

GLOBAL UNDERWATER EXPLORERS

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

04	LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT
08	RECREATIONAL & FOUNDATIONAL DIVING REPORT
10	CAVE DIVING REPORT
12	TECHNICAL DIVING REPORT
14	GUE.TV REPORT
16	INDEPTH REPORT
17	COURSE TOTALS BY YEAR
18	STUDENT REPORT
20	SOCIAL MEDIA NUMBERS
22	FINANCIAL REPORT

Cover Photo by Sean Romanowski



ABOUT GUE

Founded in 1998, Global Underwater Explorers (GUE) has grown into an internationally recognized scuba diving educator as well as a leader in underwater exploration and conservation.

Jarrold Jablonski, founder and president of GUE, leads the organization with a commitment to providing high-quality training that allows divers to participate in exploration and conservation projects worldwide. GUE serves the wider dive industry by pushing the standards for training to the next level. In this way, GUE aids scientists, archaeologists, other not-for-profits, and universities by helping them to accomplish their research goals effectively and safely.

Throughout its history, GUE's main focus has been to provide like-minded divers with a community of people that could help them accomplish their diving goals. GUE-trained divers are found in far-reaching global communities that offer many social and support opportunities alongside a host of unique and challenging underwater projects.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

It seems impossible to write a yearly report without recognizing the pervasive impact of the COVID-19 virus. The global pandemic left some to grieve for lost friends and family while economic conditions were deeply strained across the planet. Tense political rivalries were further amplified, and optimism seemed hard to find, especially on network news channels. Given these numerous struggles, it feels disrespectful to complain about the impact to our cherished time underwater. So rather than bemoan these lost dives, I would like to acknowledge the suffering of our many global citizens, give thanks for a hopeful future, and bring news of the diverse activities we pursued in spite of the challenges.

Many of us used the extra time to discover new ways to remain in touch with our friends, family, and diving communities. The GUE Board of Directors took the opportunity to conduct weekly meetings while developing a variety of projects. We also began monthly GUE instructor meetings and expanded GUE HQ staff meetings by incorporating part-time staff and volunteers. GUE also conducted our first community day, connecting 30 countries with 72.2k diver participants in the event. This was a unique interplay between virtual and in-person meetings as restrictions varied across the world, allowing some groups to meet in the “real world” while others joined virtually. These differing assemblies were then

integrated through video conferences. It was personally gratifying to initiate video meetings with our GUE communities across the globe, meeting with Asian, European, Australasian, and North American communities through the day. Presentations by and interviews with a variety of diving personalities further augmented this successful event.

A great deal of work continues across all curricula with more detail available within the program administrators’ reports that follow in this publication. We are pleased to have a new release of the GUE Fundamentals book—published in six languages—and a new cave manual preparing for release in the second quarter of 2021. Online training saw a number

of improvements with persistent expansion of GUE.tv content, covering mostly training and techniques but also including community activities. GUE is further developing a new diver coaching platform, supporting course preparation and review with skills videos, lectures, and quizzes. Fundamentals coaching will be released in the first quarter of the year followed by cave and tech.

GUE also continued their trend of expansion and refinement with a printed, full-color magazine called *Explore* being released in



the second quarter; this publication features a collection of the numerous GUE projects conducted globally. The GUE-sponsored blog, *InDepth*, continues to expand its audience and content, seeking to foster a bridge between GUE activities and those of the industry at large. The monthly blog has even been recognized by reviewers among the top available scuba blogs. Meanwhile, GUE’s signature *Quest* magazine recently celebrated its 20th birthday as longtime editor Panos Alexakos makes plans for a much-deserved

retirement. We are deeply grateful for his many years of service and wish him the very best in whatever adventures he has next. *Quest* duties will now be managed by Jesper Kjoller who brings more than a decade of editorial skill to the magazine. A notable refresh is occurring both in the representative style and the means of distribution. We look forward to releasing the fully renovated

magazine in the coming months. Social media channels also enjoy ongoing success with growing audiences and more diverse content.

Most notably, GUE renovated our YouTube channel with regular and expanded content, filling a niche between detail-oriented GUE.tv productions and the conversational style of social media. We are excited to see viewership growing steadily and expect to break the 10k subscribers mark around the time you read this report. Please visit our channel and help ensure this prediction comes true. Our Facebook and Instagram pages continue to grow, encouraging the value of social

engagement across various communities while bringing unique and engaging content to our subscribers and inviting new divers into our community. We are also developing an online community portal that intends to augment our current social media platforms while enhancing our project-based approach. This new endeavor will support community interaction, dive planning, dive buddy outreach, and project organization. In 2021, dive planning will gain additional tools in the form of a new, fully updated DecoPlanner v4. Users will be able to use either Apple or Android on a phone or tablet; they can also use Windows or Mac computers, or even a browser-based solution, providing dive planning ease from whichever platform they prefer. The browser-based solution integrates into our community portal, allowing easy integration for team planning and community-based activities.

Despite significant interruptions due to COVID restrictions, GUE continued to advance its Mission 2030 planning sessions. We deeply regret missing the long-anticipated collaborative session that would have found more than 20 stakeholders from around the globe meeting in Europe for an elaborate planning session, but we made the best of an

