



ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019



WHO WE ARE

Our mission is to increase empathy across cultures and strengthen communities through responsible travel experiences.

Human Connections is a non-profit that connects local people with international audiences through travel programs and curated experiences. Our goal is to empower local communities while fostering conversations that shift perspectives and increase understanding. Through a vibrant network of local partners - Mexican artisans, tradespeople, and organizations - HC creates opportunities for authentic, meaningful exchanges. These local partners have a platform to share their culture, have agency over their stories, and generate increased income. Concurrently, travelers gain an increased understanding of Mexican culture while cultivating more empathetic perspectives about Mexico.

Human Connections operates as a social enterprise which generates earned income through our unique, educational day tours and student programs. All profits are then invested back into Human Connections to deepen and expand our impact in the region. As a result, our business model and programs ensure sustainability for our organization and, most importantly, the community.

Thank you to the entire HC community - our staff, partners, board, volunteers, interns, tour guests, global fellows, GET participants, and donors for your continued support.

LETTER FROM ELLY

Each year, we've undergone important changes, but this year we experienced genuine transformation.

In terms of numbers, this was our most "successful" year as a social enterprise. Our revenues grew by 28%. This is because had 31% more travelers join our day tours, and 77% more students in Mexico on our student programs. We are excited to share with you how this growth translates into impact and sustainability.

Something I'm particularly proud of is our team's commitment to continual self-reflection. Using a framework called the Theory of Change, we invested countless hours in reassessing the short, medium and long term outcomes we intend to generate through our programming. Conversations with our stakeholders, combined with our staff's learnings, have allowed us to understand on a deeper level the type of change toward which we are working.

Many of you supported us as we transitioned into our new office. This space represents a tremendous shift in our image, visibility, and team morale. We finally have a functional office that is motivating to us and our partners, and that showcases our professionalism. We are profoundly grateful for the way in which you helped us reach this turning point.

And speaking of turning points, it would be disingenuous to reflect on this year's changes without mentioning my transition into motherhood. Certainly, welcoming a child has provided me with rich new insight into the human experience. At the same time, I am filled with pride, nostalgia, and gratitude in watching my first baby turn five. It is a privilege to collaborate with each of you and witness Human Connections thriving.



OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

99

TOURS

1,035

TOUR GUESTS

\$30,268

USD CHANNELED TO OUR LOCAL PARTNERS

18

LOCAL PARTNER FAMILIES

69

STUDENTS

14

INSTITUTIONS



While our programs all take place in Nayarit, our partners come from a diversity of Mexican communities.

Learn more about our impact [here](#).



"The best single word I can use to describe this tour is "respect". The people of Human Connections demonstrated respect with their actions and words to both us the tourists and to the Mexican Artisans we visited...[HC] gave us the opportunity to see what life is like in "Real Mexico" away from the resorts and tourist areas of Banderas Bay. We experienced the warmth of true openness and friendship."

- Tour Guest, 2019

THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS, OUR PARTNERS:



Are recognized for their entrepreneurship, resilience, and traditions



Feel cultural pride




Generate income (HC pays them for their time in hosting groups, plus they sell their products)



Partners have more stable businesses

OVER TIME, THIS MEANS:


Partners report that **their businesses are successful** and that their experiences demonstrate **the power of responsible tourism to strengthen a community.**





"I have learned that tourism is made by two parts: the visitors and the service providers. That the better our human relationship is, the better our commercial relation will be. And I have also learned that tourists are not only people who bring money to us, but also that they are people we may build a friendship with." -Nallely, HC Partner since 2014

THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS, TRAVELERS:

 Gain a more informed, empathetic perspective about Mexico

 Share this knowledge in their communities, breaking down stereotypes

 Learn about responsible tourism

 Think critically about their role in the global economy

OVER TIME, THIS MEANS:

Travelers apply lessons of **empathy** and **social responsibility** to their interactions, professions, and future travels.



*"An internship with Human Connections is ... an opportunity to shift your perspective on how to travel and realize the cultural aspect of travel that other trips and experiences are often missing."
-Intern, 2018*

WHY IT MATTERS

In just 5 years, the number of international arrivals in Mexico has increased by 68%.*** Such a rapid surge generated more jobs and income, but so too environmental and social damages. Pollution, overcrowding, gentrification, loss of cultural identity, and income disparity are some of the notable consequences of tourism's rapid growth in the Banderas Bay area.

The goal of responsible tourism is to minimize these negative impacts, working to enhance the well-being of host communities while providing meaningful experiences to travelers. This type of tourism involves local people in decision making and creates the opportunity for authentic cultural exchange.

Tourism is the second-fastest growing sector in the world* and, by 2030, 1.8 billion people are expected to travel internationally.** Communities worldwide will be transformed by this growth - let's work to make that transformation as positive as possible. And let's start with Bucerías.



