

Supporters celebrate youth program

By T. Lee Brown
Correspondent

Stories of Change brought Native American artist and performer Jefferson Green to the shores of Blue Lake this weekend. The annual fundraising event for Caldera presents storytelling, documentary film and performance showing how the organization's programs change the lives of youth.

Founders Dan Wieden and Priscilla Bernard Wieden, also known by their camp names Papa Bear and Moonflower, greeted people at the door. About 200 celebrants mingled in Caldera's central Hearth Building and its surrounding studios, art installations, and forest. Logs burned in outdoor fireplaces. As at summer camps of yore, guests invented camp names for themselves, wrote them on "wood cookies" with Sharpies, and wore them around their necks.

Embracing the confluence of indoor and outdoor space, the built environment (designed by Brad Cloepfil) invites exploration and meandering. A skilled hand-drummer, camp manager Catón Lyles eventually

called wanderers in for dinner, though the plan backfired a bit. Some in the audience didn't want to go take their seats for fear of missing a single beat.

Once inside, diners played art games and got to know each other. Local folks chatted with designers from Portland and artists from Los Angeles. Philanthropists mixed with students and artists. Organizers invited students from their youth programs to gather around one table, while another table seated alumni of Caldera's Artist in Residency program (including this writer).

"Caldera's work is unique," wrote Executive Director Brian Detman in a welcome note. "We believe in beauty, hope, and joy. We are committed to maintaining relationships with youth for seven-plus years, and supporting them to find and amplify their voices through art and experiences in the natural world."

Chabre Vickers served as the evening's emcee. With her strong stage presence and gracious speaking style, Vickers brought attention to how Caldera has changed her own daughter's life. Raised

in poverty, Vickers has said that as a child she could never have imagined such a beautiful place as Caldera. Vickers is now the community development officer for Wells Fargo bank throughout Oregon and highly active in Portland charities.

A short documentary film celebrated the work of youth program alumna Adiana ("Addy") Wilmot. A first-generation American born in Portland of a Jamaican family, Wilmot was "a shy young girl who wasn't interested in art." She came to "experience and appreciate all different types of art," becoming confident in expressing herself vocally and artistically.

Jefferson Greene brought stories to life with his humorous performance style and beautiful singing voice. Accompanying himself on a drum hand-painted with a volcano, Greene sang and spoke a story of when "the animals were new on this earth," as his grandmother would say. Then he told jokes, from groaners to a sly, funny narrative in which a non-indigenous attorney gets his due for poaching on reservation land.

A cultural artist born and

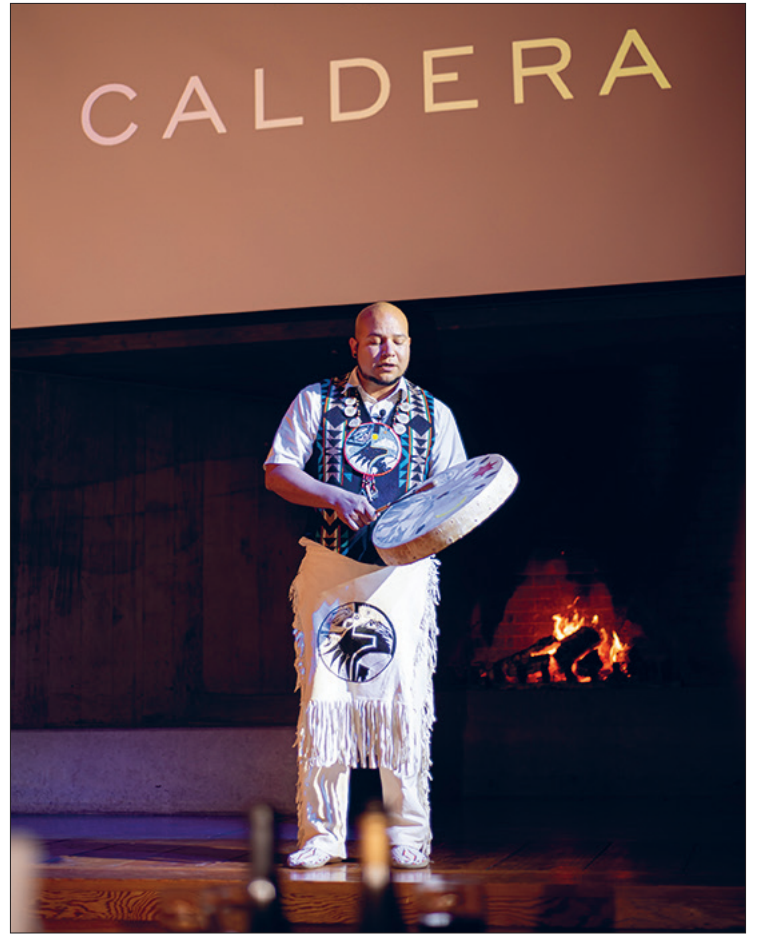


PHOTO BY OLIVIA BREBRICK

Jefferson Greene brought stories to life in humorous style.

raised on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, Greene also showed his recent map of Oregon at the event. The artwork consists of a large canvas made of tule mat, harvested and woven by the artist. He researched indigenous place names of Central Oregon towns and beyond,

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