



Student Chronicles: A Day in the Life of Hope

An invigorating assembly kicks off the school day for James at his Learning Center on 32nd and Dahlia. After the morning reminder for staff and students to “inspire learning through leadership,” the easygoing senior logs in to complete his online science studies, then strolls confidently through the halls to speech and debate. There, Ms. Williams’ no-nonsense direction and affirmation ensure that students’ presentations contain the rhetorical criteria listed on the chalkboard. Her wisdom will benefit James throughout his day.

As a newly elected vice-president of student government and summer reading program volunteer, James exemplifies academic conscientiousness, cooperation with rules and authority and service to others. His previous achievement setbacks have been remedied here, where he is surrounded by individuals whom he admires for their reflection of strong community values and ability to bring relevance to his learning. Through his mentors’ fostering of James’ engagement in academics and extracurricular activities, as well as the persistent support of his Hope Online teacher, Barb Pagano, who methodically addresses any gaps in his learning, James has embraced educational success as an investment in his future.

Across town at 3400 West Nevada Place, Josiah and Bethany’s Learning Center, with 75 cheerful students, resembles the small school it used to be. Though at different grade levels, second and sixth, Josiah and Bethany’s learning experiences are intertwined, with classrooms just doors apart from one another. All the students share a computer lab where Mr. Green reliably answers a myriad of questions proposed by k-8 online learners, working through the animated lessons assigned and thoughtfully overseen by their Hope Online teacher, Aurora Gonzalez.

Josiah’s cozy classroom is brimming with bright posters, bulletin boards and the handiwork of students that keep the energized class focused on learning. After a refreshing recess of swinging, running and climbing, many raised hands show eagerness to earn praise in spelling, math and reading as Ms. Reynolds moves from student to student. Relishing the safe environment and their mentor’s positive demeanor, Josiah and his fellow second graders form a circle to read aloud from *Ira Takes Over*.



Bethany pointing out her artwork

Meanwhile, Bethany’s class starts the day with special morning activities, including writing, before logging in for web-based lessons. Enjoying a balance of online and class instruction, they will shuffle between the care of Mr. Green and Mrs. Scheutz, their enthusiastic “home room” mentor, throughout the day. On select days, they are also led in physical education by a lively mentor who draws her students into everything from jump rope to kickball. Other days, Bethany and her classmates, whose masterpieces line the wall, delight in Mrs. Scheutz’s challenging art program.

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James, Hope Online Class of 2010 graduating senior



Josiah completing an assignment



Mrs. Reynolds’ students reading aloud

Learning Research

1. “A person’s physical and emotional well-being are closely linked to the ability to think and to learn effectively.”
(Classroom Compass)
2. “Classrooms and schools that build an atmosphere of trust and intellectual safety will enhance learning.” (Classroom Compass)
3. “The brain’s structure is more flexible than previously thought – a concept called neuroplasticity, meaning that the brain can still learn new concepts after various ages, and that every student can be taught many different ways.”
(Stansbury 2009)
4. The emotion of admiration stimulates a response from the entire body, creating many educational implications.
(Immordino-Yang et al. 2009)

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Greetings from the Chief Executive Officer

Community is at the heart of Hope.

Community has accomplished at Hope Online what was once considered impossible. Community has extended our geographical borders into areas where online education

for at-risk students was not an option. Community has built playgrounds for children who never had one, has helped children stunted by generations of illiteracy learn to read and has equipped courageous young people, trapped in roles of adult responsibility, with discipline and vital resources.

Community has provided meals to hungry students and coats to those without one. Community has encouraged students to form friendships with other students in sports, reading programs and celebrations of shared milestones. Community has cheered for over 300 graduates, many of whom believed that they were destined to drop out before reaching their academic potential. "Impossible" victories

such as these are now all in a day's work at Hope Online and represent the lasting rewards of community.

