

FALL 2015 INSIDER UPDATE



Hidden Villa is a non-profit organization in Los Altos Hills. Our mission is to inspire a just and sustainable future through our programs, land, and legacy.

We offer hands-on education opportunities in our living laboratory with programs for all ages.



We are an oasis in the Silicon Valley with 1,600 acres of farm and wilderness to explore and enjoy.





HANDS-ON LEARNING, IT'S WHAT WE DO!

2 1st Century Learning has arrived, and with it come Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Our schools and teachers are working hard to incorporate applied learning in the classroom, but this is a huge undertaking, and they need support.

Hidden Villa is poised and ready- we are exceptional at engaging a child's curiosity and exploring the "whys" and "hows" of science. Just imagine being a student that is learning about seed dispersal in class. While at Hidden Villa on a field trip you discover a single olive tree in a wilderness of Oak, Madrone, and Bay Laurel. How did it get there? Suddenly, all of your classroom learning comes alive- it was a bird that ate an olive near the gardens and passed the seed while flying!

At Hidden Villa students get excited about science. Right now we are working with teachers and other education organizations to repackage our programs to better serve our students and continue doing what we have always done — have fun while exploring the natural world.

55 YEARS YOUNG & CELEBRATING!

When you give a gift in the month of September, our Board of Trustees will match it dollar for dollar up to a total of \$55,000 to celebrate our 55th year as a nonprofit.

Give before September 30th online, through the mail, or at the Duveneck Dinner and we will celebrate our programs together.

LEARNING COMES ALIVE

“Hidden Villa is ideal in terms of meeting all of the standards, especially for science, because of the hands-on learning. It is the difference between looking at a picture and experiencing something they can touch, smell, and feel.

All of our kids come to Hidden Villa on scholarship. For kids who are not engaged, they become engaged. If we could only go on one field trip, this is the one we would choose. It is more than teaching them for a test; it’s teaching them for a lifetime.”



“Mr. O”, 2nd grade teacher, Franklin-McKinley Elementary School

RAISING THE BAR



Helen Quinn, national leader in Science Education, is a long-time friend to Hidden Villa. Her husband Dan is a Board Alum and an active Education Program Volunteer.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) have been adopted by California and are being integrated into new 21st Century Learning standards. This means that Science Standards require “learning by doing” and these experiences will be amplified in other subject areas like Math and English.

Long-time Hidden Villa friend, Helen Quinn, serves on the Board of Science Education (and chaired it for a decade) which was instrumental in developing NGSS. We asked her why she felt the shift was needed, she shared, “It’s based on research about learning, which says that you learn by engaging with phenomena and applying science ideas in the context of that phenomena. For students who are learning about where their food comes from or how an ecosystem works, the experience of the real system is very important as an underlying part of learning to understand.”

This is why places like Hidden Villa are important to learning. Our living laboratory engages students in the moment and inspires them for a lifetime.



19th Annual Duveneck Dinner
September 19, 2015
www.hiddenvilla.org
(650) 949-9702



An Interview with Chris Overington, Executive Director

Hidden Villa has recently completed a mission fulfillment and fiscal health analysis in preparation for our upcoming Strategic Plan.

What did you discover?

We completed extensive surveys with our constituents and several themes rose to the surface:

- Building a more comprehensive evaluation framework that ensures Hidden Villa's resources are being used for maximum mission fulfillment and financial sustainability
- Supporting teachers in meeting new standards
- Expanding programming to include After-School and Evening Opportunities
- Improving the Visitor Experience

What was the greatest challenge?

Hidden Villa is a legacy organization. We have a huge responsibility to uphold the traditions of the family, who created Hidden Villa for the community. This legacy is important to me on a personal level, and it's one of the main reasons I have chosen to work at Hidden Villa for 24 years.

As Executive Director, I am very conscious of honoring this legacy whilst running a dynamic nonprofit organization that is responsive to community needs. We also need to balance the checkbook, so to speak, and be guided by financially sustainable decision-making.

I do honestly believe that if Josephine Duveneck, our co-founder, walked into one of our meetings, she would say, "This is great but this is not enough. You could do more." The Duvenecks were responsive to the needs around them, and I think Hidden Villa is challenging itself to do the same.

How can we help?

Your generosity and care for Hidden Villa enables us to remain a place that is accessible to everyone. You can help in many ways — you can volunteer, participate in our programs, and of course, we always appreciate your financial support. We hope you will join us in our September match.

**Look for an Insider's Survey in our October Online Newsletter.
We value your feedback and are committed to serving our community.**