

Cultivating Talent:

Improving Access to Arts Careers for Artists with Disabilities

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a Statewide Forums Report by

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Executive Summary

In June 1998, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) convened the first-ever National Forum on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities (<http://arts.gov/accessibility/accessibility-resources/leadership-initiatives/careers-arts>) at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. This event brought together key players from state and federal agencies, educators, state arts agencies, and others to: 1) assess the state of education and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and 2) identify strategies for overcoming obstacles. A key recommendation from the National Forum was for states to conduct their own Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities (“Statewide Forums”) in order to mirror the work at the state level what was done nationally.

From 2002-2013, twenty-seven states conducted Statewide Forums, and fifteen of those received additional support to sustain their efforts through Follow-Up Projects. Over 9000 artists with and without disabilities, service providers, arts organization staff, educators, and others working with artists with disabilities participated in Statewide Forums or Follow-Up Projects. As a result of these activities, hundreds of partnerships were formed across arts and disability organizations.

The Statewide Forums served to build these partnerships, assess needs, develop a strategic plan, and identify priorities for serving artists with disabilities. Follow-Up Projects responded to artists’ expressed needs for professional development particularly in marketing and promotion, networking with other artists and employers, and opportunities to showcase their art. Follow-Up Projects focused primarily on:



- Providing professional development workshops to artists with disabilities and those who work with them on topics such as self-employment and arts and disability resources,
- Developing websites or website content for artists with disabilities such as:
 - artsworkindiana.org
 - yaconn.org/ya-artists/
 - ndcpd.org/artequalswork
- Traveling exhibitions, and
- Forming artist networking groups.

Impact

Through the Statewide Forums and Follow-Up Projects artists with disabilities:

- Increased their self-confidence,
- Increased their artistic skills and business/marketing skills,
- Increased their connections to other artists and arts employers, and
- Earned money through short term opportunities as artist speakers/facilitators, designing marketing materials (i.e. logos, brochures) and directly through sales from their artwork.

Through the Statewide Forums and Follow-Up Projects, state arts agencies:

- Built an infrastructure that incorporated accessibility into their programming. Engaging artists with disabilities became part of the organizational culture where there was increased commitment from staff, leadership, and Boards.
- Developed new partnerships amongst arts and disability communities. Core partners included the VSA affiliate, Department of Rehabilitation, University

Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), regional arts councils, local arts organizations (museums, galleries, theaters), and local and state colleges.

- Identified artists with disabilities, including those that were already part of their networks, but had not previously disclosed a disability.
- Increased knowledge of professional development needs and priorities for artists with disabilities.
- Created opportunities for artists with disabilities through expanding eligibility of calls for art for emerging artists and/or providing grant opportunities for artists with disabilities.

Keys to Success and Sustainability

Several themes emerged as contributing to the success and sustainability of Statewide Forum activities:

- **Be relevant.** Design activities that respond to an expressed need. It is important to continue to assess needs over time and develop or expand arts programs to meet the current needs.
- **Develop a core partnership** with a few organizations sharing the major roles and everyday responsibilities. Expand your partnerships to assist in providing other resources such as promoting your events through their networks or providing space.
- **Treat artists with disabilities as artists first.** Artists with disabilities have similar training and education needs to other artists. They are also just as talented, and should be judged on the quality of their work and their work treated in a professional manner.

- **Document the process** to maintain continuity in times of staff transition and to make expectations of partners clear.
- **Be intentional in your outreach.** Show your willingness to work with artists with disabilities by including accessibility and the availability of accommodations in all materials and by promoting your programs among disability organizations.
- **Expand your ability to work with artists with disabilities.** Arts agency staff benefit from receiving training and technical assistance as well as interacting with peers doing similar work. Seek out and support staff in taking advantage of professional development opportunities.
- **Evaluate your efforts.** Throughout the planning and implementation of arts projects, it is important to know what is working, what is not, and collect stories of success.

Beginnings

While there are a vast array of potential careers in design, media, performing, visual and literary arts, people with disabilities face difficult challenges entering those fields. Due to barriers in education, training and employment, people with disabilities are vastly underrepresented in the cultural world. To address this issue, in June 1998, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) convened the first-ever National Forum on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. This 3-day event led by the NEA and three federal partners, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Education and the Social Security Administration brought together over 300 representatives from government agencies, service groups, educators, artists, state arts agencies, and other non-profit aforementioned groups to: 1) assess the state of education and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and 2) identify strategies for overcoming obstacles. Highlights from the National Forum included speeches by Phyllis Frelich, award-winning actress; John Kemp, Executive Director of Very Special Arts (now VSA); Bob Lynch, President and CEO, Americans for the Arts; Ron Mace, Architectural Consultant for Renovation of the Kennedy Center Concert Hall; and William Ivey, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. One of the key recommendations from the National Forum was for state arts agencies' to host their own statewide forums in order to develop their own specific plans for advancing careers in the arts for people with disabilities.

In July 2009, the NEA and interagency partners convened 130 experts to participate in the National Summit on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the summit was to evaluate the progress made since 1998 and develop new strategies to advance educational and career opportunities in the arts for people with disabilities. Specific



improvements in policy and practice accomplished over the last decade included: the convening of twenty-six Statewide Forums between 2002 and 2009 overseen by the National Arts and Disability Center; arts internships administered by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; a resource guide, “Putting Creativity to Work by VSA and the Social Security Administration; additions to the Department of Labor’s Occupational Classification of art careers; and two studies, a National Study on Careers in the Arts by Drs. Carol Gill and Carrie Sandahl, and a study of designers with disabilities resulting in the publication of the book, “Building a World Fit for People: Designers with Disabilities at Work.”

Established in 2002 with initial funding from the NEA and VSA, the Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts has successfully built partnerships to advance careers in the arts for people with disabilities in twenty-seven states. The Forums emanated and were designed to mirror at the state level what the 1998 NEA Careers in the Arts Forum accomplished nationally. The “Statewide Forums” were successfully led by state arts agencies in partnership with the disability and arts community. Between 2002 and 2013 the Statewide Forums were headed and implemented by both the state arts agency and state VSA affiliate. States were required to demonstrate substantive planning and leadership from artists with disabilities. Other key partners included representatives from the arts community, artists and arts administrators with disabilities, education, rehabilitation, social security, community non-profits and others. Together, state arts agencies and their partners, applied for support to carry out a statewide event or series of regional meetings to identify the challenges and opportunities for people with disabilities pursuing employment in the arts, encourage connections at the state level and make recommendations.



Beginning in 2006, support was also made available to state art agencies to carry out Follow-Up Projects recommended from their state's Forums. The Follow-Up Projects were based on the identified needs; findings and/or a strategic plan from the state's initial Statewide Forum. Follow-Up Projects focused on: artist employment, professional development (workshops, traveling exhibition, showcase); regional artist networking meetings; physical and programmatic accessibility trainings; development and updating of arts and disability website resources and directories.

NADC Program Administration

Since its inception in 2002, the NADC has been the administrator of the eleven-year program (2002 - 2013). In this capacity we were responsible for the selection of states to conduct Statewide Forums or Follow-Up Projects, distribution of funds, oversight of implementation, training and technical assistance, and report writing to the funders.

A primary role of the NADC was to provide training and technical assistance through individual and group teleconferences. As we identified best practices, our training became more formalized in order to assist newly selected states to implement and evaluate their activities. Training topics included identifying your audience, marketing Statewide Forum activities, forming effective collaboratives, conducting Statewide Forum or Follow-Up Projects in multiple sites, modeling accessibility, developing a logic model, and evaluating the process and outcomes of the Statewide Forum or Follow-Up Projects. As a result of the rich discussions within the teleconferences, a peer network amongst the state arts agencies developed that they used to support the implementation of their Statewide Forum, Follow-Up Projects or sustain their long term focused work on accessibility and careers in the arts for people with disabilities.



Funding and Partnership Changes Over Time

Between 2002 and 2008, the NADC received funding from both the NEA and VSA to administer and support the Statewide Forum programs. States were provided with \$15,000 of support with the requirement of a partnership between the state arts agency and VSA state affiliate to plan and carry out the Statewide Forum. In addition, the Social Security Administration (SSA) provided direct support to the selected states. Many states used the supplemental SSA funds to provide accommodations for artists with disabilities and as honorariums for artists with disabilities for serving as speakers or developing marketing materials. In 2008-2009, VSA discontinued fiscal support for the Statewide Forum program, and with that the VSA affiliates became a 'recommended' rather than required partner. Also, with this change in funding, the support made available was reduced to \$12,000. Follow-up Projects were introduced in 2006-2007 with \$5,000 of available support that was reduced to \$4,500 in 2008-09 and to \$4,000 in 2010. The majority of states supplemented the support provided with in-kind and additional private and public funding. The actual Statewide Forums budgets ranged from \$9,124.00 to \$47,386 (mean= \$27,470). Follow-up Projects budgets ranged from \$4,000 to \$37,296 (mean=\$14,926).

Purpose of Review

This report presents an overview of implementation and resulting outcomes of the Statewide Forums program from 2002-2013, and how to sustain activities that support the professional development of artists with disabilities. The purpose of the review is to:

- Examine the accessibility of state arts agency's program and services to artists with disabilities;

- Document changes in state agency programs and policies related to artists with disabilities;
- Identify best practices (indicators of success) nationally from states that have conducted Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities;
- Describe outcomes/stories of success of artists with disabilities in their career development and employment.