Because of community, stories about our students now chronicle a sense of stability and trust. Because of community, though extensive needs are still evident, we can share stories of student successes and achievements. Because of community, there are also stories of neighborhoods banding together to interrupt the cycles of financial and academic poverty which hinder our next generation. Because of community, our voice of hope continues to grow.

Without community, none of us can sustain the level of hope necessary to advance our vision for young people. Thus, our name, Hope Online Learning Academy Co-Op, is a permanent reminder of community's critical role in helping students learn, achieve and graduate.

Thank you for collaborating with us and letting us collaborate with you. Thank you for the qualitative and quantitative improvements in the lives and academic progress that we see in our students today. Thank you for proving, again and again, that,

Community is at the heart of Hope.

Sincerely,

Heather O'Mara
Chief Executive Officer



Cornerstone: Coming Together to Learn



Left to Right: Izaiah, Jessica, Hope Online at Cornerstone Learning Center Director Ms. Apodaca, Desi, Roshel and Danisha in front of their Learning Center



New student Danisha and veteran student Jessica



Mentor Ms. Arrellano and excellent student athlete Izaiah

The cornerstone of a building is essential to its foundation. Likewise, Cornerstone Learning Center in Pueblo provides a supportive platform to foster its students' development. Sound instruction and high standards for academics and citizenship, along with shared traditions, make success easily accessible here.

The language of learning is spoken clearly at this upbeat Hope Online Learning Center. Careful curriculum supervision and detailed off-line instruction, in accordance with the scope and optimal sequence needs of individual students, are complemented by a tangible enthusiasm and confidence that permeates the atmosphere. Focused learners move from computers to tables to gym class, eventually taking their turn in the open lunch area, which doubles as a group learning zone.

Though Cornerstone Learning Center Director Celina Apodaca sincerely describes her students as "a great group of kids," it is evident that years of investment into their lives have paid off in minds that are open to guidance and determined to learn and achieve. From her desk, the de facto Learning Center hub, Ms. Apodaca calmly oversees the daily activity and various schedules that regulate a busy academic environment. With veteran mentor Michele

Arellano engaging students nearby, and new gym mentor Alysha Mantelli ushering students in and out at designated times, a lively beat of learning is constant throughout the day.

Not only do Hope Online students at Cornerstone Learning Center benefit from the attention of devoted mentors, but they also appreciate the commitment of their Hope Online teacher, Kim Craig. Recognizing her vital role in their education, students and mentors embrace her as a member of their community. "I am invited to all their significant family events," explains Ms. Craig, "from quinceneras to just about every other milestone and celebration, which gives me great insight as their teacher. It has allowed me to offer ideas that build up the center beyond academics."

So strong is the bond among students at Cornerstone Learning Center, one of the newest students, Danisha, agrees with her classmate that it seems "just like she was always here." Meanwhile, veteran student, Jessica, loves her Learning Center for many reasons and emphatically points out, "We don't get interrupted during our studies here, so we have the chance to do well and still have fun with a lot of special events during the year."

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Little debbie's super student Eyosias



Eyosias and his mentor, Terry Tanner



Hayden and Hope Online teacher Katie Cloyed



Hayden moving ahead in his studies

Geared to Learn!

Eyosias is a natural learner. His enthusiasm for his lessons is both praiseworthy and contagious. As he describes his success with numbers, spelling and even his homework, his eyes sparkle. Without a doubt, Eyosias brings energy and curiosity to every subject and activity.

The attentive first grader could soon begin third-grade level assignments at Little debbie's Dream Learning Center. Not only does he complete his work with enviable levels of mastery, but other academic measurements convey that Eyosias' understanding is well above his current academic level and chronological age. His Hope Online teacher and mentor agree that this super student, using the Hope Online model, which challenges the boundless ability of a student who never stops learning, has earned his achievements through dedicated work and inquisitiveness.

Matt Smith, Director of Little debbie's Dream Learning Center, has managed the family-owned center for over a decade. He proudly recognizes Eyosias' considerable academic achievements and his growth in other areas as well. "He kept a little to himself when he first arrived," shares Mr. Smith, "but he has become much more outgoing and has learned to make friends."

