

Annual Report 2021

THE CREATING LANDSCAPES LEARNING CENTER, INC.





Annual Report 2021 | Creating Landscapes



Photo by Mike Marley

DEAR FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS,

On the 10th anniversary of **Creating Landscapes Learning Center, LLC** we continue to prepare learners of all ages for active citizenship through their engagement with our three venues –Creating Landscapes for Families, the Creating Landscapes Early Learning Center, and Food4Thought.

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year the Learning Center K-8 Independent School became an independent entity. We celebrate this transition as a success of the Creating Landscapes philosophy and of the hard work of the director and staff of the school.

Our current venues enjoy a great deal of autonomy and independence while still benefiting from the support and encouragement of our experienced Creating Landscapes leaders and our Advisory Council with particular expertise in various fields such as legal matters, insurance, fiscal management, personnel policies and marketing.

Our participation in Crawford Gives for the last two years has proved to be a blessing. Because of the generosity of dozens of donors, our venue leaders are able to spend more of their energy and time on their projects and programs instead of raising funds to cover basic expenses.

Our venues have continued to prosper and grow.

Food4Thought has been deeply involved in community gardens and nutrition education through Grow Meadville. This summer, in conjunction with Walkable Meadville, the Children’s Garden was opened on South Main Street with the support of the Crawford Heritage Community Foundation, Dr George Vukmer and the Sperry Family.

The Creating Landscapes for Families Early Learning Center continues to provide exemplary, innovative and enriching pre-school experiences for its students while nurturing critical thinking and problem solving. Due to COVID-19 enrollment has been limited to ensure the safety of our students and staff. We look forward to expanding our enrollment in the coming year.

Creating Landscapes for Families is maintaining its community of families at both the South Main Street garden and the Fifth Ward garden. The after-school program has been on hold due to COVID-19 but plans are afoot to start it again in the fall.

Having survived a year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we look forward to being able to provide a basis of love and respect for each other and growth, both organizationally and personally, for our venues’ communities.

Corinne Chafey and Pete Gifford, Co-Chairs

Contributions/Donations

CORPORATE REVENUE	Amount
Contributions/Donations	\$4,848.26
TOTAL	\$4,848.26

CORPORATE EXPENSES	Amount
Insurances	7075.00
Business Expenses	740.00
TOTAL	\$7,815.00

Business Expenses

Insurances

Learning Center, Inc.



Photo by Sarah Steffes



Photo by Joyce Klasen



Photo by Jan Hyatt



Photo by Joyce Klasen



Photo by Mike Marley

DBA CREATING LANDSCAPES

MEMBERS and OFFICERS of the BOARD of DIRECTORS

CORPORATE GOVERNING BOARD

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- JOYCE KLASEN
Creating Landscapes for Families
- WALLY MASON
Food4Thought
- PETE GIFFORD
Families Early Learning Center

VENUE TREASURERS

- CHARMAINE KOEHLER-LODGE
Creating Landscapes for Families
- PETE GIFFORD
Food4Thought
- CORINNE CHAFEY
Families Early Learning Center



Creating Landscapes for Families



POSITIVE POSSIBILITIES

Those seeds planted on Ackerman Farm in 2011 were planted in fertile soil—land that had been cared for by Bob and Michelle Ackerman and was abundantly rich with Bob’s “farm-smart” mind and Michelle’s gracious heart. Families will never forget that first bus trip from Second District parking lot up the long, slow hill to a place where all you could see was big blue sky... and Families got to work!

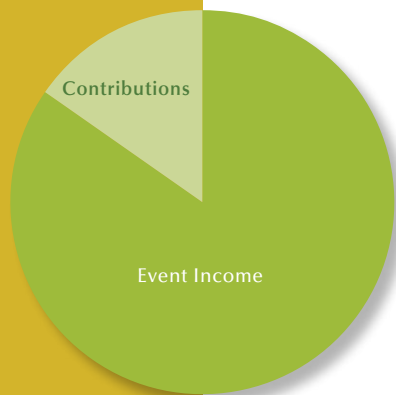
Those first seeds were planted with strong hands, open hearts, and curious minds. The strong hands worked hard. The open hearts “soaked in” the good feeling of people coming together while working toward a common cause. The curious minds dared to try gardening—something that was completely new to the vast majority. Families made bus trips to that farm a few times a week to care for their plants. Conversations between the rows were as tender as the plants that were growing. Families shared stories of their lives; children sang and ran and giggled; Bob was always nearby to help; and lo and behold, that garden grew!

