

# Agile Learning Center: New York 2014-2015 Annual Report



***In this year of growth we began to build on foundations that were laid through the dedication and care of the community in the previous years.***

*Concretely, this looked like the construction of an arcade cabinet around the Galactic Nemesis game students created in 2013-2014 and the hiring of Abby Oulton as a facilitator after her year of volunteering.*

*It also looked like growth in the size and coherence of the community, which enabled more ambitious field trips, the hosting of apprentice facilitators, and the development of practices focused on nurturing rather than simply sustaining the school.*

*We continued exploring ways to stabilize our financial situation, provide more support for parents, document our learning to share with newer ALC communities, and account for fluctuations in enrollment as families move to and from New York City.*

*The growth from last year was clear and rewarding. We are excited to celebrate this progress and work to maintain this momentum moving forward.*

## **Landmarks/Milestones:**

- *Cabinet built around Galactic Nemesis by student game-designers*
- *Popular volunteer-run classes in cooking and partner-acrobatics set to continue next year*
- *Students joined inter-ALC trips to Washington DC and Cloudhouse (Chatham, NY)*
- *Increased student engagement with website and use of blogs*
- *Implementation of Spawn Points (homerooms) to split up morning and afternoon meetings into smaller groups*
- *First completely student-run Spawn Point attempted (successfully)*
- *Staff switch to use of Trello for daily documentation of student activities*
- *Nina Blanco and Abram DeBruyn on site as preparation for their ALC Start-up endeavors*
- *Intern from local university hosted in the spring: Hannah Condon*
- *Successful first school trips to Philadelphia and Puerto Rico*
- *Began preceding Assembly meetings with community potlucks*



## People Profiles

### *Staff*

Tomis Parker, director and administrator

Ryan Shollenberger, facilitator

Abby Oulton, facilitator

### *Regular Guest Teachers*

Nancy Hooper, offering cooking

Yoni Kallai, offering partner acrobatics

Azzuré Alexander, offering yoga

Yasushi Tamaki, offering Japanese language

Peter Armenia, offering Go

### *Apprentice Facilitators/Interns*

Abram DeBruyn, apprentice ALF (Melbourne)

Nina Blanco, apprentice ALF (Oahu)

Hannah Rainier Condon, intern (LIU Global)

## Mission

New York City's first Agile Learning Center is an independent school for self-directed learners. Students at Agile Learning Center individualize their learning within the context of a supportive community. We have adapted simple tools for self-organization and intentional culture creation to better support young people in engaging with their passions and curiosities while shaping the environment of the school.

### *Address*

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[nycagile.org](http://nycagile.org)

## Financial Info

Though we started the year with a projected deficit, with rolling admissions we became financially solvent for the year by November. Thanks to further enrollments, several generous donations, and some fundraising, we ended the year with a slight surplus, which we put into savings.

In June, we were looking at losing three students and enrolling four; however, due to sliding scale variations, this change left us looking at a decrease in tuition revenue for 2015-2016.

We offered our landlord a slight rent increase and our staff slight raises even so, with confidence that the deficit projected for 2015-2016 based on our current numbers will be covered by September-October enrollments. We feel confident taking this risk when looking at enrollment data, including that from this school year.

Overall, our finances are not as stable as we would like yet. However, we are encouraged by the consistent growth of the school, the ingenuity of our community, and our new ability to end the year by adding to our savings account. It is our intention to work at stabilizing and diversifying our revenue stream over the coming years, in the hopes that this will enable us to increase accessibility of the school for both potential students who require scholarships beyond the sliding scale and potential staff for whom \$40k annually without benefits is not sufficient.

## Network Accomplishments

One of the distinctions that sets our Agile Learning Center apart from other public and private schools is that we are in active collaboration with other ALC communities around the world. Our facilitators are a part of a community of Agile Learning Facilitators or (ALFs) who work together to share best practices, support each other, and evolve our ALC model.

Our school is the flagship of this rapidly growing network. In July of 2014, ALC Mosaic hosted the first ALF Summer, a gathering and training for facilitators in Charlotte, NC. Staff, families, aspiring staff, and curious seekers spent three weeks together in the ALC Mosaic space. Part of the time was spent discussing the growth of the network, and part of the time was spent playing with kids at a summer camp that the school hosted. The second ALF Summer will also be hosted by ALC Mosaic; it is slated for three weeks in July (2015).

The Network is currently hosting a Wordpress site built, maintained by Arthur Brock and Drew Hornbein, on which community members can blog to share their learning. It also periodically hosts retreat weekends, support calls, and inter-ALC offerings.

