

The Learning Council

2020 Year in Review



2020- A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

On behalf of the Learning Council Board of Directors and Staff, we are proud to share an overview of this year's accomplishments and hardships.

The year 2020 challenged our organization in new ways. We shifted our work many times to meet the changing needs of our community while keeping up with local and state safety guidelines. Never before have we had to cancel so many classes, festivals, and workshops due to the pandemic. Yet our services have never met such a great need in our community. Here are some ways we rose to the challenges of 2020.

ARBOL FARM MARKET

The Learning Council (TLC) created the Arbol Farm Market in May of 2020: Paonia's first local farmer's market in nearly 15 years. This market aimed to elevate food security and bolster our local economy.

Eighteen local vendors came together each week to sell organic produce, meat, eggs, dairy, preserved foods, baked goods, and crafts. Farmers could rely on a steady market venue to sell their food. We implemented the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits system at the market which allowed more low-income folks to purchase food.

TLC prepared a nutritious community meal at each market available by donation. Many of these meals were also delivered weekly to elders and people in need.



EQUITY WORK

Despite the Pandemic, we continued to teach and advocate for comprehensive sexual health education in Delta County School District (DCSD). The School Board will be voting on adopting a curriculum in comprehensive sexual health education for K-12 in January, 2021. We have also offered workshops and resources to LGBTQ students, parents, teachers, and allies this year.

In 2020 we joined forces with local BIPOC friends to elevate equity within DCSD. This work led us to attend many district office meetings to collaborate with the school board and administrators. Our team also started the Diversity Library- a collection of various fiction and nonfiction, all about or written by diverse authors and characters. Students all deserve to see themselves represented in literature. We will gift these books to DCSD in early 2021.



HERB SCHOOL

This year, we partnered with local organizations Valley Organic Growers Association and Slow Food Western Slope to create our Herb School. The class was held once a month from March through November and included topics on herbal wisdom, propagating herbs, medicine making, herbs as food, wild foraging, herb craft, and more.

Classes were held on local farms, facilitated by farmers and herbalists. Each class offered the opportunity for hands-on learning and practical applications of herbs.

A locally-sourced meal was served at each class, nourishing participants with organic foods and herbal infusions.



ADAPTING WORKSHOPS

This year we safely hosted a variety of classes and workshops, online and in-person. These events focused on pertinent community topics and included: Helping Grieving Children Webinar, a monthly Postpartum Support Group, Rivera Sun's Organize and Win web series, agricultural workshops, Collective Leadership and the Role of Council series, LGBTQ Know Your Rights Zoom Workshop, a flag-making workshop, Dia De Los Muertos Celebration, Elf Crafter's Workshop, African Drum and Dance class, Cherokee Storytelling, and more



CELEBRATING WHERE WE CAN

Although the year presented so many challenges, The Learning Council Board of Directors and Staff have a lot to be thankful for. We were still able to celebrate through events and safe gatherings.

The Learning Council would like to thank all of our sponsors for making this year possible as well as individuals who give to support our work.



GROWING TOGETHER

As we move into the new year, our organization will continue to grow, learn, and serve our community. Thank you for your support and care.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors

Pat Frazier

Amy Hayutin

Patrick McCarney

May Trumble

Dana Whitcomb

Staff

Alicia Michelsen

Amanda Campbell



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