

Compass Chronicle

Options Program | Spring 2019

Welcome to 2019!

This has sure been a rainy year so far in California! But along with that rain and the intermittent days of sunshine, comes an abundant amount of beautiful new growth sprouting up around us. It makes the inconvenience of more rain than we are used to well worth it! This reminds me of the learning process. It is often through struggle and discomfort that we become a bit wiser. As Bryant McGill puts it, "Whatever makes you uncomfortable is your biggest opportunity for growth." As our scholars' learning coaches and teachers at home, we have the benefit of witnessing our children go through this learning process that involves both discomfort and triumph. Truly something to cherish!



In this newsletter, we are excited to share with you about a Compass family who has worked out a way to successfully homeschool through the added challenge of one parent away on active duty. You'll also get to know two of our dedicated Educational Facilitators a little better, along with witnessing some of the exciting projects and activities that our scholars have been working on. Finally, you'll get a closer look at some of the vendors that are available to you and what they can add to your scholar's springtime educational activities. Enjoy!

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What's New in Options?

Thank you to those parents who participated in our Options Roundtable sessions in February. Learning coaches and Educational Facilitators shared ideas on two topics that many homeschooling families find challenging -- integrating subject areas and building a local homeschool community for their scholars. At the end of this month, we will gather again for our final Options Roundtable of the school year to share some free available resources to take advantage of. We hope you learn about some new freebies during this next roundtable discussion!



FAMILY SPOTLIGHT



Learning Coach Valeska Tuntariyanond takes a moment to talk to CCS about what homeschooling looks like with two working parents, one of whom is active duty military, and a high achieving daughter!

Q: Please introduce your family and tell us a little bit about yourselves as a family! What does a typical (is there such a thing???) day in the life of the Tuntariyanond family look like?

Alexa: Our family is composed of three members. Nick (dad), is currently in the Army and is gearing up for deployment pretty soon. Valeska (mom), is a nurse and works part-time. I'm Alexa, a scholar and an ice skater. My family's daily activities require a calendar so we can keep up with what everyone's activities and we use Facetime a lot to stay connected. But when everyone is at home, we enjoy a lot of quality time by eating our meals together, reading a book to my parents, and watching a movie as a family.

Q: What led you to your decision to homeschool Alexa? How long have you been homeschooling? Are there unexpected challenges or joys that you have encountered in this journey?

Mrs. Tuntariyanond: Alexa attended a hybrid school for kindergarten and first grade. We decided to homeschool full time at Compass Charter Schools because her father will be deploying, and with my unpredictable working schedule, I did not have anyone to pick her up and drop her off at school. Also, another reason for homeschooling is because Alexa ice skates. She's in a competitive sport, she has to practice very often. Alexa can easily be at the ice rink for more than 20 hours a week! Compass has given us more flexibility. We can schedule her activities without affecting her education. At the beginning of this year, putting her curriculum together was a challenge. Alexa and I finally found our groove, though, and we settled on a curriculum and schedule that works for us. Also, knowing that we have our Educational Facilitator, Karissa, available to answer any questions that we might have or any challenges to get over is very comforting.

Q: Why did you choose Compass? What is something about Compass that you particularly like?

Mrs. Tuntariyanond: I was referred to Compass by a fellow skating mom. After visiting the school website, I was convinced that this school would work for us. Here we are halfway through our first year with Compass and I have yet to be disappointed! Compass offers so many learning pathways to best suit each child's needs. I love the follow up we receive from our Educational Facilitator and the readiness of the Compass family to assist us with any issues that we might have.

Q: What piece of advice would you give to a family considering pulling their child out of the traditional classroom to homeschool?

Mrs. Tuntariyanond: Parents, don't be scared of the unknown; don't let it scare you away from enjoying the many benefits that come with homeschooling! At Compass, you are never alone; you have great staff to guide you along the way. You can go through each school subject as fast or as slow as your child needs. You can't get the one-on-one attention that they need. The flexibility is like no other, everything and anything can become a learning experience!

