



# Creatorspace as a Third Space

David Overland  
Keeper Brunson

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144 Park Ave Ste 300  
League City, TX 77573  
[info@creatorspace.org](mailto:info@creatorspace.org)

# Biographies

- David Overland
  - BE Mechanical Engineer, MS Software Engineer
  - Retired NASA Engineer (25 yrs)
  - A Founder of Creatorspace and current Treasurer
- Keeper Brunson
  - Current Secretary of Creatorspace
  - Steward of Ceramics Studio and 2D Printing Room

# Who We Are

- Creatorspace is a Makerspace – we are a group of individuals with expertise in new and traditional tools, and who collaborate, teach, and learn by doing and making. We are very good at demystifying technology and making it approachable to those who are new to it.
- A Makerspace is a place where individuals with similar interests gather together to work on projects, share knowledge and collaborate on ideas. We are a community-oriented place that connects individuals looking to learn or collaborate on something.
- We are a 501(c)3 non-profit. We are all-volunteer and are open 24/7 for members.

# Why We Exist

- Creatorspace exists to create a network of resources that facilitate and inspire the sharing of knowledge, experience and ideas among our members and the general public.
- We do this by promoting technical, scientific and artistic skills through individual projects, social collaboration, and education.
- In addition, we have a demonstrated commitment to the local community. We have worked closely with libraries, schools and community organizations. We use our skills and knowledge to promote STEAM activities, and to provide services to the community.

# Background

- Creatorspace was incorporated April 9, 2012, so we are over 12 years old. We started in the back warehouse of a local business (EPO) rent free, and were able to develop a culture before we had to worry about money.
- We moved for the first time in 2014 with less than a dozen members. We had about two dozen members when we moved into our present location in League City seven years ago, we are now up to 80 members.
- Since then, we have expanded our capabilities, which we group by room and responsibility. Each of our areas has a volunteer Steward in charge of it, who are always ready to help members learn to use the tools.

# Capabilities

We currently have ten areas at the Space:

- Electronics – Oscilloscopes, Soldering Stations, Components, etc.
- 2D Printing – Vinyl Cutting, T-Shirt Press, Dye Sublimation Printer, Cricut/Silhouette
- A/V Lab – Cameras, Microphones, Green Screen, A/V Editing Software, Musical Instruments, Soundproofing
- 3D Printing – FDM and SLS printers
- Metal Arts, Jewelry Smithing – Oxy Acetylene torch, tools
- Metal Shop – Lathe, Mill, Bandsaw, Drill Press, Tooling, etc.
- Wood Shop - Basic Carpentry, CNC Lathe, etc.
- Kitchen Science - Molecular Gastronomy
- Forge – Blacksmithing Forge, Welding, Hot Work Area
- Ceramics Studio - Kiln, Throwing Wheels, etc.
- Sewing/Cosplay - Sewing Machines, Supplies, Dress Forms, etc.

In addition we have a large common area, storage for activities and members, and desks and studios for members.

# Community

- Creatorspace is active in the community. We support STEAM activities in CCISD, the County Libraries, Pasadena Public Library and at BakerRipley Pasadena.
- We are in partnership with BakerRipley Pasadena. We have refurbished over 300 computers and laptops for use in the community, especially for those without access to computers, small businesses, and children in Pasadena ISD.
- We have a large presence at Comicpalooza every year, showcasing our creativity, and providing costume repairs for attendees. We have been to Library Conferences, Centerpoint Power Tools Conference, Points of Life Conference and more.
- We are members of both League City and Pasadena Chambers of Commerce.
- Our members have created art pieces for Freeman Library, CCISD, and Comicpalooza.

# Activities

- We host weekly Open Houses, where we give tours, answer questions, and demos of skills and tools. We have always strived to be a welcoming Space for newcomers and guests. We have a very deep and broad set of skills and knowledge among our membership, and we are able to help navigate new skills.
- Because of this, one of the advantages to our community is to be able to learn new skills, perfect old ones, and teach new people.
- We love to share what we know with others.