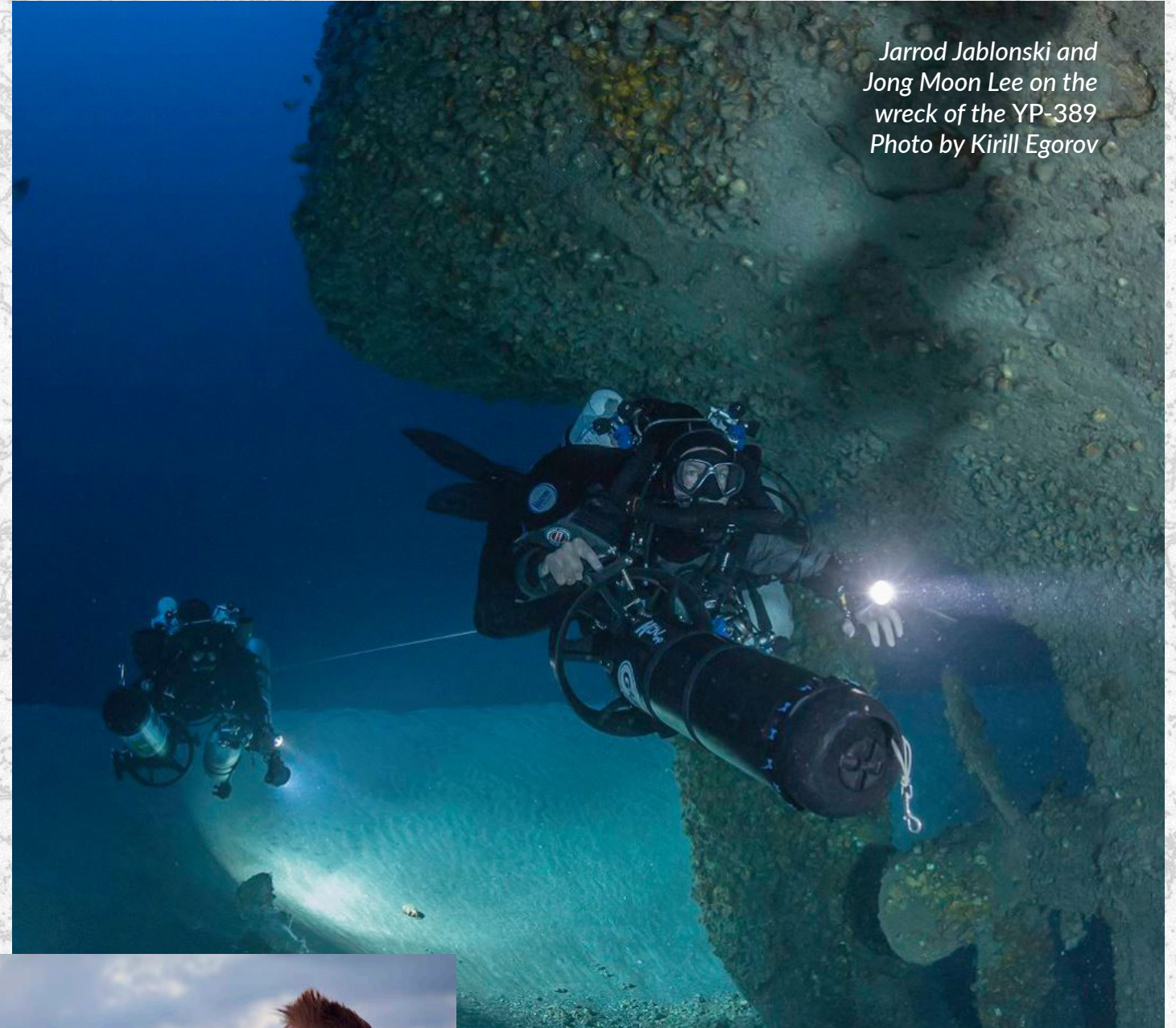
unfortunate situation and continued refining the exciting future of GUE for 2030 and beyond. Given the uncertain times, GUE is actually dividing our planning into a near-term 2025 and long-term 2030 mission plan. Both of these will be rolled out to the public in the coming months.

We have been busy throughout the pandemic and remain excited to begin the next decade of progress, working tirelessly to expand GUE's global mission. In the coming years, GUE will continue expanding the utilization of our well-trained communities in the conduct of diverse and ever-growing exploration and conservation initiatives. We remain deeply committed to the foundational goals that forged our creation and hope the current improvement in global conditions will persist, allowing us to get back to the fun and rewarding dives that shape our collective passion. I hope to see you at a dive site in the very near future.

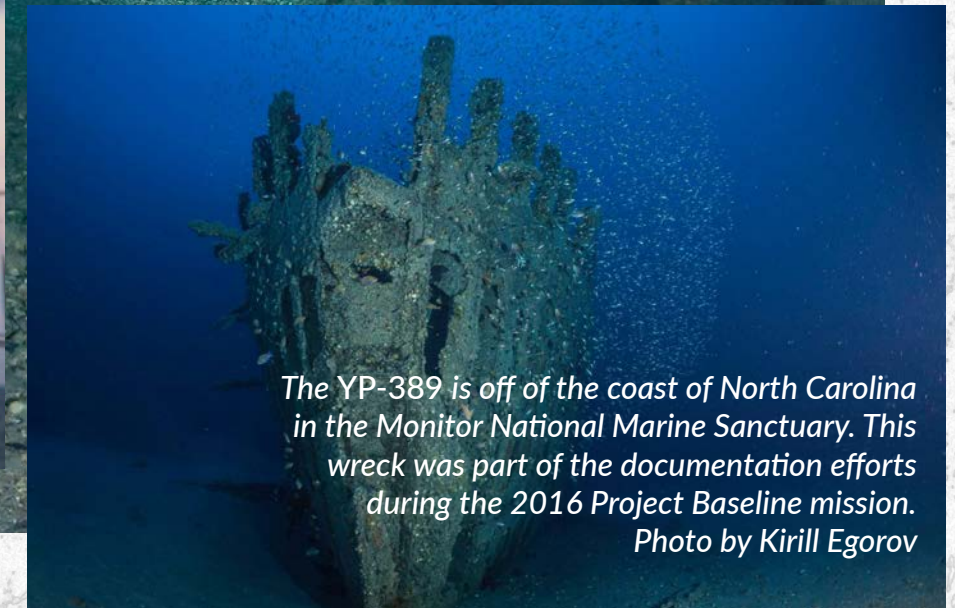
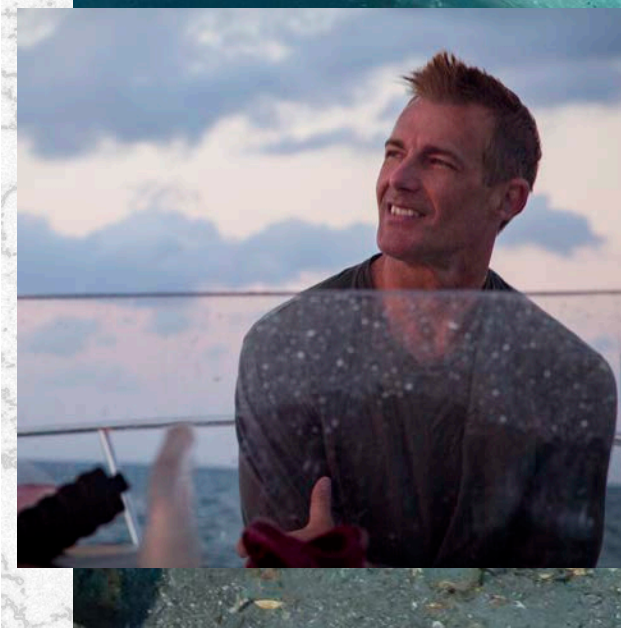
Sincerely,



Jarrod Jablonski
President/Founder
Global Underwater Explorers



Jarrod Jablonski and Jong Moon Lee on the wreck of the YP-389
Photo by Kirill Egorov



The YP-389 is off of the coast of North Carolina in the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary. This wreck was part of the documentation efforts during the 2016 Project Baseline mission.
Photo by Kirill Egorov

RECREATIONAL & FOUNDATIONAL CURRICULUM REPORT

2020 was an unusual year for the diving industry. Still, it had a dynamic start with GUE being at the biggest dive show in Germany, BOOT, promoting the recreational curriculum, followed by a global restriction in dives and training.

During this time, GUE supported its instructors by making allowances to annual renewal requirements for those affected by the pandemic. GUE also started monthly online instructor meetings to keep the instructor cadre updated on the current state of the organization, inform them of new developments, and discuss their challenges.

In 2020:

- More materials were translated.
- The GUE Training Council was created.
- We launched courses in collaboration with DAN that are taught by GUE instructors to support the development of the GUE Rescue Primer and Recreational Diver Level 2 course development.
- Development of an online learning platform began, starting with the Fundamentals curriculum, to be released in Q1 of 2021.
- A new version of the book *The Fundamentals of Better Diving* was released. It is available in English, German, Italian, Spanish, Korean, and Chinese.
- We released two educational mini books: *GUE Pre-Dive Sequence: The right way to begin your dive* and *Assisted, Not Guided – Dive Computer Use: A Guide for the Recreational GUE Diver*. Available in several languages, these publications are supplementary materials for GUE Fundamentals and Recreational curricula students, and the pre-dive sequence guide is available in the GUE Store. Corresponding educational videos were also created for GUE.tv.