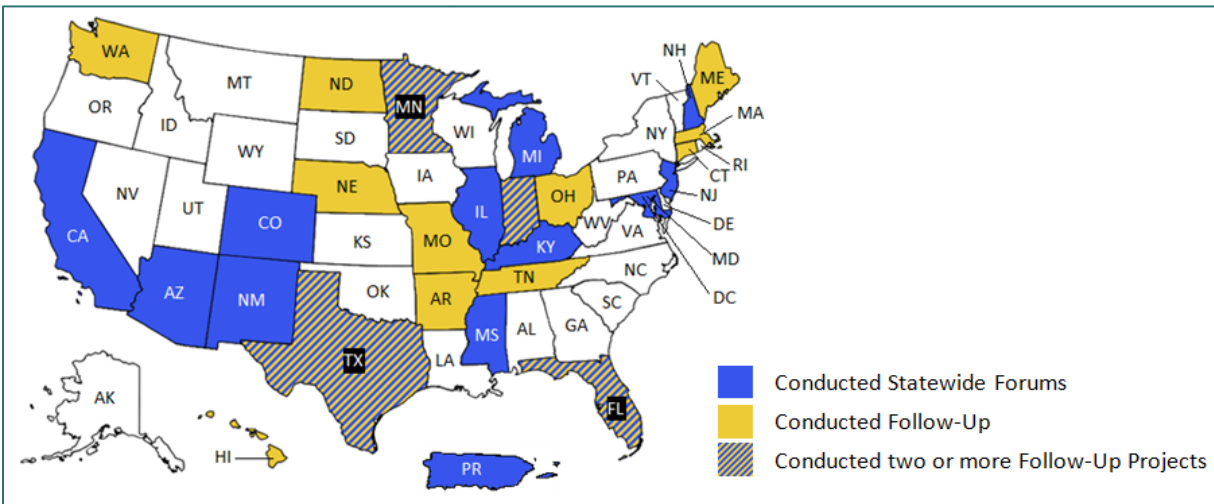
Selected States

From 2002-2013, 27 unique states conducted Statewide Forums, and 15 of those received additional support to sustain their efforts through specific Follow-Up Projects:

- **2002:** Maryland, Minnesota, New Mexico
- **2003:** California, Hawaii, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, Washington
- **2004:** Arkansas, Indiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, Texas
- **2005:** Arizona, Florida, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio
- **2006-2007:** Maine, Tennessee, Arkansas*, Florida*, Hawaii*, Indiana*, Minnesota*, Ohio*, Texas*, Washington*
- **2007-2008:** Michigan, Colorado, North Dakota, Florida*, Minnesota*, Nebraska*, Texas*
- **2008-2009:** Connecticut, Illinois, New Jersey, Indiana*, Massachusetts*
- **2010-2011:** Connecticut*, Indiana*, Tennessee*, Texas*
- **2012-2013:** Kentucky, Maine*, Missouri*, North Dakota*, Texas*

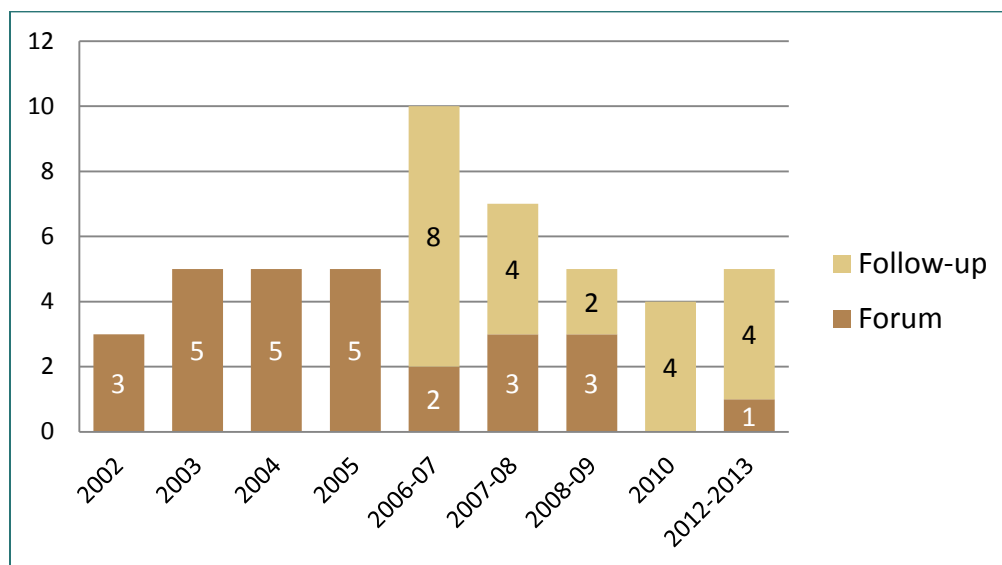
*Denotes states that were supported to carry out Follow-Up Projects.

Figure 1: Map of States that Conducted Statewide Forum and Follow-up Projects



As seen in Figure 2, the number of Statewide Forums and Follow-Up Projects supported ranged over time from three to ten. The extremes corresponded with the first year of the Statewide Forums program (smallest group funded) and first year of Follow-Up Project funding (largest group funded). Overall, however the number of Statewide Forums and Follow-Up Projects remained fairly consistent over the years with a typical year of five Statewide Forums and/or Follow-Up Projects. The number of participating states per year affected how the NADC provided TA and training. For example, in years with a large number of states it took much more time and coordination to assess each state's needs and be able to tailor technical assistance to them. In years with only a few states participating, more one on one attention and in-depth discussions could occur. Also, teleconference topics needed to be adapted to meet the needs of two different groups, those conducting Statewide Forums for the first time and those conducting Follow-Up Projects with a much more refined focus.

Figure 2: Number of Statewide Forums and Follow-Up Projects Supported by Year



Methods

Multiple methods were utilized to evaluate the changes and effects of the Statewide Forums programs at the organizational and individual artist level. Methods included:

- State Arts Agency Website Review:** The purpose of the website review was to gather information about the programs and resources offered by state arts councils/commissions that previously conducted Statewide Forums. Of particular interest were any resources, training, grants, programs, etc. that focused on accessibility or specific support for artists with disabilities. Information reviewed falls under the following categories: Training; Grants; Programs/Policies; Special Programs; and Social Networking/Social Media Use. Twenty-six state arts agency websites were reviewed. We did not have the resources to adequately review Puerto Rico's website as it was in Spanish.

- **Document Review:** Several documents were reviewed including state arts agency's Statewide Forum and Follow-Up proposals, notes from monthly technical assistance teleconferences, mandated progress and final reports, and final summary reports created and submitted by the NADC to the NEA. Documents were reviewed to describe the planning process, partners, description of Statewide Forum and Follow-Up Projects, number of participants, final budgets, lessons learned, and outcomes.
- **Call for Artist's Stories:** A call for artist's stories was sent via e-mail to all former Statewide Forum conveners asking for them to identify and contact artists who participated in a Statewide Forum and/or Follow-Up Projects to share their experience and impact of the Statewide Forum/Follow-Up Project on their careers. See Appendix A for sample invitation letter. Six artists provided stories, and their perspectives are presented throughout the report.
- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** Semi-structured informational interviews were conducted via telephone with key state arts agency staff such as the ADA/504 Coordinator and/or Executive Director, as well as any of their core partners. The interviews were used to gain an in-depth understanding of major outcomes from the Statewide Forums/Follow-Up Projects, including newly formed or strengthened partnerships, lessons learned, and factors contributing to sustainability. States were selected for an interview based on implementation of Follow-Up Projects and ongoing focus of working with artists with disabilities as demonstrated through final reports and ongoing communication between the state arts agency and the NADC. Eight states were invited to participate in an interview. Four states agreed to have the interview recorded and transcribed: Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, and Texas. Interviews occurred in April and May 2014 ranging from forty to seventy-five minutes lasting an average of sixty-two minutes. Two states did not consent to recording or a transcription of the

interview so a more informal discussion was held. Information provided by these states is incorporated into the report findings and reinforced comments made by other participants. The remaining two state representatives did not respond to the invitation after multiple attempts. See Appendix B for semi-structured interview guide.

Findings

Description of State Arts Agencies Programs

The purpose of the website review was to gather information about the programs and resources offered by state arts councils/commissions that previously conducted Statewide Forums. The website review focused on three main questions:

- What are the training and grant opportunities offered to artist and arts organizations?
- How is accessibility for people with disabilities highlighted through their website (policy statements, resources listed, etc.)?
- What forms of social media are used by the state arts agencies?

The website review revealed that in addition to general arts programming, the majority of state arts agencies that had convened a Statewide Forum also shared their accessibility statements and accessibility resources on their state arts agency websites. This demonstrated a conscious effort to be inclusive of artists with disabilities. The website review also indicated that there is a shift towards using social media for outreach to and networking among their constituencies.

All state arts agencies at the time of review offered grants for arts organizations. A large majority (80.8%) also offered grants to individual artists, although only a little more



than a third (38.5%) offered professional development opportunities such as workshops, seminars, etc.

Approximately three quarters (73.1%) of the state arts agencies provided access resources and posted their access policy (76.9%). Over half (61.5%) of state arts agencies listed their diversity policy, which often overlapped with their accessibility policy to include people with disabilities as well as other underserved groups. See Appendix C for links to accessibility resources by state.

State Arts Agencies Accessibility Policy Statements Examples

The **Arizona Commission on the Arts** provides assistance through its accessibility programs to artists with disabilities and statewide arts organizations.
<http://www.azarts.gov/programs/accessibility/>

The mission of the **New Jersey State Council on the Arts** (Arts Council) is to improve the quality of life of this state by helping the arts to flourish. Accordingly, the members and staff of the Arts Council are firmly committed to achieving the following goals: Establishing artistically, financially and operationally successful arts organizations, institutions and programs that are diverse and accessible to all New Jerseyans. http://nj.gov/state/njsca/dos_njsca_about.html

State Arts Agency Diversity Policy Statement Example

The **Tennessee Arts Commission's Arts Access** program is committed to providing access to the arts to Tennessee's underserved constituents. Those constituents considered underserved include: people of color (Black/African American, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Native American/Alaska Native and people of Hispanic or Latino ethnicities), people with disabilities, people living in rural communities or isolated settings, children and citizens who are over 65 years of age or older. tn.gov/arts/Arts%20Access.htm

Nearly a quarter of the state arts agencies (23.1%) describe resources and/or programs specific to artists with disabilities. Examples include:

- **Minnesota's ArtReach's "Art For All!"** program will provide quality arts programming to 700 youth and 100 adults who are at-risk, disabled, or low-income, by providing increased programming, reduced fees, and available transportation. arts.state.mn.us/grants/2013/2013-awarded-aa.htm
- The **California Arts Council's Arts and Accessibility Technical Assistance Program** offers mini-grants of \$500 up to \$1000 to support the professional development of artists with disabilities. cac.ca.gov/programs/access.php
- The **Ohio Artists with Disabilities Access Program (ADAP)** provides funding that gives artists with disabilities the resources they need to further their artistic development. oac.state.oh.us/grantsprogs/guidelines/ADAP.asp
- The **Tennessee Arts Access** program offers direct support for arts projects to organizations of color or to organizations primarily benefiting people with disabilities. Funds awarded under this program are made possible through a grant from the NEA. tn.gov/arts/grants/docs/Arts%20Access.pdf

Table 1: Accessibility Resources/Policies Listed on State Arts Agency Websites

	Frequency	Percent
Access Training	3	11.5%
Professional Development	10	38.5%
Access Resources	19	73.1%%
Individual Grants	21	80.8%
Arts Organizational Grants	26	100.0%
Access Policy	20	76.9%
Diversity Policy	16	61.5%
Accommodations Listed	10	38.5%
Other	24	92.3%

Outreach remains a critical piece for state arts agencies, and more and more are using social networking in addition to traditional promotional materials. Four fifths (88.5%) of state arts agencies indicated that they have a Facebook page while 57.7% use Twitter. State arts agencies use e-news two thirds (69.2%) of the time for arts organizations to distribute information and about half of the time for artists (53.8%). A large percentage (73.1%) of state arts agencies also indicated several other ways they promote their programs and activities, predominantly through press releases and YouTube videos.

