

Embrace Civility LLC

A Public Benefit Corporation

Annual Report July 2023

Introduction

Embrace Civility LLC is a Public Benefit Corporation that is engaging in business activities in two different, but related, areas:

- Embrace Civility LLC engages in activities focusing on hurtful behavior directed at young people (bullying), as well as other forms of trauma and adversity. Embrace Civility LLC is a limited liability corporation licensed in the state of Oregon.
- The Way of the Donkey uses donkeys, and a growing number of other farm animals, in empowerment coaching activities with young people. This is a form of equine therapy. The Way of the Donkey is an Assumed Business Name of Embrace Civility LLC.

Embrace Civility LLC became a certified Public Benefit Corporation in May 1, 2021, by Benefit Corporations for Good, a licensed certifier in the state of Oregon.

Nancy Willard, M.S., J.D. is the director of Embrace Civility LLC. She has degrees in special education and law. She has engaged in activities including teaching, practice of law which included computer law, educational technology planning, digital safety, bullying and discriminatory harassment, and trauma informed practices.

Mission

Both Embrace Civility LLC and The Way of the Donkey have at the core of their mission the empowerment of young people.

Embrace Civility LLC seeks to educate school leaders and counselors on how to better address the concerns of hurtful behavior, bullying, and discriminatory harassment. These educational activities have also expanded to parents. The focus of the activities of Embrace Civility LLC is on empowering young people to effectively maintain positive relationships and respond effectively when hurtful incidents do happen — as the target, the one who was hurtful, or a witness. Embrace Civility LLC also seeks to educate school leaders on how to manage the school climate to support more positive relationships and strategies to intervene in both minor and more significant hurtful situations in a manner that achieves the underlying objective of empowerment of young people to maintain positive relationships.

The Way of the Donkey has combined the use of concepts of youth empowerment that we've first identified in research to support the Embrace Civility LLC's mission in combination with engaging young people in working with mini donkeys. The seven key empowerment strategies of The Way of the Donkey are:

- Make Positive Connections.
- Reach Out to Be Kind.
- Build your Strengths.
- Be Thankful.
- Stop and Stay Calm.
- Stand Tall.
- Think Things Through.

Activities This Past Year

Embrace Civility LLC

Embrace Civility LLC has engaged in the following activities the following year, from July 2022 to July 2023:

- Wrote and self published three books on Amazon:
 - *Engage Students to Embrace Civility* is a comprehensive (420+ page) and well researched (over 720 footnotes) book for school leaders. From this book, Willard also intends to create workshops and online courses.
 - *Be Positively Powerful: A Guide for Teens on Achieving Resilience and Empowerment* is a book for teens. *Be Positively Powerful: Resilient When Things Get Tough* is a more simplified book. Both of these books present the same core seven positive empowerment strategies as presented by The Way of the Donkey.
- Established an online course planform website at <http://bepositivelypowerful.com> and created two online courses plus supplementary materials. These courses are for parents. *Empower your Child to Be Positively Powerful. Empower Your Bullied Child and Insist Your Child's School Stop the Harm.* The empowerment strategies are the same as in the Be Positively Powerful books and The Way of the Donkey.

The Way of the Donkey

The Way of the Donkey received funding through the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts to operate a summer program. The activities The Way of the Donkey engaged in included a Sumer camp program for youth, and taking donkeys to summer school program and summer camps and community events where children could engage with the donkeys.

The Way of the Donkey continued providing services in the fall by taking the donkeys to the Fern Ridge School District's special education classes for students with emotional challenges. The Way of the Donkey also took donkeys, goats, bunnies, and a duck who likes to look at pictures in books to several after school programs in the Eugene 4J School District's BEST program.

Senator Dembrow, of the Oregon State Legislature was working diligently to ensure long term funding bot both summer camp and after school programs. There was strong support in committee. Unfortunately, the legislature went AWOL and many excellent bills were not ultimately passed. Thus, there were no funds for summer programs for youth through OAESD. The Way of the Donkey has taken animals to the Bethel Farm Camp.

The Way of the Donkey was going to seek supplemental funds this summer by offering a mobile farm animal interaction program (petting zoo) for corporate family picnics, birthday parties, and other special events. Unfortunately, medical concerns faced by Willard have eliminated the possibility of these activities.

The Way of the Donkey applied for two years of funding for a program to serve youth who are neurodiverse or have experienced trauma or other adversities through the Youth Development Commission. This grant is pending as of the writing of this Annual Report.

Key Metrics

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This past year was spent conducting research and writing books. Willard has been active on several Facebook groups and has her own Facebook page where she transmits insight, however no other outreach has occurred. This past year could be considered "preparatory."

The Way of the Donkey

The Way of the Donkey provided services to well over 100 young people in the past year. Some of these interactions were one time only. Others were more extended.

Coming Year

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Willard intends to continue the production of online courses to continue the distribution of the insight in her books. Additional marketing will also occur.

The Way of the Donkey

At this point, plans are somewhat on hold pending the decision by the Youth Development Division. If this funding is received, the proposed program will emerge. If such funding is not received, there are several options:

- Submit grant proposals to the Oregon Community Foundation, The Ford Family Foundation, and possibly other foundations in collaboration with a fiscal sponsor.
- Increase services to the Eugene 4J BEST after school program.

The Way of the Donkey is also seeking to obtain property to offer its programs in a more effective manner. If the property that is desired — which is currently in default and will need to be purchased from the bank -- can be obtained, The Way of the Donkey would expand activities to include farm visits for schools, group homes, and senior centers.

Closing

Embrace Civility LLC and The Way of the Donkey will continue its activities to support the empowerment of young people in research based and innovative ways.