



Durango Early Learning Center

THE DELC DIGEST

JANUARY 2024

IMPORTANT DATES

- 1/9 Board Meeting 5:45PM
- NO SCHOOL - MLK DAY 1/15
- 1/16 Staff meeting 5:30PM
- 2/2 Dress Up Day & Snowdown Dance Party 10:00AM
- 2/5 NO SCHOOL - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HAPPY
birthday



- 1/4 Ruby
- 1/5 Mia
- 1/7 Alden
- 1/10 Carter
- 1/21 Talia
- 1/30 Max

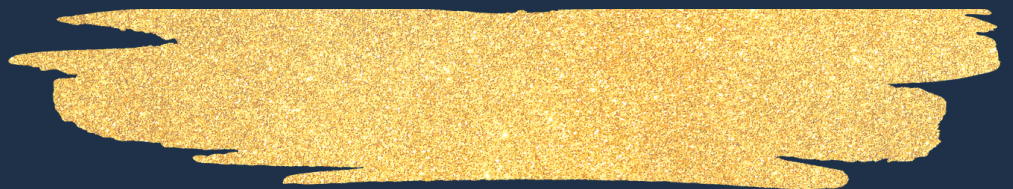
Over

\$28,500

raised
for

COGIVES DAY!

Holy Moly! We had 75 donors and raised over \$3000 above our goal with some last minute end-of-year gifts! We could not have done this without the support of our families and board members! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



DURANGO EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Board of Directors 2023.2024



**Jessie Christiansen -
Immediate Past
President/Treasurer**

Jessie was born and raised here in Durango and joined the DELC board in 2020. She earned both Accounting and Art degrees from Fort Lewis College which has provided creativity and a love for numbers into her current job as a Payroll Specialist. Since 2010, she has been helping hundreds of employers in Southwest Colorado (including DELC) ensure payroll tax compliance. Outside of the office, she loves spending quality time with her son and daughter and simply being in the mountains. From cross country skiing in the winter, to mountain biking in the summer, and traveling whenever she gets the chance, she's up for any adventure with her family. She has always wanted to give back to the community which shaped who she is today and has found a wonderful fit to serve with the DELC board family.



Torrey Baldwin - Secretary

Torrey is a DELC parent who works locally in education and social work. She deeply appreciates education that focuses on whole-child development and support and views DELC as a shining example. As a public educator, she also values DELC's nonprofit status and commitment to serving families at differing income levels. She most recently has been working as a case coordinator for the San Juan BOCES "BETA program," having most previously taught Math and Psychology at Animas High School. She holds a BA from Williams College and a MA in Teaching from Simmons College. Outside of work, Torrey enjoys curling up with a book and spending time in the mountains and on her bike with her husband, Zach, and their two sons, Amias (5) and Kestrel (8). She appreciates this opportunity to support DELC - an institution that provides such an amazing early foundation for the youth of Durango.



Chris Hughes - President

Chris is a local teacher that appreciates DELC's focus of the whole child. Currently working as an educational consultant, Chris spent his first years of teaching at DELC from '03-'05. Chris vouches that his time at DELC was the spark that pushed him to pursue the study of education. Chris attended Fort Lewis College for his BA of Education and High Tech High's Graduate School of Education for his MA in Educational Leadership. When away from work, Chris enjoys spending time outdoors with his wife and three girls, Eleanor, Raleigh, and Birdie. He feels honored to be a part of the DELC team.



**Savannah Porter -
Board Member**

Savannah is a Colorado native and joined DELC's Board of Directors in December 2022. She received her undergraduate degree in Molecular Biology at CU-Boulder and then her Master's degree at CU-Denver. She currently serves the children of Durango as a Pediatric Physician Assistant at Pediatric Partners of the Southwest and wants to continue her advocacy role through DELC's Board of Directors. Durango has provided a sense of community for her and her family since moving here in 2015, and she continues to recruit her family members to join (one sister and mom here, two sisters to go!). Outside time continues to be her happy place through hiking, skiing, snowshoeing and camping, along with any chance at traveling internationally. Savannah is thrilled to be given the opportunity to repay some of the love and support DELC has given her two sons, one who is a DELC alum and one who is currently thriving in the program.