It grew ideas, friendships, patience, courage, JOY, oh..... and vegetables too!

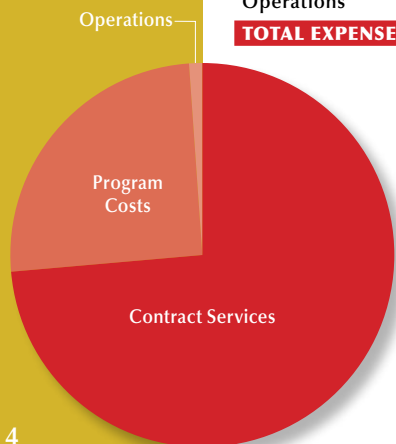
Then, because of the generosity and civic-minded foresight of Meadville Redevelopment Authority, Families found themselves overjoyed with the possibility of moving their garden “into town”—on South Main Street right in the heart of their Second District neighborhood! What an opportunity! And families were ready! Our founding Families and the surrounding neighbors as well as many local organizations have worked together over the years and have created a welcome home for all who want to plant, care for, eat, and share vegetables. Families intention is always to grow *enough* for their own tables and *extra* to share with others. Driving by at any time of day, there is a good chance you will see neighbors either working or enjoying peaceful “sitting” time on Families benches. After the fall harvest, Families “little free library” and “little free pantry” remain open—offering neighbors the opportunity to “take what you need... give what you can”—books and non-perishable foods. The path to each of those little buildings is worn all year long.

When winter comes, Families has a warm and safe place to meet because of the generous and gracious hearts of the parishioners and staff of the Unitarian Universalist Church. For many years, Families has offered weekly homework help to children of all ages followed up by Families Dinner Program which is a time for families to plan, cook, and then gather around a candlelit table to share a hot, healthy meal while enjoying one another’s company.

Ten years since the planting of those first seeds on Ackerman Farm, Families Program remains driven by strong hands, open hearts, and curious minds. Our “founding families” are now the leaders in our garden, our after-school program, and our dinner program.



FAMILIES REVENUE	Amount
Contributions	\$322.87
Event Income	1,790.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,122.87



FAMILIES EXPENSES	Amount
Contract Services	\$2,350.00
Program Costs	815.22
Operations	27.10
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,192.32



Garden & library photos by Mike Marley

Because of the ever-present love and support of family, friends and local community partners, the families of Creating Landscapes for Families continue to plant seeds, share growth and care for one another. All in a neighborhood garden

And the seeds still grow....



Photo by Jan Hyatt

Joyce Klasen,
Creating Landscapes for Families
Venue Representative



Photos by Joyce Klasen unless otherwise noted





Creating Landscapes for Families Early Learning

IN KEEPING WITH OUR MISSION . . .

The seeds that were planted 10 years ago, by the founding families of Creating Landscapes, didn't just grow. Supported by a passionate and devoted community, those seeds flourished. They became a garden so abundant it provided not only food but friendships, empowerment, and serenity. It became a place for audacious imaginations to come together. And although many great ideas are shared amongst the gardeners, one of those ideas could not be ignored. Like a seed planted into the earth, an idea was planted into the community. Within the rich soil of the community, the idea blossomed.

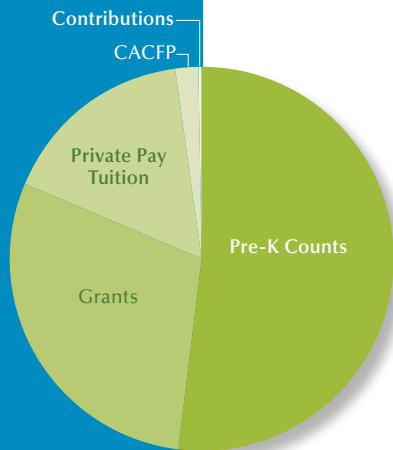
It has been 3 years now since the opening of the Creating Landscapes for Families Early Learning Center. A place where children and their families can learn and grow within a safe, nurturing, and aesthetically enriching environment. This school isn't just a place for children to come to learn their ABC's and 123's—but much more.

