



newsletter

Third Quarter 2022



Launch

SUMMER LEARNING AT LAUNCH

Launch kids had an extraordinary summer exploring the wonders of the Earth — from ocean-deep to sky-high! They met animal friends at **Woodland Park Zoo** and **Seattle Aquarium**, an eye-opening introduction to our planet's biodiversity. Then, **Animal Encounters for STEM Enrichment** and **Olympic National Park** offered children fun experiences to interact with wildlife. Kids sharpened their photography abilities at **Youth in Focus**, increasing their 21st century

skills. They wiggled out excess energy using jump ropes with **Double Dutch Divas**, a community activity that kept their hearts happy and healthy. They studied birds with **Seattle Audubon Society**, learning birds' role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Launch kids virtually blasted off to outer space with the **Willard Smith Planetarium** and spread their wings at the **Museum of Flight** — the heights humanity attained inspired them to dream bigger! *[continued inside]*

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A Note from the CEO

Another summer at Launch is in the books! What a wonderful time our children had — doing hands-on enrichment activities, exploring new places, and making new friends. This summer felt like a rest from the limited experiences we've offered our children and families over the past two years, due to pandemic safety protocols. As I pause to reflect on it all, my heart is full of gratitude for our staff, children, and particularly for you, our parents and caregivers, who have entrusted your children to us.



To our dynamic staff who worked tirelessly all summer to provide your children with an incredible summer camp experience — thank you! Our teachers persevered as each day brought new successes and challenges — they were energized, they were exhausted; they were inspiring, they were inspired. Our teachers gave it their all to make sure your kids had a summer to remember. They are a terrific group, and I am grateful for each one's dedication, enthusiasm, and professionalism.

To our kids who shows up each day with a zest for life and are the reason we do what we do — thank you! These kids were engaged and open to trying new things. Because of their days spent at camp, they have acquired an increase in confidence, a deeper connection to others, and a greater

sense of independence. The wonderful thing about camp is that the experience becomes a part of who each child is — they develop the strength and courage to stretch, continuously learn and grow, and gain an eagerness to explore the world.

To our parents and caregivers who trusted, supported, and encouraged us along the way — thank you! We absolutely could not do this without you. We are grateful that you shared your greatest treasures with us this summer.

We appreciate how you support your children's growth by encouraging them, asking them meaningful questions, and allowing them to lean into a newfound sense of independence. We are so grateful to count each of you as a part of our Launch family.

As we transition into the school year, my hope is that our children and families have continued with us and are ready for more fun peer-to-peer interactions, social-emotional learning, messy art, outside play, and just kids getting to be kids.

Angela Griffin
CEO

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pints FOR A purpose

A FALL CELEBRATION TO SUPPORT LAUNCH

Join us for Pints for a Purpose!

Pints for a Purpose is happening on **Wednesday, September 21st, 2022!**

We'll gather at the Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center, which has a beautiful view of Lake Washington. We'll bring the brewery drinks and music; you bring friends that want to learn about Launch's mission! Together, we'll cheers to Launch.

The event is a fun opportunity to meet new people, try local breweries, and support Launch's mission to ensure equitable access to the highest quality learning and care. We hope to see you there!

Want to volunteer at Pints for a Purpose? Contact Linda Wang at linda.wang@launchlearning.org or (206) 726-7972 ext. 123.

Summer Learning at Launch, continued

Our teachers received in-depth professional training from **Pamela Bond**, a Coast Salish educator. Teachers learned how to develop an anti-racist, anti-bias curriculum through an Indigenous lens — helping the youth peer at the natural world from a Native perspective! **The**

Nature Vision Science Program taught second graders about the use of native plants by First Peoples; shared Coast Salish Sea Orca lifestyles with the older grades. We also partnered with the **National Park Service Traveling Trunks Program** to teach upper elementary

students the cultures of Clatsop and Chinookan, the original peoples. Furthermore, Launch kids visited the **Burke Museum** to hear lively Native American storytelling and honor the cultural objects of long-held Coast Salish traditions.

HPK Student: Meet Tra'Moni!

Tra'Moni is a third grader. She aspires to be a teacher and help students get better at reading and writing. She also does one-handed cartwheels anywhere she can!

Launch: Can you tell me about Reduce Reuse Recycle week?

Tra'Moni: I learned that if you reduce, recycle, and reuse, it helps the environment. It's fun because when you do that the environment appreciates it.

L: It does appreciate it. What was it like to make your recycling poster?

T: It was actually really fun. We got to be creative and write it ourselves! Recycle posters tell us to recycle things like bottles and cans.

