developed a new membership opportunity designed to boost employee engagement, education, and buy-in from leaders and staff.

82

Nashville Sustainability
Roundtable attendees

54

Organizations engaged to increase sustainable behavior

10

Trainings conducted for workplaces

- Collaborated with Nashville SC for their Greener Goals initiative, resulting in food rescue, back-of-house composting, and glass recycling at Geodis Park
- Redesigned our Workplaces programs to provide a systemic approach that helps organizations consistently achieve their sustainability education goals; the <u>Sustainable Workplaces Collaborative</u> will launch in 2025.
- Partnered with The Wond'ry's Climate Innovation Accelerator to support local businesses in achieving their climate-related goals through education
- Hosted six Nashville Sustainability Roundtable meetings at workplaces like REI,
 Schneider Electric, and Turnip Green Creative Reuse
- Hired Carlos Hoyos as the sustainable workplaces manager and promoted
 Bethany Edwards to assistant manager of workplaces





We think it's important to gather and talk about sustainability regularly because it helps us lift and inspire one another, but it also helps spread new ideas, awareness, and much more!

ANN MARIE DISALVO
NASHVILLE SUSTAINABILITY
ROUNDTABLE MEMBER



Meet Ann Marie DiSalvo

Ann Marie DiSalvo doesn't feel so isolated in her passion for sustainability after attending Nashville Sustainability Roundtable events. "In a very climate crisis world, it can be overwhelming or disheartening to even try sustainable efforts – almost isolating like we're the only ones that care—, but when we go to these roundtables, we meet others in businesses, organizations, and individuals that care about sustainability and making a positive impact too which makes us feel not so alone," shared Ann Marie.

Ann Marie is on the LightWave Solar Green Team. Working with Urban Green Lab has allowed the team to get out into the community more often, gathering new ideas and education opportunities to bring back to the whole company. "We think it's important to gather and talk about sustainability regularly because it helps us lift and inspire one another, but it also helps spread new ideas, awareness, and much more! We can't all know everything, so bringing people together who want to share their ideas, thoughts, and concerns only helps us all grow."

Nashville Environmental Justice Initiative

A partnership with Tennessee State University

The Nashville Environmental Justice Initiative (NEJI) is a partnership with Tennessee State University (TSU) that educates community stakeholders on environmental justice and collaborative problem-solving that protects and empowers Nashville's marginalized communities from environmental hazards.

This year, the NEJI continued developing an oral history archive to document the lived experiences of Nashvillians experiencing the effects of climate change first, worst, and longest. The archive launched to the public this year as Voices of Resilience, and we began planning the museum exhibition of the archive. We also started convening a cohort to support food justice in Nashville.

8

Voices recorded for the <u>Voices of Resilience</u> oral history archive **15**

Partner organizations engaged in food and environmental justice work with us 18

Environmental justice leaders gathered to brief Admiral Rachel Levine on environmental justice in Nashville

- Spoke on environmental and climate justice panels and presented on environmental justice for schools, universities, businesses, NGOs, and faithbased organizations
- Launched Voices of Resilience: A Nashville Environmental Justice Story Archive
- Began planning the museum exhibition of Voices of Resilience starting at John Early Museum Magnet Middle School
- Convened environmental justice leaders from Nashville organizations to meet with Admiral Rachel Levine with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to share about environmental justice in Nashville
- Started creating a food justice cohort of faith-based organizations and community partners to support food justice efforts with FeedBack Nashville





The best way to learn where we have been is from people in the midst of the circumstances. They have insights into the problem and the solutions.

ELOIS FREEMAN VOICES OF RESILIENCE PARTICIPANT



Meet Elois Freeman

Elois Freeman is driven by her faith. "I look for spaces where I can help people lead abundant lives in keeping with the word of YAHshua, the Christ in John 10:10," said Elois. She shared her story with Tennessee State University and Urban Green Lab for our oral history archive project to document the lived experiences of Nashvillians experiencing climate change in a changing Nashville. Elois believes in the power of collecting stories because telling stories is telling history. "The best way to learn where we have been is from people in the midst of the circumstances," said Elois "They have insights into the problem and the solutions."

She believes environmental justice is naming the damage that has been done to communities and using that momentum to challenge, organize, and compel those who caused harm to bring repair. Her hope for the project is that listeners will clearly hear storytellers when they say, "This is who we are, this is where we are, and this is where we want to go and want our community to look like."

Nashville Food Waste Initiative

A partnership with the Environmental Law Institute

The Nashville Food Waste Initiative (NFWI), in partnership with the Environmental Law Institute (ELI), aims to educate Nashvillians on food waste reduction and connects them to resources for food rescue and composting in Nashville.

In 2024, the NFWI created opportunities for the community to engage in food waste reduction and learn why reducing wasted food is important for people and the planet. We hosted three restaurant challenges, held two mural launch parties, and co-created videos to educate households, businesses, and classrooms on the importance of composting. We also formed a cohort of sister cities to expand the Waste Less mural campaign into Seattle, WA; Cincinnati, OH; and Greensboro, NC.