Within the walls of the Unitarian Universalist Church, students gather to explore their whole universe. The children aren't seen as empty vessels ready to be filled with facts, but rather as whole beings who have as much to teach as they do to learn. They are considered active and important participants in their school community and neighborhood community. This year they made thank you cards for health care workers and planted flowers in the new Children's Garden. Together, we dance, sing, create, build, read, write, garden, problem-solve and explore. There is absolutely NO question about the seriousness of this play.

The parents of these precocious pupils usually linger when dropping off and picking up, taking a moment to enjoy their children's artwork or latest experiments. In previous years, they've joined their children for music classes, tea parties, holiday dinners and so much more. They never have to fear they will be judged or ridiculed here. They know they are their children's first teachers and they're treated as the experts on their small wonders. This is a safe place where we collaboratively navigate challenges of life—reaching out within our community for support.

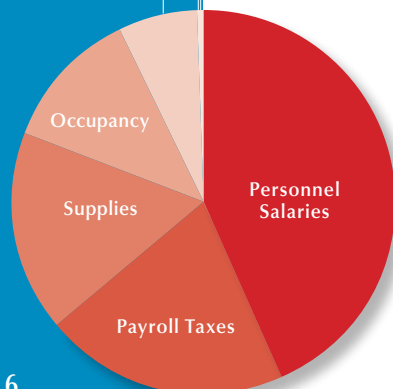
The Early Learning Center will continue to be a place where the imagination and identity of our students are nurtured like their two sunflowers at the Children's Garden, Sunny & Rosie. With patience, care, love, and understanding we can continue to provide a place for children to find autonomy, friendship, empowerment, joyfulness, and resilience.

Sarah Steffes, Educational Director and Lead Teacher



FAMILIES REVENUE	Amount
Pre-K Counts	\$78,959.59
Grants	44,793.80
Private Pay Tuition	24,910.03
CACFP Subsidy	2,997.10
Contributions	125.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$151,785.52

Events/Activities
Other Costs
Operations



FAMILIES EXPENSES	Amount
Personnel Salaries	\$48,147.84
Payroll Taxes	\$18,710.11
Supplies	22,983.88
Occupancy	13,309.85
Operations	7,260.93
Other Costs	611.04
Events/Activities	382.38
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$111,023.65

Center



Photos by Sarah Steffes



Food4Thought

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE . . .



During 2020 and first half of 2021, Food4Thought adapted to necessary changes and moved forward with our vision “to nurture grass roots engagement and action toward a well-fed, well-educated and resilient community.”

Four areas where ongoing progress has been made are Food Insecurity, Grow Meadville, Walkable Meadville and a new Walkable Meadville Children’s Garden.

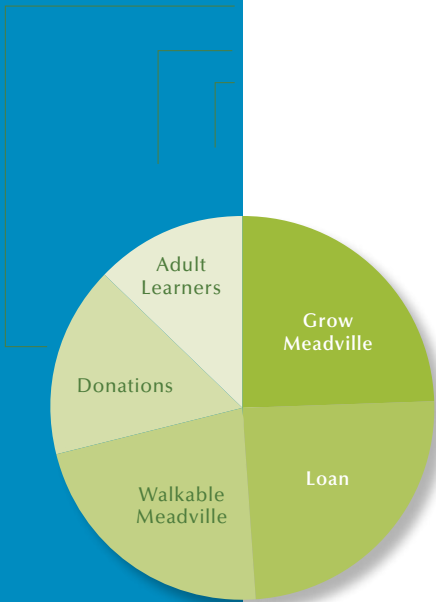
FOOD INSECURITY: A working group comprised of Kinorea Tigri (Penn State Extension—Master Gardener of Crawford County), Krista Geer (Active Aging), Hannah Fuller (YMCA) and Ann Areson (F4T) collected information from agencies and organizations in Crawford County that are addressing food insecurity. They have compiled a spreadsheet with pertinent information about these organizations’ activities to address food insecurity and will disseminate the spreadsheet to them. They will ask for updates on any of the information contained in the spreadsheet as well as information about other programs that should be included. They plan to keep the spreadsheet as current as feasible. Their next step is to bring these organizations together to determine if and how they might coordinate efforts and resources to more effectively address food insecurity in Crawford County. Michael Williams, Director of the Gateway Network at Allegheny, is working with the group.