Description of Statewide Forums

A little over half (55.6%) of the states held single, one day Statewide Forums while other states held them in multiple sites. Twelve states conducted their Statewide Forums in multiple locations including: California, Connecticut (focus groups prior), Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Washington, Arkansas, Missouri, New Jersey, Nebraska, North Dakota, Illinois, Kentucky (follow-up workshops). The Statewide Forums followed a similar format. States frequently had a keynote speaker, successful artist panel, concurrent sessions based on artistic discipline, and performances/exhibitions. The most useful part of the Statewide Forums identified by artists with disabilities was the networking and hearing stories of success. Service providers, educators, and other professionals also began to see arts as a viable career choice after hearing artist stories and witnessing first-hand the talent of artists with disabilities.

Follow-up Projects were introduced in 2006-2007 to support the growing number of states working with artists with disabilities in sustaining their collaborations and provide seed money to address a prioritized need from the Statewide Forums. There were a range of activities carried out by states through their Follow-Up Projects that included professional development training for artists or professionals working with people with disabilities,

development of resources for artists with disabilities including websites, traveling exhibitions, and building artist networks. For details about each state's Forum and Follow-Up Projects, go to semel.ucla.edu/nadc/statewide-forums.

Partners and Participants

Over 9000 individuals participated in Statewide Forum or Follow-Up Projects. Participation in Follow-Up Projects tended to be greater than the Statewide Forums, but states also often engaged in multiple events for their Follow-Up Projects whereas the Statewide Forums were usually a singular event. See Table 2. There was also a much greater range in number of participants for the Follow-Up Projects, from thirty-four to 1612. The number of artists represented was slightly higher in the Statewide Forums, and represented a larger range than those participating in Follow-Up Projects.

Table 2: Participants and Partners Involved in Statewide Forums or Follow-up Projects

	Statewide Forum				Follow-up			
	Total	Mean (Median)	Min	Max	Total	Mean (Median)	Min	Max
Participants	3026	121 (117)	55	225	6198	365 (129)	34	1612
Artists	926	54 (58)	7	89	873	55 (40)	4	40
Partners	278	10 (8)	3	29	149	6 (5)	1	20

The number of partners engaged also varied by Statewide Forum or Follow-Up Project. States engaged nearly three hundred partners to conduct Statewide Forums with an average of ten partners. The Follow-Up Projects engaged about half as many partners (149), and tended to rely on a smaller group of partners. Partners varied in their level of support. Some partners helped host and publicize activities while others were central to

the planning and implementation of each activity. Core partners often included the VSA affiliate, Department of Rehabilitation, University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), regional arts councils, local arts organizations (museums, galleries, theaters), and local and state colleges.

Identified Needs

One outcome of the Statewide Forums is that state arts agencies learned and prioritized the specific needs of artists with disabilities. The identified needs of artists with disabilities, for the most part, mirrored similar needs of artists in general. Artists with disabilities expressed needs for:

- Professional development particularly in marketing and promotion,
- Networking with other artists and employers, and
- Opportunities to showcase their art.

Transportation was acknowledged repeatedly as an “incredibly huge issue.” And not specifically just for people with disabilities: “I wouldn’t even say that is a barrier for people with disabilities, but that is a barrier for anybody in the state. If you don’t have a car or have a reliable car or gas money, it is the same thing” (S. Schmitt, personal communication, May 7, 2014). State arts agencies with their partners addressed these identified needs through various Follow-Up Projects described in more detail below.

Description of Follow-Up Projects (2006-2013)

“One major lesson learned from the committee and Forums work about the disability community and issues that individuals face in developing careers in the arts is that there is no one answer or solution or ‘right way’ in providing resources and programs for individuals with disabilities or working with people in general.” (2008-2009 Illinois Final Report.)

States engaged in a variety of activities that responded to needs of artists with disabilities identified from the Statewide Forums. The majority of Follow-Up Projects tended to fall into one of the following categories:

- Professional development workshops,
- Development of websites or website content for artists with disabilities,
- Traveling exhibitions, and
- Artist networking groups.

The following section describes the most commonly carried out Follow-Up Projects emanating from the Statewide Forum, highlights some of the challenges encountered by states in carrying out the activities as well as the longer term impact of each activity.

Professional Development Activities

Professional development workshops were one of the most commonly executed Follow-Up Projects. Nine states provided professional development workshops on topics ranging from self employment to explaining the 2010 revisions to the ADA to supporting artists with disabilities in their careers. See Table 3. Artists with disabilities were

involved, but not always the primary audience. For example, artists with disabilities may serve as panelists to a group of vocational rehabilitation staff.

Table 3: Audience and Topics Covered in Professional Development Activities

State	Audience	Topic(s) Covered
Florida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Rehabilitation Artists with and without disabilities 	Professional development exhibition of work from artists with disabilities
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artists with disabilities Service providers Arts organization staff 	Tips, tools, and resources on careers in the arts including those at artsworkindiana.org
Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small to mid-sized cultural organizations 	How to serve artist with disabilities through education and hiring people with disabilities
Missouri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artists with disabilities 	Online videos on how to write an artist statement, sell their work, submit work to juried exhibitions, and the difference in types of galleries at vsamissouri.org/webinar-videos
North Dakota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Rehabilitation 	Artists with disabilities stories about career paths
Ohio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service providers Artists 	Share success stories of artists with disabilities and success in supporting them
Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special education teachers/artists Young musicians with disabilities 	Connection of music to curriculum Learn about how the music business works, opportunity to play and receive critique
Texas (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artists with disabilities Service and employment providers 	Self employment
Texas (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts administrators and program staff of specified cultural districts 	Revisions to the ADA, examples accessibility aids, success stories of artists with disabilities
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging artists with disabilities 	Tools for building arts careers Successful artist panel

Florida

In 2006-07, Florida provided professional development, technical assistance and information/resources on careers in the arts for individuals with disabilities through “The Arts – A Realistic Career Path.” Professional development activities included four workshops for nearly two hundred vocational rehabilitation staff, two professional development workshops for artists with and without disabilities, and eight exhibitions of work from members of the VSA Florida artist registry with forty-five different artists participating. Ninety percent of respondents (vocational rehabilitation staff) indicated increased understanding and awareness of the impact of the creative industries on the economy and the great number of jobs that are part of the creative economy. The impact of the Follow-Up Projects included follow-up calls from vocational rehabilitation counselors on specific client questions, the short term employment of ten members of the artist registry and the increased number of exhibition opportunities and sales (\$7000). Two registry members were chosen to participate in a national exhibition at Princeton.

Indiana

Indiana conducted six workshops in six different cities around the state of Indiana. The workshops provided tips, tools and resources on careers in the arts from regional artists with disabilities and presented information and training on the resources available at ArtsWORKIndiana.org. Over one hundred individuals with disabilities, service providers, and arts organization staff representing seventeen counties in Indiana (as well as the Ohio and Kentucky) participated in the workshops. The format for all six workshops followed the same basic structure: a one hour workshop comprised of the artist speaker presentation followed by the ArtsWORK Indiana website demonstration and instruction by the ArtsWORK Indiana Chair. As a result of the workshops, six artists

with disabilities and one arts administrator with a disability were employed, new partnerships formed, and an additional sixty-five email addresses for the ArtsWORK Indiana mailing list were collected; increasing artist directory listings on the ArtsWORK Indiana website by 29% and increasing homepage hits by 56% in the weeks adjacent to the workshops. One rehabilitation staff member stated: “This latest workshop has INVIGORATED our staff.....we are seeing new directions that really never even occurred to us before... the energy is flowing again and ideas are bursting through like daffodils.”

Massachusetts

In May 2009, Massachusetts hosted the *Putting Creativity to Work: Engaging People with Disabilities in the Cultural Life of Massachusetts* conference. The focus was specifically on the senior management leadership of small to mid-sized cultural organizations with the hopes of helping them understand the importance of working with people with disabilities. Over 100 participants attended, although not many at the senior management level. This underscored the challenge of obtaining the attention and involvement of administrative leadership in addressing the needs of artists with disabilities, but the high attendance also reflects a high level of interest among those who may work more directly with artists with disabilities. The goals of the conference were to: assess the state’s resources for people with disabilities and to evaluate existing services among arts organizations, encourage more organizations to create ADA 504 Coordinator positions, and influence attending organizations’ and agencies’ efforts to serve the needs of artists with disabilities through education and sharing resources. It was a half-day conference with closing remarks by John Hockenberry followed by a networking reception and Henry Butler concert. Evaluations indicated increased knowledge on the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, the role of the ADA/504

Coordinator, where to go for information about disability accommodations, and accessible media and resources.

Missouri

Missouri added practical, hands on professional development element to an existing website through three fifteen-minute online videos on the VSA website, vsamissouri.org/webinar-videos. Three local working professional artists were interviewed: gallery owner, Assistant Director of a member based arts organization and an artist with a disability making a living from his art. They speak about how to solicit galleries, write an artist statement, sell their work, submit work to juried exhibitions, and the difference between member-based organizations versus commercial galleries.

North Dakota

In 2012, North Dakota presented “Art=Work in North Dakota” at the North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation Conference which included information on careers in the arts for persons with disabilities and the importance of the arts. Artists with disabilities shared their stories of the impact of art on their life. A copy of the presentation to the Vocational Rehabilitation staff is available online at nd.gov/arts/ada/pdfs/ArtEqualsWorkinNorthDakota.pdf

Ohio

Ohio held a networking workshop in November 2006 primarily for service providers who were interested in learning from each other about developing programs for their consumers and that involved the arts. A secondary audience was artists with a focus on assessing their level of success and next steps. The primary focus of the workshop was



to share ideas and successes encountered by artists with disabilities functioning independently and by service providers supporting artists' work through facilities or agencies. Sessions included:

- Individual Creativity-Investing in the Future of Ohio's Artist,
- Building Community Collaborations: Creating Partnerships and Networks to Support Clients with Creative Abilities,
- Building Creative Interests - Break Out Sessions,
 - Where Do We Start?: Assisting Clients with Creative Interests,
 - Marketing Your Client Creativity: Useful Tools and Tips for Production, Portfolio Development and Promotion.