Meanwhile, Eyosias' Hope Online teacher, Katie Cloyed, concurs, "Students at Little debbie's learn many important skills, including problem solving, a healthy sense of independence and methods for expressing themselves in difficult situations. It is truly amazing."

Eyosias describes his Learning Center as, simply, "happy." He loves the routine of the day and finds something delightful about all of his subjects, from singing and art, to numbers and spelling. He can spell "space shuttle" in a matter of seconds and is excited about all of the new words, including "graduation," that he is learning.

Encouraging others who want to be excellent students, Eyosias reminds them to be quiet and listen carefully to the teacher, to practice at home and to win the rewards for behaving responsibly and doing well on assignments. *Thank you for your eagerness to learn, Eyosias!*

Pacing to Win!

Hayden is most comfortable ahead of the pack, and he prefers a learning pace that keeps him there. He finds new inspiration to forge ahead every time his buddy moves on to the next assignment. Being the leader motivates this second grader, who strives to master every subject.

Learning, playing and making good decisions are activities that allow Hayden's conscientious nature to shine. By virtue of his thoughtful patience and attention to detail, this friendly boy knows the mechanics of division and forming cursive letters. Among the lessons which Hayden has learned from his teacher and Learning Center mentors is an understanding that fighting brings bad consequences but getting along with others earns rewards. Hayden enjoys learning, both skills and lessons, at Little debbie's Dream Learning Center.

Hayden works hard at home and always pays attention during school. Heeding the advice of his mother, a high school teacher, he continues to improve his exceptional reading and study skills, because he knows that they will help him as he advances into higher grade levels. Intent on maintaining Hayden's interest, Judy Robbins, one of Hayden's mentors, is grateful that Hope Online's curriculum allows students, like Hayden, who complete work accurately and quickly, to delve deeper into a subject, while remaining on topic with their peers.

Proud of his accomplishments, Hayden looks forward to a career where he can use advanced technology. In fact, a technical career with the Army sounds great to Hayden. Helping him move toward his goals, his mentor, Terry Tanner, challenges Hayden to be prepared and "have your game face on" when he take tests. The advice seems to work well for Hayden, who is committed to doing well on tests in every subject. *Thank you, Hayden, for being a leader in learning!*

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The Gift of Play

“KaBOOM!” was loudly cheered by the faithful volunteers who endured the cold of an unseasonably chilly October morning to build a playground of dreams.

After lauding their dedicated efforts, Caleb Marshall, Senior Project Manager for KaBOOM!, the nonprofit organization managing the playground’s construction, called upon Hope Online students from Center of Hope Academy to display their “all hands” ribbon, a symbol of the community accomplishment. Praising the commitment of vital partners, Center of Hope Academy Learning Center Director Holly Santistevan recognized donors from the Coors Foundation, Pastor Raymond Chavez and Hope Online CEO Heather O’Mara at the ribbon-cutting ceremony, as well as many volunteers, students and parents.

Center of Hope Academy parent Sharon McKutchen first proposed the idea of applying to KaBOOM! one year ago. In the meantime, she and other volunteers began remedying their students’ needs through donations for tether balls, a simple swing set and sand. This fall, when word came that they were in the running for a KaBOOM! playground, the Center of Hope Academy supporters were careful not to expect more than they had already accomplished.

“I didn’t think much of our chances; I knew other candidates were also being strongly considered,” confessed Ms. Santistevan. Nevertheless, Center of Hope Academy was selected, and the ecstatic student recipients helped design the playground, including a gazebo area suited to older students.

Mr. Marshall, who supervised a number of planning and preparation activities leading up to the build day, asserted, “Center of Hope Academy leaders were really on top of their game and extraordinarily invested in this mission for their students, making the process very smooth,” referring to the long list of organizational requirements satisfied by Center of Hope Academy before construction.