Also, on May 19, 2021, Ann Areson and Wally Mason attended Crawford Central’s School District’s Wellness Committee and Child Nutrition Program Advisory Board. The meeting was attended by Crawford Central teachers, personnel, parents and community members.

The Wellness Committee focused on physical and mental health within the district, while the Child Nutrition Board discussion centered on current policies regarding food waste and what could be done to limit waste.

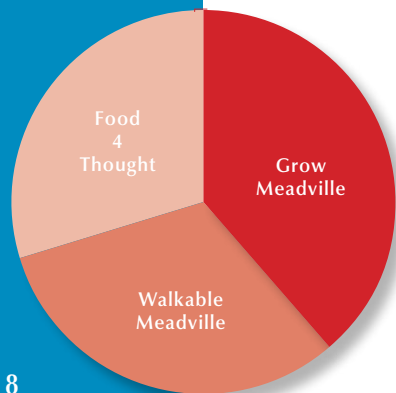
The City Garden Project under **GROW MEADVILLE** promotes accessibility to fresh vegetables through development of small plots of land throughout the city. A sponsorship model, individuals, businesses or organizations oversee the planning, planting and maintenance of an individual plot. The garden’s bounty is free for all to enjoy.

WALKABLE MEADVILLE envisions a five-mile path within Meadville city limits as part of a project highlighting a variety of Meadville’s community gardens and public parks. These pathways are marked by Garden Stones created by Second District Elementary School art teacher, Michelle Kearns’ fifth grade art class. More than twenty property owners are hosting stones created by area students. These stones line the pathway from the Families



Food4Thought REVENUE	Amount
Grow Meadville Grant	3,000.00
Loan	3,000.00
Walkable Meadville	2,716.16
Donations	1,945.00
Adult Learners	1,550.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$12,211.16

Food4Thought EXPENSES	Amount
Grow Meadville	\$4,060.96
Walkable Meadville	3,320.28
Food4Thought	3,096.90
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$10,478.14





Community Garden at 1191 South Main Street to Meadville Public Library and back to the new **CHILDREN'S GARDEN** at 1047 South Main Street. Informational Brochures and Maps are available at both gardens and in the Children's Room of the Library.

In conjunction with the Children's Garden, this project provides families with opportunities to exercise, increase their awareness of the surrounding natural environment and learn about growing their own food.

At the Children's Garden 10:00 a.m. Saturday classes meet from June to August during summer vacation from formal school. Class time includes 'exploring garden basics and bugs and blooms' with Crawford County Master Gardeners and Arborist Scott Sjolander. Children also have the opportunity to create garden art with Mike Marley. At 11:00 all are invited to travel along the Walkable Meadville Path to the Public Library. Upon arrival all are greeted by displays and especially selected materials designed and chosen by the library staff to complement the active garden experience. Saturday morning's activities conclude when families re-gather at the Children's Garden at noon.

Support for Walkable Meadville Summer comes from: Crawford Heritage Community Foundation; Ainsworth Educational Fund of the Crawford Heritage Community Foundation; Food4Thought, Grow Meadville and the Creating Landscapes Learning Center Inc. Underwriters for the Children's Garden are John and Jody Sperry and George J. Vukmer.

Wallace G. Mason II, Chairperson Food4Thought
 Peter Gifford, Treasurer
 Jan Hyatt, Secretary
 Ann Areson, Board Member



Photos by Jan Hyatt





The Creating Landscapes **IDEA** (1990)

INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING *at the* INTERFACE *of* IMAGINATION *and* CRITICAL THINKING

Enabled by ALLEGHENY COLLEGE (1990–2020)

SUMMER LANDSCAPES

The Summer Creating Landscapes Program (1990)

— where curious students and creative faculty play and learn together.