The networking workshop was attended by fifty-seven service providers, artists, and presenters. The workshop provided a setting for introducing the Careers in the Arts workbook, which was created as an outgrowth of the original 2005 Careers in the Arts Forum. The workbook describes the Statewide Forum highlights and resource session materials. It included a self-assessment to determine where the artist or program is currently functioning and encourages both to evaluate their goals and to explore opportunities in their communities. Over 100 workbooks were distributed.

Tennessee

In 2011, Tennessee held an all day event at the Schermerhorn which included hands on activity stations, performances, art exhibits, and a professional development session led by the Nashville Symphony on how to use music to connect to education. As a result of this event young musicians with disabilities were identified as having a great deal of talent, but little knowledge, guidance or marketing experience in pursuing careers in music. Many of the performers were approached about performances after the spring event at the Schermerhorn, but they did not have any materials (CD, websites,



promotional packets) to provide to help them secure the jobs. Tennessee extended their activities to include a hands on experience for young musicians with disabilities who were interested in pursuing music as a career through the Nashville Jazz Workshop. This follow-up activity invited professionals in the music field to come and speak to the young artists about ways to market themselves, what to expect when entering the music industry, some critique on their performance and the opportunity to go into a recording studio and create a CD for promotional purposes. The Nashville Jazz Workshop had some of their artists talk about promotion and careers in jazz. Then they broke the group into percussion, winds and strings and provided some instruction and critique. At the end, a jazz session was held in which all participants took part. The musicians with disabilities learned improvisation skills which were demonstrated by the end of the workshop in the final performance, process of recording music, and some now have a CD to promote themselves and enter contests.

Texas

In January 2007, Texas presented a two-day workshop by David Hammis entitled “Unraveling the Mystery of Self-Employment in the Arts.” The workshop covered the topic of self-employment in the arts, specifically using the PASS plan and was based on Mr. Hammis’ book “Making Self-Employment Work for People with Disabilities.” Each participant received a binder with handouts and spreadsheets that were referred to during the workshop. A CD with handouts was also provided and videos of self-employment success stories were shown. The workshop was attended by forty-four participants. Of these participants, about half were artists with disabilities, a third rehabilitation counselors, employment professionals, and other specialists who provide supports to people with disabilities as they pursue career goals, and nearly a fifth were family members or mentors to artists with disabilities. Artists with disabilities gained

knowledge on how to write a PASS plan for self employment, with some participants contacting an employment specialist and the Social Security Administration directly after the workshop to get started.

In 2010, Texas offered three workshops for arts administrators and program staff of arts organizations located within the designated cultural districts in Lubbock, Dallas and Houston. Topics covered in the workshop included: statistics regarding people with disabilities in Texas, grant opportunities and guidelines for Texas Commission on the Arts support of programs inclusive of people with disabilities and/or older adults, personal stories of Texas artists with disabilities, including live performance, overview of changes to ADA as of March 15, 2011, presentation on available supports for workers with disabilities, and demonstration of access services, such as audio description, real-time captioning and ASL performance interpretation. Resulting from these workshops was the creation of an online ADA toolkit. The toolkit provides information about the revised Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines, disability awareness and customer service tips and techniques, arts and disability organizations, and a link to the TCA online marketing toolkit. This toolkit is monitored and updated by VSA Texas at vsatx.org/adaToolkit.html

Washington

In May 2007, Washington provided an all day workshop for emerging artists with disabilities on practical tools for building arts markets and careers. It included a keynote address by David Roche, finding funding presentation, successful artist panel, and focused panel on realities of an arts career. Extensive workbooks were given to each participant and arts media-specific handouts were available for pick-up. All materials were provided on computer disk as well as in paper formats. Following the workshop



these materials were made available to anyone who requested them. There were thirty-four people in attendance, twenty-seven of whom were self-identified as artists with disabilities. At least one artist stated that the workshop “made me change my mind about quitting my arts efforts and encouraged me to stick with it.”

A sentiment shared by many states on the success of the professional development workshops is echoed in the 2008-2009 Indiana final report:

“We believe that the number of artists with disabilities that attended each workshop correlated directly to the involvement of the local partner organizations with local artists with disabilities. For example, at our two largest workshops (New Albany and Indianapolis) we had the support of very active partners to get the word out to potential participants.”

Conversely, states that did not get the response they were hoping for discussed the difficulty and importance in getting the word out and gaining the attention of their intended audience.

Website Development and Enhancement

Artists with disabilities who participated in the 2004 Indiana Statewide Forum expressed their need for information related to arts careers, for networking opportunities, and for overcoming negative attitudes regarding the arts as a viable vocational choice. The idea of a website came from these identified needs as well as an attempt to address transportation and financial barriers. The statewide Internet site and artist online directory was launched in 2008 after much site testing, artsworkindiana.org. The



I greatly appreciate "Photography by Kendal" being featured on both the website and the Facebook page. While there are no specific incidents that occurred because of this, the fact remains that it was positive exposure and publicity for myself and my business. This could easily lead to something for me in the future or could be an opportunity for another artist with or without disabilities to move forward in their artistic career despite any reservations. Sometimes it's extremely hard to "put yourself out there" but seeing others paving their way is helpful.

I greatly appreciate any opportunities that come my way through ArtsWORK Indiana and can't thank everyone enough for including me.

Kendal R. Miller

website includes careers in the arts resources, informational pieces by artists with disabilities such as "Promoting Your Arts Business-101" and "Finding Success in Acting," an artist directory, and monthly features on a particular artist. The website is promoted through a monthly e-newsletter that features a new artist and describes what's new on the site. The site is maintained and updated by one of the core partners, the Institute on Disability and Community, UCEDD. During the development phase, Indiana learned that it takes more time than one might think to get a website up and running and that there are several steps that need to take place including: securing content, securing artists for online directory, testing of site, and developing a marketing plan to coincide with launch. The ArtsWORK Indiana website has been recognized widely by its peers and has served as a model for several states that have pursued providing resources and an online artist directory.

For example, in 2011 Connecticut updated the Young Audiences of Connecticut/VSA Connecticut website yaconn.org/ya-artists to include resources on the arts and accessibility, inclusive events, and an artist directory and gallery to showcase the work of visual and performing artists with disabilities.

In 2012-2013, North Dakota launched the Art Equals Work website, ndcpd.org/artequalswork and accompanying Facebook page, facebook.com/ArtEqualsWork. The website includes resources, background of North Dakota's Statewide Forum, and artist directory. Similar to Indiana, North Dakota's University Center for Excellence, the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities, developed and continues to host the website. The logo for the website was created by an artist with a disability.



Traveling Exhibitions

Connecticut's CHANGE Exhibitions



**Entrance of
CHANGE
Exhibition in
Connecticut.**



**Artwork by
James Grave
featured at
CHANGE
Exhibition.**

The State Office of the Arts (DECD-Department of Economic and Community Development) and Young Audiences of Connecticut an affiliate of VSA (YAC/VSA), in discussion with the Connecticut Statewide Advisory Committee, created an exhibition opportunity for artists with disabilities ages sixteen and older through the *CHANGE* exhibition. This was a juried process that drew submissions from ninety-one artists. Fifty-six artworks were selected representing thirty-nine artists from eighteen cities and towns. The exhibitions were held in three professional art galleries from June 2010 to February 2011 attracting over 1200 visitors: the State office of the Arts Gallery, Hartford; the Cornwall Public Library, Cornwall; and the Fairfield Arts Council Gallery, Fairfield. As a result of the first two *CHANGE* exhibitions, Connecticut developed a central system of artwork drop-off and pick-up locations mutually convenient for the artists and the exhibiting galleries. Half of the artists (twenty) attended opening receptions. As part of the exhibition, Connecticut modeled accessibility through provision of Braille, large print, sign language interpretation, audio description, and hung artwork at an accessible viewing level.

Missouri “Where We Can Read the Wind” Exhibition

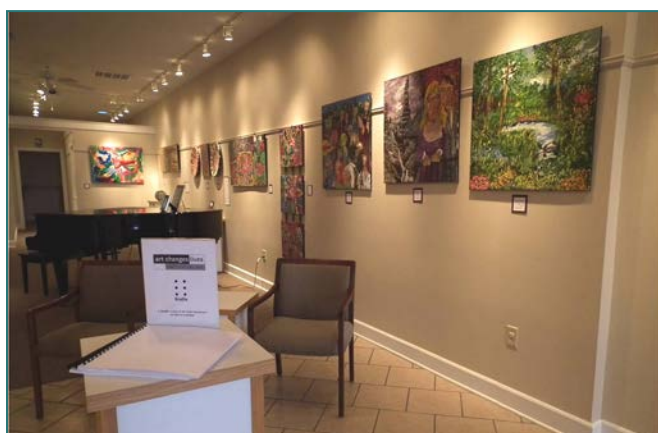
Through the Statewide Forums project in 2012, the second generation of the *Where We Can Read the Wind* anthology traveled across the state of Missouri from May –November 2012: Hannibal Arts Council, Hannibal; Gallery on C Street, Springfield; Capital Arts, Jefferson City. Forty-nine pieces of artwork were published and displayed



Missouri’s “Where We Can Read the Wind” Exhibition.

featuring the artwork and writings of artists with disabilities. VSA coordinated with each gallery/venue for the delivery of the artwork. Each gallery/venue was responsible for installing and de-installing the artwork. The exhibitions were on view at each gallery/venue for approximately eight weeks before the exhibit traveled to the next venue. There was an opening reception for each exhibition and at two of the three venues there was one additional event. At the Hannibal Arts Council there was a poetry reading and at Gallery on C Street there was a reception that coincided with the city's artwalk and one of the artists in *Where We Can Read the Wind* was featured for the evening. Missouri also modeled accessible features through provision of large print and Braille:

Many of the visitors and or patrons of the various galleries commented on the ease of the large print materials and were happy to have them. Often labels are made in quite small type create a barrier even for a regularly sighted individuals. Although the Braille materials were not used as intended, they allowed the public to see the significance of making printed materials and exhibits accessible to all. (2012-2013 Missouri Final Report).

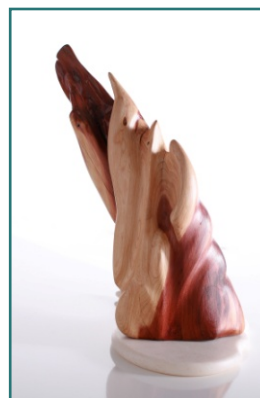


Installation of
“Where We
Can Read the
Wind” at the
Hannibal Arts
Council.

