



ANNUAL REPORT



Kahlert Youth Media Arts Center

2019/20

discovering the
new now

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Spy Hop Friends,

If, like me, you were moved to tears by the powerful words of United States' National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman at President Biden's inauguration, you now understand why cultivating and supporting youth voice and leadership is key to a thriving democracy and to healing a broken nation. This past year our young people have endured a year like no other - their lives turned upside down by a pandemic, police brutality, civil and cultural unrest, not to mention earthquakes and hurricane-force winds or pathological lies and misinformation by a president in an effort to undermine our constitutional right to a free and fair election.

This year has taken its toll on our young people, to be sure, but I take solace in the fact that Spy Hop - our mentors, staff and board - have been there for them. We've persevered. We've shown up for them, committed to listening, learning, and adapting, and making sure their voices were heard and valued in their communities. We embraced the "mentoring young people to find their voice" part of our mission, fiercely.

As a teen, Amanda's voice was cultivated through her participation in WriteGirl, an afterschool, mentor-based, creative writing program in Los Angeles that works to empower girls to find their voice and strengthen their leadership. It is organizations like WriteGirl and Spy Hop that are needed now more than ever. We are able to provide the individualized encouragement and mentorship needed to help them grow and thrive.

On the infamous Friday the 13th, we were forced to move all our programs online - from PitchNic, Musicology, Loud & Clear, or our Multimedia Apprenticeship programs we run at our youth media center in Salt Lake City to Sending Messages at Decker Lake Youth Center and our POPS and Voices of the West programs we run throughout the state. This was no small undertaking. Our teams of mentors redesigned, reimaged, and redelivered on the promise we make every day to our youth. We hear you and we are here for you - and we are ready to help you embrace your New Now.

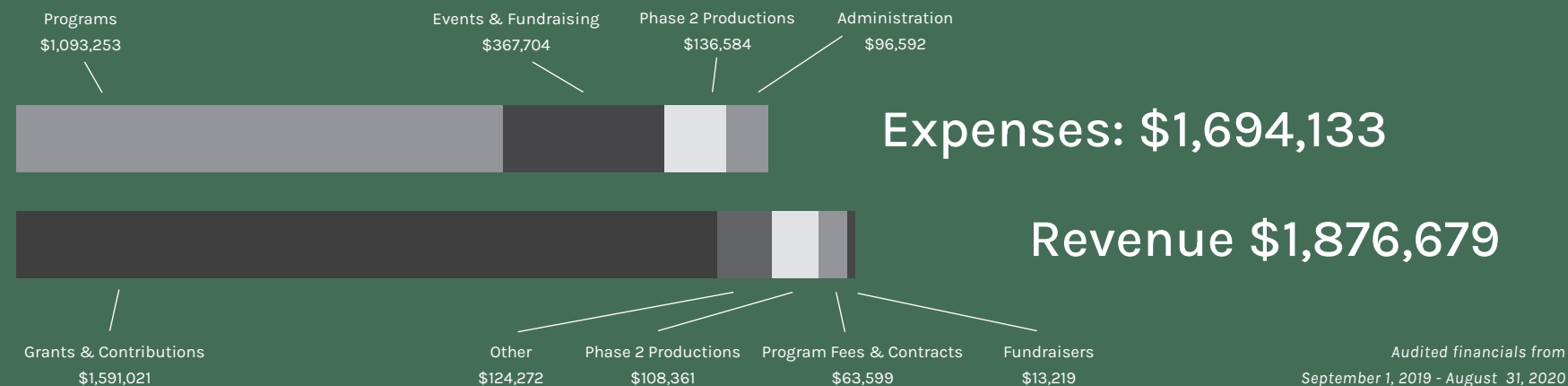
Thank you all for believing in the power of youth voice and for encouraging our next generation of leaders like Amanda Gorman. There are thousands of Amanda Gorman's out there, and with the help of organizations like Spy Hop, they will become the next leaders, thinkers and doers in our communities and help restore our beautiful country and our beautiful democracy. Thank you for being on that journey with us.

As we settle into 2021, I look forward to celebrating with you the incredible accomplishment of opening the new Khalert Youth Media Arts Center. We hope to hold a naming ceremony in May; we invite you to rejoice with us as we settle into our facility built for our students and our community.

With much love and appreciation,

Kasandra VerBruggen

FINANCIALS



YEAR AT A GLANCE

From new classes and partnerships to new staff, and initiatives to better serve our community, our list of accomplishments from the past year have made us proud.

