We are excited to be back in person with our Cincinnati Public School partners! This fall we have been able to get back to taking kids outside. We are providing outdoor education programming to Pleasant Ridge Montessori four days a week and run outdoor exploration-based afterschool programming once a week at both Robert’s Academy and The Academy of World Languages. Each week over 300 students go outside with us to explore and learn in the outdoors at their schools!

This year we have implemented a new station-based approach to outdoor education at Pleasant Ridge Montessori.

Each week when students come to the school garden they explore student-directed, hands-on activities centered around an educational theme. For example, during our Bird Unit, students were able to dissect owl pellets, create field guides based on birds they saw in the garden, and learn about bird beak adaptations using tools like pipettes, tweezers, and slotted spoons. Students are able to choose which station they want to explore and complete the activities at their own pace. We are excited to continue developing this programming model as the school year continues!

The Outdoor Explorers at Robert’s Academy and The Academy of World Languages have been busy enjoying the outdoors! The students in our afterschool programs have loved building forts, flipping rocks to look for bugs, digging for worms, and making pinecone bird feeders so far this fall semester. The students who participate in our Outdoor Explorers program look forward to a new adventure exploring the natural spaces at their school.

It is a joy to be back in person with students. We look forward to another school year of exciting and innovative outdoor education programming!
Volunteer Cheer

How does Imago manage 37 acres of forest, lead hundreds of young people outside, plant hundreds of trees, host big events like Music in the Woods, all with a staff of four? Volunteers, of course! Our amazing and dedicated volunteer corps does everything from serve on our board, to serve food at Music in the Woods. Each year our volunteers give heart, mind, and muscle to help us meet our mission.

The theme that holds all of this together is that our volunteers are our family. We strive to create a volunteer experience that feels like home—Welcoming, fun, and meaningful. As one volunteer put it recently when responding to a volunteer evaluation—“Warm and fuzzy feelings :) and contributing to the greatest urban nature preserve in the nation”.

The warm and fuzzy feelings are mutual. Thanks volunteers!

Volunteer highlights of 2021
Volunteers Art Helpers - Volunteers were CRITICAL in the installment of two of our 2021 art pieces (Reclaimed by the Beast and 21 Creatures). Both of these pieces were created by the artists on site, and both had lots of volunteer support to make them happen. Volunteers helped to haul tree stumps, sink large branches, find cool broken clay drain tile pieces, cut honeysuckle as raw materials, and lash out frames that would become finished pieces. Our volunteers’ “fingerprints” are all over these art pieces and the volunteers that worked on them expressed a sense of pride and camaraderie in helping those pieces come together.

Hot Weather Gardeners - We cannot say enough about the amazing volunteer crew that came out weekly to support the care of our garden at Pleasant Ridge Montessori. They weeded, moved beds, turned compost, and watered (a lot). The garden is an amazing learning space and it’s in no small part to our amazing volunteers that came out EVEN when it was stiflingly hot.

MITW Masters - Music in the Woods is a huge endeavor and it’s ONLY possible because of our volunteers. Volunteers served food and beer, hauled lots of equipment, set up tents, carried tables and chairs, and most importantly were amazing ambassadors of Imago.

Volunteers removing honeysuckle on our nature preserve.
New Outdoor Learning at Gamble Elementary

You probably already know that Imago takes Cincinnati Public School students outside (see the cover article). What you might not know is that Imago also partners with schools to create outdoor learning spaces that the schools can use year-round. Those spaces are the school's very own pocket nature preserves. Not only does Imago help to design and build those spaces, we help classrooms use them by providing lessons, materials and resources.

In the last year, Imago has installed pollinator gardens, bird feeding stations and our most ambitious project yet, two forest trails at Gamble Elementary.

Gamble teachers were looking for ways to explore the school's wooded campus and natural areas so they reached out to Imago for help. Imago partnered with the amazing volunteers from Rotary Club Cincinnati to clear honeysuckle and blaze two trails that explore the woods just outside the classroom doors! This project is part of a collaborative initiative, organized by Green Umbrella, to foster outdoor learning in Cincinnati Public Schools.

We're excited to be a part of an awesome team of peers, teachers, principals and schools to help students connect to nature daily!

Call to Artists

Spring 2022 Installation

We're excited to offer our second year of art installations on Imago's trails.

Submissions are due by February 11, 2022

More information and the application can be found at imagoearth.org/art

Have an idea or a question? Ask us! office@imagoearth.org

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Send an email to office@imagoearth.org to opt out of receiving the paper version of our newsletters.
The term “climate anxiety” is one that we’ve seen used more and more recently. As we read reports of more intense storms, hotter and hotter years on record, and losses of biodiversity, it seems almost unavoidable to feel anxiety about what is happening to the planet now and in the future.

Rather than let climate anxiety overwhelm us, this winter Imago is going to be focusing on ways to calm those feelings of anxiety and channel that energy into taking action and growing community. During our “Climate Change: From Anxiety to Action” sustainability theme, we will be sharing stories of resilience, ideas for building community, suggesting ways to take action and that are most impacted by the climate crisis. Hope can be found when we work together and when we are honest about our fears.

Strength is built when supporting our communities and the natural world around us.

You can find all the Climate Change: From Anxiety to Action resources we’ve gathered so far at imagoearth.org/climate-anxiety.

Resources include stories of resilience, tips for building community, ideas for actions that you can take to advocate for the planet, as well as self-care practices and book and podcast recommendations if you want to take a deeper dive.

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