The anthology and traveling exhibition have become an annual event. Several new partners were developed from this activity and there continues to be growing interest by other venues to host the exhibit. One of the identified keys to the success of the traveling exhibition is the quality of the art and professionalism of the exhibit.

Texas Distinguished Artist Veteran Initiative

The Texas Distinguished Artist Veteran initiative, which included a statewide survey of arts programs for veterans, also included a touring exhibition. The exhibitions in 2012-2013 were typically month long exhibits in spaces such as galleries, city facilities, and military facilities in six different cities: Austin, Bryan, Kyle, Lampass, Laredo, and San Antonio. An opening reception was held at each location. The artists in the show helped find partners in their hometowns to exhibit the work. The Distinguished Artist Veteran exhibitions continue. Future annual exhibitions, due to the time and cost associated with moving previous exhibitions, will be in one or two key locations, using existing artist veteran's to conduct audience outreach activities.



"Burst of Cedar" by James Nelson, Kyle, TX.

Artist Networks

"The key factors to having successful networking meeting[s] was strong lead artists in each city and repeat participation by artists." (2007-2008 Texas final report).

Minnesota

Minnesota was one of the first states to pursue regional artists networking group throughout the state to address the need of artists to receive professional and emotional support from others. In 2006-07, Minnesota set out to replicate their Twin Cities **Artists with Disabilities Alliance** (AWDA) group in six regions throughout the state. Eighteen meetings were held during the project period, and attended by thirty-two artists, attending more than meeting. In the year following, Minnesota worked to determine viability and create sustainability for the regional networks. Although each group expressed interest in continuing, difficulties were encountered with several of the groups. The primary difficulties in sustaining the program were the number of sites to coordinate and effort involved to maintain interest and engagement over the course of the year. Being able to secure strong leadership in each site, whether by the local arts council or artists, was very difficult due to already demanding responsibilities and/or health issues. Many were willing to host or attend meetings, but did not have time or the ability to do the level of preparation, outreach, and follow-up needed to keep the group going. In Minnesota's final report another issue was identified, "As I look back on the composition of the groups, the networks that have not remained active (Fergus Falls, Mankato, Mora/Hinckley and to a lesser extent Bemidji) were the networks involving the most artists active at a "hobby" level." Several lessons were learned as to what is needed for regional networking groups to be successful:

- Artist networks need oversight which often requires more direction than the individual participants are able to provide.
- Though helpful, money isn't the only factor that drives success.
- Activities directed towards career development for artists with disabilities do well to focus on issues of personal creativity and the business of the arts.

- Each group is unique and may have a different focus. For example, some may work towards a specific goal whereas others may be interested more in the support.

While Minnesota had difficulty sustaining the six regional artist networking groups originally created, according to VSA Minnesota's website (vsamn.org/artists-disabilities/), three artist networking/support groups continue to meet:

- **The Arrowhead Alliance of Artists with Disabilities (AAAWD)** mission is to promote awareness, standing, community, and opportunity for artists with disabilities in the Arrowhead region of Minnesota (in and around Duluth). For more information about AAAWD, go to [AAAWD on Facebook](#).
- The **Open Flow Forum** is a Twin Cities group for artists with and without disabilities that meets monthly on "First Thursdays." Open Flow provides artists with an opportunity to bring samples of their visual art, poetry, music, memoir, photography or other art form to share and discuss in an informal, supportive, fragrance-free setting.
- **We-R-Artists** is a group of artists with disabilities based in St. Cloud which meets regularly to offer support, share current projects (artwork, writing, music, etc.), meet other artists and network on marketing, sales and other art connections.

Indiana

In 2010-2011, Indiana initiated "**Creative Networks**," an expansion of their Indianapolis group to two other locations. The format for one meeting site followed the same basic structure: a one and a half hour meeting comprised of introductions, speaker presentation with question and answer time, networking/socializing time, update on

member activities and upcoming ArtsWORK Indiana news and activities. The second site focused more on the artist presentation and providing some networking and socializing time over the course of an hour. Over 200 participants from eleven counties (including participants from Kentucky) attended twenty-three meetings. As a result of the satellite networking groups, five artists with disabilities were employed as the facilitators and Project Coordinator and five new partnerships were established. Networking meetings were often an important source of support for artists with disabilities. As Nadine Pinede (personal communication, October 29, 2014, an artist facilitator,) expressed:

“ArtsWORK had a tremendous impact on me as a writer with disabilities. During my time as an artist facilitator, for the first time I was able to come “out of the closet” and feel comfortable discussing my fibromyalgia without shame or the need for long-winded explanations. My contact with the other artists I met was often the highlight of my month, especially because physical mobility was an issue, and I worked from home. Therefore, there weren’t office colleagues with whom to socialize, and even if there had been, I would have felt the need to explain myself, and I wouldn’t have felt the support and understanding I did at an ArtsWORK meeting.”

All satellite groups continued to meet past the project period. However, none of the groups currently meet. Indiana encountered similar difficulties as Minnesota in securing local leadership. As Kristina Davis-Smith (personal communication, April 30, 2014) reflected:

Everybody loves the idea that this is their group. And nobody was going to tell them what way they should do things or do it for them. But at the same time nobody really wanted to do it for themselves either. Really at the end of the day they wanted to give the ideas and wanted to give the ideas and wanted the respect and appreciation that went along with asking for their input and then building it around that, but it seemed the group as a whole wanted somebody else to put it all together.

A major factor contributing to the success of the satellite groups included clear communication among the partners, which at times required face-to-face meetings. In person meetings early on were useful to ensure that everyone understood their roles and responsibilities in coordinating meetings, and getting everyone on board with the project. Indiana also found that formalizing the artist facilitator position was very helpful. This included creating a job description, a Memorandum of Understanding spelling out roles and responsibilities, providing a stipend, and breaking down the artist facilitator costs by monthly tasks. This helped legitimize the position and clearly communicated expectations of the position. It also provided a way to determine payment when an individual could not continue in the position. Artist facilitators should have the following qualities:

- A passionate interest in the project and be self-motivated,
- Social skills and connections in the local community, and
- Some basic computer skills.

Texas

Texas addressed the need for networking through initiating “**Artworks Networks**” groups in six communities. Each location had at least one fall meeting and one spring meeting, co-facilitated by VSA arts of Texas staff and a lead artist in the area. The Texas Commission on the Arts worked with the Offices of Cultural Affairs in each city to find local arts organizations to host the meetings. The purpose of the meetings was to have the artists share resources and begin the process of forming self-sustaining groups. Lead artists in each group were encouraged to coordinate the group to meet beyond the two scheduled meetings. Meetings were held from October 2007 to June 2008, attracting 129 participants. El Paso was the most effective group, meeting three times on their own and planning for an exhibition. The strong leadership in that group by staff from the El Paso State Center and the El Paso Museum of Art was the biggest factor in their success. “What the artist mentoring group meant to one artist: “I have found more galleries to put my work, and part of it is due to your organization, helping me feel that I could do it.” (2007-2008 Texas Final Report). Texas found artists liked the informal nature of the meetings, but also need structure in terms of goal setting and planning of the meetings. Meetings continued beyond the project period, but none of the networking groups currently meet.

Outcomes and Sustainability

Several outcomes emerged from the Statewide Forums and Follow-Up Projects for artists with disabilities, arts organizations, and those who work with individuals with disabilities. Both artists with disabilities and arts organizations increased their knowledge and skills in specific areas, became better connected to each other and other arts and disability organizations, and state arts agencies changed their policies and practices to better serve artists with disabilities.

Benefits to Artists

Artists with disabilities increased their self-confidence and had their talent validated through the Statewide Forum and Follow-Up Projects.

I have attended several Statewide Forums which I was informed about through VSA. The benefits are numerous, but I will only name a few. First of all it was encouraging for me to have met other artists who are disabled and continuing to explore ways to continue doing their art. Such Forums keep people in touch with others....These events motivate disabled people and give them opportunities to get involved and feel part of the mainstream. Being involved helps uplift my self-esteem, it also makes me feel I am part of something worthwhile.

Linda Michael Lo

I was thrilled to be invited to participate in the Forum activities and was able to network with and meet other artists with disabilities. Through these events I learned, gained confidence and heard others validating the work I was doing. I gained energy through this program that stays with me today. (J. York, personal communication, October 23, 2014).

Several of the Follow-Up Projects provided opportunities to develop skills: responding to a call for art, participating in a juried competition, writing an artist statement, creating a CD, and marketing, pricing, and selling their work. The technical assistance received from calls for art or grant opportunities provided artists with disabilities learned skills that translated to applying for other similar opportunities. Artists with disabilities also became more connected with other artists and arts organizations through networking groups, trainings, exhibitions, and websites and Facebook. Some artists, as part of Follow-Up Projects, were directly employed as artist speakers or facilitators or earned income through art sales. To read more about the impact of Statewide Forum Projects on artists, see artist stories in Appendix D.

At that forum I not only met other artists in a similar situation to mine but I also sold two of my drawings, which boosted my confidence. At the forum I learned a lot from the other artists and the sponsors I met. ... Most importantly was making connections with the people I met, just to know there are others out there who are like me. (J. Cole, personal communication, April 11, 2014.)

Organizational Changes

Ultimately, we have come away from the Forum with an institutional culture that includes staff-wide (not just the access director) attention to the needs of artists with disabilities and several legacy pieces, including an adaptable access grant, video vignettes highlighting Kentucky artists with disabilities, strengthened relationships with access-oriented partners, and new procedures for planning and conducting accessible workshops. (2012-2013 Kentucky Final Report).

One of the greatest outcomes from the Statewide Forum projects is that accessibility and engaging artists with disabilities was no longer viewed as a separate activity by a lone staff person, but rather became part of the overall programming. As staff became more aware of the talent and similarities of professional development needs of artists with and without disabilities, activities focused more on artistic discipline rather than disability status.

The Statewide Forums also presented opportunities to develop new partnerships amongst arts and disability communities. These partnerships have spurred on additional activities and allowed state arts agencies to focus in on specific populations or issues: “I really love the partnerships that are starting to happen between arts organizations and veterans organizations. And some of these new organizations that are specifically for arts, for veterans with disabilities, are now becoming our constituents” (C. Winkler, personal communication, May 4, 2014).

Several other organizational changes occurred as a result of the Statewide Forums, expanding the capacity of state arts agencies to work with artists with disabilities.

Through the Statewide Forums, state arts agencies:

- Identified artists with disabilities, including those that were already part of their networks, but had not previously disclosed a disability;
- Increased knowledge of professional development needs and priorities for artists with disabilities;
- Created opportunities for artists with disabilities through expanding eligibility of calls for art and/or providing grant opportunities for artists with disabilities;
- Observed an increase in the number of grant applications from organizations to work with artists with disabilities;
- Increased commitment from agency staff, leadership, and Boards to serve artists with disabilities.

