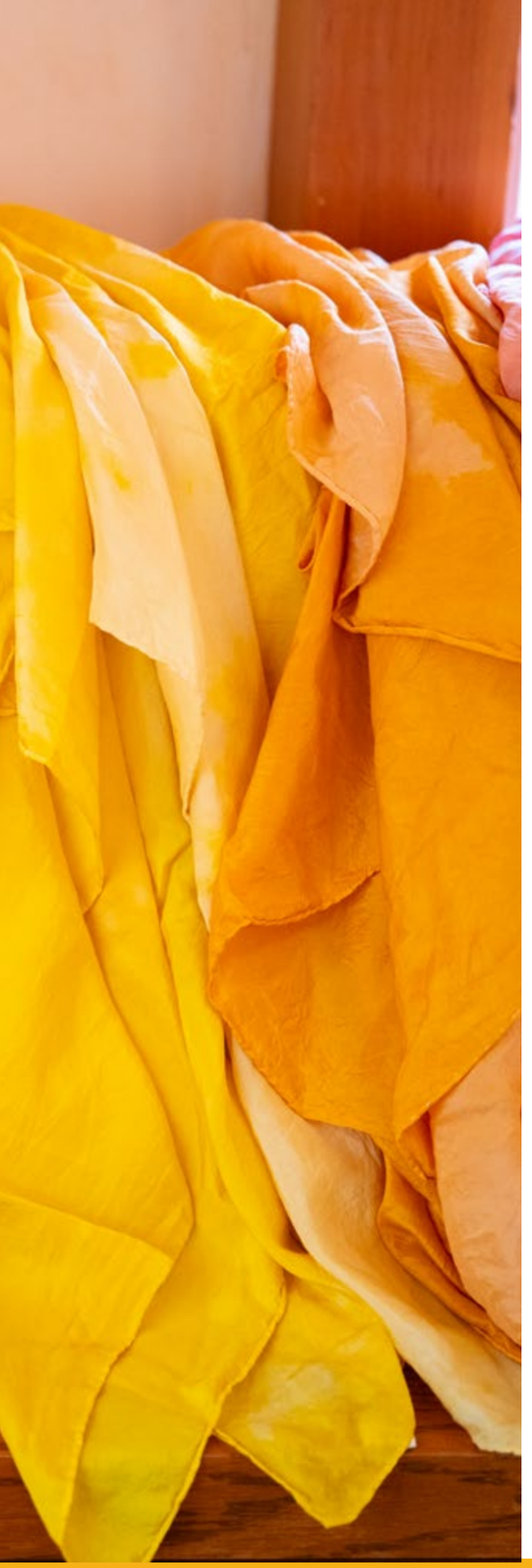
IMPACT REPORT 2024-25

Sunbridge Institute

www.sunbridge.edu



HOPE AS ACTION

November 2025

Dear Friends,

This past July Sunbridge Institute held its first joint commencement. Sharing the Threefold Auditorium stage were our High School Teacher Education and Elementary Teacher Education Classes of 2025. Enlivened by moving artistic performances and addresses both humorous and thoughtful, this joyous occasion capped off a very full summer. It was wonderful to see everyone here in person, as well as to greet our Summer Series students and instructors in their (mostly) online classrooms.

Students and faculty from our Early Childhood program are returning to campus this month for their weeklong fall session and then again in March for their weeklong spring session, while our Elementary and High School program students and faculty are meeting together in online classrooms for several weekends between now and April. This blended learning format best suits today's grades 1-12 teachers whose family and school commitments make it difficult to leave their own teaching classrooms during the school year in order to pursue their teacher education studies.

Such shifting interests and needs on the part of our students and their schools increasingly call upon us to reassess the educational landscape and rethink how we shape our programs. Foundational shifts in the greater landscape are also measurably impacting our larger work in the world. Owen Schiller, a newly-minted Sunbridge graduate who stood on the stage in July with his fellow Elementary program classmates, touched on this theme in his commencement address:

> *"This fall, as we all return to our classrooms, we will not find ourselves in an ordinary moment in history. The world feels perilous, increasingly in need of real moral courage.*
>
> *"It can be overwhelming. There's a temptation to shrink. To love more quietly. To avoid conflict with our colleagues, students, their parents. To retreat to the safety of empty platitudes like 'everyone is welcome here' or 'love is love.' But these stances do not stand. They call for no action and ask for no courage. If we are to see our way forward, as teachers, and as human beings, we must understand something crucial. Hope is an action.*
>
> *"If there is one thing I have learned at Sunbridge it is this: this education is not about pretty silks and attractive nature tables. It is not about always getting it just right. It is about getting it wrong sometimes and showing up again tomorrow to try something new. You are standing for freedom, beauty, truth, and love. You are saying to the children in your care: 'You matter, the world needs the person you really are, and I have your back.' That is hope in action."*

As you engage with your own communities this year, recognizing and responding to their needs and taking action to shape their futures, we at Sunbridge wish you all the very best.