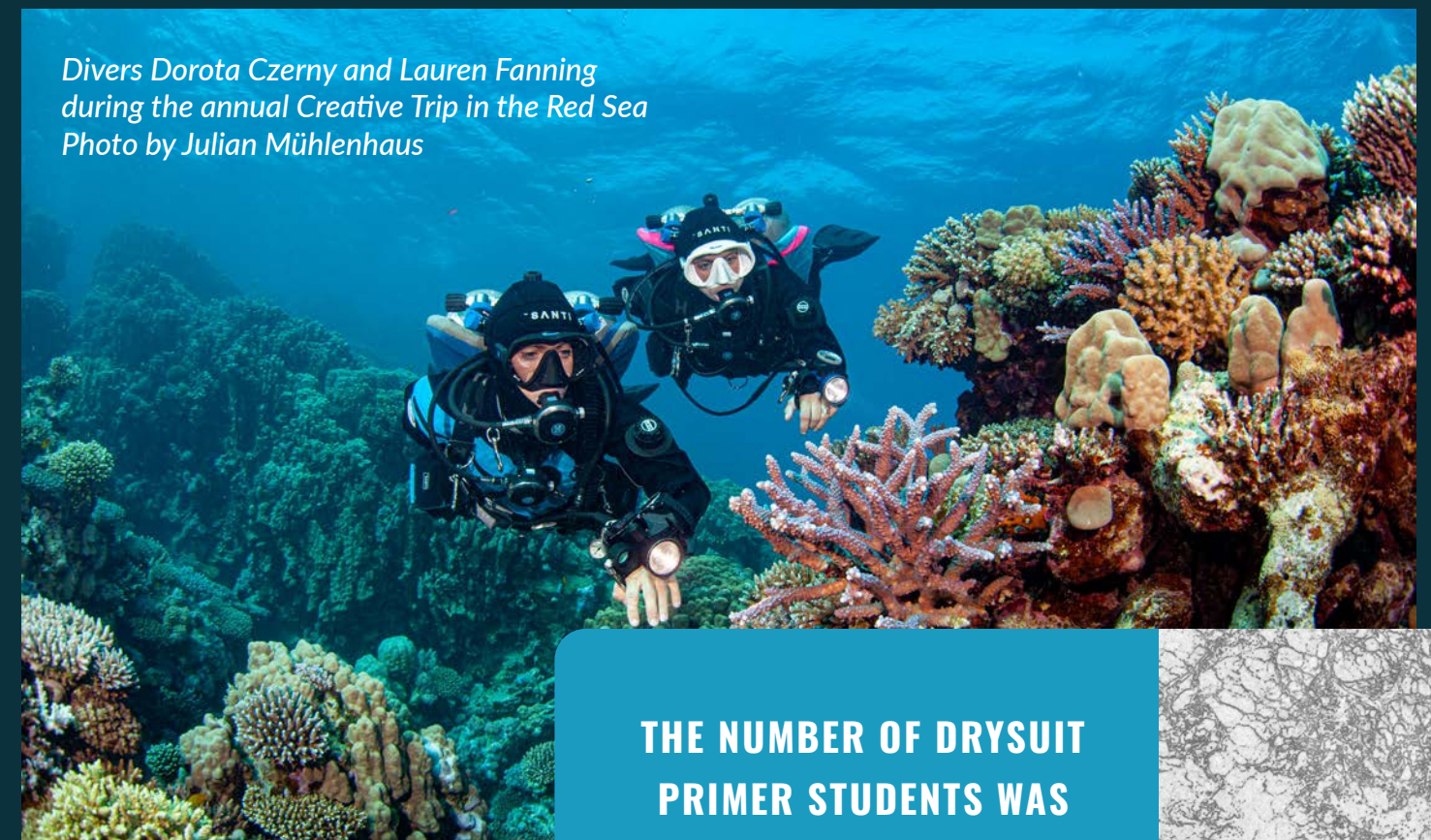
- Despite restrictions that prevented divers and instructors from traveling for training, GUE saw a growth in local diving activities and the development of communities, including the addition of new GUE Dive Centers in a few areas.

With all the new tools for training and pre-course study in place, I am looking forward to continued development of GUE and the recreational curriculum in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Dorota Czerny

Vice President and Recreational Administrator



Divers Dorota Czerny and Lauren Fanning during the annual Creative Trip in the Red Sea
Photo by Julian Mühlenhaus

