

Our Sawtooth community is rich with stories. It is because of our artist instructors, that we have these stories to tell. We appreciate each of them and their desire to teach their skills to others.

Dear Friends of Sawtooth,

Last year approximately 120 artists instructed over 5000 students in 11 different mediums at our community art school. Kim Gondring is one of those instructors.

In this fundraising appeal, I decided to do things a little differently. I've asked Kim's daughter, Kelley, who is a member of our board of directors, to tell us what the arts and Sawtooth have meant to her family. It reminds us of the power of the arts to connect, explore, build community, and make memories.

"For as long as I can remember, Dad has been in his workshop building things. If you were to walk through my house and point at something beautiful and wooden, there is a 100% chance that Dad made it. There is the dresser in the room of my daughter, Audrey, that was mine during childhood.

Walk with me over to the room of my other daughter, Alice, and hanging from her window is one of his 32-point Moravian stars. When her friends come over and point at it, she proudly says, "My Pops made that."

If you don't mind one more short trip over to my dining room, you'll find an elegant cherry table that Dad made from a friend's fallen cherry tree. The wood wasn't easy to work with, but wow does it make a gorgeous table at which to host one of my favorite things (aka: fancy dinner parties).

I could go on, but instead I would encourage you to consider taking one of his woodworking classes at Sawtooth.

Dad's classes at Sawtooth are just the beginning of my family's relationship with this community asset. While Dad's focus and medium has been Wood, Mom's has historically been textiles. She learned to sew when she was a teenager and made her own prom dress! She continued to expand her knowledge of textiles years ago by taking a weaving class at Sawtooth.

So now a loom sits next to her sewing machine, and she teaches my daughter how to warp the loom and shuttle yarn across.

I can hear the shuttlecock moving back-and-forth, back-and-forth, as my daughter learns to use her hands and create. My mom's art is also a constant presence in my life – woven hand towels as well as hand-thrown plates, bowls, and mugs. (Did I tell you she's taken several pottery classes at Sawtooth?)

Just last month, Mom and I took a jewelry class on Friday night. Both girls have participated in summer camp at Sawtooth – Alice following right in Pop's footsteps when she chose the woodworking class.

I love that my parents incorporate creativity and art into their lives, recognizing the importance of self-expression and exploration. And I love that we have a local organization like Sawtooth that provides opportunities for all of us to learn new skills and make new memories.”

What I love about Kelly's story is that it shows the power and purpose of art. We make. We teach. We share. We display. We learn.

Although Sawtooth is thriving, we rely greatly on your generosity to provide high-quality art instruction for our community. Classroom revenue only covers about half our operating budget. Much of the rest comes from people like you who understand the centrality of art in our lives.

Please consider a gift to help ensure that all families have a place to create, explore, and make memories for a lifetime.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, enclosed in a thin blue rectangular border. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Amy Jordan'.

Amy Jordan
Executive Director