AESTHETIC EDUCATION

Aesthetic Education Programs for Educators (1990)

— where area educators discover the power of arts-infused learning as a viable path toward achieving twenty-first century learning skills.

ENRICHMENT COLLABORATION

The Enrichment Collaboration for Middle and High School Students (1999)

— where Allegheny College faculty and community professionals offer enrichment opportunities in the arts and sciences for area middle and high school students on twelve Fridays each academic year.

ADULT LEARNING FORCE

The Adult Learning Force in conjunction with the Enrichment Collaboration (2010)

— where adult learners participate with area high school students to reacquaint themselves with the best of liberal arts learning.

Enabled in the Community by CREATING LANDSCAPES LEARNING CENTER INC. (2011–2021)

A non-sectarian, non-profit organization that extends creative and active inquiry to intergenerational learners. Our work is distinguished by aesthetic learning, which engages the senses and emotions in addition to the critical mind.

LANDSCAPES *for* FAMILIES

Creating Landscapes for Families (2011)

— where families wholeheartedly navigate LIFE together, sharing the load.

FOOD 4 THOUGHT

Home of GROW MEADVILLE, Film 4 Thought, Walk-able Meadville, and the Children's Garden (2014)

— where collaborators gather to nurture grassroots engagement and action toward a well-fed, well-educated and resilient community.

FAMILIES EARLY LEARNING CENTER

(2017)

— where children love to learn, teachers love to teach and families feel at home. A 4-STAR Early Learning Center for children 3-5 years old offering Pre-K Counts and wraparound care.

The schools of Creating Landscapes Learning Center, Inc. admit students of any race, color and/or ethnic origin — December 2019

What is extraordinary about a good idea is that it manages to do something surprising within a highly predictable and conventionalized scheme.

At Creating Landscapes, the dreamers among us enjoy brainstorming around how learning might become more meaningful, more sustainable, more fun and more conducive to well-being. As we look around, we know there could be more...

Thirty years ago, when we began to explore learning possibilities in the Creating Landscapes summer program for children and teens at Allegheny College, we had an idea: *the most meaningful learning happens when students are actively exploring, solving problems and free to collaborate*