**THE NUMBER OF DRYSUIT
PRIMER STUDENTS WAS
UP BY 38% IN 2020**

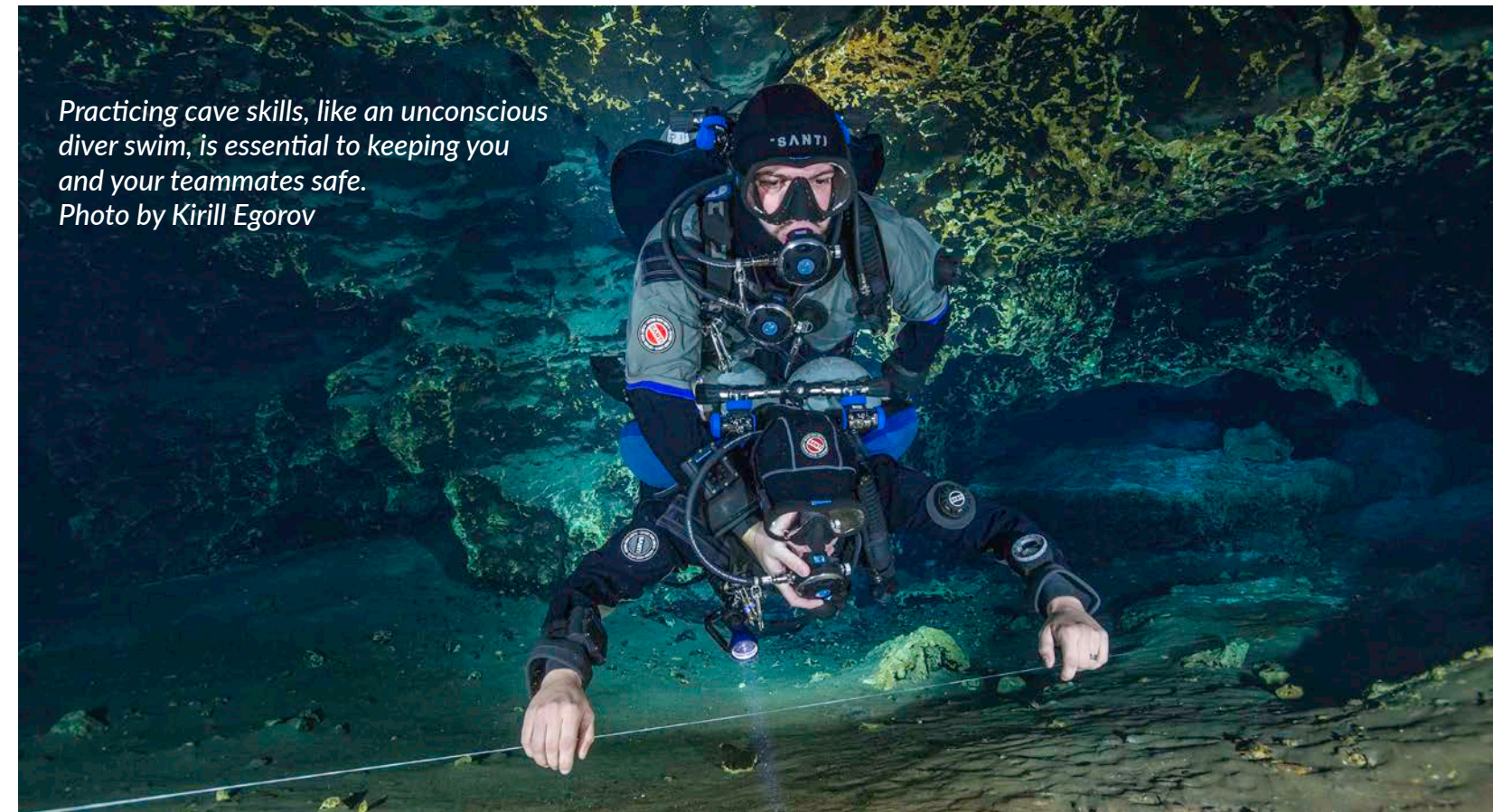
CAVE CURRICULUM REPORT

2020 presented a number of unique challenges to all of us. Nevertheless, we kept teaching wherever and whenever possible. Some of our teams were lucky to be able to explore (you can find a number of updates from Mexico, Florida, and Sicily both in *Quest* and on our social media channels) or fill the rest of the time with material creation and updates.

In 2020:

- At long last, the updated GUE Cave Manual is being prepared for release in second quarter 2021.
- Two lecture modules (Cave Geology and Navigation) were filmed and edited. These videos will be available both on GUE.tv and the GUE online training platform.
- The Cave 1 exam was updated based on instructor feedback.
- CCR Cave materials were developed and are being prepared for release in 2021.
- *Diver Propulsion Vehicles: Procedures and Skills Guide*, a photographic educational supplement was released in support of both the DPV 1 and DPV Cave programs.

**THE FIRST CCR CAVE
STUDENTS WERE CERTIFIED
IN 2020**



Practicing cave skills, like an unconscious diver swim, is essential to keeping you and your teammates safe.
Photo by Kirill Egorov

LOOKING INTO 2021:

- We are planning for continued expansion of our video library, including gas planning lectures for GUE.tv and the GUE online learning platform.
- We have started discussing restructuring our RB80 program and potentially adding two specialized programs: RB80 Cave and RB80 Sidemount.
- The DPV Cave presentation will be released in Q2 of 2021.
- An updated Cave 2 presentation and Cave 2 exam will be released in Q2 2021.
- We will develop a new and long-anticipated signature top level course in the cave/rebreather curriculum. This will be a true explorer course, bar none.

I hope we are all able to get back to training, travel, and diving in 2021.

Sincerely,
Kirill Egorov
Cave Administrator

TECHNICAL CURRICULUM REPORT

I think very few of us had the foresight to see the events about to unfold in 2020. Our rebreather diving instructors and divers were impacted by the acute shortage of oxygen sensors as the demand from the healthcare industry took every single sensor off the market during quarters one through three. I applaud all of you who still stuck to our guidelines and recommendations that you not be tempted to use unapproved or outdated sensors during this difficult time.

*Diver on the Hima Hooker wreck in Bonaire.
Photo by Kirill Egorov*

2021 Vision and Goals

The following is a summary of visions and production goals I'm involved with implementing as your technical administrator.

- New revisions of Tech 1, CCR 1, and CCR 2 based on instructor and student feedback
- Launching the new Tech 2 student and instructor teaching and support materials
- Developing more digital support materials for GUE.tv and online resources
- Developing and updating instructors seeking to earn teaching credentials within the technical/rebreather curriculums
- Evaluating the need for creating a sidemount rebreather cave course and potentially a bailout rebreather course for both tech and cave

I hope you have enjoyed this brief insight into what's going on and what's in the works for 2021. As always, I'm available for comments and ideas using any of the platforms available to you as a GUE diver, student, and member.

Enjoy the upcoming springtime. Dive, explore, and have fun! Stay safe, get vaccinated!

Richard Lundgren
Technical Administrator

**THE NUMBER OF CCR
DIVERS CERTIFIED IN
2019 DOUBLED**

GUE.TV REPORT

In 2020, the primary focus for GUE.tv was to provide our subscribers and community with content that was both educational and entertaining during the pandemic.

We focused on educational series and on interviews with influential people in the dive industry. We released 192 high-quality videos and reached an audience of over 30,000. The GUE.tv app has allowed users to access videos more easily from their tablet or phone, and we have seen an increase in the number of people who access the site on their mobile devices.

For 2021, our main goal is to continue delivering great content while focusing on bringing more technical and cave-specific training videos to the platform. Thank you to those of you who are subscribers and support GUE.tv.

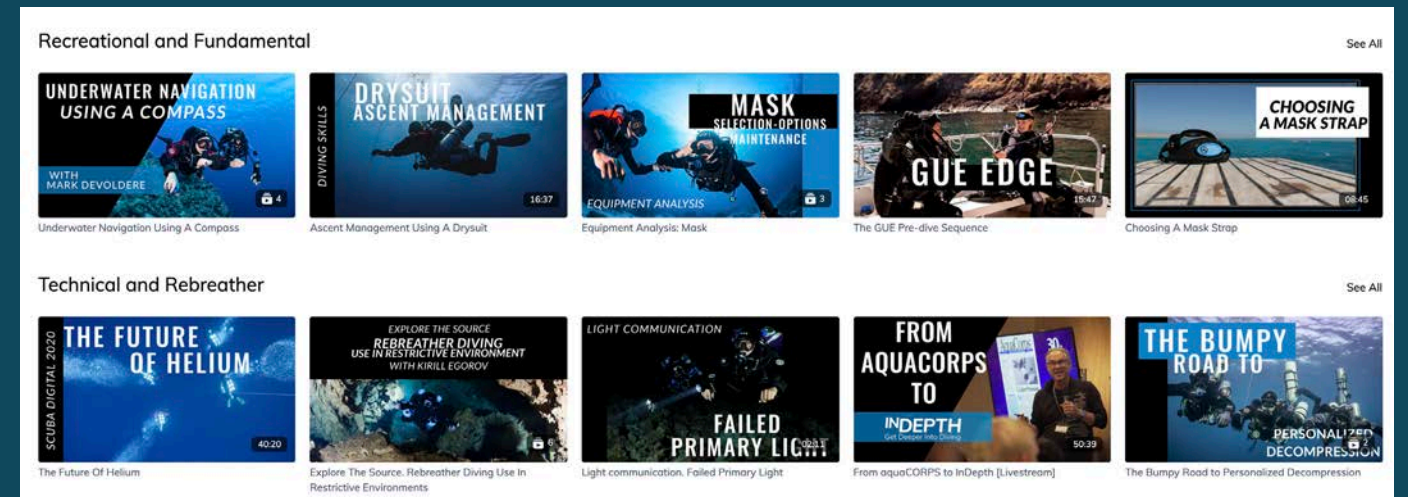
TOTAL WATCH TIME:
4,209 HRS
64,565 UNIQUE VIEWS