1

New Programs

Spy Hop created new programming to respond to the COVID-19 shutdowns. Rewired Workshops provided live virtual programming to students 9-19, while [Art Shop](#) provided on-demand tutorials that students of all ages were able to access for free to create fun media projects at home. [Beat Challenge](#) gives space for a community of music producers to come together online to create beats and learn from each other.

2

New Partnerships

Spy Hop established new partnerships with Planned Parenthood, Club Ability, Heartland Community 4 Youth & Families, Refugee Action for Family Health, David Eccles School of Business, and Utah Communities Connect to remove barriers for participation to historically underserved multicultural communities.

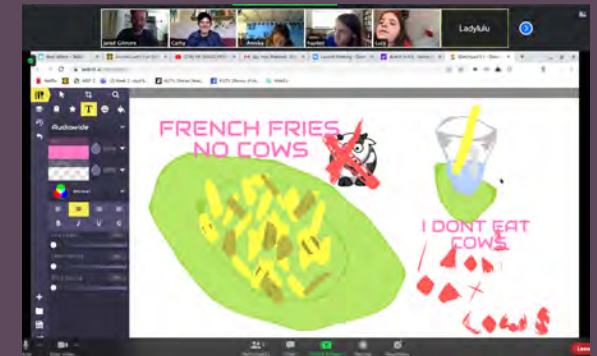
3

Daigwade

Through a partnership with Utah State University, Spy Hop is part of a community-based project with the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation. Working with tribal youth, Spy Hop is helping them create place-based storytelling experiences that share and preserve important cultural and historical stories of the Tribe.



Quarantined kids doing an Art Shop tutorial.



Screenshot from an online summer Rewired Workshop class.

4

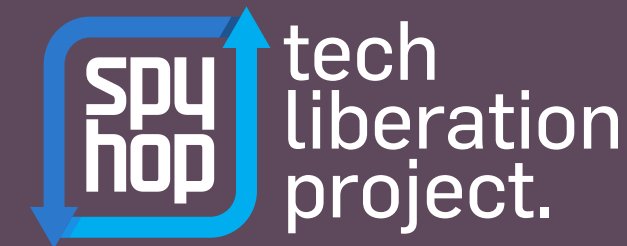
Phase 2 Productions

In February 2020, Erin Cole, Spy Hop alum (2009-2011) joined the Spy Hop team as the Production Manager of Phase 2 Productions. Phase 2 is Spy Hop's alumni run production studio and is able to provide high quality video production to clients. Learn more at [phase2productions.com](#).

5

Tech Liberation Project

To address the digital inequities that exist in our community and have been exasperated by the pandemic, Spy Hop launched the [Tech Liberation Project](#) to accept old functional laptops and computers to be refurbished and then redistributed to students and families in need. To date Spy Hop has received 271 donated devices and liberated 60 refurbished devices to students and families in our community. Over 90 devices and 200 lbs of cords and accessories have been safely recycled and kept out of landfills.





KAHLERT
YOUTH
MEDIA
ARTS CENTER

In August 2020, Spy Hop's 10-year dream of building a space of our own for our young people to learn and grow became our reality. In the days that Spy Hop took occupancy of our new space, the organization also received an incredible contribution to name it the Kahlert Youth Media Arts Center facility. The donation from the Kahlert Foundation is transformational; it signals how much our community believes in Spy Hop, the importance of this center, and how critical it is to the education and well being of the young people in our community. Spy Hop is incredibly grateful to all of the donors and funders who have been on this journey with us; their collective contributions have proven that if you believe deeply, work hard, and don't give up, dreams do come true.

