Dear Idyllwild Community,

The coronavirus pandemic reminds us all that, in our small mountaintop community, we rely upon one another for our health, safety, and livelihood. This past weekend, Riverside County Health Department reported that there were no cases of COVID-19 in Idyllwild, California. Each passing week confirms that Idyllwild Arts acted expediently and judiciously to remove students from campus days before State and local authorities advised us to do so. The greatest result of that decision is the wellbeing of all those we love and cherish in our small town.

Idyllwild Arts families have been notified that students will not return to campus and classes will remain online for the remainder of the semester. Idyllwild Arts instructors have spent weeks preparing to teach students in multiple time zones and our student services staff has devised ways, such as all school gatherings and online coffee houses, to keep our school community together, even while we are so far apart.

Throughout this health crisis, artists around the world have found ways to help us laugh, reflect, cry, and heal. At Idyllwild Arts, we teach students to learn of one another’s differences and aspirations, for in doing so they are poised to make a difference in this world. I am heartened by the examples that students and teachers are sharing with one another and by how they are using social media to help spread the word that art matters. Indeed, art heals.

Harry Pickens, a Jazz in the Pines favorite, has been playing live tributes from his living room and posting them on Facebook. Local favorite Casey Abrams (with Postmodern Jukebox) has posted an invitation to Sheltering in Swing, an online jam session on April 2. And Joe Davis, a current Idyllwild Arts student, is back home in Jamaica and has posted a video of himself playing five instruments and singing “Three Little Birds,” a song made famous by Bob Marley, to spread positivity and uplifting music during these challenging times.

For over 70 years, Idyllwild Arts has been using music and art to help citizen artists make a difference in the world. Our Founders Max and Bee Krone knew that this was important in 1946 when they established Idyllwild School of Music and the Arts. Today, we need the transformative power of art more than ever and we now have 70 years of alumni and students making a difference around the world.

In service and gratitude,

Pamela Jordan
President and Head of School