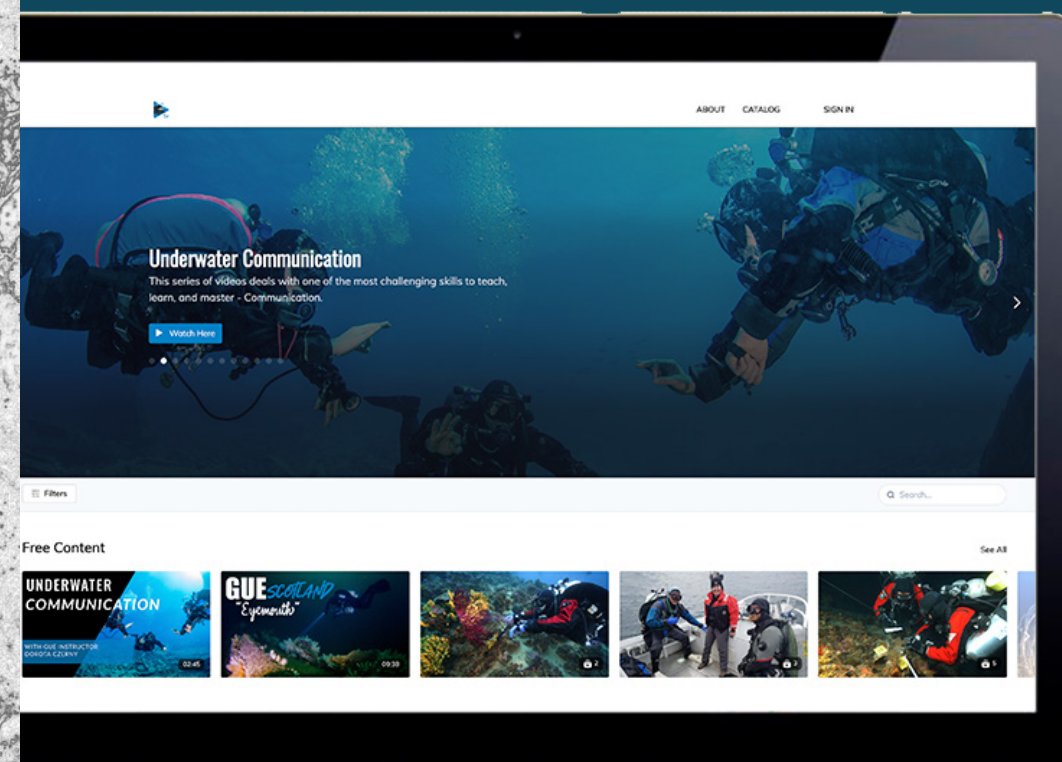
31% OF VIEWERS ARE DIRECTED TO THE SITE FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

MOST POPULAR VIDEO SERIES

1. FUNDAMENTALS SKILLS IN-WATER: S-DRILL
2. BUOYANCY BASICS SERIES
3. ALLENAMENTI PER SUB DA FARE A CASA, CON CATERINA DE SETA
4. EXPLORE THE SOURCE: REBREATHER DIVING
5. GUE EQUIPMENT CONFIGURATION



TOTAL VIEW TIME INCREASED BY 152% IN 2020



192 NEW VIDEOS IN 2020

16,000 VIEWS WERE ON MOBILE DEVICES

INDEPTH REPORT

InDepth grew in a number of significant ways in 2020, our second year of operation. The highlights are these:

- We published 100 stories in 2020, up from 92 in 2019, and have grown in the sophistication and depth of our content; for example, through adding links and related documents. We have added more contributors and currently have a backlog of stories.
- We added advertising in the middle of the pandemic. Specifically, we added six sponsors. We have subsequently added two more sponsors in January 2021 and renewed many one of the originals.
- We were rated the 5th Best Scuba Diving Blog by Adventure Junkies, up from 10th place in 2019.
- We began monthly video teasers on the GUE YouTube channel that have been averaging more than 1,000 views each within a day or two of release.

**60% OF OUR SURVEYED READERS
HAVE TAKEN A COURSE WITH GUE**

**INDEPTH HAD 240,480
PAGEVIEWS IN 2020**

**65% OF OUR SURVEYED
READERS ARE NOT DIVING
PROFESSIONALS**

**54% OF OUR
SURVEYED READERS
ARE IN EUROPE**

MOST-READ STORIES IN 2020

1. CAMERAS KILL CAVERS AGAIN BY NATALIE L GIBB
2. GUE'S CLOSED-CIRCUIT REBREATHING CONFIGURATION BY RICHARD LUNDGREN
3. GRADIENT FACTORS IN A POST DEEP STOPS WORLD BY DAVID DOOLETTE
4. HRANICE ABYSS: THE DEEPEST FLOODED FRESHWATER ABYSS IN THE WORLD BY MICHAL GUBA
5. FACT OR FICTION: REVISITING THE GUINNESS WORLD RECORD DIVE BY MICHAEL MENDUNO