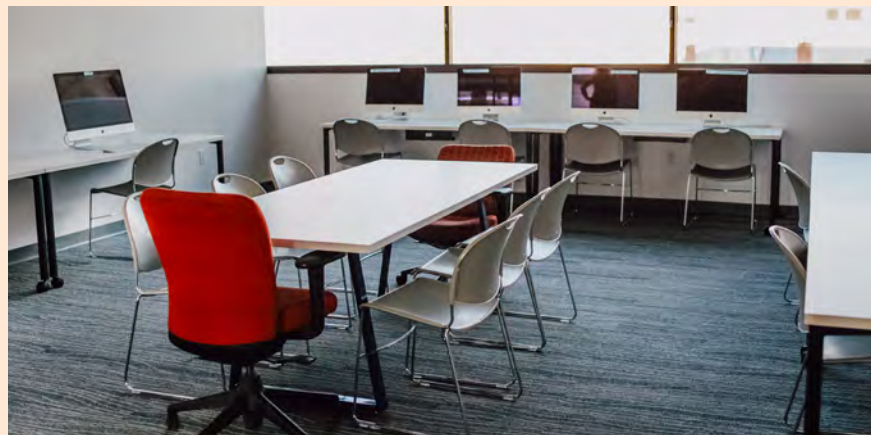
The Kahlert Youth Media Arts Center is a 22,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility designed with students in mind. With a recording studio, large classrooms, a student lounge, equipment lab, and more, it is a beacon of creativity and learning for young aspiring digital media artists of all skill levels. The third floor boasts a Rooftop event space available for community events large and small. Designed by Atlas Architects, built by Okland Construction, with solar provided through a grant from Blue Sky Energy with additional support from CE Solar, the facility is LEED Silver equivalent. The Kahlert Youth Media Arts Center is situated perfectly in the Central 9th District of Salt Lake City, providing critical access to public transportation, making the facility accessible to students across the Salt Lake valley.



Donor Signage Overlay by Infinite Scale, photography, Scot Zimmerman



George S. & Dolores Doré Eccles Student Lounge



1 of 5 designated classroom spaces

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DONORS

All gifts and pledges to the Capital Campaign to date are recognized.

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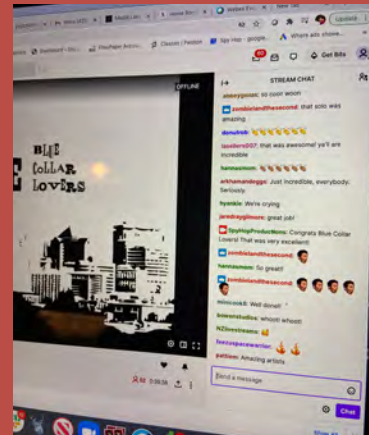


DISCOVERING THE NEW NOW

Being authentic to who we are

as an organization, as a culture, and as a work family is central to our daily decisions and actions. When COVID-19 arrived in our world, our ability to stay focused on our mission and students was pulled into sharp focus. We were collectively compelled by the need to rise to the moment and meet the needs of our youth.

And while we were in the trenches of figuring out exactly how to do that, we did, in fact, find our footing and nimbly responded. It was a grave moment in time where everyone in the world was trying to reorient and find a way forward; young people included. And now, in the early days of 2021, we have found enough space to begin to reflect on the past 10 months and evaluate our lessons learned. We do this knowing that the transformation that comes from this shared global experience is only just beginning. We asked our evaluation partners at Convergence Design Lab to help us put words to paper to understand what we did well and where we could improve as we move forward.



Screenshot of the live Musicology listening party celebrating the launch of the album, "Mean Machine" by the Blue Collar Lovers.

The mantra that ‘change is the only constant’ strikes a deep chord among our staff as we are continually discovering and defining this ‘new now.’

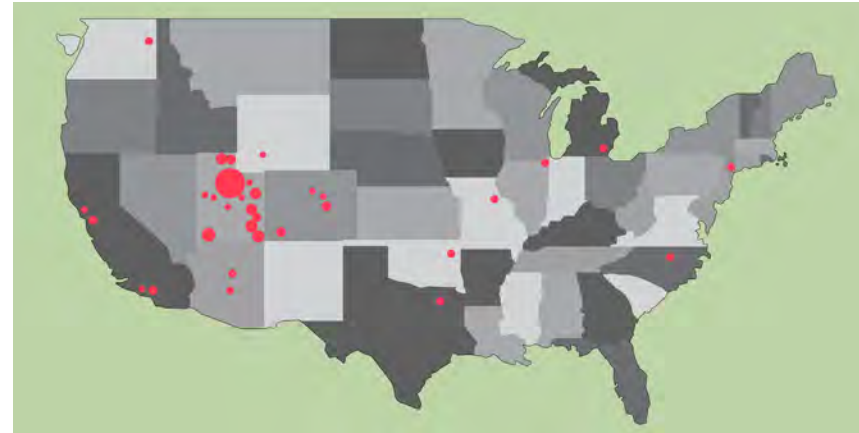


Top: PitchNic students meeting with their mentors via zoom. Right: PitchNic student on set following COVID-19 protocols.