3rd

Mural in the Waste Less mural series completed at Turnip Truck on Charlotte Ave.

3

Sister cities adopted our Waste Less mural campaign to bring the murals to their cities 46

Attendees for the inagural Climate Week

<u>Cook-Off with 1 Kitchen</u>

Nashville

- Hosted three food waste restaurant challenges: Food Waste Prevention Week
 Coffee Crawl, Earth Week Restaurant Challenge, and Climate Week Cook-Off
- Served on the FeedBack Nashville Steering Committee to develop and promote ways to transform Nashville's food system
- Developed a process for acheiveing authentic community leadership in muralist selection and mural messaging for our Waste Less murals
- Held two mural launch parties to celebrate the art and educate on food waste reduction strategies
- Developed <u>three videos on composting</u> with local composting and waste services partners to showcase why composting is important for Nashville







Through art, complex messages like the importance of food sustainability and water reduction can be communicated in engaging, memorable, and impactful ways.

LEANDRA CRYSTAL MURALIST

Meet LeAndra Crystal

LeAndra Crystal is profoundly committed to using art to educate and inspire positive change. That's why she was inspired to paint our "Food is Community" mural at the Turnip Truck. "This mural is more than just an artwork; it is a catalyst for dialogue and a beacon of community and environmental stewardship," said LeAndra.

LeAndra's hope for the mural is that it shares a message of unity and reminds us of our collective responsibility to create a sustainable future for each other and the planet. "Art transcends language and cultural barriers, making it a great tool for reaching countless communities. It provokes thought, evokes emotions, and inspires action. Through art, complex messages like the importance of food sustainability and water reduction can be communicated in engaging, memorable, and impactful ways," shared LeAndra.

Collaboration makes us stronger.

Our Donors

GOLD

W.L. Lyons Brown Foundation

SILVER



Anonymous





BRONZE

















PACESETTER

Bradley Pinson

Nashville Earth Day

Community Foundation of Middle

Tennessee Valley Authority

Tennessee

The Memorial Foundation

Lindsey Rueger

CHANGEMAKER

Allison Walker Heather Langford Maura Sullivan

Ana Serra Jacob Straessle Melissa Cornejo-Nell

Avery Markel Jenna Wolf Mike Drongowski

Camille Mayle Jennifer Westerholm Neely Tabor

Dan Heller Jessi Hammond Stephanie Gates

Emily Davis Jill Farnham-Allison Todd Lawrence

Erica Rivero Kelly Blankenship Zach Gautsch

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ott

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Elicia Taylor Leanna Cooke Valetta Seymour

Emerald Built Environments Major Jackson

Collaboration makes us stronger.

Donor Spotlight



Kat Pohlman

URBAN GREEN LAB DONOR IN 2024

Kat Pohlman's passion for sustainability started with snow cream. Her grandfather wanted to make a tasty sweet treat with freshly fallen snow, but Kat quickly learned that it wasn't safe to consume because of air pollutants that contaminated rainwater, creating acid rain. "I was determined to make a difference," shared Kat. "The rest is history."

Kat donates to Urban Green Lab because she has seen how access to education and resources can make lasting, impactful change, and she knows Urban Green Lab is connecting Nashvillians to education, resources, and each other. "Sustainability is still an ambiguous topic, and knowing where to begin can be intimidating. By putting resources and tools in the hands of educators, neighbors, and friends, the tenants of sustainability become less abstract and more manageable to define."



Brad Pinson

MONTHLY DONOR SINCE 2020

Brad Pinson believes change happens through education and that Urban Green Lab is the go-to educational resource for learning about sustainability in Nashville. As a member of the business community, Brad enjoys supporting and attending the Nashville Sustainability Roundtable to network and hear best practices from other local businesses that care about people, prosperity, and our planet.

Brad is a monthly supporter of Urban Green Lab because he knows we have a shared responsibility to ensure the health and future of all people. "We need all hands on deck to achieve a sustainable future for Nashville and Middle Tennessee," said Brad. "We can all play a role in making our city the best and healthiest place to live, work, and play."

Partner Spotlight

Centennial Park Conservancy

We are proud to be a presenting partner of Nashville Earth Day, a free event by the Centennial Park Conservancy that celebrates our planet and inspires positive environmental change. Proceeds from the event are donated back to the community by the Centennial Park Conservancy to support local environmental initiatives. In 2024, they donated \$60,000 to create ongoing environmental change in Nashville.



Nashville Department of Waste Services



Our podcast, Sustainable in the City, is created in partnership with the Nashville Department of Waste Services. Through the podcast, we are spotlighting ways that Nashville can waste less through the stories of everyday Nashvillians and sharing how to properly dispose of the waste they have through recycling, composting, and trash services offered by Metro Nashville.

Nashville SC

As part of the Greener Goals Initiative from Major League Soccer, Nashville SC partnered with us to step up their sustainability initiatives at Geodis Park. We served as an educational and strategic partner, making suggestions for improving their green initiatives at a sustainable pace. As a result, they have implemented back-of-house composting, food rescue donations, and glass recycling so far.



