

TAHOE:  
**STATE  
OF THE  
LAKE**  
REPORT  
**2023**

## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

## Education and outreach

In 2022

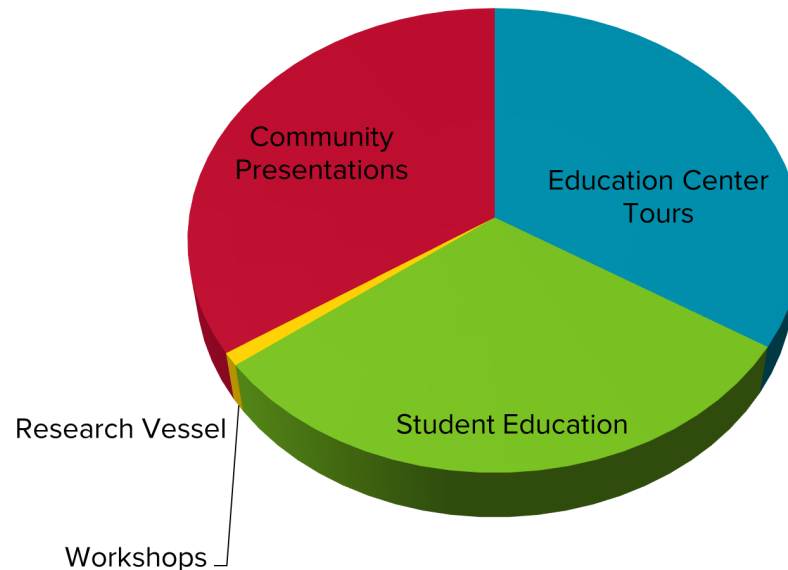
Maintaining healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems is greatly enhanced by education and outreach to provide science-based information to people of all ages and backgrounds and to foster responsible actions and stewardship.

In 2022, TERC interacted with 8,890 visitors through tours, field trips, lectures, and public events. The TERC education

team reached 2,732 students during 73 field trips focused on Lake Tahoe geology, the aquatic food web, forest health, and climate change. TERC continued educating the public through lectures, community presentations, and outdoor programming. TERC brought science-rich content to 603 community members through 17 lectures. The Education

and Outreach team participated in 31 community outreach events that reached 2,436 people. This represents a 72% increase in the number of visitors over the previous year. TERC anticipates that audience sizes and visitation rates will continue to bounce back and surpass pre-pandemic numbers with the expanded education offerings planned.

**TOTAL VISITOR CONTACTS = 8,890**



## Educational exhibits

2023

The Tahoe Science Center continues to expand offerings with two new exhibits in the Underwater Lake Tahoe lounge and plans to expand accessibility to a Spanish-speaking audience and younger demographic.

A new scavenger hunt adventure that leverages augmented reality (AR) technology and the completed Find Tahoe Tessie (beta) App will be added to the Underwater Lake Tahoe room in 2023. The Underwater Lake Tahoe scavenger hunt allows visitors to discover the abundance of life that exists in the lake and their habitats. Additional AR elements will bring the Lake Tahoe aquatic organisms to life. TERC's Find Tahoe Tessie

app has officially launched for beta testing. Find Tahoe Tessie encourages users to unlock various animations of Tahoe Tessie by answering questions regarding the impacts of climate change on the Tahoe aquatic ecosystem. While Tahoe Tessie isn't real, climate change is!

As part of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Museum Assessment Program TERC is expanding the accessibility of science education to Spanish-speaking visitors and a younger demographic (age eight and younger). Spanish translated speech bubbles will be added to the Tahoe Science Center that express guiding questions through the science center exhibits.



Spanish Springs High School students were eager to check out the scavenger hunt available in the Underwater Lake Tahoe Lounge at the UC Davis Tahoe Science Center™.  
Photo: A. Toy



Dayton High School students were so excited to find Tahoe Tessie, they had to capture a photo. Here's hoping this picture wins the Find Tahoe Tessie photo contest!  
Photo: A. Toy



New discussion questions geared towards English and Spanish speakers prompt thought-provoking conversation between visitors and TERC education staff.  
Photo: A. Toy

## Educational programs

2023

TERC programs aim to expand public awareness, knowledge, and understanding of environmental issues at Lake Tahoe. New programs allow TERC educators to grow in their knowledge of science communication and expand TERC's audience.

In 2022, ten TERC educators and three community partners participated in a 32-hour Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) course through the National Association for Interpretation. As educators and interpreters of Tahoe science and research, TERC conducts tours, demonstrations, and leads many activities. This professional development opportunity allowed staff and volunteers to build on presentation skills and refine thematic interpretation elements of the Tahoe Science Center.

The TERC Internship for Scholars program is running again in 2023. This eight-week paid internship offers a cohort of

undergraduate and post-graduate students a unique opportunity to be part of TERC's applied research and education programs. Interns work with a variety of staff, faculty, and graduate students to complete a poster project related to limnology, hydrology, aquatic chemistry, forest ecology, and science education. At the end of the program each participant receives a \$3,000 stipend that comes from a large fund-raising effort from the UC Davis Give Day.

Programs that expanded TERC's education reach that are new in 2023 include: the UC Davis Summer Sessions at Lake Tahoe, Patterson High School Summer Camps, Tahoe City Evening Lecture Series, and a transition of TERC's Citizen Science Tahoe app to ESRI Survey123.



National Association for Interpretation Certified Interpretive Trainer™ Stephanie Ambrosia led the Certified Interpretive Guide™ 4-day certification workshop and engaged the group in a number of activities.

Photo: A. Toy



Seven undergraduate interns from a variety of universities come together to learn about science and research. Over the summer, they will learn to be better communicators of science and complete a project that contributes to TERC's overall mission and goals.

Photo: A. Toy



As part of a pilot summer camp program, underserved students from Patterson High School came to the Tahoe Truckee area. For all of the students, this was their very first time visiting the Tahoe area and participating in the science and outdoor activities offered.

Photo: C. McHenry