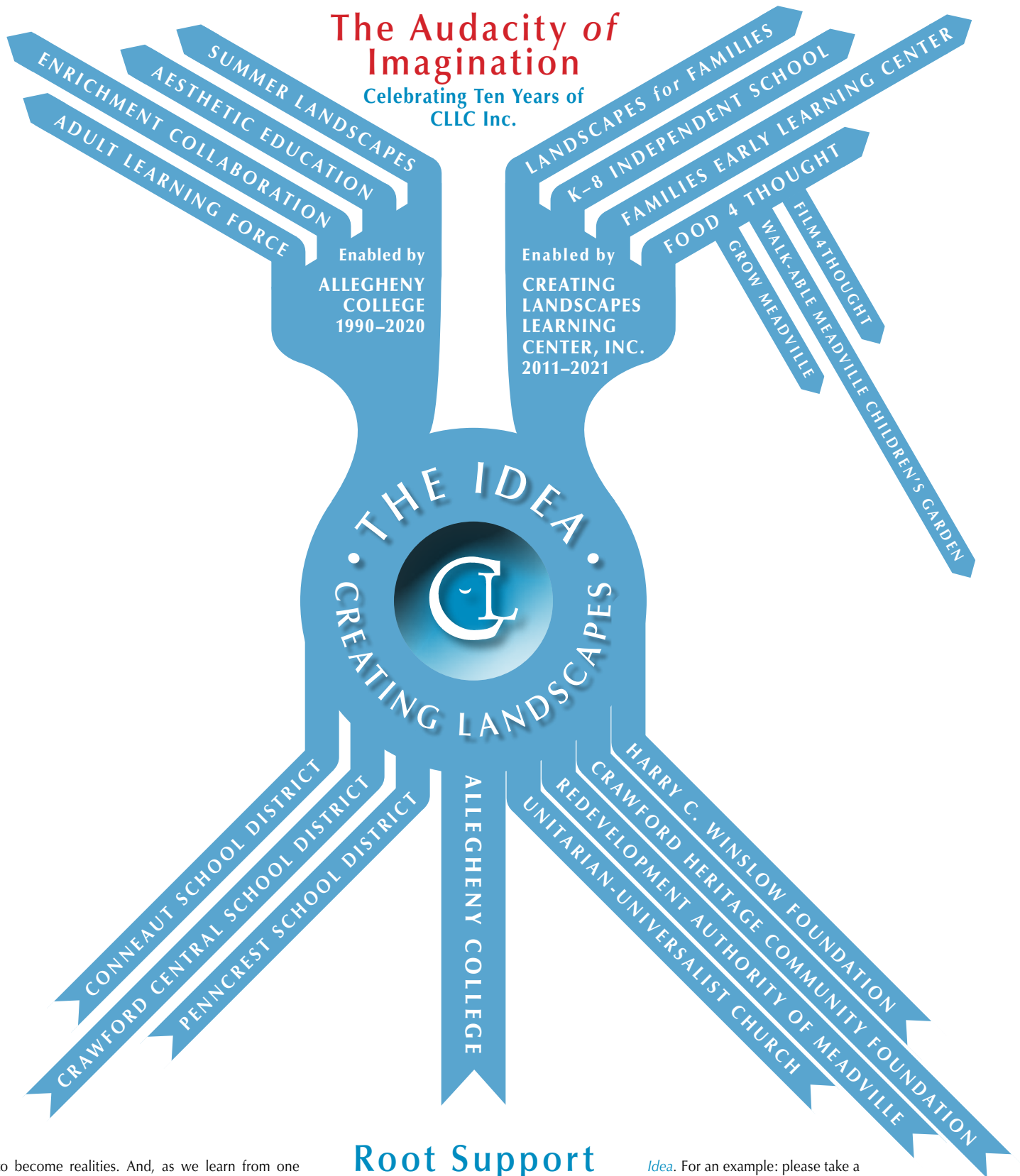
as they make sense of their worlds by creating songs, dances, images and stories. To challenge individual imagination and critical thinking in this way became The Creating Landscapes *large idea*.

In reality, 'the idea' would not have had a chance in the world without our enabling partners who always seemed to appear in the nick of time to almost always say: "you might be on to something" or "that makes a lot of sense" before saying: "slow down, you need to think about..." or "do you know what that's going to cost?"

Collaborating lawyers, marketers, accountants, insurance advisors, bankers, editors and designers/printers consistently bring to the *Landscapes Idea* those practical skills that enable possibilities

The Audacity of Imagination

Celebrating Ten Years of CLIC Inc.



Root Support

to become realities. And, as we learn from one another we are becoming better listeners. We also manage to have fun.

Together, we resemble a kite and its flyer. Together we find the courage to imagine and the audacity to act!

No question about the seriousness of this play... .

How astonishing it is that ever since Creating Landscapes Families from Second District School planted their first garden seeds at Ackerman Farm, members of our Meadville Community have consistently chosen to support the *Creating Landscapes*

Idea. For an example: please take a moment to notice this page of our annual report.

As the saying goes: 'location, location, location'.

What Great Good Fortune!

Jan Hyatt — 2021



A SINCERE THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED IN 2020-2021!

Creating Landscapes for Families

Our Generous Donors of Time, Talent, Supplies, & Funds—July 2020 through June 2021