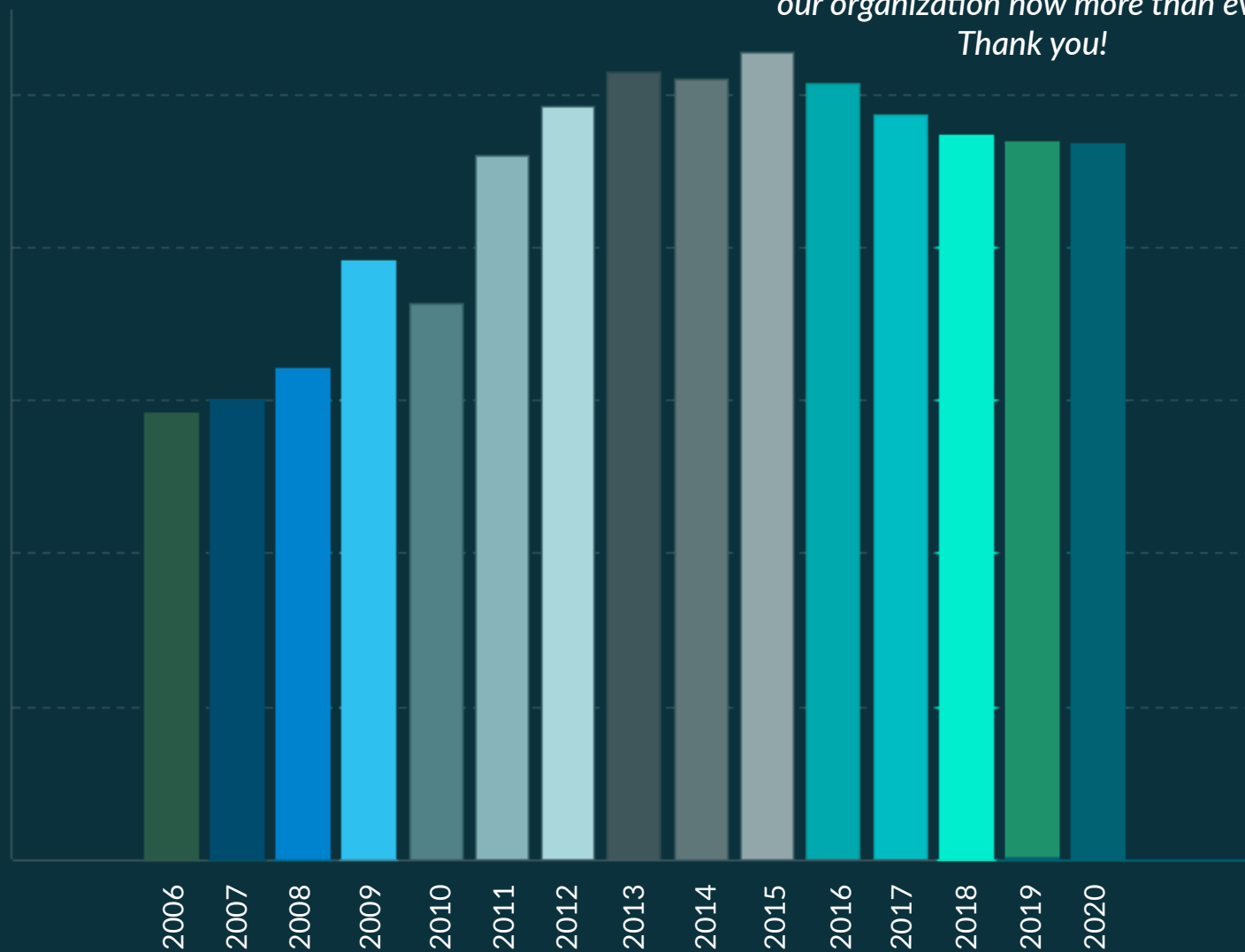
**102,720 PEOPLE VISTED
THE BLOG IN 2020**

The screenshot shows the InDepth website interface. At the top, there are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, followed by the InDepth logo and tagline "Get Deeper Into Diving". A navigation menu includes categories like ISSUES, EDUCATION, CONSERVATION, EXPLORATION, MEDICAL, TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNITY, NEWS, LANGUAGES, SUBSCRIBE, ABOUT US, and GUE.COM. The main content area features a "COMMUNITY" section with three articles: "Getting to The Bottom of 'The Fundamentals of Better Diving'", "No Direction Home: A Slovenia Cave Diving Adventure", and "ICE: How Intrepid Souls Spent Their Winter Lockation". To the right, there is a "SUBSCRIBE" form with fields for "First Name" and "Email Address", a "Submit" button, and a CAPTCHA. Below the form is a "THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS" section featuring an advertisement for "AFFORDABLE ANALYZER" by DIVESOFT.

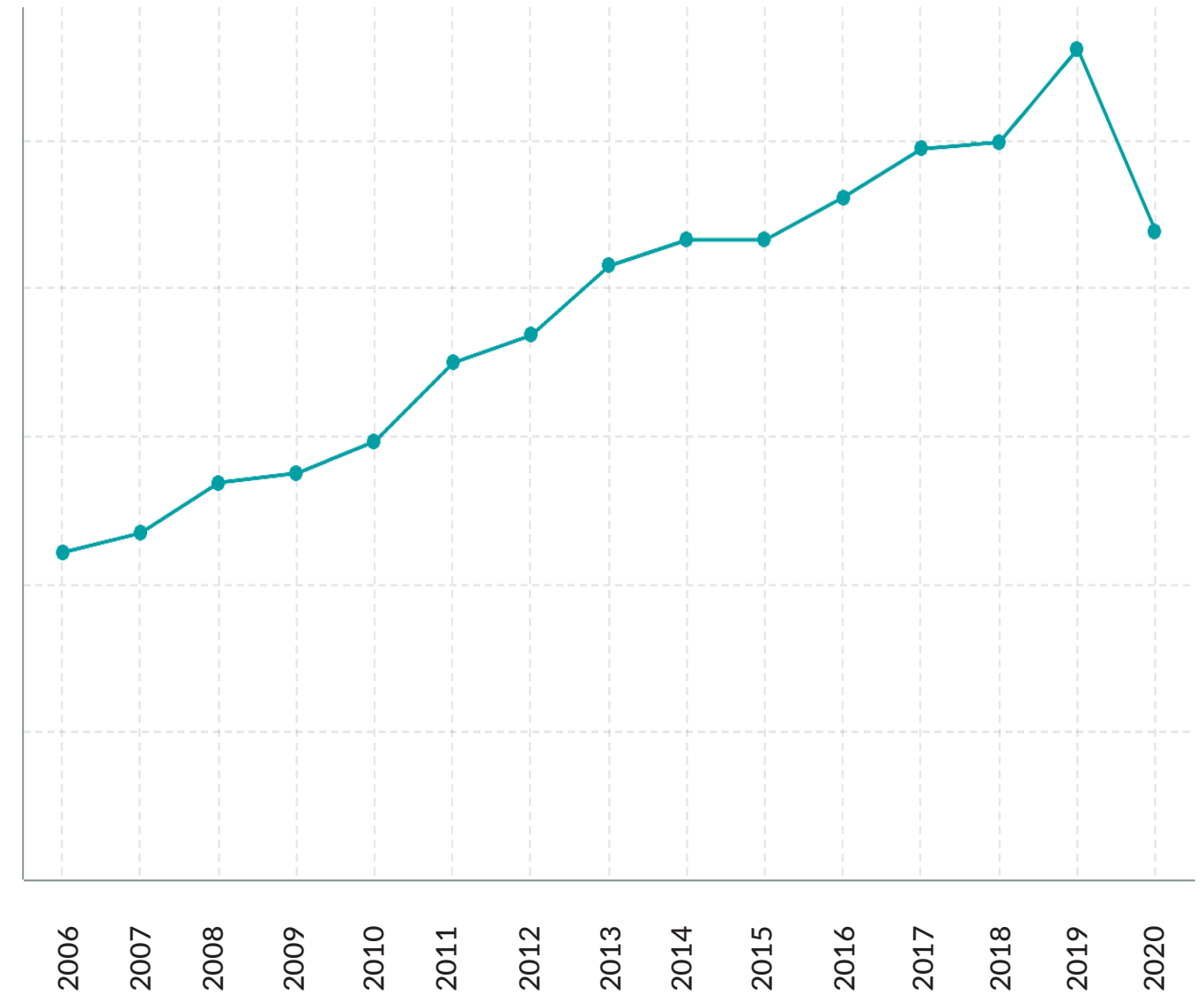
MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Become a member today! Membership is the crucial funding that makes it possible for GUE to maintain its website, update educational materials, support its instructors and students, and grow as an organization. We need your support: visit GUE.com today to see how you can be a part of sustaining GUE.

