

LE: Every Color the Crag Festival that I've been to. We've had three so far, and they've grown by 100% each time. The first time we had 100 people, the next time we had 200 people, and then we had over 300 people at our last festival in 2019. Seeing people connect with each other, people that they've known virtually, like I was saying, even if you can't connect in person, you can probably connect online with folks. Seeing those people meet in person for the first time, getting to climb with other people of color for the first time. What other outdoor festival are you going to go to where you have a silent disco party the same night after you spend all day climbing. And you're listening to trap music in the middle of Alabama, with 300 other climbers who are there to do the exact same thing you are.

It's really, really powerful to see it happen. To see how much it means to people, to have this connection that they've been looking for their entire lives, or their entire climbing career at least. To see how much it impacts them and see what they take away from it. The first Color the Crag, I think five or seven other organizations grew out of that first meeting that that people had. That first event that people got together, people were like, "this is amazing, I want to bring this back to my local community." There were a ton of other local groups that popped up to support climbers of color in given areas. It's really incredible, the kind of change that can come just from creating and giving space for community.