Q: Of the 5 ARTIC traits (Achievement, Respect, Teamwork, Integrity, Communication), which do you feel Alexa best exemplifies?

Mrs. Tuntariyanond: Though I feel she has a little bit of all the traits, I will choose Respect. Alexa not only respects her family and her elders, she also has respect for her education and her sport. She is respectful of everyone and everything that we love and that is how she shows appreciation.

Q: How does Alexa exemplify that trait?

Mrs. Tuntariyanond: Alexa treats people with courtesy, politeness, and kindness. She follows directions and instruction given to her by her parents and coaches. She works hard for the sport that she loves and keeps up with her school work.

Q: Does Alexa exemplify any of the other traits to a lesser degree? Will you give examples of how she exemplifies them?

Mrs. Tuntariyanond: Achievement: Alexa set her heart on passing her pre-preliminary free skate test in ice skating. She worked hard and achieved her goal! This year she will start competing at that level. She is learning that to achieve anything in life, hard work and perseverance have to be done.

Q: Is there anything else that you would like to share with the Compass family either about your family, about homeschooling in general, about any curriculum that you are using and love, or about a vendor that does a particularly good job of supporting you in your homeschool journey?

Mrs. Tuntariyanond: I always thought that to homeschool my child, I would have to be a stay-at-home mom. But I was wrong. Any type of family dynamic can make this work. Yes, my family's schedule is crazy and hectic, but homeschooling has opened up a new world of learning for my child. Alexa does not have to be sitting in a classroom for six hours a day trying to fight for the teacher's attention. We can take our time in subjects that she's struggling with and speed through the ones that she gets right away. I am thankful to have a great support system in my family, friends, and Compass. We are here to stay!

Q: What would you say is your biggest goal for her for this year? Academic, social, skating?

Mrs. Tuntariyanond: Our goal for this year is to continue doing a good job with her reading, writing, and math. Also for Alexa to continue putting in the hard work with ice skating, especially now that we are about to start the competition season. Also, to keep building and making great memories with her friends.

Thank you so much for sharing a little bit about yourself and your family! You are an inspiration!



STAFF SPOTLIGHT



This month, we interviewed new Educational Facilitator and OCLC science teacher, Shalimar Slobojan!

CCS: *What is your job title and what are a couple of the things you do at Compass Charter Schools? How long have you worked for this organization?*

Ms. Slobojan: I am an Educational Facilitator and a science teacher at Compass' Orange County Learning Center (OCLC) in Santa Ana. I joined the Compass team in August of 2018.

CCS: *Tell us your "why" for doing what you do here at CCs?*

Ms. Slobojan: My "why" for working with Compass is that I am able to build long-term relationships with scholars and their families. I can share my passion for teaching and learning, and I am able to work with the best colleagues!

CCS: *As an educator, is there piece of advice you'd like to share with learning coaches or scholars?*

Ms. Slobojan: I would like to tell my scholars to always strive to be the best version of themselves, to be kind to themselves and others, and to look for the good in every situation (at Compass and in life).

CCS: *Share one thing about you would very few people know?*

Ms. Slobojan: I was a dancer for most of my youth and young adult life. I did ballet, jazz, and tap. I performed in the Nutcracker many times and once with dancers in the ABT Ballet.

CCS: *What do you and your family like to do during your free time?*

Ms. Slobojan: My family likes to have movie and game nights. We enjoy cooking, hiking, and going on vacations together.

We would also like to feature Karle Roberts, Educational Facilitator with the Options Program at Compass. Karle loves working with homeschooling families and this is her fifth year working with Compass.

CCS: *What is one of your favorite parts about working with homeschooling families?*

Mrs. Roberts: I love the relationships that I am able to build with the families that I work with. I love helping them and seeing their growth and the excitement that comes with it!

CCS: *What is your favorite thing to do outside of work?*

Mrs. Roberts: I love spending time with my family, going for a jog, and enjoying a great cup of coffee in the early morning.