L: Awesome. What do you love the most about Launch?

T: The teachers. That's why I want to be a teacher. Sometimes, when I don't know something, they tell me the words. Sometimes, I forget the easiest words that I know how to spell — I just forgot. When I ask them, I don't feel bad or anything like that. I just feel like I need help since I forgot. Then, they help me!

L: Glad to hear it! How else have you grown as a person at Launch?

T: I've grown to be a nice and caring kid. And I've grown to learn stuff and understand my past mistakes. I learn to see when I made a mistake. Now I know to not make the same mistake again. If I don't do it again, it's just a mistake, period!



BHIS Fun: A Recycled Crafts Competition!



Edwin (right) is a third grader. He wants to be a zookeeper and see pandas! He has a knack for building things.

Mabel (middle) is a first grader. She would love to be a vet. She is strong at hula-hooping!

Abisai (left) is a second grader. He wants to be a Youtuber. He loves Nintendo Switches — his dream is to have 3,000 of them!

Launch: How did your team make a recycled robot?

Edwin: I made the arms! **Makes robot arm swinging motions.**

Abisai: I built nothing!

Mabel: Abisai wore the costume (pictured on the bottom right)! We used a box and carved out eyes. We made a mouth and painted it! And then for legs, he only had one leg. We also added a water bottle to the arm to make a laser!

L: Good job! What did you learn?

E: I learned that making things is good.

M: I learned that making a robot is really fun.

A: Putting it on my head was fun!

L: Fun! What else have you enjoyed this summer at Launch?

M: Doing art projects. And, I like making new friends!

E: The places are amazing. The food is good. And, the teachers! You guys really take care of us. You guys teach us how to be kind.

A: Laughing!



Share Your Lived Experiences

We want to hear your lived experiences! Which celebrations and holidays do your family honor? We invite you to share your perspective, artwork, and expressions about your culture and religion with the Launch community. Each published submission will receive a \$25.00 compensation. Please contact Linda Wang at linda.wang@launchlearning.org if interested. Thank you!



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Sign Up for Program for Early Parent Support

Development milestones. Parenting past midnight. It's all super overwhelming! Are you looking to de-stress and connect with other parents/caregivers who can relate to you?

Join Launch for facilitated parent support groups for ages 0-3 where parents and caregivers can share their knowledge with each other and explore topics like feeding, sleep, and discipline!

This FREE program runs once a week in the evening for eight weeks. Meals will be provided!

Questions? Contact Nahyeli Mendivil (Se habla español) at nahyeli.mendivil@launchlearning.org or Ruth Diaz at ruth.diaz@launchlearning.org.

Meet Ruth Diaz, the Early Learning Director!

Ruth Diaz joined Launch in 2021 as the Early Learning Director to provide preschool curriculum support, coordinate teacher trainings, and give instructional and behavioral assistance to students. In her free time, she plays hide and seek with her dogs, enjoys her extended family's laughter and company, and cooks hearty Southern food for her favorite people!

Launch: What needs are you seeing with kids and families?

Ruth: Preschoolers are just coming out of isolation, and most of them spent half of their lives in the pandemic. There is a need for kids to build social-emotional skills outside of the home.

L: Have you seen kids improve since isolation ended?

R: Yes, it's been incredible to witness the preschoolers' growth! We use Teaching Strategies Gold to assess our kids' developmental progress, including physical, cognitive, and social-emotional learning. During the Fall, 65% met or exceeded age-level expectations for social-emotional learning. By the Spring, **91% met or exceeded** age-level expectations for social-emotional learning!

L: That's wonderful!

R: I'm so proud. Teachers were skilled at creating teachable

moments. They would ask questions such as, "How did you make your friend feel?" Everyone felt safe to express themselves and communicate big feelings!

L: Why is a safe space important?

R: Well, preschool is a key moment to help kids figure out how to exist within a community. A lot of that is learning emotional regulation, empathy, and how to be a kind friend and classmate. And, a safe space to grow sets them up for success and happiness in their later school years! They gain the confidence to see themselves as capable students, classmates, and team players.

L: Can you also discuss Program for Early Parent Support?

R: Sure. We made a decision to partner with PEPS, a local program that facilitates support groups for early parents. We want to expand access to PEPS for traditionally underserved parents and caregivers. During group sessions, participants can gain wisdom, compare experiences, and share advice with each other! The goal is to help parents feel less isolated — other parents are experiencing it too. These groups will be facilitated by Nahyeli Mendivil, our Spanish-speaking Family & Engagement Support Specialist, and me, the Early Learning Director!

