

Featured Teacher, January 2020



Mark Leitzel and Leigh Schickendantz

Two Rivers Aikido, Kalispell, Montana

We live in the beautiful Flathead Valley of Northwest Montana alongside our aging animals, expansive garden, and rolling terrain. Together we co-vision, co-create, and co-manage Two Rivers Consulting and Two Rivers Aikido.

This year marks the 13th year of Two Rivers Aikido. What began as a small school of four students in a worn out overhauled garage on the south end of town has now blossomed into a vibrant community of sincere students who train in a beautiful peace dojo in the Historic KM Building of Kalispell. For those not familiar with Kalispell, we sit in the NW corner of Montana near the crown of the continent. Glacier National Park is our back yard!

Leigh was first introduced to the art via a conversation with the late great George Leonard as she sat with him at his grand piano one cool afternoon in 1987. The Leonard Energy Training program was her entrance into formal Aikido training.

Mark began his formal Aikido training in 1992 as part of somatic studies in graduate school. Sensei's Leonard, Strozzi-Heckler, Choate, Eddy, Hultgren, Drachman, Richardson, and Friedl have been an integral part of our diverse Aiki path.

We have been blessed with the good fortune of learning from and being shaped by skilled mentors and wise teachers from all walks of life. From Aikido mentors who have kept their eyes

on the True North of the art and by doing so being an inspiration when there seemed little to be had, to the big sky, deep waters, and high peaks of Montana, which offer a place to be inside the rich elemental nature of Aikido.

The Embodiment of Peace Matrix© is one of our many Aiki-based professional domain babies. We developed the Matrix back in 2010 and since that time have served thousands of generous and curious people who are interested in the study of harmony in conflict.



The Earth Lifts Its Glass To The Sun And Light - Light Is Poured. ~ Hafiz

Our Most Memorable Aikido Experience

Our most memorable Aikido experience? So many to choose from. Our Aiki journey is punctuated by an array of memorable experiences both heartbreaking and heart expanding. We live in a fairly remote area and have met challenges in affiliating and developing an extended Aiki community. As such, the most recent and memorable heartwarming Aiki experience to date is when our dear friend and Sensei, Michael Friedl via Kimberly Richardson Sensei warmly welcomed Two Rivers Aikido into the CAA family.