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Hope for a High School in Glendale

By Jennifer Mayer-Glenn

In December 2020, Education Collective SLC (a grassroots coalition of parents, former students, educators, city residents and community advocates) sent a letter to the Salt Lake City School District (SLCSD) and Board of Education to request that the Board and SLCSD work with them and the community as a whole to begin an authentic, community-engaged process of building a new high school on the west side of Salt Lake City.

At East High School, 1,164 students (56%) live on the west side. At Highland High School 221 students (11.5%) live on the west side. A total of 1,385 students travel across the city to attend high school. This has caused barriers to participation in extracurricular activities and for families to be able to participate in meetings with teachers and participate in the education of their children.

If you are interested in learning more about what families, students and educators are saying, please go to edcollectiveslc.org where you can read the letter in its entirety. You can also sign in support and indicate if you would like to be involved in future conversations.

An Enduring Impact

By Yda Smith

“So I think that back then if I had not gone to College Prep, I don’t think I could reach this far.”

During 2007 and 2008 hundreds of people from the Karen ethnic group from Burma/Myanmar were resettled in Salt Lake City, many having lived for decades in refugee camps in Thailand. Several of these families lived in the Hartland apartments where they were able to access the UNP Hartland Partnership Center. During that time University of Utah occupational therapy students provided a College Prep class to Karen youth. Five Karen girls, who arrived in the U.S., speaking little to no English, attended the class on a regular basis and all eventually attended college. Yda Smith, an Associate Professor – Lecturer with the Department of Occupational and Recreational Therapies, was able to contact four of these women to interview them about their experiences with the College Prep class and to explore the impact it may have had on their college experience. Occupational therapy student Chelsea Day helped with the interviews and research process. Using qualitative methods four dominant themes emerged: Confidence Lacking/ Confidence Building, The Need for Doing, It’s a Hard Life, Seeking Comfort in Communication and Support.



College prep students at the state capitol

These interviews made it abundantly clear that the group had a significant positive impact on the participants’ access to college both in terms of their confidence that they could reach this goal and in terms of assisting with necessary tasks such as filling out scholarship applications. The group provided needed education that their parents, who had little to no experience with formal education, could not provide.

College Prep had a much greater impact than ever imagined by those involved in its creation. Participants were able to list not only what was helpful but could describe activities that would make the group even more effective. After reviewing the results of this study, it is clear that more groups like this would be of benefit to middle and high school students who arrived in the U.S. as young children with refugee status.

Honoring Our Dark Skies

By Jarred Martinez

The night sky and stars play a powerful role in shaping not only human culture, but also healthy living systems across the planet. A sometimes overshadowed element of environmental justice is studying and addressing what happens when the night sky is unnaturally brightened by our city lights.

The Dark Skies Studies (DSS) program at the University of Utah, the first of its kind, explores these issues. In fall 2020, students in the DSS Capstone Course collaborated with Glendale High school students in the Natural History Museum's Youth Teaching Youth program (YTY). YTY is a program providing opportunities for Glendale youth to experience a variety of cultural and scientific disciplines.

Over several weeks, DSS students worked with YTY to learn about light pollution, measuring its impact, and opportunities to explore this in their communities and lives. This culminated with the creation of a 'Dark Sky' mural at the Salt Lake Center for Science Education, informed by concepts from this collaboration, where students worked with artists to paint. To see a timelapse of this project, go to fb.watch/4MiaxVyrL7/

Acknowledgements: Jessica Cleaves (former faculty, U of U), Daniel Mendoza (DSS), Linda Aaron (YTY), Jonny Gonzalez (YTY) and the amazing students of both DSS and YTY.

Youth Teaching Youth:

nhmu.utah.edu/yty

Dark Skies Studies minor:

bit.ly/3mGtu60

Making our Community Stronger

Poplar Grove Earth Day Event

By Jaime Cross

Westside Studio is an undergraduate and graduate City and Metropolitan Planning course at the University of Utah. This semester, with Dr. Ivis Garcia Zambrana, we are working with the SLC Public Lands Division on their Public Lands Master Plan, which will share natural areas, parks, and trails for the next 10-20 years. During the public participation process last fall, the City heard that equity was a fundamental principle to move forward. In this vein, Westside Studio decided to concentrate its efforts in answering a key question: how east and west side parks compare in terms of demographics, neighborhood, and park amenities. We found that the populations served by each park are widely different and that the City should implement placemaking initiatives based on who lives in the neighborhood (e.g., older adults, families, Spanish speakers, etc.)

Our class wanted to engage in

a placemaking event to show what the possibilities are. Given that our class is registered as community-engaged learning and sustainability, we are working on hosting an Earth Day event on April 24th at Poplar Grove Park located at 750 Emery Street in Salt Lake City. At this event, we will be planting trees, picking up litter, and painting murals. We plan to provide free food and music from local businesses and environmentally friendly raffles for the public as well. Our goal is to create opportunities for people to become more engaged and involved with their local neighborhoods.

Additionally, we have prepared COVID-19 safety precautions, like masks, sanitizers, forehead thermometer, and gloves during these challenging times. We encourage everyone to wear masks and bring their water bottles to lessen the event's waste. We are accomplishing



Partnership Platform

Focus on Partnerships

this with support from University Neighborhood Partners, the Bennion Center, ACE Funding, the Utah Arts Alliance, West Side Community Councils, among many other partners.