It was our infrastructure that allowed us to be nimble in the face of such upheaval. The fact that we have a full-time paid staff of teaching mentors is a choice investment that allows for built-in meeting time, which supports innovation and reflection, making programmatic shifts, such as taking all programming online in the span of one-week, possible. Our investment in state-of-the-art facilities and resources allowed us to create a free equipment rental system to support at-home student participation and production. A commitment to the value of youth centered instruction and creative expression allowed staff to collaborate and figure out innovative ways to deliver programs online. Together, these elements helped us support our students’ social/emotional needs, skill growth, and the cultivation of future-ready mindsets during and despite a time of an unprecedented set of challenges.

We know that ‘showing up’ for our students is critical to success regardless of online or in-person interactions; however, taking programming online and simply being available to our students proved to be one of the most important



Spy Hop offered online classes for the first time and as a result, students from outside of Utah were able to participate in Spy Hop classes.

acts of mentoring that we provided during the early days of the pandemic. Our students looked to us to provide a dynamic space where needs for belonging, expression, and community building in a safe, shared space could be realized.

Many of our students who had begun classes with us prior to COVID-19 forced shutdowns already had established strong working relationships with peers and mentors. Many youth who had the benefit of these foundational experiences could more easily transition to online learning. There were tough moments when several of our core programs were forced into temporary hiatus, and we weren’t able to re-engage with every student. However, those who returned did so with a renewed sense of commitment and purpose. We saw that when mentors continue to show up, we can cultivate new ways for youth to grow. Sadly, for youth whose families were economically challenged or for youth where online learning was not a practical reality, many students had to drop out of classes or significantly pull back from participation.

Online learning afforded us new ways to reach students that surprised us. We saw that youth whose geographical distance once prevented them from in-person participation could take part when programs moved online. For the first time in Spy Hop’s history, we had students who could come together in a virtual space to collaborate and connect. Students from Washington, New York, Wyoming, North Carolina, and more found their way to Spy Hop.

Students grasped the larger historical context and the myriad ways in which COVID embattled everyone. They did not fault mentors for delivering online learning experiences that were subpar to their face-to-face learning. They were grateful for the ways that real conversations and connections happened on their Spy Hop zoom calls compared to school. They found meaning and purpose by creating media works that addressed the issues of the time.

As it became increasingly clear that COVID-19 was not going to dissipate in the Summer or Fall, another pandemic - that of systemic racism and police brutality became viscerally and horrifically apparent to many Americans. During these exceedingly complex times, we faced many challenging decisions, both programmatically and internally. How might mentors build relationships and foundational skills in programs that could not run face-to-face and hands-on? How might the rural and more community-based programs that center around hyper-localism thrive in a virtual space? How should Spy Hop re-evaluate its approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion in terms of its pedagogy, curriculum, funding models, and staffing? There are no easy or quick answers to these questions. Still, we continue to rely on our core values, our commitment to our students and our community to be our authentic selves and to use our strengths as a team and as an organization to address these inequities and challenges through the lens of our mission.

There is no going back; there is only forward. We embrace our lessons learned and are prepared to push forward, advocate for our young people to ensure that all possess the skills and mindsets necessary for future success and that their voices are heard and valued in their communities, here and around the world.

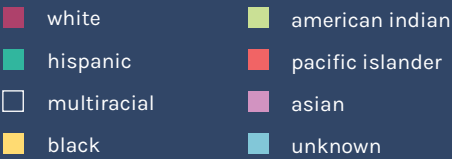
“I think we’re going to be the voice of the world. I think Spy Hop really tries to help us find that voice and give us confidence and give us the ability to have this impact and ... they support our media because ... it’s what would benefit the world the most.”

- Spy Hop Student

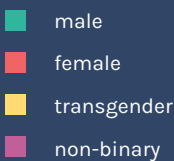
Students Served: 11,950

Spy Hop’s portfolio of programming includes in-school, after-school, youth-in-care and summer camps for kids 9-19. On March 13, 2020 Spy Hop made the decision to move all programming to an online format due to COVID-19. The data from our 2019-2020 programming year reflects both in-person and online data.