With obvious emotion and gratitude, Ms. Santistevan described the playground’s potential impact, “This was the one thing we wanted to give our students that all of our care and planning could not give them. Through this gift, the students’ laughter will truly be the cherry on the sundae.”



Pastor Raymond Chavez and other leaders at the Center of Hope Academy “all hands” ribbon cutting ceremony



Dedicated volunteers building a playground for Hope Online students



KaBOOM! The proud community celebrating a job well done

Becoming a Learning Center

By the time a Hope Online student begins his first assignment, a multitude of unseen hurdles have already been crossed. Months of preparation, including negotiating a building lease, hiring staff and planning a budget, have preceded the approval of each neighborhood Hope Online Learning Center. Completing this rigorous application process has resulted in access to web-based instruction for Colorado at-risk students.

“Many components are evaluated through the steps designed to eliminate potential hindrances to complete qualification,” explains Hope Online Chief Compliance Officer Michael Cooke. “Our process has evolved and supports Learning Center applicants who have proven their commitment to the academic advancement of our students through educational, business and administrative preparedness.”

The application cycle begins with informational meetings to communicate the Hope Online mission and highlight the schedule of requirements and corresponding deadlines. These meetings allow interested non-profit organizations to foresee their readiness in the various areas of evaluation. Applications are accepted in January, followed by interviews with representatives from the Hope Online Compliance, Academics, Operations and Technology management teams.

For those applicants granted conditional acceptance after an interview, site visits facilitate an awareness of specific requirements pertaining to:

- location
- fire inspection
- building certification
- heating and ventilation
- physical space
- budget
- staffing
- internet band width

“
...our extensive review of applicants is most effective when... we perceive a discernible passion to serve students because our future relies on quality education for all children.
”

*Joyce Gietl,
Hope Online Chief
Operating Officer*

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Hope Online students from Crescent View Academy taking in a close-up view of Earth



Participants from Front Range Academy enjoying the variety of aircraft

Cornerstone: Coming Together to Learn

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Tenth grader Izaiah agrees, adding that “not having drama,” which distracts him, helps his study habits immensely. In addition to the opportunities he has to successfully meet his academic goals, Izaiah enjoys Spanish and guitar electives and plays organized sports at another nearby school.

With many attributes to like about their Hope Online Learning Center, perhaps the contented students are a natural outcome of Ms. Apodaca and Ms. Arellano’s daily approach. “Our students know that they don’t have to be something they are not,” clarifies Ms. Apodaca. “We’re here for them, wherever they are at in life and learning.”

Drug Free and Proud

Red ribbons with shiny silver letters, provided by the Civil Air Patrol, proclaimed a “Drug Free and Proud” message at Wings Over the Rockies on Friday, October 16th. Gathered to commemorate Red Ribbon Week, a U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration anti-drug program, over 300 Colorado online students made a public pledge to *never* take illegal drugs.

The memorable afternoon began with a field trip to Wings Over the Rockies, an aviation and space museum converted from a 40,000 square foot hangar at the former Lowry Air Force Base. Students of all ages enjoyed up-close views of aircraft and dimensional exhibits highlighting the legacy and future of American air and space endeavors.

After viewing the aircraft inside, students headed outside in anticipation of a military Blackhawk helicopter landing and rally. Chaplain Major Gordon L. Rourk, Colorado Drug Demand Reduction Administrator for the Civil Air Patrol, emceed the event. The online school audience, including Hope Online students from Rocky Mountain SDA Academy, Crescent View Academy and Front Range Academy Learning Centers, was encouraged to live and learn drug-free.

The special Red Ribbon Week event was sponsored by the Colorado Coalition of Cyberschool Families and the Colorado Cyberschools Association.

Student Chronicles: A Day in the Life of Hope (Continued from page 1)

In north Aurora, Dominique and Sandra work with enviable concentration on their respective assignments. Having completed her elective requirement, Sandra, an unassuming freshman who is proficient in math, uses the allotted time to advance even further. To her right, Dominique works diligently on a paper about mapmaking. Her mentor, Ms. Geiser, explains that the freshman will need to complete a draft and a revision before her final paper. The requirements are clear, so Dominique returns to her school endeavors with diligence.

