



launch  
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# newsletter

First Quarter 2017

## Partnership with Woodland Park Zoo

Our preschool programs are taking part in the Woodland Park Zoo's Nature Club, which is a program that uses nature exploration and science activities to build STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) skills for early learners.

WPZ educators helped bring science into our classroom through activities including nature walks. Our preschoolers even got to hold an ostrich egg!

Not only is the Zoo providing

educational programs for our students, but they're also training our preschool teachers on how to incorporate outdoor science activities into the school environment.

Zoo educators provided training and one-on-one classroom coaching to our teachers. They also made material kits and resource guides (continued on page 2)

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## A Note from the Executive Director

As we embark upon our 40th Anniversary this year, I've been thinking a lot about the past, present, and future of Launch.

Launch began as an idea - an idea conceived by a group of parents who wanted their children and the children in their neighborhood to have somewhere to go after school. They knew that many children were either left alone at home or in afterschool activities that were less than enriching, and they knew that children deserved more.

From a small program operating out of a garage, we've grown to 10 locations and have served over 20,000 children over the last 40 years. The core and foundation of who Launch is has guided us over the years to ensure that we're providing the highest quality services for children and families. We still believe that all children deserve a place outside of the home where they can go to be



nurtured, encouraged, motivated and inspired. We still believe that all families deserve to make a living for their families while knowing that their children are safe and cared for.

As we move forward into our next 40 years, we rely on that same foundation to make decisions about where we go and who we continue to serve. We'll continue to advocate for and stand up for equity in education. And we'll continue to hold ourselves accountable to providing care that we can be proud of.

I hope you'll join us and tell others to join us to celebrate our 40th on Tuesday, March 14th at our Annual Fundraising Luncheon at the downtown Westin. Come help us celebrate our past and our future!

Brianna Jackson  
Executive Director

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## Maple Students Learning About Nutrition!

Maple students are benefiting from a partnership with Solid Ground's Nutrition Education Team, which works to counter childhood obesity through nutrition and fitness education and activities.

Every Friday for 6 weeks, educators from the Nutrition Team visit our classrooms, teach lessons on nutrition and cook with our children. Students also get the opportunity to exercise and move with their classmates.

Thanks to Solid Ground's Nutrition Education Team, our children have learned new ways to be healthy and active through great lessons on food groups, vitamins, minerals, and natural vs. added sugar. And they're sharing what they learn with their families!

## Zoo Partnership (continued from front page)

on how to incorporate age-appropriate science into the classrooms for our teachers.

Not only has the Zoo helped us with bringing science into the classroom, but they're also making it possible for us to visit the zoo! Our preschools will take a field trip to the zoo in April, and

we'll also hold a Family Day at the Zoo with our preschoolers in May.

The Zoo even invited our teachers to their professional development day at the zoo, free of charge!

Our Program Quality Manager Christine Stark says "this partnership

has benefited us greatly because it provides our preschool teachers with the knowledge and understanding to convey the importance of science education and explain how nature play is a form of learning science!"

Thank you, Woodland Park Zoo, for this great partnership!

## What's Happening at Launch

Preschoolers at Rainier Community Center welcomed several new families in the past few weeks, and are enjoying the opportunity to get to know new friends. In honor of Valentine's Day the children each brought a favorite fruit and made a friendship salad. They had pineapples, mangoes, strawberries, apples, oranges, grapes and bananas. It was delicious fun!



Maple recently held Friendship Week. Students talked about what the characteristics of a good friend are. They also celebrated individuality and what makes us all unique.

Montlake students started a Student Leadership Club to give back to the community. They wrote valentines to the kids in the juvenile detention center, wrote letters to veterans, and will be planting trees in the community.

Hawthorne school age students have continued to create fun clubs. In addition to existing clubs like music, American Sign Language, and fitness, students recently added

fashion club. Students created wearable fashion out of recycled materials, and showed off their looks (including gowns, armor, hats, and accessories) in a fashion show for their classmates.

Leschi preschool families gathered on Valentine's Day for a friendship breakfast with croissants and frittatas. It was great to get our families together and get to know one

another better. Leschi school agers have also been busy with Team Read, which partners Launch students with high school students twice per week to read new books and work on homework.

Kimball 1st and 2nd graders made hovercrafts using CDs, bottle caps, balloons and thumbtacks. After putting everything together, the kids observed as the CD "floated." This activity helped them learn about the scientific method - students made predictions about what would happen, and then afterward reflected on what actually did happen. Not only did they learn a lot, but it was so much fun!

Sanislo had a "Soup"er Bowl party for their families. Everyone brought in a different vegetable and all worked together to make a delicious vegetable soup. We

then all enjoyed the soup together as a community!

Beacon Hill school age students have been growing herbs! They planted seeds for cilantro, parsley, and other herbs and are watching them sprout. They'll be incorporating their herbs into a nutrition and cooking project.

Preschoolers at Madrona had a visit from our Executive Director and her son! Brianna brought in her 7-month-old son and shared with the preschoolers about how babies grow and develop. Brianna and the preschoolers had a great discussion about different developmental timelines and about how our preschoolers have changed over the years. Our students can't wait until she brings her son back again!

Highland Park school age students took a fun field trip during Mid-Winter Break - they got to go ziplining at the park! Our preschoolers had a movie day and watched Ponyo, a children's anime movie. They also enjoyed popcorn and a special treat of ice cream!



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### Join us at our 40th Anniversary Fundraising Luncheon!

We're turning 40! Join us for a fun anniversary luncheon on Tuesday, March 14th at 12pm at the Westin Seattle and help raise money to support our mission. Guests will enjoy inspiring speakers and a performance by Launch preschoolers. There will also be the chance to win raffle prizes!

To learn more or register, go to [launchlearning.org](http://launchlearning.org).



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## Register for Summer!

Join the fun! At Launch summer camps, children build skills, make friends, and explore the city through fun and engaging learning adventures. They'll learn by doing through hands-on activities and field trips.

This summer, we're offering programs for children ages 3-12, including preschool, school age summer camp, and Leap Ahead. Leap Ahead is a program specially designed to successfully transition children from preschool to kindergarten.

To register, go to  
[www.launchlearning.org](http://www.launchlearning.org).

## Meet Hilary Young!

Hilary joined our board in October. She's the Vice President of Policy & Communications at Pioneer Human Services (PHS), a state-wide nonprofit providing reentry services including counseling, housing, and job training for people leaving the prison system.

Hilary has spent her career working in the public sector. She was the policy director for the Employment & Career Development Division of Employment Security, and also worked as the public affairs manager for the state Insurance Commissioner and as the communications manager for WA's unemployment-insurance system.

She says she was drawn to serve on our board because she sees early learning and school age programs as a way to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline. She says, "Education is a big equalizer." Growing up in Tacoma during the height of the crack epidemic, she saw how community centers were anchors for the community. She sees Launch as having a similar impact. Hilary also appreciates our focus on access because when she was a young mom "having access to programs like Launch's was a lifesaver for me."

Hilary is excited to bring her advocacy, policy, and communications skills to the board and support our expansion plans. In her spare time, she enjoys participating in sports of any kind - she recently ran a half marathon in Hawaii! She's an avid reader, and loves spending time with her two college-age children.

