



Strategic Plan 2022-2024

Children's Literacy Foundation

The next three years will usher in a series of significant milestones for CLiF:

- We will celebrate 25 years of service
- We will build and move into a brand new headquarters
- We will undertake our inaugural executive director transition

To ensure the upcoming period is as productive and successful as possible, CLiF's Board of Directors and staff have developed a three-year strategic plan with input from CLiF's stakeholders, community partners, subject matter experts and supporters. This plan outlines CLiF's vision and strategic direction from January 2022 through December 2024.



2022-2024 Goals and Activities

Goal

Build on the foundation that CLiF has established as a strong, locally-based, responsive and sustainable literacy organization

CLiF will accomplish this goal by focusing on promoting diversity/equity/inclusion in all aspects of its operations; strengthening CLiF's visibility as go-to resource (in-person and online) for advancing children's literacy; continuing to broaden our donor base with an increased focus on the younger generation; and monitoring the long-term impact of the pandemic on schools and communities, and positive ways CLiF might help.

Goal

Plan and build CLiF's new headquarters to expand organizational capacity (e.g., # of children served, # of books donated, # of presentations in 2023 and beyond)

CLiF will accomplish this goal by working with a team of professionals and staff to design and permit the building; raising sufficient funds to build and furnish the new building; and completing construction by as early as December 31, 2022.

Goal

Conduct a smooth and successful leadership transition

CLiF will accomplish this goal by reviewing governance and operational practices with the Board and staff to ensure the necessary policies and processes are up to date; communicating broadly to stakeholders, partners and supporters that CLiF has a strong, talented team (staff, presenters, Directors, Advisors) to support new leadership; and developing and implementing a plan for onboarding new leadership.

Goal

Continue to create a culture of literacy in the communities CLiF serves

CLiF will accomplish this goal by increasing a focus on and awareness of writing as a literacy skill; emphasizing Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) in our programming; building and strengthening outreach that includes longer engagements and a wide variety of experiences and activities for students, families and adults to help weave a web of literacy; and continuing to strategize and expand digital/virtual/online presence while maintaining a primary focus on in-person programming.

And the Work Continues

CLiF's pivotal transitions to a new leader and a new home require our utmost attention, and will be key areas of focus in the immediate years ahead. The strategic planning research confirmed that "what CLiF does, they do well." With that affirmation, we will continue to maintain the reliable, fun and creative programming and outreach services that are our hallmarks: inspiring presentations by local professionals; a wide range of valuable materials and resources; and high-quality children's books and literacy support.

CLiF has learned a great deal in recent years, both as a result of our ever-evolving work on behalf of the communities we serve, and the global pandemic's impact on our operations. We have incorporated lessons learned into our strategic plan, allowing room for contributions from the new leadership and opportunities to grow within our new and expanded headquarters. The Executive Director and Board will review the organization's progress against its strategic objectives regularly.



Our Core Values

CLiF is committed to:

Literacy development for children with the greatest needs

CLiF knows early reading and writing skills are a gateway to literacy and key predictors of success in school, work and life. In particular, we are dedicated to promoting literacy and increased enjoyment of reading and writing among those children at greatest risk of growing up with low literacy skills.

Innovation, efficiency and excellence

CLiF has a culture of innovation. We develop our programs and services based on client feedback and the latest research and best practices. We have an established reputation as an organization with integrity. Our operations are efficient, cost-effective and responsive to the unique needs of the communities we serve. CLiF seeks to be the go-to resource for children's literacy in the region.

Community collaboration

CLiF seeks to weave a web of literacy within the communities we serve. We build long-standing relationships with our partners, and collaborate with families, schools, libraries and many other programs to give them the tools they need to encourage literacy skills.

Diversity of individuals and their unique contributions

CLiF values all members of our community. We seek to create an environment that respects and honors the diversity of individuals and their unique contributions to our mission.

