

Travis LaBerge, Kari Palazzari and Nancy Smith: Election: 2A will pay dividends to our entire community

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PUBLISHED: October 23, 2023 at 6:00 a.m. | UPDATED: October 23, 2023 at 6:05 a.m.

Nonprofits enhance Boulder in many ways, providing resources and opportunities far beyond what their limited budgets would indicate. And, in many cases, nonprofits provide supplemental education for marginalized students who don't fit neatly inside the traditional learning environment. Nowhere is this more true than in our arts organizations, which consistently overdeliver for our community while being underfunded year after year.

Consider the impacts of the three arts organizations we represent: Frequent Flyers Aerial Dance, Parlando School of Musical Arts and Studio Arts Boulder who, combined, have provided over 125 years of service to Boulder.

Over the course of a given year, our organizations provide instruction and performance for over 77,000 Boulder youth. The majority of the students we serve live in low-income households. We also provide extensive programming for Boulder's BIPOC youth and for kids living with intellectual/developmental disabilities and neurodiversities.

Our programming can't be found anywhere else. Over the last 35 years, Frequent Flyers has brought the joy of aerial dance to 208,000-plus audience members, 23,000 students, and helped over 9,000 youth-at-risk overcome their fears. Parlando provides lessons and classes to over 600 students every week, and on-site support to more than 1,400 BVSD music classrooms every year. Studio Arts manages the historic Pottery Lab which has served Boulder youth since the mid 1950s and provides over 12,000 participant-hours of annual youth programming.

The impact on our community's young people is immeasurable. Regular participation in the arts boosts mental, physical, and social health. It also dramatically improves academic performance and graduation rates.

This is but a sample of what the arts bring to Boulder. Many other arts organizations support our community's youth in ways that traditional education does not.

Voting "yes" on 2A this fall is an investment that will pay dividends for our entire community — especially our kids.

Travis LaBerge, Parlando School of Musical Arts; Kari Palazzari, Studio Arts Boulder; Nancy Smith, Frequent Flyers Aerial Dance