



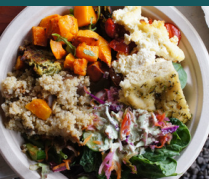
THE
LEARNING
COUNCIL

2025 IMPACT REPORT

www.thelearningcouncil.org

EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS FOR ALL

The Hearth, our downtown Paonia hub,
brings learning opportunities to the heart of our community.



TLC LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

20

Agricultural
Ed. events
with VOGA

Participated
in **6**
regional
festivals

Over **50**
Mindful Mamas
groups

Over **100**
community
yoga & tai
chi classes

Monthly
Day of
Mindfulness
events

10
Movement as
Medicine
classes with
live music

Monthly
West African
Drum &
Dance
classes

Over **30**
wellness &
health
classes

6
Build Guild
gatherings &
skill shares

22 Outdoor
Farmers Markets
& **6** Winter
Markets

20 Heritage
Month film
screenings &
cultural events

A dozen
community
activism and civic
empowerment
classes

REPARATIONS & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING



**For to feed is to tend,
and to tend is to mend.**

REMEMBER US ALL HARVEST RUNS

Twice a year we travel to the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, the original stewards of the North Fork Valley, facing the grief, broken trust, and disparities between our communities.

In 2025, we delivered **over 4,000 lbs of locally grown food**. This is more than a food drop, it's relationship building. Together with local students, we cook community meals and enjoy them together.

STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS

In collaboration with the Migrant Rural Coalition, TLC supported "Voces Del Campo" (Voices of the Field), Colorado's first educational and advocacy convention connecting migrant farmworkers with vital resources and support networks.



HONORING HERITAGE THROUGH CELEBRATION

Throughout 2025, TLC created spaces for cultural celebration and remembrance.

We gathered for **Día de los Muertos** with a community ofrenda, candlelit procession, and shared stories around the fire. Through regional collaboration, we celebrated **Cinco de Mayo** honoring Mexican culture and heritage. We supported **regional PowWows**, honoring Indigenous cultural practices and supporting cross-cultural learning. These celebrations sustain living cultures, connect generations, and strengthen our diverse community.



FOOD EQUITY PROJECTS- MAY ALL BE FED



TLC Kitchen served meals at 28 Arbol Farmers Markets and weekly meals at The Hearth. Every meal was prepared with over 80% locally sourced ingredients.

Our food equity projects are more than just feeding people, they're about strengthening our entire food system.

We purchase produce from local farmers year-round to stock the TLC Kitchen & Market, ensuring farmers have stable income beyond harvest season while making healthy, local food accessible to our community in every season.

TLC Kitchen served over 7,000 meals to our community investing over \$68,000 directly into our local agricultural economy!

**The result:
Farmers are supported.
Community members are fed.
Our local agricultural economy flourishes.
The Gift Model insures access for all.**

COMMUNITY ARTS IN ACTION

MYTHOS: The Paonia Fashion Show returned after 9 years with sold-out performances. Local designers, dancers, musicians, and performers created a multimedia spectacle celebrating spring, renewal, and creative collaboration. The community showed up ready to celebrate.



MAKING ART, BUILDING COMMUNITY



The Build Guild hosted skill-share workshops in stone carving, clay, and metalworking, passing down traditional techniques through hands-on learning.



Arts for All reached 472 students through kids art zones at regional festivals, cultural events and after-school arts series.



West African Drum and Dance workshops connected participants to cultural traditions through rhythm and movement, enriching our community through cross-cultural celebration and learning.

CHALLENGES & LEARNINGS

Public Resistance to Comprehensive Sex Education

Our Health & Vitality Council has offered comprehensive sex education for years, but this year faced heightened pushback. Staying committed to youth health and bodily autonomy while navigating community tensions required deeper relationship-building and creative problem solving.

Gift Economy Engagement

TLC runs on a pay-what-you-can Gift Model, which means a tough adjustment for some. We're learning to communicate that there's no shame in not being able to afford the suggested donation, and satisfaction to be had in paying it forward. The Gift Model works when people are engaged within their true capacity and work to unlearn capitalist beliefs.



Our commitment to this work deepens through these challenges.

Federal Funding Uncertainty

Federal grants have become unreliable, particularly for organizations serving immigrant, LGBTQ+, and BIPOC communities. We're building sustainability through local donor relationships, social enterprise, and community collaboration to reduce dependence on funding that may disappear or compromise our values.

Visibility Comes with Cost

Being openly LGBTQ+-affirming and justice-centered in rural Colorado sometimes means disengagement or opposition. We're holding our ground with grace, trusting that authentic relationships sustain us more than broad approval.

TLC IS UPLEVELING!

As TLC has grown into multiple branches—TLC Kitchen, Arbol Farmers Market, Arts for All, the Build Guild, DC CARES, Health & Vitality Council, and more—we're investing in the organizational practices that sustain them all.

We're clarifying how our branches connect, streamlining operations, and creating systems that enhance both efficiency and accountability. We see that strong programs require strong organizational foundations.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

Cottonwood Convergence - A November gathering of Indigenous leaders, artists, farmers, and healers practicing liberatory leadership through ceremony, feasting, and council.

Hearth Sanctuary Gardens - Expanding our healing garden as a replicable model demonstrating seed saving, traditional plant knowledge, and regenerative practices.

Comprehensive Health Care - Launching a wellness hub at The Hearth offering medical care, mental health services, gender-affirming care, midwifery, and herbalism on a sliding scale.

Digital Presence - A redesigned website that better reflects our work and values.

Workplace Equity - Piloting in-house childcare to remove barriers for parent employees.

The future we're building honors the past, serves the present, and makes space for what wants to emerge.



STEWARDED OUR RESOURCES

2025 brought transformative growth for The Learning Council and the North Fork Valley community we serve together. To every supporter who made this work possible: thank you for sharing this journey with us.



YEAR END ASSETS: \$155,590	In 2025, we invested over \$415,000 back into
FIXED ASSETS: \$1,300,420	local economy, including:
MORTGAGE LIABILITY: \$95,110	LOCAL FARM PRODUCE: \$68,000
2025 NET INCOME: \$72,020	LOCAL BIZ'S FOR SUPPLIES: \$43,000
2025 EXPENSES: \$633,330	LOCAL ARTISTS/CONTRACTORS: \$68,000
	SPONSORING OTHER NFV EVENTS: \$7,300
	STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS: \$2,280

80% of program supplies purchased locally

GRATITUDE FOR OUR SPONSORS



The Colorado Health Foundation



Alpine Bank



KAMPE
FOUNDATION

NEXT
50



The Women's
Foundation of Colorado



BUELL
FOUNDATION
Investing in Colorado's Future

ANSCHUTZ
FAMILY
FOUNDATION



THE
PITTSBURGH
FOUNDATION



BERMAN
CHARITABLE TRUST

Our impact grows through community support. As funding challenges persist, your contribution, whether dollars or time, sustains the programs that strengthen our community. Join us in building the future we need.

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THE
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