A bit of myself, I am a third-year urban ecology student at the University of Utah. Growing up, I moved seven times, each move taking place about every other year. That said, I had to learn how to connect with people to make friends quickly. As I have gotten older, I have realized that the best way to make these connections is to involve myself with the community.

A community is much more than just a geographic area. It is also a group of people with similar interests. This could be, but is not limited to, school, church, work, and political groups. These are very important because they allow people to work together to achieve a common goal or feeling. It is in our nature to be drawn to people and activities that share our passions.

While University Neighborhood Partners may not run programs, they bring people with common interests together. They believe in the strength and empowerment that comes from community engagement and are there to help achieve your goals, just as they are with my Westside Studio class.

Get social with us!



Raise Up

By Lenn Rodriguez and community residents

COVID-19 hit everyone hard in 2020, but some people were affected more than others. A summer report by Voices for Utah Children released findings that there were at least 2,700 tax-paying individuals and families in Salt Lake City who were unable to receive any of the federal stimulus aid that has helped many residents throughout this pandemic. This left so many people, many of whom were laid off, to struggle to make ends meet and unable to navigate the systems that were providing resources during the pandemic.

Raise Up Salt Lake City, a community nonprofit-led fundraiser, in partnership with other CBOs, began distributing Salt Laker Cards worth \$500 to community members in December, and almost \$1.3 million has been raised to fund this financial assistance program.

Through its fundraising efforts, Salt Lake City is prepared to disperse even more over the next few months to support families with funds to buy groceries, pay utilities or rent, or even receive medical treatment. While \$500 may seem small to some, it has been life-changing to these community members who were able to receive it.

For more information about Raise Up Salt Lake City, please visit slc.gov.ng/p/raise-up-slc

Thank you to all the people that made it possible for my family to receive Raise up funding. With this funding I was able to make a payment for a surgery that I had been needing for more than a year because I could not come up with the payment. -Maria

I am very grateful to the economic support of Raise Up. With this money I was able to rent a new apartment for my family after being evicted from my previous place of living. -Manuel

The year 2020 has left my family with much pain for the loss of my loved ones due to covid-19. Thank you to Raise Up for the financial support my family received, with this support my family was able to contribute to the funeral expenses of my loved ones. -Valencia

Due to COVID, my mother has had 2 surgeries in the last 6 months. The doctors say she needs a third surgery. However, we did not have the money to make a payment. Thank you to the Raise Up support we were able to make a payment and schedule her next surgery. -Jose

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Rosa Rosas



Rosa is currently working with UNP as part of the Digital Navigator partnership with the Salt Lake City Library, but you may have seen her before when she led the parent-child program at the UNP-Hartland Partnership Center.

She's originally from Los Angeles, but moved to Utah when she was fairly young and has lived in Glendale for over 15 years. She loves working with youth and has worked in local schools and with Head Start. Rosa would enjoy a career as a case worker or in social work.

Rosa is a mother of four and has been married for 22 years. She enjoys camping and taking road trips with her family, visiting in California or exploring in Las Vegas. She plans to visit Colorado and Lava Hot Springs in the near future.

She has enjoyed working as a Digital Navigator where she is able to help families get affordable WiFi, navigate the internet, and access computers. She has also helped with job search, resumes, and getting library cards. You can connect with the Digital Navigators at 801-524-8200 or you can send an email directly to Rosa at rosalia.rosas@partners.utah.edu

Community Corner Snapshots of wonderful west side businesses and restaurants

Diversion - A Social Eatery

Diversion Eatery was in its infancy when the pandemic started, but they recently marked the anniversary of their grand opening and are still welcoming guests to enjoy their great food inside the restaurant, on their patio, or for take-out. Located at 535 N 300 W near West High School and the Marmalade Library, this locally owned gem serves up American favorites like pizzas, salads, and burgers, with a few



delicious *diversions* from the norm. Try a burger bowl – the patty is formed into a bowl to hold your favorite toppings. You can opt for lettuce wrapped – or a filled Portobello mushroom instead of the beef. Try their poutine fries, carnitas tacos, vegan or vegetarian options, or drop in for Sunday brunch with mimosas!

Check out the full menu on their website at diversioneatery.com



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Newsletter Suggestions

What would you like to see
in UNP newsletters and
blogs?

Is there a UNP Partnership
that you would like to know
more about? Perhaps an
area business that you'd
like recognized?

Send your thoughts to

unp@partners.utah.edu

Upcoming Events

Poplar Grove Earth Day Placemaking Event

April 24 - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Poplar Grove Park, 750 Emery Street
Join in to plant trees, paint sidewalks, pick up litter, and more.

Partners in the Park-ing Lot

The 2021 Partners in the Park season has been adapted for continued health safety as follows:

- **June 14** - Community Parade, 6:30 p.m.
- **June 15** - Drive thru event at UNP Hartland Partnership Center, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- **July 12** - Community Parade, 6:30 p.m.
- **July 13** - Drive thru event at Northwest Middle School, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- **August 10** - In person event at Jordan Park *(if conditions allow)*, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.