ethnicity



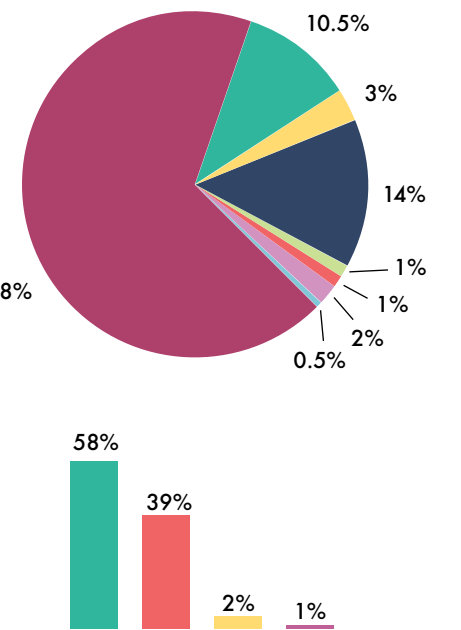
gender



Afterschool Programs

Our afterschool classes are offered year-round in our downtown SLC studio for students ages 9-19. Through a scaffolded approach we offer introductory to advanced classes that provide hands-on learning while encouraging students to create media to inspire social change. In 2020 all classes were free of charge and included free gear and software to intermediate and advanced students who needed it.

Students Served: 820
Number of Classes: 103
Average Age: 14
Free/Reduced Lunch: 29%

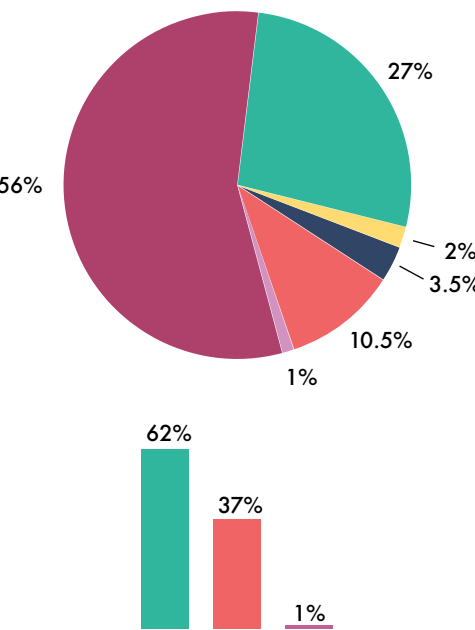


Languages Spoken in the Home:
English, Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Urdu, Arabic, Rwandan, Samoan, Swahili,

Satellite Programming

Through community partnerships with schools, youth organizations, and government agencies Spy Hop is able to provide its high-quality programming to youth throughout the state of Utah. These customized classes can be held during school as well as out-of-school time hours in a variety of locations across the state of Utah as well as at our downtown center.

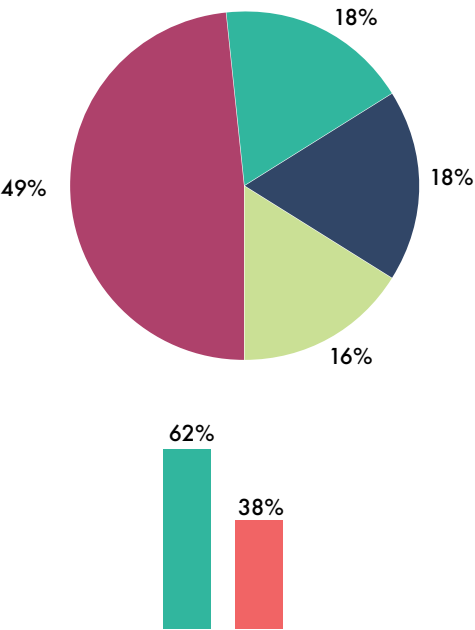
Students Served: 204
Number of Classes: 113
Average Age: 13
Free/Reduced Lunch: 51%



Voices of the West

Through afterschool workshops and paid summer media intensives, this program provides a unique opportunity for Spy Hop mentors to offer week-long programming that aims to elevate the voices and ideas of young people while also celebrating what makes their communities unique in the rural communities around Blanding, Tooele, Vernal, and Hurricane/La Verkin, Utah.

Students Served: 45
Number of Classes: 44
Average Age: 15
Free/Reduced Lunch: 54%

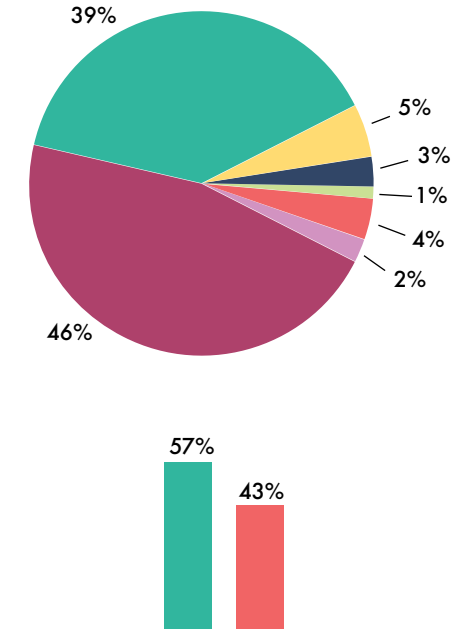


Russian, Lao, Hawaiian, Igbo, Afrikaans, Portuguese, Persian, Vietnamese

Youth-in-Care

Spy Hop’s Youth-In-Care programs are for young people in the foster care system, residential treatment programs, secure care facilities and those in state’s custody. Students create podcasts, stop-motion animation and music projects that are shared online. This includes Spy Hop’s award-winning Sending Messages podcast program.