We want to take this time to say a special thank you to our GUE members and GUE.tv subscribers. Your contribution helps to support our organization now more than ever. Thank you!

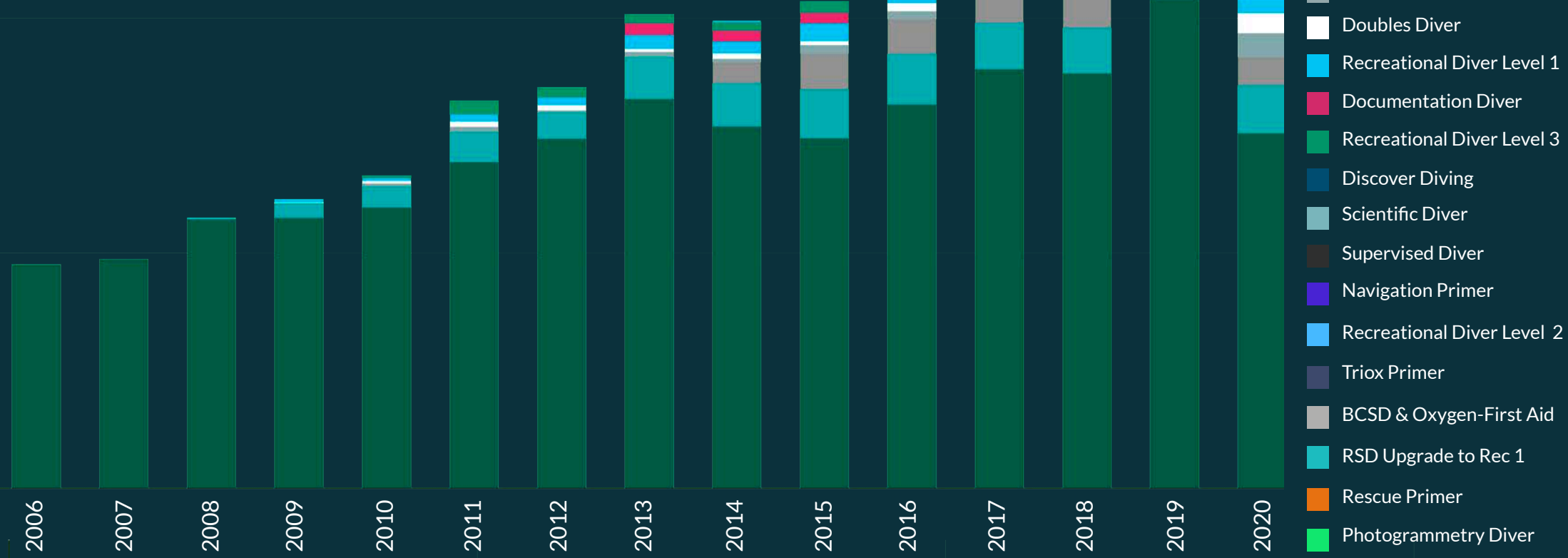


STUDENT TOTALS BY YEAR

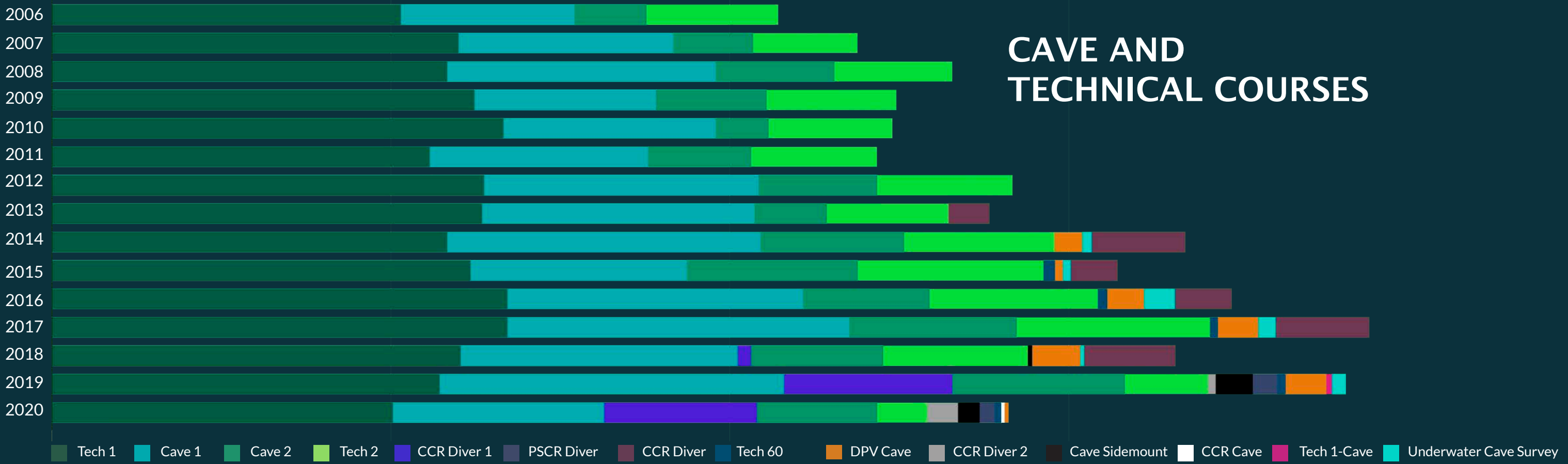


Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 and the global pandemic, course totals dropped in 2020. Even with the pandemic, we are grateful for the resilience of our community and instructors, who were able to find a way to continue providing diver education safely.

RECREATIONAL AND FOUNDATIONAL COURSES



STUDENT REPORT



CAVE AND TECHNICAL COURSES

SOCIAL MEDIA NUMBERS



33.8K LIKES



20.3K FOLLOWERS



9.1K SUBSCRIBERS



956 FOLLOWERS

In 2020, GUE's social channels focused on showing support for the community during the lockdowns and the continuing pandemic. This was done through Facebook live workouts, Facebook live events like CommUNITY Day, and sharing content that was educational and entertaining.