CCS: *Is there anything unique about you that you'd like our families to know?*

Mrs. Roberts: I originally went to UC Davis to become a veterinarian but changed my career path midway through college and then I changed colleges! I remind high school scholars that it's okay to change your mind if you decide what you originally wanted to do might not be a good fit.

CCS: *What is your favorite subject?*

Mrs. Roberts: My favorite subject is science. When I was in high school, I loved all of the science courses. (Of course, because I was also going to be a veterinarian but I still love animals.) All of the information I learned has been beneficial as a teacher.

CCS: *Anything personal that you'd like to add?*

Mrs. Roberts: I have been married to my husband, Ryan, for 17 years, and we have three precious children: Preston 10, Peyton 7, and Presley 5.

CCS: *What advice do you have for scholars or learning coaches that you wish someone would have told you when you were a student?*

Mrs. Roberts: I encourage scholars to find what excites and energizes them so that can find a career that they will continue to enjoy. And it's okay to change your mind! Since I was a young child I thought I was going to be a veterinarian and midway through college, I totally changed my mind. And I am so thankful I did!

Karle can be reached through her CCS email address or phone: kroberts@compasscharters.org or at (805) 807-8215.



SCHOLAR WORK SAMPLES



Second-grade scholar Addison W. made an amazing Medieval Times Castle out of their Amazon boxes and construction paper to go along with her social studies unit. It even has a working drawbridge! They really focused on what the day-to-day life was like and Addison's learning coach (Chelsey) helped her understand how much harder life was back then. What a great project!



Our kindergartener Rowan L. created this mobile to show all that he learned about the planets and our solar system. He even got the opportunity to experience what space might be like after it was hung up. He and his mom turned off the lights, added pillows on the floor for a "bouncy" zero gravity effect, and pretended they were in space looking at his beautiful creation.



Families that learn together grow together! Kindergartener Vanellope D., third grader Alexander D., and fifth grader Ethan D. made it a goal this year to create and add to their YouTube channel, which helps educate others about things they are learning while homeschooling. With each video they create, they are able to practice their speaking and communication skills, learn concepts on a deeper level through teaching, and also be able to educate others along the way.



In their video on geodes, Vanellope and Alexander each explain what geodes are, how they are formed, and take us through a step-by-step process of how to break geodes in a safe manner. They made sure to add how important it is to "clean up." Go team!



Andrew is in 8th grade and is an Exceptional Scholar. He did extensive research on trains and their history. He then put a lot of time into creating a powerpoint to share all that he learned.



At the OCLC, the TK and Kindergarten class created presentations about their family history. They traced back to see how their family immigrated into America. This was a culmination project of learning about Immigration through Ellis Island.

VENDOR NEWS

SunDog Therapy

What better way to learn than with “man’s best friend”? A new service vendor, SunDog Therapy, located in South Bay Los Angeles, offers classes right along side Dottie and Tater Tot, two canine co-therapists. Dr. Karen Ni, the owner of SunDog Therapy says, “Our classes are for students to engage in activities with dogs that promote the health and well-being of both humans and animals. Students will learn about caring for pets, how dogs communicate, positive relationship-based training methods, and playing games with dogs while developing positive relationships with animals and peers, social skills, empathy, perspective taking, motor coordination, cognition, independent living skills, vocational skills, and more!” Learning with the help of dogs can not only be fun but also beneficial for the social and emotional well-being of the human. This is a one-of-a-kind class led by an occupational therapist that incorporates animal assisted interventions and humane education. These classes do not provide direct OT, but participants can gain valuable skills and learn positive human-animal interactions.



