

# DESERT LEARNING ACADEMY

2248 E. Ramon Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262

760-778-0487

## -Monthly Newsletter

**In this issue :**

- Monthly message from Dr. Grainger
- High School Seniors Graduation Update Letter
- Brainteaser Activity
- Teacher showcase: Mrs. Rosie Mendoza
- WASC Focus group meetings
- Edgenuity parent portal

## Happy New Year to our DLA Family

I want to take a moment to wish you all a very Happy New Year. I hope you all had a restful holiday break and you used the time to recharge and spend quality time with immediate family.



As we enter 2021, there is hope on the immediate horizon with the roll-out of several different COVID-19 vaccinations. District staff will soon be vaccinated and it is hoped that we will soon return to some sense of normality. Until then, please remember to wash your hands frequently, wear a face covering, and maintain appropriate social distancing.

## Parent Contact Information

Here at DLA we frequently send out important information using our email mass notification system. This system will send information to the email address that you provided when your child was registered. If for some reason your email has changed please let us know so we can update your contact information to make sure you do receive all messages. Please call Mariana at 760-778-0487 to update your contact information.

## Desert Learning Academy Teacher Showcase: Mrs. Rosie Mendoza



My name is Rosalia Mendoza, and I am the School Counselor at Desert Learning Academy. I have been working at Desert Learning Academy for 3 years and before coming to DLA I was the Adult Education Counselor. I was born in San Gabriel, CA. When I was 6 years old my parents moved to Bloomington, CA. I graduated high school and went to San Bernardino Valley College where I received my AA degree in Liberal Studies. I then transferred to Cal-State San Bernardino and graduated with my BA in Liberal Studies. I received my Masters Degree in School Counseling from the University of Redlands in 2009. I began my Counseling Career at Chaffey Community College in Rancho Cucamonga as an EOPS (Extended Opportunity Program and Services) Counselor.

I met my husband in 2005 and we got married in 2013. In 2017, we had our beautiful baby girl named Jessica Rose. She is our pride and joy. I am a first generation college graduate. I am very proud of my Hispanic culture. My parents have always told us to strive to be better. I remember my dad telling us that he does not want to see us with scrapes and cuts on our hands like him. That is why I have always strived to educate myself to make him proud.



## High School Seniors– Parent Notification Letter

Now that we are in the second and final semester of the 2020/21 school year, all attention turns to our current high school seniors as they prepare for graduation in May 2021.

This year I am implementing a new information letter that will be sent each month to the families of our high school seniors. This letter will clearly outline the following information for each of our seniors:

- The number of credits each student has currently earned
- The number of credits each student is currently working on
- The number of credits needed to graduate
- Current Grade Point Average (GPA)
- A-G eligibility
- Palm Springs Unified School District graduation requirements

As soon as graduation information is available I will include this information in the monthly letter to each of our senior families.

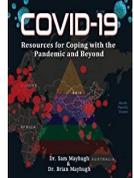
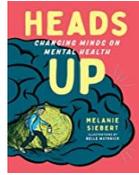
Letters will be sent on the last day of each calendar month to the address we have on file. Please make sure that this mailing address is current to insure delivery of this very important letter.



I am delighted to announce that beginning in January 2021, Mrs. Brenda Gunderson (former retired DLA counselor) will be returning to provide small group support services for students and their families attending DLA.

The plan is to offer a small counseling cohort on campus and a second group online. If you are interested in your child participating in these counseling groups, please contact Rosalia Mendoza or your child's teacher at 760-778-0487 and the necessary referral forms will be provided to you so that services may be provided.

Each month I would like to recommend some publications that I feel are excellent resources for parents during these tumultuous times. If you are a voracious reader like me- add them to your Amazon reading list.



**January 2021 Brainteaser Challenge**

**Congratulations to Gage Renfro who was the winner of December's Brainteaser challenge.**

*"I am a seven letters word; I like mornings; If you remove my first letter you can drink me; If you remove my first and second letters you may not like me; If you remove my last letter you will see me on television. "*

*What am I?*

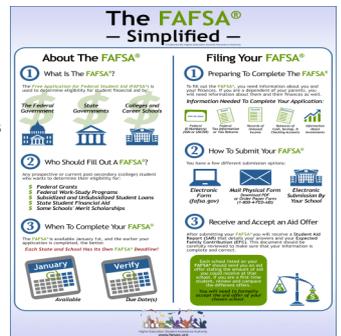
**The first person to submit the correct answer to mgrainger@psud.us will win a \$25 cash gift card.**

**High School- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

Beginning on October 1 of every school year, students who plan to attend college have the option to apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). FAFSA allows you to get free grant money and student loans to pay for your education. This is money that the government provides to students. This is money that parents do not need to pay back. If you would like to learn more information please click on the following link:

<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

**Pleaser remember that the submission deadline for the 2020/21 school year is June 30, 2021.**



**Puttanesca Sauce Recipe**

**Ingredients:** Large tin of Roma tomatoes in juice; small tin of anchovies; Kalamata olives; capers; garlic cloves; protein of choice (chicken, shrimp, oysters, clams); salt and pepper, red chili flakes.



**Method:** Chop up garlic and fry in a small amount of olive oil; Add the tin of tomatoes with juice to the garlic; Use a pair of scissors to cut up the whole tomatoes in the pan; Add the oregano and chili to taste and stir over medium heat for several minutes. Chop up anchovy filets and add them to the tomato sauce; Cut the olives in half and add them to the pan; Add the capers to the tomato sauce and simmer for 5-10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add protein of choice and simmer for 10-15 minutes until protein is thoroughly cooked. Serve over pasta of choice and grated parmesan cheese.

**DLA Calendar Events for January 2021 and February 2021**

- **Monday January 11, 2021:** Semester 2 begins
- **Monday January 18, 2021:** School closed in observance of Martin Luther King Holiday.
- **January 27, 28 and 29, 2021:** Middle school parent teacher conferences
- **Friday February 12, 2021:** School closed for President's Day Holiday
- **Sunday February 14, 2021:** Valentine's Day
- **Monday February 15, 2021:** School closed for President's Day holiday.
- **Friday February 26, 2021:** Trimester 2 ends for elementary and middle school parents.

**Desert Learning Academy WASC Focus Groups**

The DLA staff are currently in the process of revising our current mission and vision statements. To complete this task, it is very important that our different stakeholder groups are involved. These groups include parents, students, and teachers at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. If you are interested in participating in a short focus group meeting please contact me via email at [mgrainger@psud.us](mailto:mgrainger@psud.us). During these meetings we will be asking you some important questions about your family's experiences while enrolled at DLA, and what are the core values and learning outcomes you expect for your children. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at your convenience.



**Edgenuity Parent Portal-**

I wanted to remind parents that the Edgenuity parent portal provides parents with an opportunity to review student progress in their assigned courses, and monitor the time students spend on the Edgenuity learning platform. Please take a moment to visit the DLA website using the link below and watch the video tutorial on how to access the Edgenuity Parent platform. Once you have viewed the video, please contact DLA so that we may provide you with your parent access code. You will need this four digit code to access the portal.



Please use this link to access the orientation video: <https://www.psud.us/domain/4743>