*World Travel and Tourism Council

**<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284420070>

***World Bank, Number of international arrivals in Mexico in 2012 (23.4m) compared to 2017



"Human Connections provided me with a way to see the beauty and richness of the people, community, and culture of Bucerias. I learned about myself, but most importantly I learned from the people we visited and saw their pride, strength, and commitment to their trade." -Alternative Break Participant, 2019

FINANCIALS

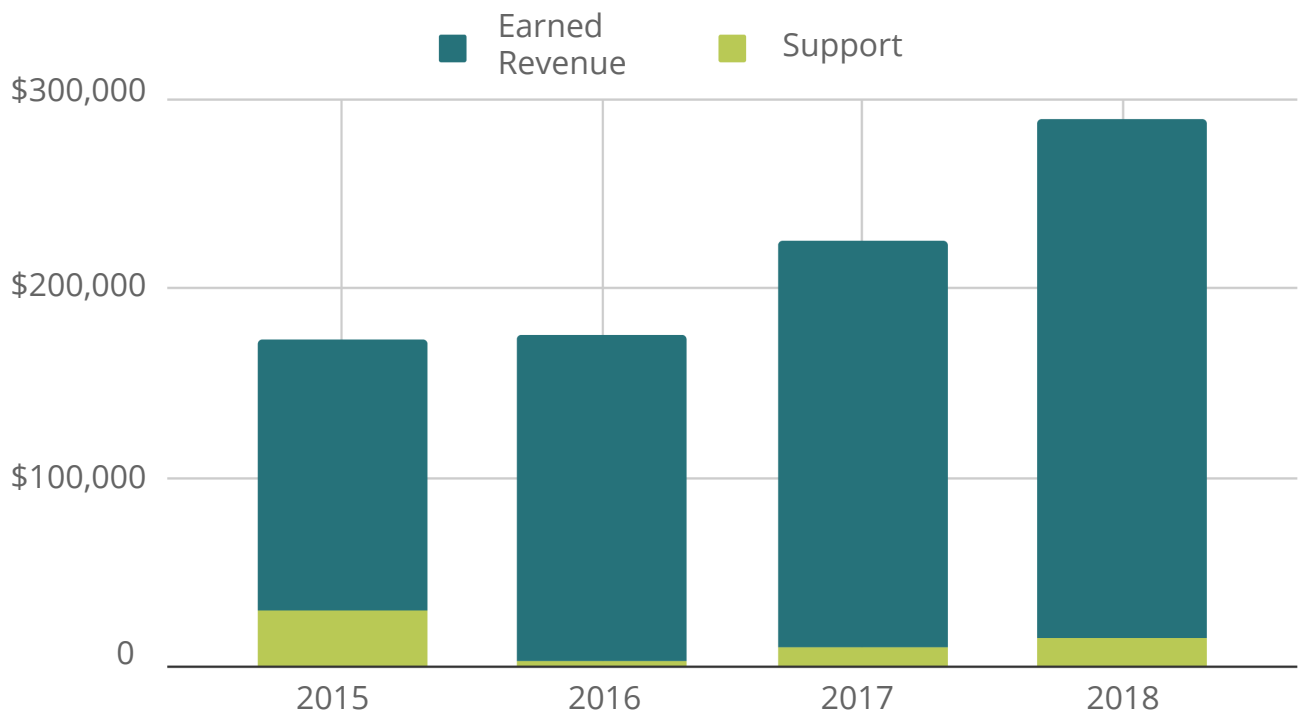
	2018	2017
Assets	\$140,042	\$77,436
Liabilities	\$1,888	\$129
Net Assets	\$138,154	\$77,308

Revenue

	2018	2017
Contributions & Grants	\$14,441	\$9,525
Program Service Sales	\$275,253	\$215,495
Other Revenue	\$65	\$829
Total Revenue	\$289,759	\$225,849

Expenditures

	2018	2017
Program Services	\$198,252	\$172,228
Management & General	\$25,143	\$16,792
Fundraising	\$0	\$3,297
Total Expenditures	\$223,395	\$192,317



HC SUPPORTERS

\$1,000+

Place2Give Foundation

\$500 - \$999

Jeanne Koruga

Dennis and Stacey

Barsema

Jean-Pierre Rohrer

\$100-\$499

Brian Runyan

Kathleen Frost

Eileen and Rob McHale

Michael Hornsby

Mary and John Jacobs

Santiago Goldman

Judy Bottorf and John

Millard

Adam and Kyra Grenier

Sarah Lesar

Josie Burke and Matt Perl

Eric Wasowicz and Ann

Lawrence

Molly Fisher

Isabella Cochet

Larry McClure

Shirley Bridges

Corrina Jacobs

Karen and Dave Reinke

Steven Miller

Barb Chester

Dennis and Barb Ross

Jane McElduff

Kelly Ward

Ken Nielsen

0-\$99

Shawn Lee

Merry Rowland

Brittany Alexander

Robin Cindy Yoshimura

Patrick and Tracy Heim

Iris Dobschall

Scott Bollinger

Margery Sotomayor

Kathy Moriarty

Daniela Frendo

Judy Stettner

Karen Kirschner

Michael Bockmann

Elly Rohrer

Victoria Thompson

Gary Parker

Kurt and Jessie Mansperger

Karen Meredith

Peter Pollhammer

Ian and Sharon Whitehouse

Tess Wasowicz

Maggie and Marty McCann

Emma Stettner

Pamela Brody

Debra and Robert Lineback

Peggy Mansperger

Brandon Mank

Justin Wilson

Avianna Carmoega

¡GRACIAS!

GET INVOLVED

SUPPORT OUR WORK

Human Connections is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations can be made online at www.humanconnections.org/donate or by calling us at 773-800-2811.

CONNECT US WITH UNIVERSITIES

Spread the word about our student programs and connect us to faculty. This is the most significant way you can help grow our impact.

BOOK A TOUR

Visiting Bucerías? Book a tour online at www.humanconnections.org/tours.

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