Christopher Sargente '23
Board President

Jessica Heffernan Ziegler
Executive Director

2024-25 Highlights

- Key members of the Sunbridge administration and program leadership produced and submitted comprehensive self-study reports to both WECAN (Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America) and AWSNA (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America) and welcomed site visits by representatives of each organization. At the conclusion of the self-study process, Sunbridge was successfully re-affirmed as a full WECAN and AWSNA institute member.

- Our WECTE (Waldorf Early Childhood Teacher Education) program, under directors Nancy Blanning and Leslie Burchell-Fox '96, started admitting new cohorts annually, upending WECTE's previous every-other-year enrollment cycle in order to better serve the early childhood movement.

- Justin Trombly was appointed co-director of our WETE (Waldorf Elementary Teacher Education) program, working alongside co-director Rebecca Nelson '07 in leading WETE into the future.

- SUNY Empire State approved our WHSTE (Waldorf High School Teacher Education) program for inclusion in the SUNY/Sunbridge partnership, qualifying our High School Teacher Education graduates to be awarded credits for their Sunbridge diploma toward earning a fully accredited SUNY MEd or MA degree with self-designed concentration in Waldorf education.

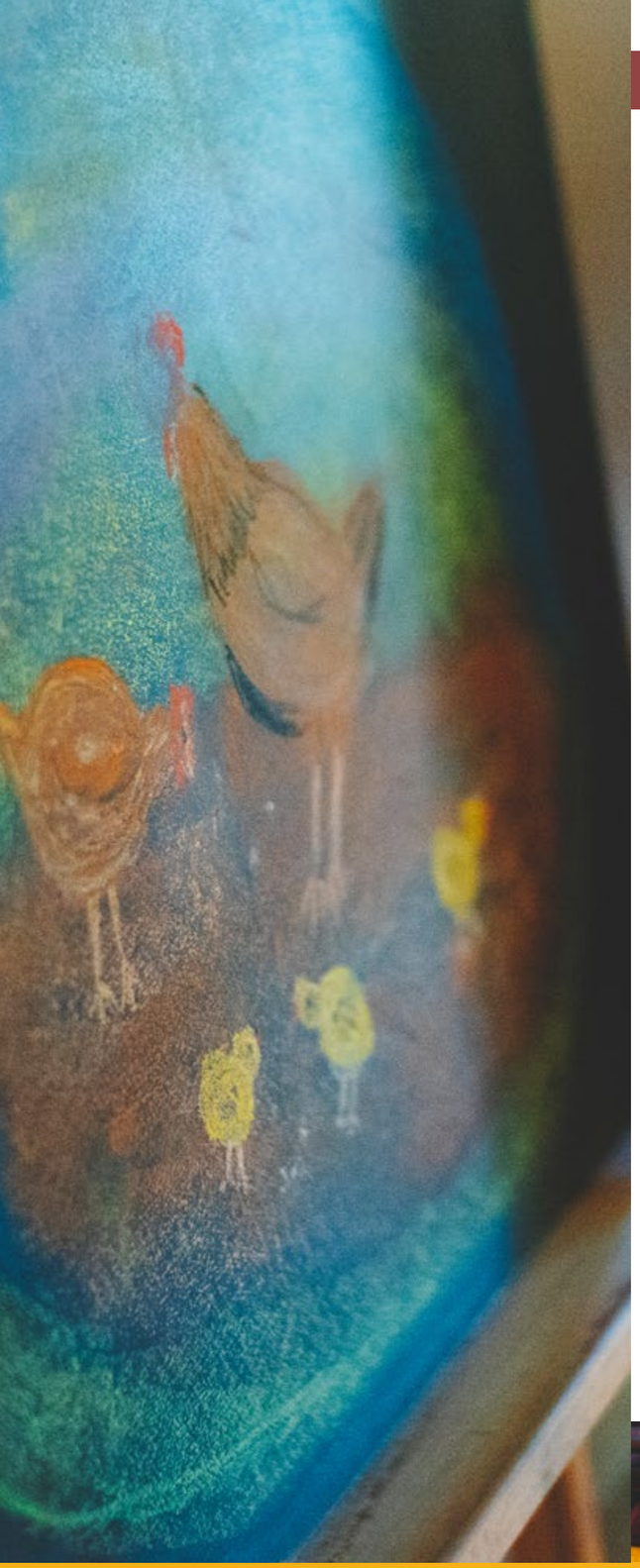
- Alternating summer enrollment cycles continued for WEMTE (Waldorf Elementary Music Teacher Education) and WWLTE (Waldorf World Languages & Cultures Teacher Education), our two in-person, three-week-long certificate programs.

