Greetings Idyllwild Community,

Idyllwild Arts is pleased to be a part of the health and safety measures we have all taken during this global health pandemic. Most IA staff are now working from home, and essential workers who are reporting to campus are doing so by observing social distancing and wearing proper protective equipment when working.

With our educational program online for nearly one month now, the school and several individuals are focusing on ways in which to help others. One such effort involved Idyllwild resident and Arts Academy instructor Trevor Holmes (IA ‘05). While his students were preparing to start online classes, Holmes used his professional skills to manufacture face shields made of polylactic acid plastic and overhead projection transparency sheets. The story, recently featured in the Desert Sun, highlighted Holmes’ ingenuity, after he made 14 dozen masks using his 3D printer. The use of the masks is not regulated by any governmental agency, however, their success has resulted in high demand. Holmes sends the face shields to Los Angeles. There, Idyllwild Arts graduate and Hollywood costume designer Lauren Oppelt (IA ’05) launched the “Mask Crusaders” group, whose roughly one hundred members have teamed up with the Costume Designers Guild (Local 892) to deliver protective masks to hospitals in states as far away as Rhode Island and Florida.

Justin Barrett, Idyllwild Arts' Vice President, Student Operations, is helping the school focus on the important work being done here in Idyllwild. The school is now in collaboration with the nonprofit work of Mountain Communities COVID-19 Mutual Aid (MCCMA), led by Idyllwild residents Mara Schoner and Mark Yardas, the parents of recent Academy graduates Zora Schoner and Dante Yardas.

MCCMA gets food to local residents who need assistance by working with an Anza-based food supplier. Idyllwild Arts provides food boxes with staples and fresh produce to supplement the MCCMA food. Nelson Dining Hall Director Chris Stroud orders the items from the dining hall’s suppliers. Then, together with his staff, Stroud prepares food boxes for distribution to participants in the MCCMA program, focusing on families in financial need. Stroud, his staff, and volunteers from other IA departments distribute the boxes on Thursdays at Camp Maranatha, using the Academy’s refrigerated trailer. Idyllwild Arts is grateful to Camp Maranatha and MCCMA for their partnership and generosity.

The pulse of Idyllwild Arts is palpable when the 300-plus Academy students and many hundreds of more Summer Program students permeate the campus. Their passion, creativity, and beautiful artistry remind us each year of the meaningfulness of our work and the impact they are prepared to make in communities around the world. We look forward to their return next school year.

We wish each of you health and wellness in the weeks and months ahead.

Warmly,

Pamela Jordan
President and Head of School

P.S. We are grateful to Don Stoll and the IAF Marketing Department for these stories of hope and encouragement.