If you have a dog-lover at home, and you live in the South Bay area, SunDog Therapy might be worth looking into for future classes. According to Karen, “My programs are inclusive to individuals of all abilities, disabilities, and special needs. These classes are ideal for individuals who love animals, or who want to gain more experience with animals in a friendly environment.” Some of the most popular ongoing six-week course offerings include Being a Dog’s Best Friend, Cooking for Canines, and Canine Sports. Karen is passionate about giving people the opportunity to experience the human-animal bond with her canine companions while supporting improved health, wellbeing, and meaningful participation in daily life. She looks forward to sharing her passion with your scholar. You can contact SunDog Therapy by phone at (424) 262-9617 or by e-mail at karen@sundogtherapy.com, and more information can be found on their [website](#).



VENDOR SPOTLIGHT

CodeWizardsHQ

[CodeWizardsHQ](#) is an international coding school for youth. Classes are live, scholar-centered, project-based, and teacher-led. Their multi-year structured curriculum prepares scholars for a capstone internship that gives them real-world web development experience, allowing them to build a portfolio and stand out amongst peers in college applications. They offer a weekly schedule available to scholars at home, and they serve scholars in grades 5th-12th with different levels of expertise. This [video](#) gives a quick overview of the program. The approach of CodeWizardHQ combines the benefits of teacher-led, student-centered, project-based instruction and the ease and convenience of online classrooms. CodeWizardsHQ talented teachers are available to scholars through same-day email support and free 1-on-1 extra help. Parents receive weekly progress updates.



It all started when CodeWizardsHQ's founder, Jey Iyempandi, wanted his daughter to learn how to code. He was able to find the resources but soon realized that he would also be taking the course as she would need his guidance. He began preparing the courses in the early hours of the day so he could explain the content to his daughter when it was her turn. This went on until he realized there had to be a better way, and he began researching coding curriculum, created a pilot program and offered it to families in his community. Everyone loved it, and the program continued to evolve as his daughter's skills progressed. Now CodeWizardsHQ is an international programming school that provides online classes starting at introductory with graduates that are ready to thrive in a tech-driven world!

To read more about CodeWizardsHQ's curriculum and structure click [here](#).

Crafty School Crates has joined the Compass vendor list, and they offer creative lessons in crafting! Each crate provides hands-on learning experiences for kids, with no parent prep! The crates are designed to complement any curriculum choice or serve as a stand-alone unit study. They include everything needed to create, so no need to shop for anything! A team of homeschooling parents, working parents, and teachers gives you the best quality in every crate!

Mariah Gage began Crafty School Crates as a homeschooling mom. Being a parent of seven, she saw that her kids were really missing the hands-on crafts while learning. Yet, trying to plan and shop for supplemental activities for her children's curriculum was a tedious and time consuming chore, which often was neglected. As she talked to other homeschooling families, they expressed the same desire to be able to offer their children more hands-on activities without all the stress of planning and shopping for the supplies. From that desire, Crafty School Crates was born.

Each Crate offers a new learning experience! They have included it all -- the glue, the paint, the book, even the writing samples have been created by their team specifically for each crate! They have included portfolios so your child can create a lasting memory book of their writings and art, along with fun crafts to be displayed in your home.

According to Mariah, "What families love most about our crates, is the variety in age range that is offered. Our literature crates are perfect for novel studies for older kids. They can read the book, answer writing prompts, and engage in multiple hands-on activities to engage them in the book. Our two most popular crates for the younger grades are the Young Learners Seasonal Crate and Animal Science Crate Series. Those two crates are perfect to meet standards and have fun while learning. Families who love learning together love our History, Geography and Science Crates, and our Astronomy Crate and Ancient Civilization Crate have flown off the shelf. Our crate selection is rapidly growing in order to meet the needs of families and their learning needs."

Learn more about Crafty School Crates on their [website](#).



SHARE YOUR STORY

Comments

Are you enjoying the educational experience at Compass? Tell us! We want to hear from you. Why did you decide to join the Compass family? Or, what do you love most about being part of our community? Share your comments and all of your wonderful experiences at Compass with us! [Click here](#) to share.

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Visit our [website](#) for more information about our academic programs. Or contact Kristy Smith, Director of Options Learning, at ksmith@compasscharters.org.

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_3jyxoCWVU