- At June's AWSNA annual conference, held in Toronto, Sunbridge was well represented by keynote speakers Steve Sagarin (WHSTE director) and Linda Williams '87 (Board trustee) who gave talks on the conference theme, "Deepening the Art of Teaching and Leading."

- In early August director of education and organizational culture Meggan Gill made room on her professional plate to assume the additional role of WECAN co-director, succeeding WECTE founder Susan Howard in that position.

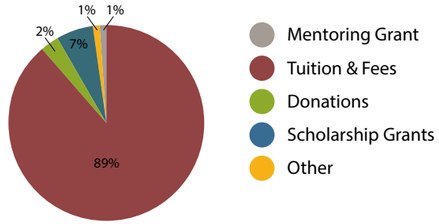
- Over the course of the year, Sunbridge presented nine Summer Series professional development courses, two Summer Series introductory courses, seven online workshops (stand-alone or series), and one in-person Waldorf Weekend.

- January 2025 marked our 15th anniversary as Sunbridge Institute.

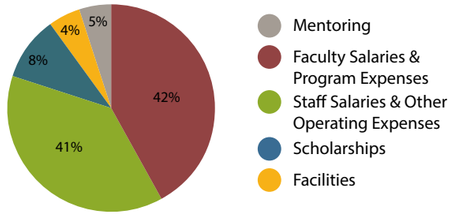


Budget & Data

REVENUE



EXPENSES



WHO WE SERVED

Individuals from:

37 US states
3 Canadian provinces
2 Central American countries
4 European countries

100%

Percentage of qualifying program students who received scholarships

82.4%

Scholarship recipients out of total number of program students

THANK YOU TO OUR 2024-25 DONORS

Our deepest gratitude to the following supporters whose generosity makes our work possible

ANNUAL FUND

$2,000 and up
Dorothy Hinkle-Uhlig

$1,000-1,999
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Linda and Eric Ogden-Wolgemuth

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Anonymous
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Kenneth Roe
IHO George McWilliam

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Anonymous
Linda Williams

$100-249
Anonymous
Jason Child
Keelah Helwig
IHO Dr. Linda Williams
Elisabeth MacCormick
Mary Mertz
Jennifer Robinson
Stephen Sagarin & Janis Martinson
Jennifer Telling
Marna T. Wolaver
IHO Foundation Year 1995, Speech Drama Class II 1996, Admin Class III 1997
Erin Zaremba
Jessica Heffernan Ziegler

Up to $99
Anonymous
Jared and Lois Bark
Nicolas and Gisela Franceschelli
Meggan Gill
Laura Grau
Ivy Greenstein
IHO Juliette Layla Draznin
Wendy A. Guerra
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Lisa M. Miccio
IHO The Wonderful Sunbridge Staff!
Sian Owen-Cruise
Heather Partis
Motria Shuhan
IMO Monica Grudin
Jody Spanglet
Dolores M. Trujillo

NORMAN DAVIDSON STUDENT SUPPORT FUND

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$100-249
Brigida Baldszun
IMO Norman Davidson
Renate Hiller
Bayyinah Muhsin
Linda and Eric Ogden-Wolgemuth

Up to $99
Anonymous (2)
Anonymous
IMO Werner Glas and Norman Davidson
Leslie Burchell-Fox
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IMO Kekoa Hakeem Gentry
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KEY:
IHO = In honor of
IMO = In memory of

DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

$5,000 and up
Stephanie and Robert Ross

$500-999
Cathy O'Neill
Early Childhood Class of 2024
IHO Nancy Blanning & Leslie Burchell-Fox

$250-499
Linda Williams & Candyce Sweda

$100-249
Alma Partners
IMO Ms. Mary Henderson
Gary Banks
Susan Howard
Chris and Signe Schaefer
Motria Shuhan

Up to $99
Anonymous
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Wendy Caesar
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Meggan Gill
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MaryLynn Hetsko
Jennifer M. McMurtrey
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IHO Acorn Waldorf School's NTP Project
Patricia Rubano
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IHO Keelah Helwig and Meggan Gill
Wendy Weinrich
IHO Ann Stahl

Special thanks to these organizations and foundations for their very generous scholarship support

Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
The Michael Foundation
Waldorf Educational Foundation
Waldorf Schools Fund

MAKING A GIFT

Please see our back page to learn how you can support Sunbridge.

The Annual Fund provides unrestricted funding for essential operating expenses, including programming, salaries, and outreach activities.
The Norman Davidson Student Support Fund supports teacher education students through scholarship grants and mentor visits.
The Diversity Scholarship Fund provides scholarship grants for BIPOC students enrolled in our diploma programs.

THE YEAR IN PICTURES

Sunbridge Institute

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MAKING A GIFT

Sunbridge gratefully welcomes one-time gifts, recurring gifts, matching gifts, multi-year pledges, and bequests to support us in our work.

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THANK YOU.

WECAN Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America
Full Member Institute

AWSNA Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
Full Member Institute

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