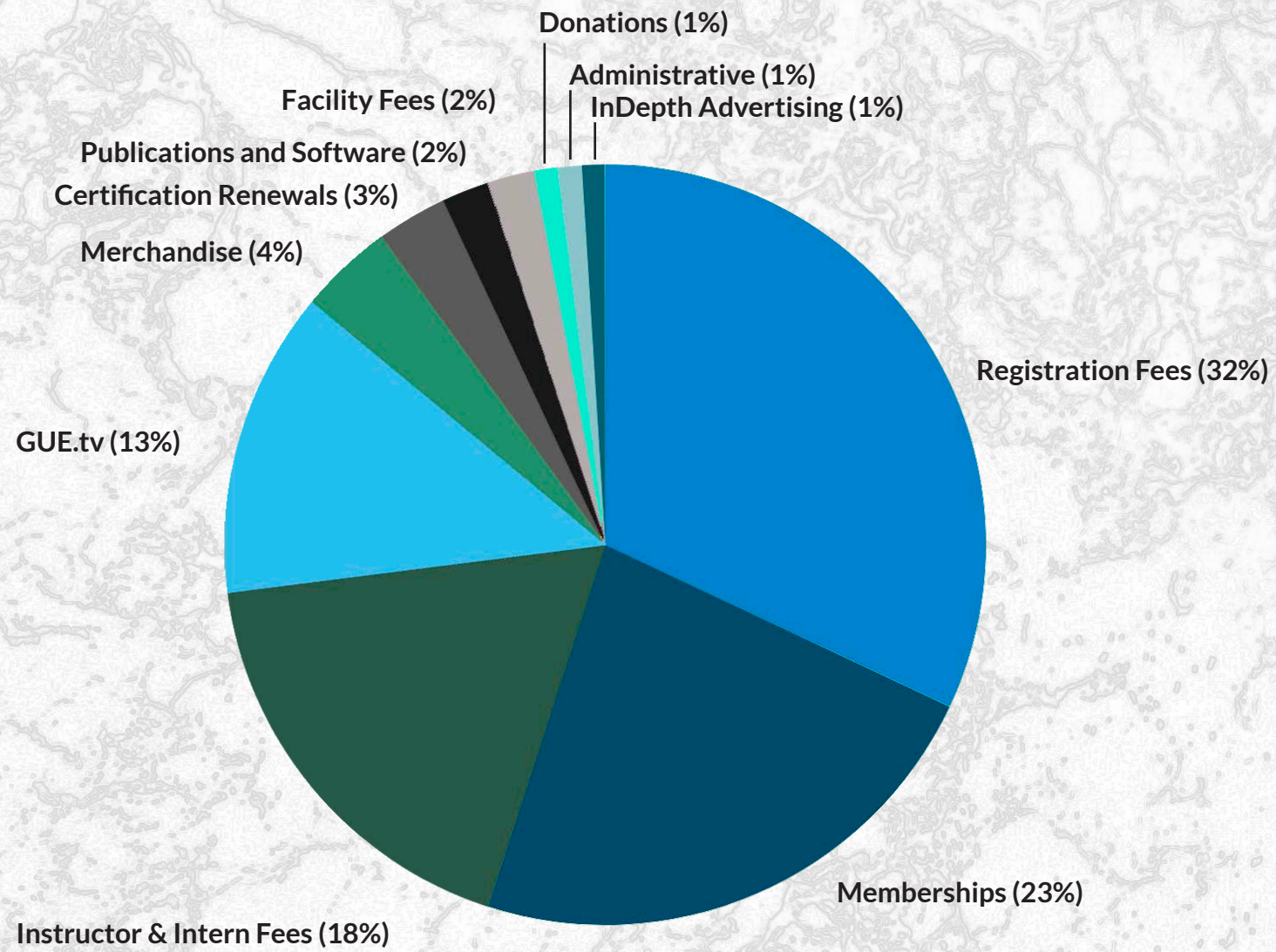
Photo by Owen Flowers



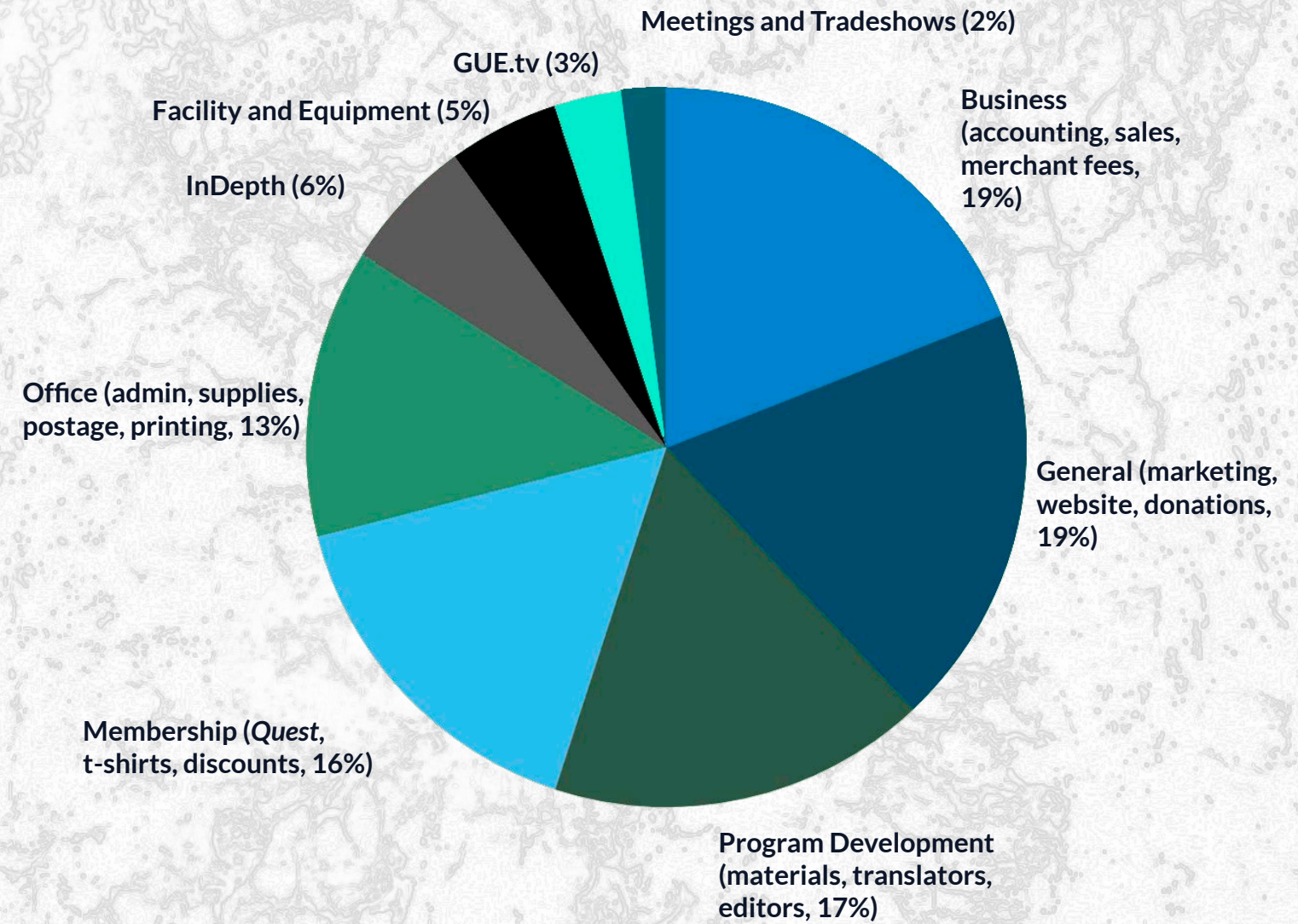
Photo by Jacob Mehr


FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME



EXPENSES





*A top-down look at two
divers and lemon sharks
in Jupiter, FL, USA
Photo by Rich Denmark*

GLOBAL UNDERWATER EXPLORERS

18487 High Springs Main Street, High Springs, FL 32643, USA

Phone: +1 (386) 454-0820

Phone, toll-free: (800) 762-DIVE (3483)

Fax: +1 (386) 454-0654