1 Hotel Nashville



We co-hosted a Climate Week Cook-Off with 1 Hotel Nashville at 1 Kitchen. 1 Hotel Nashville is a sustainable, luxury hotel in Downtown Nashville. The Cook-Off challenged three local chefs to make the most delicious dish with the smallest climate impact possible. The evening was full of incredible food and education on the effects of food waste on the climate.

Collaboration makes us stronger.

Board of Directors



Sabrina Powell Kroger Companies President



Mike Drongowski Nissan North America Vice-President & Governance Committee Chairperson



Jaz Boon Bridgestone Americas Secretary



Erica Weeks
Paladin Inc.
Treasurer and
Finance Committee
Chairperson



Jennifer Novo FUTURO, Inc. Communications Committee Chairperson



Derek Blank LP Building Solutions



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Neely Burks Tractor Supply Company



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Kareim Oliphant The Investments Lawyers



Bo Robertson ServisFirst Bank



Ana Paula Serra Nissan Americas



Jacob Straessle Owen School of Management Board Intern



Alexa Voytek
Tennessee
Department Of
Environment And
Conservation

Our Staff

Urban Green Lab's staff is a community of people who are passionate about creating a culture of sustainable behavior in Nashville. This year, we added three new members to our staff, including our first-ever director of

partnerships. The role was established to continue generating partnerships that make an impact for Nashville. We also promoted three staff members.



Bethany Edwards
Assistant Manager of
Workplaces



Sofia GuerreroSustainable Classrooms
Manager



Karissa HamptonAssitant Director of Households



Carlos HoyosSustainable Workplaces
Manager



Christina Langone, MA
Director of Education



Stephanie RoachAssistant Director of Special Initiatives



Todd Lawrence, MA

Executive

Director



Camille MayleDirector of Partnerships



Katie Miller
Assistant Director of
Communications



Noah Spiegel, MFA, CNC Senior Director of Operations

We are good stewards of our organization.

2025 Strategic Plan

In 2020, Urban Green Lab created its first five-year strategic plan looking at six broad goals for strengthening how we deliver our mission of sustainability education in Nashville. As described in the pages above about our programming in 2024, we're on the way to accomplishing these goals as a team.

(1) Awareness

Increase visibility in the community

ig(2 ig) Diversity

Better respond to the needs of diverse communities

ig(3 ig) Messaging

More clearly communicate our mission and impact

4 Collaboration

Understand the field in order to catalyze change

- 5 Technology & Innovation
 Utilize technology to be innovative and efficient
- 6 Stability & Expansion
 Strengthen our business model to drive growth

Looking to 2030



As we near the end of the 2025 Strategic Plan timeline, we are looking to 2030. In 2025, we will enter the strategic planning process with Elevate Consulting to create a community-informed strategic plan for 2030. Our goal for this more community-informed plan is to evaluate our strategy and how we measure progress to decide how we'll continue to make sustainability learning a part of life in Nashville.

We are good stewards of our organization.

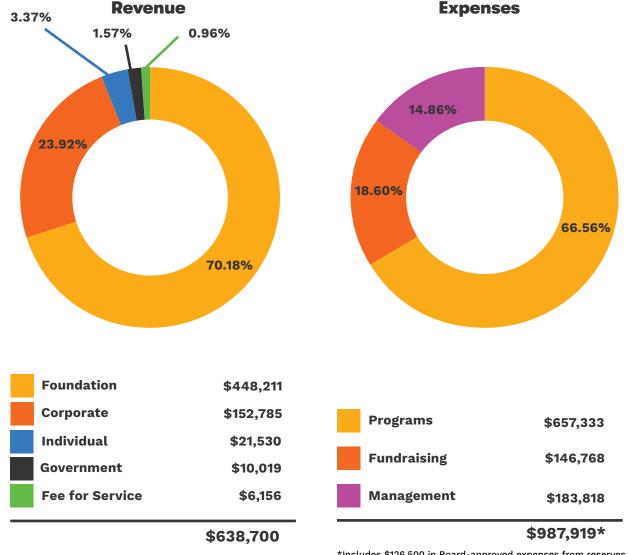
2023 Financials

This page reflects data from our most recently audited financials from the calendar year 2023. Urban Green Lab's fiscal cycle follows the calendar year. At the date of this report's publication, February 19, 2025, our

2024 financials have not been audited yet. For additional information, all financial reports are available on our website. Our audited 2024 financial report will be available on our website after May 15, 2025.

Revenue & Expenses

Our programs are led by a team of highly credentialed educators. Therefore, a majority of our expenses are investments in human resources to further our educational mission.



^{*}Includes \$126,500 in Board-approved expenses from reserves

Support our Work

Share



Spread the word about sustainability and our mission.

Participate



Volunteer with us, join our board or staff, or enroll in a program.

Donate



Invest in sustainability education for