The studious young ladies have spent most of their day pursuing a disciplined sequence of lessons. Ms. Geiser’s coaching is ongoing, combining group supervision and one-on-one attention in various subjects. Hope Online teacher Don Westman and the students enjoy a warm rapport as he monitors the academic performance of the entire student body. At this particular Learning Center, comprised of uniformed elementary, middle and high school students, leaders inspire students to be compassionate and work hard.

As another day of online learning comes to a close across 51 Hope Online Learning Centers, throughout the metro area as well as Colorado’s outlying cities and rural areas, the 2,873 reasons for Hope Online log off and wave good-bye to their safe haven of learning. A special thank you to James, Josiah, Bethany, Sandra, Dominique and their Hope Online classmates for a glimpse into their world of hope.



Sandra demonstrating her excellent math skills



Dominique reviewing her writing draft

Learning Research

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Becoming a Learning Center

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Hope Online at Maranatha Learning Center Director Victoria Aguilar strongly advises Learning Center applicants to ask all of their questions during the process, even if they are tenuous about a final decision. Ms. Aguilar, a licensed teacher, acknowledges, "I especially valued Hope Online staff's in-person visits to my site. The live feedback was personal, informative and encouraging. It helped me prioritize and prepare thoroughly."

As the various facets of compliance are addressed and satisfied, new Learning Center applicants are well on their way to attaining full qualification and joining the Hope Online team. Technology Manager Tina Watson emphasizes, "Organizations benefit from the application process as they analyze whether they are ready to move forward or prefer to use the process as a preparation tool to reapply in the future."

"A balance of skills is vital to successful Learning Center approval and, in turn, operations," says Joyce Gietl, Hope Online Chief Operating Officer. "It is true that dedication alone does not replace timely response to application deadlines, a firm organizational vision for success, an appreciation of their community's needs and a commitment to enthusiastic collaboration with Hope Online. Still, our extensive review of applicants is most effective when, amongst all these other necessities, we perceive a discernible passion to serve students because our future relies on quality education for all children."



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Hope Online Learning Centers

Below is a list of all 2008-2009 Hope Online Learning Centers. Learning Center visits are a hands-on way to learn about Hope Online's unique model, allowing community members to see first-hand how online learning is helping Colorado's at-risk student population. To arrange a Learning Center tour, please call 303-989-3539.

A Brand New Start
Action Learning Center
All Peoples Learning Center
Alvarado Place
Aurora Tech Academy
Bridges of Silence
Center of Hope Academy
Cherry Creek Learning Center
Common Ground Learning Center
Cornerstone Learning Center
Crescent View Academy
Dinosaur Community Learning Center
Eastwind Academy
E-cademy
El Shaddai - Alameda
El Shaddai - Jason
Faith Prep Learning Academy
Front Range Academy - Arvada

Front Range Academy – Boulder
Front Range Academy - Broomfield
Front Range Academy - Westminster
Front Range Academy - Lakewood
Harrison Street Academy
Healing Waters Learning Center
Hillcrest Academy
IBG Learning Center
JMJA Learning Center
LARASA Central Learning Center
LARASA Learning Center at
Westminster
Life Preparatory Academy
Little debbie's Dream Learning Center
Love Educational Center
Maranatha Learning Center
New Beginnings Learning Center
New Heights Academy

New Hope Academy
Pathway Learning Center
Redeemer 1-8 Learning Center
Redeemer K Learning Center
Revolution Global Academy
Roca Fuerte Learning Academy
Rock Creek Academy
Rocky Mountain SDA Academy
Solid Rock Academy
Tetra Academy
Tubman Hilliard Global Academy
Urban League Child Development
Center
Vision Academy
Westside Learning Center
Worldwide Academy