



launch
Learn. Grow. Inspire.

newsletter

Second Quarter 2017

Tilth Alliance and Good Food Bags

Launch has partnered with Tilth Alliance (formerly Seattle Tilth) for years on everything from connecting our families with their local food supply system to sharing nutrition information and hosting Community Kitchen Events. They continue to help us tend and winterize our school gardens, train our cooks and leadership team members, and provide vouchers for produce shipped straight from the farm.

This year, we're taking part in Tilth Alliance's Good Food Bag program.

This program provides free organic, locally grown, fresh produce to all Seattle Preschool Sites including our five preschool programs at Rainier Community Center, Beacon Hill, Madrona, Leschi, and Highland Park. At no cost to families, Tilth Alliance provides weekly food bags with organic fruits and vegetables, recipes to try using ingredients

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A Note from the Executive Director

As my son approaches his first birthday, I've been thinking about how lucky my family is to have all of the support that we do. There are so many children in our community who lack access to the support they need to grow into healthy and happy adults.

Quality out-of-school time, early learning and summer programming is a big support for families and makes a lifelong difference for children, but unfortunately the importance of these programs has recently been under scrutiny. Significant federal cuts to afterschool programming have been proposed, and impact of afterschool programs on children and families is being questioned.

21st Century Community Learning Centers are the most at risk, and while Launch is not a CLC and our funding isn't currently at risk, we believe it's important to speak up and support out-of-school time

programs. Schools can't do it alone and the support that community organizations provide is invaluable and helps change outcomes for kids. It's critically important that we get involved in our communities and let our lawmakers know what really matters for our kids.



Helping change the academic, social and emotional outcomes for kids is just part of what quality programs do. They also create a safe and nurturing space that families trust. Although federal

immigration policies have created a climate of fear for many families, Launch is proud to serve as an inclusive, welcoming place where children and families don't have to hide or fear who they are or where they come from. Instead, they're celebrated for the rich diversity they bring.

Brianna Jackson
Executive Director

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40th Anniversary Luncheon a Big Success!

Thank you donors! At our 40th Anniversary Luncheon on March 14th, you raised over \$40,000 to support our work!

It was a great event! Launch @ Sanislo Student President Kyliah McRoy shared how Launch provided a welcoming space for her, and Highland Park preschoolers sang "Happy Birthday" to Launch.

Erin Okuno, of the Southeast Seattle Education Coalition, gave the keynote address. She shared how addressing the relationship gap can help close the opportunity and achievement gaps in our schools, and encouraged the audience to be brave and talk about race.

Thank you to everyone who donated and participated in this event!

Good Food Bags *(continued from front page)*

in the bag, plus kitchen tips. These bags are provided weekly to about 120 of our preschool families.

This program helps to Launch to fulfill our goal of serving the whole child. According to Northwest Hunger, one in five children in Washington state

live in a food insecure household, and half of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) clients are children.

Thanks to this partnership with Tilth Alliance, our families can support their local community, eat nutritionally

wholesome meals, and support environmentally conscious growing practices. Thank you Tilth Alliance!

What's Happening at Launch

2nd graders at **Maple** wrote and performed a play with a cultural exploration theme for students and their families. The play was about a dragon who visited other countries, ate new food, and made new friends from different cultures. The students even made costumes and props, including a dragon made out of recycled boxes!

Students at **Leschi** were lucky enough to have a food themed spring break week. They planned a three course meal and took a trip to Pike Place Market to purchase the ingredients.

During Spring Break, **Kimball** welcomed Nicole Appell, a teaching artist at MoPOP. Students created wearable fantasy hats, which helped develop fine motor skills, design, engineering and geometry. All their hard work paid off when they went to MoPOP to see their creations displayed in the Sky Church! After exploring the exhibits, the students decided their next big project is a Rube Goldberg-inspired machine.

To get to know their neighborhood better, **Hawthorne** students had a scavenger hunt that took children throughout Columbia City. They

had to work together to solve clues, practice their photography skills, and explore their surroundings to earn their final prize.



Launch at **Madrona** held a luau party that included games of limbo, beach volleyball, and hula skirt relay races, crafts of leis and glittery pineapple portraits, tasty tropical drinks, and a viewing of Moana.

Multiple students said it was "the best day ever!"

Beacon Hill had a Game Week during Spring Break, which gave our students a chance to express their creativity and practice skills like problem solving and created and played their own board games, used chalk to create a giant game of darts on the blacktop outside, and explored Jefferson Park while doing a scavenger hunt.

Montlake wrapped up another quarter of Launch clubs, including Dance Team, which concluded in a performance for Parent Night. Gym Games Club taught children new games as well as sportsmanship skills. At Globetrotters Club, students learned about a new country each week including Greece, Romania, Japan, and Thailand. The Student Leadership Club designed projects to make people smile by making Get-Well

cards for children in the hospital, designing place mats for Meals on Wheels, and writing letters to wounded soldiers.

Highland Park celebrated Star Wars Day (May the 4th be with you!) by building scenes with Legos and watching a Lego Star Wars movie. They invited their families to come, relax with students and teachers in Star Wars pajamas, enjoy snacks, pizza, and win a Star Wars gift bag.

The annual Peeps competition happened this April at **Sanislo** and students created 3D scenes for Peeps to inhabit. The People's Choice Award went to a haunted house themed set built by two first graders, and the first place winner, chosen by our Executive Director, was a ballet studio for Peeps of all shapes and colors.

This spring **Rainier Community Center**

preschoolers are learning about the life cycles of everything from frogs to butterflies to seeds that they planted. As they watch their seeds grow, they measure them and make predictions!



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Spring Break Field Trips

Spring Break at Launch was a week of fun! We had over 300 students enrolled over five full days. Students went on field trips all over the city including the Museum of Flight, the Center for Wooden Boats, Whirligig at the Seattle Center, movie theaters, Jefferson Park, and the Living Computer Museum. This was a great sneak peek into how much fun summer will be!



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Register for Summer Camp!

During our full day Summer Camp, children will build skills, make friends, and explore Seattle through fun and engaging learning activities. Each site has nine unique weekly themes for students to participate in, including hands-on lessons and field trips.

This summer, we're offering programs for children ages 3-12, including preschool, school age summer camp, and our Leap Ahead kindergarten transition program.

To register, go to www.launchlearning.org.

Meet New Board Member Danya Clevenger!

Danya became a board member in December after learning about Launch through her work at the Carlson Leadership & Public Service Center at the University of Washington. Not only is she the Community Partner Liaison, but she's also a Master of Public Administration student at UW.

Danya originally began her career as an opera singer and music educator. After serving as a middle school math and science teacher with Teach for America, she worked for a nonprofit that helped school districts implement Common Core academic standards. Going back to school made her realize the importance of staying connected to real-world organizations like Launch, which Danya says are accomplishing amazing things for public education.

Danya says that Launch is already a leader for preschool and out-of-school care, and as a board member she wants to expand our programs and have an even greater impact throughout the Seattle area. She envisions the next phase of Launch to include becoming an even stronger advocate for families and children.

In her free time, Danya likes to hang out with her one-year-old daughter Philippa as well as cooking, eating, and grocery shopping. She keeps her passion for music alive by professionally singing from time to time too!