Mission

Literacy skills are foundational to success in school, work and life, but not all children have equal access to experiences and resources that help build those skills. CLiF's mission is to inspire a love of reading and writing among low-income, at-risk and rural children up to age 12 throughout New Hampshire and Vermont.



Children's Literacy Foundation

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Our History

CLiF opened as a nonprofit in 1998, under the leadership of founding Executive Director Duncan McDougall. In that first year, CLiF hosted six events, with a total attendance of 500 children, and donated \$7,000 in books. Over the last quarter century, our impact has expanded dramatically. In 2021, despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, CLiF hosted 788 events, with a total attendance of 52,753, and gave away almost \$1 million in new, high-quality children's books.





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Who We Are

Early literacy skills are one of the strongest indicators of a child's future success in school, work and life, yet over two-thirds of low-income fourth graders in New Hampshire and Vermont do not read proficiently. Many also have limited access to inspiring literacy programming and high-quality new books.

CLiF provides our free programs to: children in schools, libraries, low-income housing, shelters, childcare centers and Head Start programs; children of prison inmates; children in rural communities with limited resources; refugee, foster and migrant children; families with substance abuse challenges; and many others.

By the Numbers:



350K+

YOUNG READERS AND WRITERS PROVIDED WITH INSPIRING FREE LITERACY PROGRAMS



425+

COMMUNITIES SERVED ACROSS VT AND NH



\$9 Million

IN NEW, HIGH-QUALITY BOOKS GIVEN TO CHILDREN WHO NEED THEM MOST



60+

TALENTED PRESENTERS—CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS, STORYTELLERS AND POETS—WHO WORK DIRECTLY WITH CHILDREN ON OUR BEHALF