Paige DeNier - Vice President

Paige is a local business owner and the mother of two DELC students. Paige grew up in Durango as did her husband whose family has lived here for 3 generations. She has a degree in Interior Design with an emphasis in Sustainable Design. She and her mother own {re}love Consign and Design, a gently used home furnishings store. They also own {wee}Love Consign, selling children's clothes and decor. When not working, Paige can be found with her family skiing, hiking, camping or playing in the river. Paige is excited to be a board member and to contribute towards the continued success of DELC.



**Lisa Sifrit -
Board Member**

Lisa is a Durango local who started her career working with children at DELC in 2005. DELC provided Lisa with the strong values of respecting children and collaborating with families to enhance a child's well-being, which eventually led her to pursue a master's in social work at MSU Denver. Lisa is currently a behavioral health counselor at Pediatric Partners of the Southwest and a child and family investigator for the court. Lisa is excited to be able to engage in the policies, strategic planning, and fundraising that allows the DELC staff to be successful in their amazing work with children. Lisa and her husband love enjoying all of the outdoor activities the southwest has to offer with their twin daughters (Hayden and Parker) and two sons (Beckett and Renik). Beckett is a current Rainbow Roomer!



**Molly Pagano -
Board Member**

Molly joined the DELC Board of Directions in October 2023, after having fallen in love with school through her daughters first year in the purple room (now a green roomer!). Molly loves the staff, mission and values of DELC and wants to help to continue to grow the school. Molly is a Colorado native and has been in Durango since 2013. Currently, Molly is the owner of San Juan Paralegal Services, providing contract paralegal support to attorneys throughout Colorado. Molly's passion for her community continues to grow, as a graduate of the 2018-2019 Leadership La Plata Class and recently obtaining a Certificate in Non-Profit Management she is excited to continue her growth professionally and move towards non-profit work. Molly is also the president of the Professional Women's Network of Durango, a local Non-Profit. Outside of the office, Molly loves spending her time with her husband and daughter and just being in the mountains. From paddle boarding, hiking, camping to snow shoeing and sledding. Molly appreciates this opportunity to support DELC for the future generations of Durango.



**Julia Abner -
Board Member**

Julia has lived in Durango for the past 10 years after moving here from Telluride. Originally from CT, having earned a BS in Business Administration in Boston, the West always called to her and she was thrilled to have stumbled upon this uniquely incredible town. Working at Mercy Hospital as an RN, Julia loves being able to help and give back to people in the community. Once their son Hudson started at DELC in 2022, Julia's whole family instantly fell in love with the school, its caregivers and its mission. She was really excited when the opportunity arose to give back to the community in a new way, and to give more time to this incredible school as a Board Member. Julia enjoys everything Durango has to offer from hiking, running, skiing and river-time. Her and her husband Andy have loved showing their son the world through various camping and rafting trips, Mexico adventures and East Coast/West Coast family visits. She feels honored to be involved in this organization that is such a staple and positive influence on this community.



**Gretchen Dixon -
Board Member**

Gretchen is a longtime Durango resident, originally from Georgia. Gretchen, her husband Tyler, and their three children Woody (9), Rush (6) and Eddie (2), live and work at a local summer camp, Colvig Silver Camps. Gretchen had admired DELC for years, and in 2020 officially joined the DELC family when daughter Rush was enrolled in the Rainbow Room. Eddie is now a student in the purple room. Gretchen and Tyler have been continuously impressed by DELC's commitment to supporting the whole child. They are endlessly grateful to the teachers for their expertise and the passion they bring to their jobs. Professionally, Gretchen worked for multiple years as Program Director at Durango Nature Studies, before attending a nutrition-based culinary school in Denver where she graduated as a Certified Natural Foods Chef. Gretchen now works year round as the registrar Colvig Silver Camp. Gretchen is a Four Corners Naturalist, sometimes chef, book hoarder and avid birder. During their down time, Gretchen and her family enjoy gardening, biking, hiking and backpacking, and spending time with their family pets - dogs Ranger and Soca, barn cats Jenny From the Block and Nelly Furtado, and a bevy of chickens.

