**JUNE 2020**

**Camp At Home**

In August, we’re bringing the camp experience to our students at home because we know that opportunities to engage in creativity and connection to a supportive community can be powerful and healing. We’ll explore innovative activities and creative projects live-streamed to students with our incredible mentors and teaching artists.

**Community Residencies**

While we will miss having our students at Caldera this summer due to statewide restrictions on overnight camps for youth, Caldera Arts is excited to offer two summer residencies to support Black alumni of our Youth and Residency Programs.

**MAY 2020**

Since in-person activities have been cancelled, we’ve been hard at work finding new ways to engage our young people and artists. Here are some highlights over the last few weeks:

- We held our first virtual campfire last month, gathering some of our youth together to participate in one of our long-standing traditions from camp.

- We’ve made over 100 phone calls made to youth and their families to check in and provide 1:1 mentor support.

- We’ve put out creative activities, like our drawing challenges, and had special guests, like Julie Keefe, join some of our mentor hangouts.

- The team is currently in the planning stages for our first ever virtual camp—researching teaching platforms, prepping new materials, and thinking about how we adjust curriculum to online platforms.

We know that artists’ needs for space, time and supportive community are stronger than ever, and we are looking toward our 2020 - 2021 residency season with safety top of mind. In order to serve and care for our community, we are updating our communicable disease policies and procedures, adding more hand sanitation stations across the Arts Center campus, and will be oriented toward informed consent as we invite artists and others to our facility. We are thankful that our facilities allow for physical distancing, and we are mindful that community-building has always been and will continue to be a cornerstone of our residencies. We are a creative organization and value doing things differently! Our efforts to create an experience this spring and summer that will be new and different, but great nonetheless.
APRIL 2020

We have supported each other through all these many years of joys, new experiences, growth, fun and yes, some difficulties, but this COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it extraordinary challenges. With the knowledge that there is a statewide “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order, we have made the difficult decision to move this years’ in-person, overnight summer camp to an online program.

Youth safety is our main priority, and due to the volatility of the current situation, we feel strongly that we must do our best to protect the health of youth, staff, and families. Our community supports each other and we are here for you all during this unprecedented time.

Our programs team is working diligently to create a virtual camp experience for our students in Portland and Central Oregon. Caldera is committed to developing activities that will foster creativity and community through art and the environment, provide mentoring with our youth, and as a whole, offer the same comprehensive lessons that make Camp Caldera such a special place.

While we continue to plan for this summer, our mentors will be hosting weekly hangouts and we will be posting art activities to do at home, created by some of our amazing artists. You can follow @CalderaArts on social media for updates. If you have any questions about how to keep your youth involved while school is out, please contact us at any time (caldera@calderaarts.org).

Thank you for being a part of our Caldera community and supporting our efforts to create an experience this spring and summer that will be new and different, but great nonetheless.
Dear Caldera Community,

Even as we go through these uncertain times, we focus on gratitude. We, Caldera’s Board of Directors, are grateful for you. As we navigate new challenges each week to nurture our relationships with one another and our young people, your belief in the power of creativity empowers us to stay strong and emboldened in our commitment to the creative communities in which we work and live.

We don’t know when things will return to normal or if the normal we remember will still exist. One thing that will never change—Caldera’s Board of Directors will do everything in our power to support the organization’s youth, families, artists, and staff. We are a creative organization first and will continue to use creativity, ingenuity, and culturally-responsive processes to navigate these unprecedented times. We also want to acknowledge that this moment in time can be unsettling, and we encourage people to be gentle with ourselves and others as we figure this out together.

While we are apart, youth continue to connect with their mentors each week through video hangouts, phone calls, virtual creative activities, and social media. Be sure to connect with us on Instagram or Facebook for up-to-date resources, creative activities, and enjoyable moments of connectivity for everyone, young people and adults alike.

Also, Caldera elder and teaching artist, Sister J’Rae has filmed and created an activity for youth to get to know the folks they’re living with while staying at home together. Sister J’Rae, also known as Julie Keefe, is a photographer who has worked with Caldera since the very beginning and she’s looking forward to sharing this lesson with you.

Please know that you are all in our thoughts, near or far. Please take care of yourselves and each other. We can’t wait to see you again soon.

Warmly,
René Mitchell, Board Chair
COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is a national and global emergency and pandemic. At the local, state, and federal level, schools, institutions, organizations, and businesses, are taking serious precautions to reduce the impact of the novel virus. The health and safety of our youth, artists, staff, and elders, as well as that of our larger community of families, partner schools, volunteers, and supporters is our primary concern.

To stay on top of things, our staff Leadership Team is meeting and checking in regularly on this topic and will continue to assess our efforts to reduce risk and prioritize health.

A majority of full-time staff will be working remotely starting March 16 until further notice, though our Portland office and Arts Center will remain open to support daily operations, ensuring that we are there to support our students, artists, and families during this time, in whatever ways we can.

We are following the lead of the state and federal agencies as well as staying closely connected to school districts in Portland and Central Oregon to guide our decisions on program and event changes. With this in mind, we have made the following decisions:

Our middle school mentor classes are on hold for the duration that partner schools are closed, and we are pausing our high school workshops during this time as well.

Our Artist in Residence Program will continue in March with the option for artists to reschedule their residencies for later in the year if they choose.

We will not be hosting an in-person Open Studios on March 28 but will provide alternative ways to engage with our artists in residence. More information will be available soon. The campfire open mic that was planned for March 24 in downtown Portland will also be cancelled.

We feel these are the responsible choices to make and we will keep the community updated about any other changes to programs and future events. Currently, our plans for the Central Oregon Weekend Intensive (April 18-19), Hearth Festival (June 6-7), and camp sessions (July 16-August 17) remain unchanged.

We are grateful to have you as part of our Caldera community and appreciate your understanding and patience. As we navigate this extremely complicated situation, our belief in the power of creativity will light the way. The resilience of our communities to innovate, create, and support one another, no matter the circumstances, inspires us to do the same. Thank you for your ongoing support, and particular attention and allyship to vulnerable communities and populations. It means the world to us as we continue to provide the support and care our young people deserve.