Several of the SAA's indicated that one of the few differences in working with artists with disabilities was they tended to be more emerging artists than some of the more mid-career or professional artists the agency usually worked: "And that is different, just the majority of the artists that came to these events were more emerging artists and that has a slightly different set of needs than established or progressed artists" (K. Davis-Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2014).

This was not equated, however, with a lack of artistic merit. Rather artists with disabilities may be in need of further professional development and opportunities to increase their confidence:

...some of the artists came to us and said, “Because I have a disability, I don’t feel I am on par with other artists like that. I will submit to the exhibit, but...” I would comment, “Have you applied to this exhibit? Have you applied to any other arts council exhibits?” And they are like, “No, they are not for people with disabilities.” But your work is at the same level as these other artists, regardless of who it is for. You should be applying to this program. Your work should be in these shows, and they are as good if not better than some of the artists. That was an epiphany. (S. Schmitt, personal communication, May 7, 2014).

Keys to Success

Several themes emerged as contributing to the success and sustainability of Statewide Forum activities including:

- ✓ **Relevance of activity**
- ✓ **Good partners with good reputations**
- ✓ **Planning and flexibility**
- ✓ **Artists with disabilities treated as artists first**
- ✓ **Funds & technical assistance/ training provided through the Statewide Forums program.**

Relevancy

The Statewide Forums provided states with the opportunity to ask artists with disabilities and arts organizations what they needed and wanted. States achieved success in their Follow-Up Projects when they listened to these expressed needs and designed the activities around what was most important and timely to artists with disabilities and/or arts organizations. Artists with disabilities responded to opportunities provided by state arts agencies that demonstrated a “genuine interest in working with the community in the way they have asked you to do” (S. Schmitt, personal communication, May 7, 2014).

Partnerships and Partnership Building

Across every year, partners were mentioned as the most important contributor to success. Conversely, states that encountered obstacles in implementing their activities often cited difficulties with their partners. It is the quality of the partnerships and level of commitment that can make the difference in how smoothly Statewide Forum and Follow-Up Projects are put into action. Elements of successful partnerships include:

- Shared mission,
- Consensus building,
- Dedication of time and talents by partners,
- Respect for each other,
- Clear and ongoing communication,
- Drawing upon existing relationships and expanding reach to new people and organizations, and
- Diversity of organizations in representation of skills, expertise, and experiences.

You should have a lot of partners, but they should be treated based on how close of a relationship you have with them. And they need to know their expectations up front.

In engaging partners, it was crucial that the mission of the projects matched with the mission or goals of the partnering organizations. Partners need to have a “real meeting of the minds when it comes to how we want to serve these constituents and why it is important” (K. Davis-Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2014). It is also important that the projects are supported by the administrative leadership of the agencies.

I think that the fact that my Executive Director and my Board, the Missouri Arts Council Board, believes in the project so it continues to thrive because of the support that they get from the Missouri Arts Council, the Regional Arts Commission and various other funders throughout the state. (V. Sanders, personal communication, May 19, 2014).

For instance, our Board of Commissioners are much more aware and interested in arts for people with disabilities. I've had the chance to speak up at meetings a number of times and talk about the work that has been done. And they come to me often or they are definitely expressing support for that as well. (C. Winkler, personal communication, May 4, 2014).

Although several partners may be necessary for large or multiple events, not all partners provide the same level of support: “You should have a lot of partners, but they should be treated based on how close of a relationship you have with them. And they need to know their expectations up front “(S.Schmitt, personal communication, May 7, 2014). Schmitt describes partnerships like a hierarchy of friends where you have close friends as the inner circle and other friends. The core group of partners are those you can rely on for ongoing, daily support and follow through on major tasks. Other partners may come into play for specific tasks that match with their area of expertise and availability. This combination of a few core partners who share in the planning and

implementation of various activities with a broader reach for specific tasks was a common pattern. For example, the state arts agency and VSA may be the leaders of an activity, but receive assistance from a local gallery to host and publicize an exhibition.

Planning and Flexibility

Realizing that the Statewide Forum and Follow-Up Projects do take time, particularly in the planning stage, was a common lesson learned. States that had invested time in the planning and building partnerships prior to applying for the Statewide Forum program were in a better position to implement their activities once selected. States acknowledged the time investment in the planning and organizing phase in combination with partners as instrumental to their success. However, even with detailed and dedicated planning, unexpected challenges did present themselves. Many of the challenges related to staff turnover were due to job change, retirement, or health issues. At the time of the review, only a third of the staff involved in the Statewide Forums were still at the state arts agencies.

Health issues were a common reason that artists with disabilities had to step down from an artist facilitator position or were delayed in completing a project they were hired to do. Other time delays came from learning the scope of work was larger than expected. Thus being flexible is an important in continuing to move forward, “First and foremost, being flexible is crucial, as many unexpected challenges came up in our project and we had to reassess, find a solution and move forward.” (2010-2011 Indiana Final Report).

Artists with Disabilities Treated as Artists First

The Statewide Forums helped create attitudinal shifts in how artists with disabilities were perceived by arts employers, service providers, and the general public. This shift was a focus on the art, and artists with disabilities treated as artists first. This means that artists with disabilities were judged based on the quality of their work, like any other artist, through juried shows. In fact, it was often fellow artists with disabilities on review panels who were the biggest critics. Exhibitions and shows were prepared in a professional manner. Virginia Sanders contributed part of the success of their traveling exhibition with the quality of the art and presentation (personal communication, May 19, 2014).

[T]his is actually art and not necessarily just what people would consider therapy or craft movement.

And there is just genuine interest in having the work displayed and I think a lot of it comes from the fact that a lot of people realize this is actually art and not necessarily just what people would consider therapy or craft movement or something like that. It is actually art and it is displayed in a manner that is very professional and the work is professional...

Technical Assistance Provided through Statewide Forum Program

States also cited the Statewide Forums program itself as an important factor in laying the groundwork for their continued work and focus on engagement of artists with disabilities; "...appreciate the chances that you all [NADC and NEA] have given us through the years, and I'm glad that things are coming to fruition, and we are really growing" (C. Winkler, personal communication, May 4, 2014). The process of preparing

an application, planning for the Statewide Forum and other activities, engaging partners, and outreach to artists with disabilities were all important factors in building the capacity to sustain activities. Being recognized by the National Endowment of the Arts and the National Arts and Disability Center through the Statewide Forums award was viewed as important in gaining administrative and executive support and attainment of future awards: "...part of the reason we have been able to get support is because of recognition and the assistance and the prestige of the grants from the National Arts and Disability Center and the National Endowment for the Arts" (K. Davis-Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2014).

In several of the interviews, state arts agency staff also expressed appreciation for the monthly technical assistance teleconferences. The teleconferences were recognized as an important source of knowledge, particularly in areas where they may not receive any training such as evaluation. Following specific training teleconferences, participants would practice their new knowledge by rewriting their objectives or developing a logic model.

Working together to develop the logic model really focused us on the project and what we wanted to accomplish. It made it easier to talk about the project with other agencies and helped the leadership at TCA and the Cultural Districts understand the purpose of the workshops. (2010-2011 Texas Final Report).

Another aspect of the teleconferences was the connections with peers and being able to learn from one another. Kristina Davis-Smith (personal communication, April 30, 2014) remarked, "...to have a community of people to at least listen to and talk to and lean on- I need it. It is very important."

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

One of the biggest challenges to sustainability of this work is staff turnover, whether at the state arts agency or a core partnering organization. It is important that this work not fall to one individual. There is a need for organizational buy-in and documentation of process. Virginia Sanders reflected on her experience when mid project, there were staff changes at a core partnering organization (personal communication, May 19, 2014):

...one of the main lessons learned is to make sure that whoever is working on a project is documenting what they are doing. And if they say they are documenting, just request, send me your notes or something. And I think that would have helped the next person in line that was working on the project to create a real time line for themselves because they would have known exactly where things were.

Another recurring issue is transportation for artists with disabilities and their art. States addressed this issue through selecting sites that were often in central locations and were accessible by public transportation, provided reimbursement or stipends for travel, and trying to form carpools. The strong commitment and good standing relationships with partners greatly facilitated the delivery of art. Another solution for exhibitions was to have a few different exhibitions in various parts of the state rather than have the exhibition travel.

Networking for artists continues to be an area of interest, but the coordination and sustainability of in-person networking groups has presented several challenges. Websites for artists and social media offer one way to facilitate connections and address barriers of transportation and organizational capacity for oversight. Despite difficulty in sustaining the in person networking groups, there were many benefits that

came directly from meeting face-to-face. One potential solution to providing opportunities for face-to-face interactions and networking on a smaller scale is for state arts agencies to become intentional in their outreach and model accessibility in all their programs.

As states incorporate accessibility into all their efforts and across all their various programs, more and more artists with disabilities have the opportunity to participate and interact with other artists.

“We are reaching out intentionally to people and also because we are intentionally making what we do accessible...we are being very vocal about that. We are trying to show it through our presentations and in our talks. ...and I think that because a lot of artists felt very comfortable with us and saw us as resources and part of their network-they look to other things that we do as well. ...They [artists with disabilities] need to feel comfortable and worthy of being there and they need to be invited.” (K. Davis-Smith, personal communication, April 30, 2014).

Several recommendations emerged for ways arts organizations can work better with all artists including those with disabilities:

- Arts activities should respond to an expressed need. Needs may change over time, and so must the activities. It is important to continue to assess needs over time and develop or expand arts programs to meet the current need.
- Find partners whose goals are aligned with the goals of your projects, and clearly articulate their role within the project. Develop a core partnership where there are a few organizations sharing the major roles and everyday responsibilities.

Expand your partnerships to assist in providing other resources such as promoting your events through their networks or providing space.

- Be intentional in your outreach and implementation to demonstrate your willingness to work with artists with disabilities. This may sometimes mean creating an opportunity specifically for artists with disabilities, but it also means making sure that all your activities convey an openness to work with artists with disabilities. This may mean displaying access symbols or providing a contact person for accommodations or simply including a welcoming statement.
- Arts agency staff, particularly accessibility coordinators, need professional development opportunities and/or mentoring to sustain and evolve their efforts in including artists with disability in their programming.
- Document the process to maintain continuity in times of staff transition. One of the challenges to sustainability is a lack of institutional memory when efforts for artists with disabilities are the responsibility of one staff member, and that staff member leaves. To sustain these efforts, it is important to have documentation of what has taken place thus far and to have good partners to assist in moving things forward.
- Evaluate your efforts. Throughout the planning and implementation of arts projects, it is important to be assessing what is working, what is not, and to collect stories of success as well as well as document outcomes such as increased skills or sales. Evaluation is not only critical to helping make changes as needed in your program, but is increasingly an important way to demonstrate capability and success in grant applications to support your arts projects and programming.