Meet the DELC Board of Directors!

As a non-profit 501(c)3, DELC's Board of Directors is responsible for the financial health of the school and propelling big picture changes and improvements! Our BOD is comprised of current DELC parents, alumni families and teachers. The BOD also has working committees to support specific areas of growth such as fundraising, finance, and DEL (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). We are so grateful for all the hard work our BOD has done for DELC.

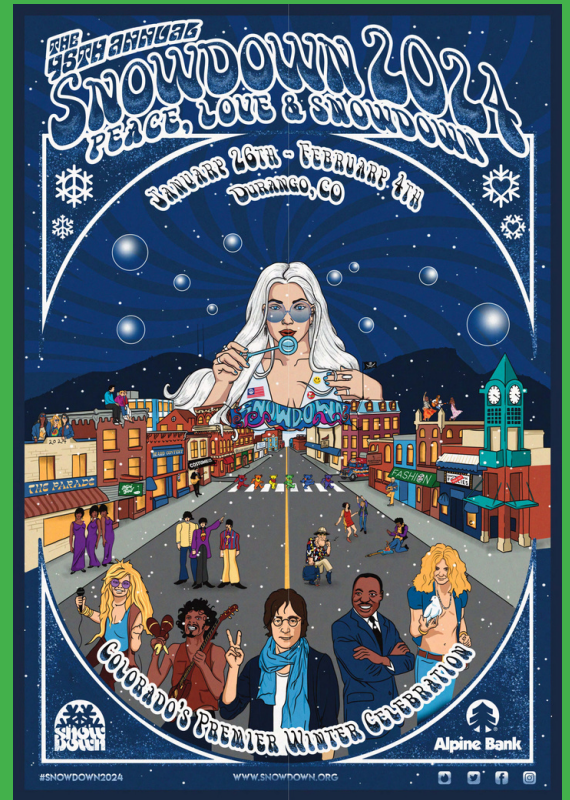
Currently, our board is working on our new strategic plan through 2027. Want to get involved on the board or help with the strategic plan? Contact Becca!

Dress-Up Day



Snowdown Dance Party

Friday, February 2nd
10:00AM



Waiting List Update

The 2024.2025 waiting list is CLOSED. It is anticipated we will only be able to fill 1 or 2 toddler spots and 3 or 4 preschool spots after enrolling siblings.

For the 2025.2026 school and beyond, the Board of Directors voted to move to a lottery for available spots for new families. Current families and their siblings will continue to have priority and register first. More info to come!

Registration for the 2024.2025 school year will come out in February! Please contact Becca ASAP if you are not returning or if you are wanting to change/increase days for your current schedule for next school year! Changes will be accommodated based on availability/first come-first serve!

Conscious Discipline Corner

What POWER will you focus on in 2024?

The Seven Powers for Conscious Adults

Power of Perception



No one can make you angry without your permission.

Power of Attention



Whatever we focus on, we get more of.

Power of Unity



We are all in this together.

Power of Free Will



The only person you can change is you.

Power of Acceptance



The moment is as it is.

Power of Love



Choose to see the best in others.

Power of Intention



Mistakes are opportunities to learn.



Conscious Discipline®

Grady, from Table to Farm Compost, taught us about what goes into compost, how it works, and why it is awesome for the environment!



Durango Early Learning Center Land Acknowledgement

Welcome to the Durango Early Learning Center. We respectfully acknowledge that the school is located in Durango, Colorado, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Ute (Núu-agma-tǣvǣ-ǰǰ), Diné (Navajo: Naabeehó Bináhásdzo), Hopi (Hopituh Shi-nu-mu) Pueblos, Apache and Zuni (Shiwi'ma) People who have been stewards of this land throughout generations. As early childhood care providers and educators of our future generation, it is our responsibility to acknowledge the impacts of the unKind acts that have led to the unfair and inappropriate treatment of people that traditionally lived here and still live here today. We lead by example and share stories of this land that are respectful to the people and the real history of this region. As we teach our children, we strive to nurture a culture that takes responsibility for our actions, and is curious, honest, and inclusive to the diverse backgrounds in our community. #HonorNativeLand