Students Served: 103
Number of Classes: 106
Average Age: 15
Free/Reduced Lunch: N/A



POPS Programs

Spy Hop brings teaching artists to a single classroom, grade level, or an entire school through workshops and assemblies. These programs introduce young people to concepts of media arts in film, audio and design. These activities encourage engagement in core subjects as well as develop 21st century skills.

Students served: 10,778
Schools: 51
Charters: 10
Districts: 15

Explore student work online!
www.spyhop.org/watch-listen-play



PitchNc students on location to film “Fitrah.”

OUR DONORS

Spy Hop thanks all of the following donors* who generously contributed to the organization. This Annual Report lists gifts made from September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2020. While we make every effort to be accurate, mistakes occur. If we have made a mistake, please contact us!

- 5+

5+ years of giving
- C

CREW member (Spy Hop's [monthly donor club](#))
- ♥

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*All Capital Campaign donors are recognized on pg. 4

\$100,000 and Above

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Students collaborated to create a Spy Hop mural with local artist [Ruel Brown](#) at the Maven District.

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Musicology student recording their album, "[Mean Machine](#)."

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Jackie Standing
Jamie Crews
Jan Nystrom
Jane Anderson
Jeff Bryant



Musicology band, [Blue Collar Lovers](#), persevered and were able to release their album in November 2020.

I'm really glad that we stumbled across your class offerings. We live in Wyoming, and I've shared it with some other parents that signed up their kid(s) last week and this week. It has been nice for them to experience a big city offering of classes!

- Spy Hop Parent

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Michelle Anderson
Michelle Cline
Michelle Vansice
Microsoft
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Nathan Buchanan
Olivia Smock
Paula Teets
Peter Rosen
Rachel Sweet
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Robyn Martinez & Melanie Hamilton

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Suzanne Robbins
Terese & Mike Walton
Tim Erickson
Traci Thompson

P

Tricia Schumann

C

Trish Aguilar
Trisha Hernandez
Trisha & Trace Worthington
Urban Partners 2, Inc.
Wally Bills
Woodland Advisors, LLC

In Memory of:

Sierra Chacon (17)
Lynn Dougan (2)

In Honor of:

Adam Sherlock
Adriene Klein (2)
Anthony Kreisel
Ben Trentelman
Maxie & Calvin Mumm (2)
Cathy Foy
Dennis Dolan
Kasandra VerBruggen (2)
Larissa Trout
Laura Sellers (2)
Mark & Libby Haslam
Matt Mateus
Meredith Lavitt & C. Reddish (2)
Nate Thomas
Peter Coyote
Team Tipton
Tessa Arneson
The L. Kids
The Tipton Kids.



Staff celebrate with donor Heather Kahert on the new Spy Hop Rooftop.

Spy Hop's mission is to mentor young people in the digital media arts to help them find their voice, tell their stories, and be empowered to affect positive change in their lives, their communities, and the world.

We envision a world in which all young people possess the skills and mindsets necessary for future success and that their voices are heard and valued in their communities.

Connect with Us!

Kahlert Youth Media Arts Center
208 W. Harvey Milk Blvd.
Salt Lake City, UT, 84101
801.532.7500 | spyhop.org



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[Rooftop Event Space Manager](#)
Amber Dwyer*
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Cathy Foy
[Musical Arts Mentor](#)
Celia Boyle
[Finance & Operations Director](#)
Connor Estes*
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Erin Cole*
[Phase 2 Productions Manager](#)

Erik Roan
[Annual Fund Manager](#)
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[Education Director](#)
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Trevor Dahl
[Graphic Designer & Design Mentor](#)

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"One of the things that I love most about Spy Hop is its focus – it has a distinct purpose. One of our goals with the video game we made was to show how by overcoming differences and taking responsibility for what's happened, you can solve problems that threaten your entire society."

- [Power Up](#) game design student