Concluding Remarks

The Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities was an innovative program that supported state arts agencies to develop partnerships across the disability and arts communities to learn of the needs and talents of artists with disabilities. In 2013-2014, the Statewide Forums program completed its final cycle adding a twenty-eighth state, Alaska, to the national network of organizations committed to supporting the careers of artists with disabilities. The Statewide Forums program illustrated the importance of listening and involving artists with disabilities in designing arts programming, and the need for a diverse, core partnership to respond to those needs. Artists with disabilities, through the Statewide Forums, found their voice and place within the greater arts community. As their confidence and skill grew, they gained exposure and more employment opportunities. State arts agencies and their partners realized the talent of artists with disabilities, and created a welcoming environment that assisted artists with disabilities in benefitting from their programs and professional development opportunities. The Statewide Forums program leaves a legacy of a network of agencies that continue to evolve to meet the needs of all their constituencies including those with disabilities and work with artists with disabilities to demonstrate that the arts are a viable career path.

Appendix A Call for Artist Stories

The National Arts and Disability Center (NADC) is conducting a review of the Statewide Forums for Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities (“Statewide Forum”) program. The NADC has worked with 27 state arts agencies from the around the United States to remove barriers to careers for artists with disabilities and promote education and employment opportunities in the arts.

We are contacting you because your state arts agency conducted a Forum and may have also carried out one or more Follow-Up Activities. We are gathering information about how participation in the Forum or Follow-Up Activities helped artists with disabilities make progress in their careers or become employed.

We are asking for your help to invite artists with disabilities who participated in your Forum or Follow-Up activity to share their success stories. The stories may include training, education, exhibitions, performances, grants, scholarships, networking, earned income, employment, or sales that resulted from their participation. The artists’ stories will be used along with a review of documents, websites and other materials from states’ to show how the Forums benefitted the participating artists with disabilities.

We are requesting that you forward the following message to the artists, along with the attached consent document.

CALL FOR ARTIST STORIES

Please respond by: (Date to be inserted after IRB approval)

The National Arts and Disability Center is looking for personal stories by artists with disabilities to show how participation in the Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities benefitted their careers. You were identified as having attended your state’s Forum or Follow-up Activity. We would like to ask you to submit a brief story (1-2 pages) that tells us:

- A bit about yourself (brief biographical statement, your artistic discipline, training/and or education in the arts; how your disability informs or influences the creation of your art)
- Your experience and/or role in the Statewide Forum or Follow-up Activities
- Accomplishments that you’d like to share about how your career has grown as an artist since participation in the Statewide Forum or Follow-up Activities. You may include examples of training, education, exhibition or performance opportunities,



networking, grants, scholarships, earned income, employment or sales since participation in the Forum/Follow-Up.

- Optional: Please feel free to attach photographs of your artwork, website, publications, resume and/or personal statement.
- Please sign and submit the attached consent form along with your artist story.

You can e-mail your story, consent form, and any optional documents directly to Katharine Hayward at khayward@mednet.ucla.edu. Please also contact Katharine Hayward if you need any assistance in submitting your story or artwork.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Katharine Hayward, PhD, MPH
Project Director, Statewide Forums on Careers in Arts
National Arts and Disability Center
Director of Research and Evaluation
Tarjan Center at UCLA
Semel Institute, Department of Psychiatry & Biobehavioral Sciences
(408) 294-6171
khayward@mednet.ucla.edu

Appendix B

Semi-Structured Interview Guide for State Arts Agency Staff

Date:

State:

Start time:

End time:

1. What do you remember about your Forum (who was there, how it went, what you learned)? If interviewee was not involved in original Forum, ask how what they were told about the Forum.
2. Who were major partners for your Forum and/or Follow-Up activities?
 - i. What partnerships have you continued since the Forum? Which have been the most important or productive?
 - ii. What partnerships evolved or deepened as a result of the Forum or follow-up activities? How did you engage partners?
 - iii. Which are most important for getting artists employed?
 - iv. What has this/these partnership[s] enabled you to do that you couldn't do by yourself?
3. What were some of the most important activities carried out as part of your Forum or Follow-up?



- i. [if multiple, can you describe the activity that you think was most important? Probe for description of activity, planning process, source of funding and results]
- 4. What were 2-3 significant outcomes that emerged as a result of your Forum? Probe for:
 - i. Specific examples during and after the Forum of positive outcomes specifically for the artists with disabilities who participated in your forums in regards to seeking or maintaining employment, no matter how small. What contributed to these outcomes?
 - ii. Were these artists you worked with in the past?
 - iii. How have you drawn attention to the work of artists with disabilities?
 - iv. Are there particular artists you would like to highlight as having advanced their careers through their participation in the Forum or Follow-up activities? Can you tell me a bit about them? Is there information that is publicly available to share?
- 5. We are interested in finding out how conducting the Forum and Follow-up affected your organization, specifically related to accessibility (physical and programmatic). In what ways has the Forum affected the way your agency now reaches out, engages, or works with artists with disabilities?
 - i. How did your work on the statewide forums affect or improve the operation of your organization in terms of its (probe for)
 - 1. policies
 - 2. agency strategic plan
 - 3. materials/alternative formats

4. space for meetings/venues
 5. panel composition
 6. grant opportunities
 7. leveraging resources/collaboration
 8. calls for art
6. What key factors have enabled you to continue your work after your Forum?
- i. Possible probes: additional funding, administrative support, partnerships, strong arts community in the state, etc.?
7. {If not captured earlier} Tell me about the Follow-Up activities you have been engaged in, or you are planning to engage in, that build upon your work from the forums? Probe for
- i. Target audience for f/u activities –age, disability, art form if relevant. Are the activities for emerging artists [early career] or established artists [have a clientele or ongoing employment]?
 - ii. Was this planned or how did it evolve?
 - iii. Who are your key partners for this (these) activity(ies)?
 - iv. Are further activities planned? What are they? Purpose? Who for?
8. What is something that you think is unique or notable being done by your arts agency to further careers of artists with disabilities?
- i. Probe for details, artists served, how they do it, and funding outcomes

I will be forwarding you a copy of the transcript for your review. You may delete or edit any of your comments. I think that does it. May I contact you if I have any further questions or want to clarify anything from today's call? Thank you for your participation.

Appendix C

Accessibility Resources

The following is a list of all of the States that offer accessibility resources on their website. These resources include links to ADA information, arts and disability related programs and accessibility resources.

State	Name of Page	Link
Arizona	Accessibility	http://www.azarts.gov/programs/accessibility/
Arkansas	ADA Compliance	http://www.arkansasarts.org/grants/ada.aspx
California	Arts and Accessibility	http://www.cac.ca.gov/programs/access.php
Connecticut	Accessibility	http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=3933&q=510052
Florida	Accessibility	http://www.florida-arts.org/resources/accessibility/
Indiana	Accessibility Resources and Opportunities	http://www.in.gov/arts/accessibility.htm
Kentucky	Accessibility and the Arts	http://artscouncil.ky.gov/Resources/Accessibility.htm
Maine	Arts Accessibility	https://mainearts.maine.gov/Pages/Accessibility/Arts-Accessibility

Maryland	Accessibility and the Arts	http://www.msac.org/accessibility-statement
Minnesota	Accessibility Resources	http://www.arts.gov/resources/Accessibility/index.html
Mississippi	ADA Information and Checklist	http://www.arts.ms.gov/resources/ada-checklist.php
Missouri	Access Tips: A Publications of VSA Missouri The State Organization on Arts and Disability	http://www.in.gov/arts/accessibility.htm
Nebraska	Accessibility Center About the ADA	http://www.nebraskaartscouncil.org/news_resources/resources/accessibility.html
New Hampshire	Program Services: Arts for Underserved Populations	http://www.nh.gov/nharts/programs/services/underserved.html
North Dakota	Accessibility/ADA Compliance/ Section 504	http://www.nd.gov/arts/ada/ada.html
Ohio	OAC Accessibility	http://www.oac.state.oh.us/aboutOAC/accessibility.asp
Tennessee	Accessibility	http://www.tn.gov/arts/accessibility.htm

Texas	Accessibility Policy	http://www.arts.texas.gov/footers/accessibility-policy/
Washington State	Policies	http://www.arts.wa.gov/about-us/pages/policies

Appendix D

Artist Stories

Linda Michael Lo

To view her work go to: <http://www.vsatx.org/gallery/lindaMichaelLo/lindaMichaelLo.html>

I have attended several State Wide forums which I was informed about through VSA. The benefits are numerous but I will only name a few. First of all it was encouraging for me to have met other artists who are disabled and continuing to explore ways to continue doing their art. Such Forums keep people in touch with others. Sometimes people who are disabled tend to feel isolated and keep to themselves. These events motivate disabled people and give them opportunities to get involved and feel part of the mainstream. Being involved helps uplift my self esteem, it also makes me feel I am a part of something worthwhile. Recognition is very important to keep me motivate to continue my art creations. For over 5 decades I have been creating art, I do painting on canvas and wood using acrylic and oil paint. I have also done ceramics and wood carvings.

To me art is not just defined as what we see in the mundane perceptible world around us, but it also encompasses our inner-feelings. The colors I use in my artwork transmit the energy from my soul. I strive to make each piece of my art special. Creating art is my therapy.

Information regarding my Awards:

In 1985, my ceramic sculptures took 1st and 2nd place in the South West Ceramic Show in Mesquite, Texas. In 1977, I was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to travel to West Africa. During my travels to Senegal, and The



Gambia I was taught the art of tie dye and batique on cotton fabric .Two pieces of my art was displayed at the J.F.K. Center for Performing Arts via VSA.2004.

These painting were rendered on cotton fabric and told of my feelings when meeting "Mothers of Africa". In 2004, I was interviewed by channel 11 in Dallas, Texas and was given the title of "Disabled Artist of Texas". During this time I was homeless and living in a shelter because my home of 14 years was contaminated with "black mold". My stay in the shelter lasted nearly 3 years. During this time I was diagnosed with cancer of the spine which made me even more disabled. Creating art helped me maintain my sanity during these time of turmoil. In 2006, one piece of art which spoke about my trials with cancer was selected by Eli Lily Oncology and exhibited at the Royal college of Art in London, England. The title of my artwork sent to England was "Expressions of a Cancer Journey".