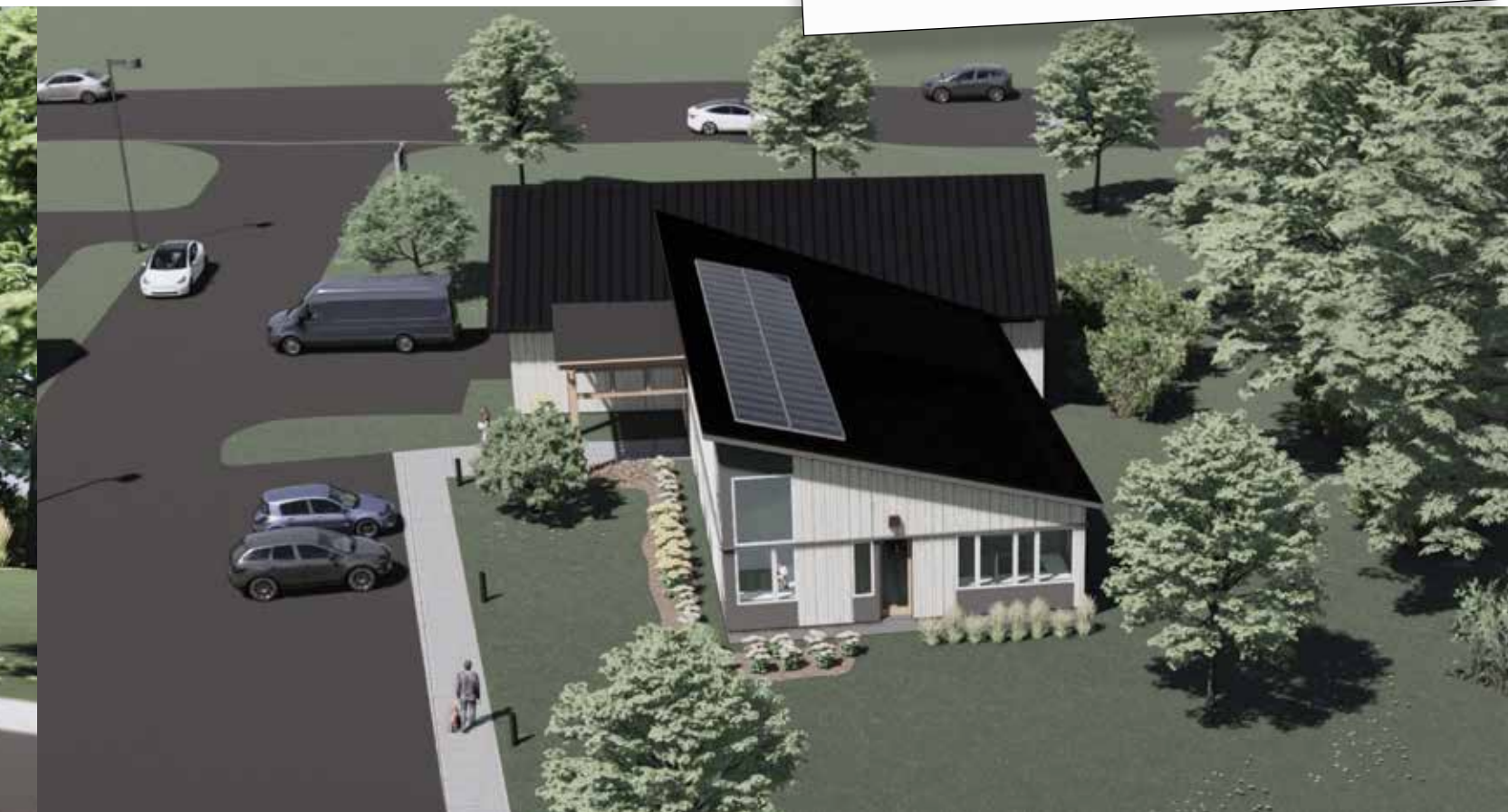
Dozens

OF FREE SEMINARS WITH PARENTS TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO READ TO THEIR CHILDREN, AND FREE CONFERENCES FOR EDUCATORS AND LIBRARIANS



Hundreds

OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES, CHILDCARE CENTERS, HEAD START PROGRAMS, SUMMER CAMPS, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS



Where We Are Going

To a new home, with a new leader

Leadership Transition

Leadership transitions occur in all organizations, and it's time for ours. In the spring of 2023, our founding Executive Director Duncan McDougall will retire after dedicating 25 years to shaping CLiF into a forceful change agent for children's literacy. True to Duncan's continued commitment to CLiF, he notified the Board of his plans five years in advance, ensuring the change in leadership could be thoughtfully planned and executed. CLiF is subsequently well-positioned for a successful transition. We have an extremely deep bench of skilled staff members, directors, advisors, presenters, partners and volunteers with a reservoir of talent and experience, most of whom have been with CLiF for many years.

Among CLiF's many assets are:

- A superb staff in place to support the new leader in learning about CLiF quickly, pursuing our mission, and adapting the organization to future challenges
- A willing, experienced and active Board of Directors, including several members who have been part of leadership transitions in other major organizations
- Strong, stable finances and a broad, loyal donor base to carry CLiF forward

- Deep community partnerships and an extremely positive reputation among partners and supporters throughout New England

In preparation for CLiF's upcoming leadership transition, an internal team interviewed leaders from 17 nonprofits that had undergone recent leadership transitions to learn about their best practices. We also hired a search firm and the search commenced in early 2022. CLiF expects a competitive and exciting search process for the leader who will guide our organization to even greater milestones.

New CLiF Headquarters

CLiF will not only be transitioning to a new executive director, but to a new headquarters as well. Since CLiF's inception, we have operated out of offices located in Duncan's home. After a two-year search, we located an excellent site to build a new facility in Waterbury Center, Vermont. Our goals are to provide:

- An attractive and comfortable structure that enables staff and volunteers to be their most productive
- A building where the flow of work—including the delivery, processing and shipping of books—can be done as efficiently as possible
- A location that is welcoming and easily accessible to visitors
- A space that not only serves current needs, but also allows potential future growth



Dear Clif,
Thank you for all of the books and for sending the authors.