Islands of Brilliance Workshop Experience
Late February, 2020
What we can provide in the face of uncertainty and the absence of in-person programming:

- Welcoming Faces
- Connection
- Consistent Routine
- Empathy
- Creativity
- Exploration
- Joy
- Respite and Wellness
Why it’s so important:

“I’m very, very concerned because when these school closures become a nationwide issue ... this population will just regress,” said Chris Yun, an education policy analyst at Access Living, a Chicago-based disability rights group. (“Schools that go ‘remote’ for coronavirus must keep serving students with disabilities. Can any really do it?” Kalyn Belsha; chalkbeat.org, March 12, 2020)

“People with intellectual disabilities are more likely to have a mental health condition than the general population. Structure and routines can reduce anxiety for people with intellectual disabilities – but at a time when structure and routine is quickly changing, this can have a big effect on emotional and mental wellbeing.” (“How coronavirus could affect the wellbeing of people with intellectual disabilities,” The Conversation, March 17, 2020)

“... the education of students with disabilities must not be forgotten.” (National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools wrote in a post published Thursday, March 12, 2020)

“For people with autism, lock downs have shattered the routines they rely on, deprived them of specialist education and therapy, and heightened already high levels of anxiety. Parents are dealing not only with concern about the effect of all that on their children’s well-being but also the strain of particularly difficult home schooling.” (“For people with autism, lockdowns shatter routine, heighten anxiety,” Wall Street Journal, April 21, 2020)
Distance Learning Suite:

- Question of the Day
- Virtual Doodle Lounge
- Virtual Digital Academy
- Virtual Creativity Workshops
- Virtual 1:1 Mentorship
- Lighthouse
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| What's your favorite thing to have for dinner? |
| What's your favorite bird? |

- **Pizza**
- **Bluebird**

**Artwork:**
- **Sean Donnelly Family:** Taco Night, even when it's not Tuesday!
- **Jean Llanas From Danie:**
- **Pat Greer:**
Question of the Day

- Filmed, curated and posted daily
- IOB Founder, Margaret Fairbanks hosts
- Includes guest appearances (students, volunteers, local artists)
- Features add-on creative activities
- Utilizes YouTube, Facebook, Instagram TV
- Launched: March 19, 2020
Virtual Doodle Lounge

- Daily, 1:00pm - 3:00pm
- Utilizes Zoom platform
- 4 - 6 IOB Doodle Guides
- 1 Brilliant Guest Doodler
- Launched: April 2, 2020 (World Autism Awareness Day)

- Watch Trailer Video
Digital Academy

- Twice weekly virtual instruction of three distinct learning tracks focused on game development skill sets: 2D Design, 3D Modeling, and Unity Coding

- Utilizes Discord communication platform

- Industry professionals provide structured learning while special educators provide student support over Discord channels

- Launched: March 30, 2020

- View Islands of Brilliance video game trailer
Virtual Creativity Workshops

• Five-day (consecutive), one-hour virtual workshops with a focused topic/project and specific parameters like logo design, etc.

• Featured Brilliant Guest Artist

• Utilizes Zoom and Discord platforms

• Starts with large group then breaks out into 3:1 student/mentor with presentations on day five

• Creative mentors guide students while special educators circulate breakout rooms

• Launched: April 16, 2020
  (First Workshop featured collaboration with Urban Ecology Center)
Virtual 1:1 Mentorship

- Five-day, 60 minute virtual workshops focused on individual learning/projects based on student interest
- Utilizes Zoom platform
- Starts with large group then breaks out into 1:1 student/mentor with presentations on day five
- Creative mentors guide students while special educators circulate breakout rooms
- Testing: May 2020; Launch: July 2020
Lighthouse

• A weekly parent focused space for connection and conversation

• Provides a safe space with familiar faces for parents to share, listen, and support each other as the community navigates uncertain times together

• Utilizes Zoom platform

• Wednesday evenings, 9:00 - 10:00pm

• Launched: April 8, 2020
Islands of Brilliance was featured in the nationally syndicated show Matter of Fact with Soledad O’Brien. Our new distance learning offerings were highlighted, including Virtual Doodle Lounge.
IOB’s Virtual Doodle Lounge was highlighted live on Fox6 News on April 2, 2020, World Autism Awareness Day.

Adobe has made an initial contribution to support IOB’s switch to distance learning that provides access to creativity and community for our students.
Partnership Opportunities

Partners are needed to …

- Underwrite Distance Learning Programs
  - Support creation and initial execution
  - Provide for ongoing execution, development and expansion of online programming
- Supplement lost Workshop revenue
  - Reinventing how we currently offer programming to ensure future offerings and scaling
- Serve as a catalyst for providing the IOB experience to students on the spectrum all across the country
- Ensure resources are available to students with special needs and that their education is not forgotten
- Demonstrate a commitment to the emotional well-being and unique mental health needs of students with disabilities