# Community

- Creatorspace is a 50/50 mix of Making and Community. We have regular meetings for Artists, Model Builders, and Tabletop Gaming. We host regular meetings of local Artists.
- We also have member-only and family activities, including holiday parties and potlucks.
- We also are a place where members hang out. Some members work out of the Space as well.

# Support from City

Creatorspace thrives with the support of local government and businesses. Our original Space was donated to us by EPO, a local business. When they moved, we put everything in storage, and met weekly at the Freeman County Library, where we had been doing monthly lectures and demonstrations.

We realized at that time that we needed a place of our own and collectively decided to rent a unit in a local business park. We took the risk of increasing our membership to afford the rental, which happened!

We quickly outgrew the 1100 sqft unit, and started asking around for a new Space.

We were extremely fortunate that the City of League City had several properties that weren't being utilized. We negotiated a rate that we could afford for a 4500 sqft unit in League City. In 2019, the City expanded our lease to 5400 sqft, which enabled us to provide Studio Space for members. We work with Scott Livingstone, Director of Economic Development for the City.

# Support from Community

We also receive support from the Community. In addition to donations of tools, material and equipment from members and neighbors, we have received some larger donations from individuals.

We have received large donations in memory of members and local makers who have died. These have enabled our Audio/Video Lab, and much of our Machine Shop, and to endow a scholarship at SanJac Maritime College.

We have also received grants from BakerRipley, Albemarle, Boeing, and STEMfinity, which have provided our first Laser Cutter/Engraver, Milling Machine, a good Pottery Wheel, and several higher quality 3D Printers.

We have also received a federal grant from the CASIS program for the MIMIC Project, which has created an ISS model for education.

# As a Third Space

Creatorspace definitely serves as a Third Space for many of our members. As mentioned previously, the Space is a Community first, access to tools second. A community of like-minded makers and creatives. We strive to be both welcoming and safe, and we have been fortunate that the community we attract respects the diverse people that are our members.

Keeper will talk about her experience with the Space and what contributes to our unique culture.

# Creatorspace as a Third Space

In a society that prioritizes profit, Third Spaces have become almost a luxury.

We believe sustainable Third Spaces require connection:

- We foster a **culture** of inspiration and collaboration.
- We encourage people of any skill level to **share** their passion.
- Regular **social activities** can be hosted by any member. (parties, activity nights)
- All members are encouraged to **participate** by volunteering, hosting classes, and presenting demos.

# Creatorspace as a Third Space

## What sets Creatorspace apart as an accessible third space?

### Inclusion:

- We appreciate every **skill level** (We shun elitism. Onboarding is primarily for the safety of machines and users. We let people play. Demos are open to any level of mastery.)
- We encourage all **types of hobbies and making**. (We support all aspects of STEAM and have a diverse mix of artists, engineers, teachers, crafters, etc.)
- We do not discriminate based on **background** (social status, worldview, race, disability, gender, orientation, etc.)

### Accessibility:

- **Low cost** of entry (only \$40/month base-level membership, discounts for educators and others)
- Occasional need-based **financial assistance** (We depend on donations, low cost of operation, and volunteers to keep our cost as low as possible.)
- **Open 24/7** to members in good standing
- **Convenient location** near major roads

# Support

## Community Support

Various **donations**, **grants**, and **sponsorships** (from companies and individuals)

- Pottery wheel donated by STEMfinity
- Continuous 3D printer, Metal CNC, computers, sewing machines donated by individuals
- Grants/support from organizations like BakerRipley

## City Support:

- Inexpensive facilities, allows us to keep cost of operation much lower and to stay centrally located in the heart of League City.

# What do we Need for the Future

- A larger space to accommodate more members and more tools, and especially Studio Space
  - There are a lot of artists and small businesses that would benefit by co-location with a makerspace
- A space that would allow more flexibility in upgrades and repairs
- Donations and underwriters for events, and for classes, tools and materials