Chris Bell
 Brenda Boyd, George & Georgia
 Mela Calomino
 Ronda Calomino
 Richard & Corinne Chafey
 Chris & Tammy Collins
 Cheryl Dooley & Kimmee
 Sean & Pat Donahue
 Food 4 Thought
 The Gifford Family—in Memory of Debbie Gifford
 Don Goldstein & Marcia Metcalfe
 Jessica Gosnell & Children
 Paul Gosnell & Sue Sloss
 Dan Hunter
 Janyce Hyatt
 John & Jill Hyatt
 Cheryl Johnson
 “Grandma Cheryl”
 Bob & Joyce Klasen
 Klasen Children—Julie, Bob, Susan, Erin
 Deb Lehman
 Jenni, Deshauna & Lexi Magoon
 Wanda Magoon
 Danuta Majchrowicz
 Matt McElhinney
 Lynn McUmber
 Meadville Garden Club
 Women’s Services, Inc.
 Clemence Mershon
 Jed Miller
 Doug & Charmaine Koehler-Lodge
 Wally & Sherry Mason
 Reid & Marylynn Mauri
 Tracy, Candi & Ken North
 Rosemary & Chris Richardson and Family
 Lee Scandinaro
 Jodi Sipos
 Elizabeth Spadafore
 Unitarian Universalist Church—through the generous use of their loving space
 Autumn Vogel
 George Vukmer
 Dorothy & Lonny Ware

Jane Warner & children
 Charles and Charley

*
 CHAPS
 Common Roots
 Ernst Conservation
 Debbie & Pete Gifford Family Fund
 Grow Meadville Service Members
 Integrity Auto Repair
 Joann Fabrics
 Pathstone Senior Employment Opportunity
 PNC Bank—Warm Coats
 For Local Children through Grow Up Great

Throughout the year, more than \$1000 was received in free will cash donations offered at Families Harvest Soup Sale and Families Annual Spaghetti Dinner. Plants were lovingly dropped off at our Community Garden. Non-perishable food and household items were placed in the Food Pantry at our garden. Books were shared in our Little Free Library. We know the names of many of those givers and they are listed above but so many donated without us knowing their names. We thank ALL who quietly and generously “filled our jar”—whoever you are—your support sustains us and your spirit inspires us.

Creating Landscapes for Families Early Learning Center

Lucille Bleasdale
 Mattie Boyd
 Corinne Chafey
 Casandra Dingle
 Cheryl Dooley
 Seth Ernst
 Pat Ferrey
 Pete Gifford
 Maja Heuchert
 Robin Howell

Jan Hyatt
 Bob & Joyce Klasen
 Deb Lehman
 Amanda Marcum
 Matt McElhinney
 Marcia Metcalfe
 Gabrielle Morrow
 Amber Mosbacher
 Jessica Odom
 Stacey Phillips
 Charlotte Reedy
 Rosemary Richardson
 Pamela Runestad
 Mariana Silva
 Jodi Sipos
 Sarah Steffes
 *
 Early Learning Resource Center
 Edinboro University
 Jenn Gifford Designs
 Journey Center
 Marquette Savings Bank
 Susan Moorehead—Pre K Counts
 Pathstone Senior Employment Program
 The Timo Family Foundation
 Unitarian Universalist Church
 Walkable Meadville Children’s Garden



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 Evan & Cheryl Andree
 Elizabeth & Bruce Angstadt
 Ann Areson & Greg Dauber
 Bill & Ruth Bywater
 Brian & Sylvia Cagle
 Mela Calomino
 Amelia Carr & Pete LeBar
 Corinne & Rich Chafey
 James & Mary Lee Collins
 Mark & Hannah Cosdon
 Scott Duda
 Pat Ferrey
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 Amara Geffen & Jonathan Miller
 Janace Gifford

Jennifer Gifford
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 Glenn Wurst & Fran Orfino
 Sue Wycoff
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 Crawford Heritage Community Foundation
 Jenn Gifford Designs
 The Robert Hyatt Family Fund
 McGill Power Bell and Associates LLP
 Jonathan Miller Design
 Redevelopment Authority of the City of Meadville
 Maryann Mennano
 George J. Vukmer

Food4Thought

Kerstin Ams
 Ann Areson
 Donna Baker
 Truman & Mattie Boyd
 Crawford Central School District, Superintendent’s Office
 Cheryl Dooley
 The Freysinger Family
 Peter Gifford
 Beth Heuchert
 Emma Heuchert
 Juvia Heuchert
 Jan Hyatt
 John Hyatt
 Michelle Kearns
 Bob Kerr—Pine Alley neighbor & Garden Guardian
 Joyce Klasen
 Danuta Majchrowicz
 Mary Marley
 Mike Marley
 Sherry Mason
 Wally Mason
 Dr. Kurt Meader
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