Group Exhibitions:

- San Diego, California, 'Beyond Boundaries' solo art showing 1995
- Mableton, Georgia, South Cobb Arts, Alliance, 9th National Juried Art Exhibition, 1996 1 piece selected for display. Second showing 1998, art piece titled "Harlem in the 1920's ceramic mounted on canvas.
- Los Alamos, New Mexico, Fuller Lodge Art Center, Biennial exhibition, Fine Craft Juried showing. 1996
- Plano, Texas Cultural Celebration, 1996, Dipo and Lo Art Exhibition, 1996
- Dallas, Texas, Craighead Green Gallery, solo exhibition "The Conversion of the Rhasta Lady" 1996
- Cobeskill, New York, Schoharie County National Small Works 4/1996.
- Dallas, Texas, Dallas Symphony Association, African American Arts Festival 1998
- Dallas, Texas 500 Inc. Montague, 1997
- Ovilla, Texas, Summer Exhibition, Dolls of Africa 1998

- Dallas, Texas, Tremell Crow Pavilion, 1999
- Kansas City Missouri, Rehabilitation Institute 2006-9
- Dallas, Texas, The Dallas Center for Contemporary Arts, 2002
- Dallas, Texas, Delta Sigma Theta, Woman's Museum Art symposium, Women in The Arts Renaissance, 2002
- Princeton, N.J. "Art First, 2003-4 Group Exhibition, Pennsylvania, "Art Abilities Expo" 2003
- Cedar Hill, Texas art exhibition, North Wood University, Cedar Hill art group 2007
- Dallas, Texas featured artist in South West Now Magazine June 2009, 2 page write up
- Dallas, Texas, The Martin Lawrence Gallery, A the Galleria, Ability Expo 2010.
- Dallas, Texas, Sustaining Artist and their Environment, 1st annual exhibition 2011.
- Austin, Texas artwork selected for poster, Disability Mentoring Day, "Putting Dreams to work" 2013
- Texas Dept of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services.
- Dallas, Texas, Reach of Plano, artwork selected by VSA, 2010- 2014
- Dallas, Texas, UTA art exhibition 4 pieces on display 2014
- San Antonio, Texas, High Wire Art Gallery showing 2014

Education:

- Graduate of Art Instructions Schools ,Minneapolis, Minnesota, graduated 1965
- St. Peter's College, N.J. BA Urban Studies, minor Art

Art Affiliations:

- VSA Texas, Austin 1995 to present
- Irving Art Center, Artist Connection 2010-present



- Former Artistic Director, Irving Black Arts Council, Irving Texas 1997-1999
- Schomberg Center for Cultural Development, Manhattan, N.Y. 2000-present
- JBall, Junior Black Academy of Arts and Letters 2014
- St. Peter's college, B.A. Urban Studies, minor art, graduated 1973

Publications:

- Featured artist, "Metro, Prime Time", Anchor Garry Reeves, channel 11, 2004
- Nami Dallas, Newsletter, Dallas Voice on Mental Illness, Volume 11, Issue 10, October 2008
- Dallas Metro, Dallas Morning News Expanded Local News, Exhibited at wok at North Wood University, Cedar Hill, Texas 2/2007
- Fox 4 News, Dallas, Texas interviewed by Sal Garza, Linda and her art. 10/2010

Joe Cole

Weatherford, Texas

After many years of working with a disability there came a time in 2002 when I had to end my career as a photojournalist that I had worked at and loved for over 30 years. At that time I was 56 years old and although I tried to find a job in another field I kept hearing the same things. One potential employer told me he liked my resume but he wanted "A younger guy." Another asked, "What's this leg thing?" referring to my need to walk with a walking stick. I kept hearing similar things so I gave up on that and returned to something I had enjoyed since I was a kid. I thought maybe I could become an artist full-time.



I created several pieces as an inventory and discovered VSA Arts of Texas in Austin through research on the internet. At one point I taught a drawing workshop put on by VSA Texas. However it was difficult trying to sell my art although I was told it was quite good, perhaps because most of the art shows and events VSA Texas put on were in Austin, 200 miles from where I live.

In 2005 I was invited to participate in a VSA sponsored forum and art show in Denton, an easy drive from where I live. At that forum I not only met other artists in a similar situation to mine but I also sold two of my drawings, which boosted my confidence. At the forum I learned a lot from the other artists and the sponsors I met. I also made friendships such as with April Sullivan, a VSA Texas staff member. Most importantly was making connections with the people I met, just to know there are others out there who are like me.

A few years later I was invited to a forum at the Rose Marine Theater in Ft. Worth, near where I live. At that forum I met more artists with disabilities and again met April. All of the participants spoke and told of what kind of work they liked doing and displayed some of their art. Each of us talked and showed some of our work. Along with compliments were suggestions and ways of selling art were discussed. That forum was fairly small, only about 10 artists participated. I enjoyed that one the most as it was more intimate and we had more time to discuss our art and ways of marketing it.

Where I live there doesn't seem to be many things like that I can attend. Although I live in the Dallas-Fort Worth area where there are a lot of talented artists there aren't many disabled artists I get to know. I'm not able to take my art to art shows where I have to set up a table to display my work. I have to participate in art shows where I can ship a few pieces to be displayed. VSA Texas has occasional shows like that and that's about the only time I can offer my work for sale. I appreciate what they do. I also appreciate

the forums I've been able to attend. I just wish there were more in my area and more art shows I could participate in.

I enjoy creating my art but I need to offer it for sale.

Randy Souders

<http://www.randysouders.com/artist.htm>

I attended the VSA Texas statewide forum on careers in the arts 2003. However, by that time I had already been a full time artist (painter, print publisher, gallery owner) for 25 years (beginning November 1978). During the 1980's there were some years in which I had 30+ public showings --mostly art festival type events. I had been actively promoting and marketing my work through various means (direct mail, catalogs, website and online auctions) for a long time. I launched my website in 1998.

I also had a long history of both participating in --and organizing-- group exhibitions involving other artists. In 1988 I co-created a juried exhibition called "[Call to Rise](#)" which featured works by disabled artists at the Orlando Museum of Art in Florida. This was the brainchild of neurosurgeon Dr. J Darrell Shea (Humana Hospital) who was a collector of my work. We formed a committee which resulted in our collaboration with VSA (Very Special Arts as it was called then). During the event I first met VSA founder Jean Kennedy Smith. In June 1989 I was invited to attend and speak at VSA's [International Festival](#) in Washington, D.C. Shortly thereafter Mrs. Smith asked me to join VSA's national board of directors. I served on the board until 2004 when we voted to officially "re-affiliate" (merge with) the Kennedy Center. During my time I helped create, and

wrote the introduction to, VSA's book "[Putting Creativity to Work: Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities](#)" (page XIV- XV).

So I came to this 2003 statewide forum armed with my own personal and professional experiences as well as a desire to learn firsthand the difficulties and issues other artist's were facing. Being a working artist is always a challenge for anyone (hence the prefix "starving" artist). Add to that the difficulties of disability and your challenges are doubly hard. In my case I couldn't have accomplished 1/4th of what I had without a dedicated support system (primarily my family). This appears to be a common denominator of most creative people (ref. "[Creating Minds: An Anatomy of Creativity](#)" by Howard Gardner). In my case, I have always had to rely on others to perform most of the tasks I couldn't physically do (i.e. picture framing, packaging, shipping, setting up exhibitions, office work etc. The list is fairly extensive). For the most part, my contributions consisted of creating paintings for sale, overseeing their reproduction (prints, posters, cards etc), public appearances/ speaking, signing products, creating marketing plans, promotions, interviews, etc.

I recall attending a session on grants, fellowships etc. However, I personally have never had the need to apply for those in order to fund my artistic career.

The one major thing I came away with was an understanding of how the Social Security system works and can support working and aspiring artists with disabilities. I learned about the SSDI system which proved highly beneficial to me shortly thereafter.

As a self-employed artist I had always been forced to secure my own medical coverage. The plans that were available to someone in my condition were always horribly expensive, limited in coverage, and contained every incentive >not< to use them. As a consequence I hadn't received the sort of routine exams, testing and treatment a person

in my condition should have. I was fortunate to have only had a couple of serious medical complications during my career but my luck ran out shortly after this conference. I found myself faced with the following choice:

To try and continue on as I had been but at the risk of my health and lifespan --or-- take advantage of some medical/disability entitlements I had earned in order to try and regain my health and (hopefully) allow me to continue as a gainfully employed artist.

I've since experienced multiple other serious disability related/ neurological complications which have prevented me from working as I had before. However, I've taken the opportunity during this time to pursue other --as yet-- "non commercial" activities such as continuing education, writing etc.

So for me, the 2003 forum was literally a "life saver." At nearly 60 years of age I'm still hoping to be able to embark upon a "late great phase" at some point. For now, I'm happy to do what I can to help others with disabilities who have similar artistic aspirations.

More Background:

Briefly, I was injured in 1972 (C3/4 spinal cord injury/ incomplete quadriplegia) shortly before my 18th birthday. Initially I lost all use of my extremities though I eventually regained much of the use of my arms but not my fingers though I use my hands to paint.

In 1978 --after graduating with a BFA in art-- began working as a full time artist (painter). During my 35 year career I established my own gallery, frame shop and print publishing/ marketing business. In 1990 I began a parallel career as a featured gallery artist with the Walt Disney Company that continues to this day.



<http://www.randysouders.com/disney>

I also married that same year and have two daughters and two grandsons. I've earned my living exclusively from my art.

In 1989 I met Jean Kennedy Smith who asked me to serve on the national board of directors of VSA Arts (then called Very Special Arts). I am profiled in her book "[Chronicles of Courage](#)" as well as VSA's 25th anniversary book "[Journey to Here](#)." I also wrote the forward to their book entitled "[Putting Creativity to Work: Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities](#)." I served in the capacity of board member until 2004 (I think) when we unanimously elected to formally be governed by the Kennedy Center .

Janie York

Textile/Mixed Media Artist

Omaha, NE

I grew up the only girl and oldest of four children. I was always making something ... doll clothes, flags, costumes and bunk houses for my brothers along with clothes for a very unappreciative cat. During this time I was becoming increasingly interested in my grandmother's hobby and extra income stream, quilting. I spent long hours watching her quilt at the frame in her bay window, but although she enjoyed the process, I believe she thought it menial labor and would not teach me. It was years later as an adult that I finally began to learn quilting from my sister-in-law. I was an immediate convert to the craft. I became an avid quilter always searching for new methods, new classes and creative ways to use quilting in clothing and home decorating. I was a quilter ... and

knew of quilters who were also artists ... I was not able to identify myself as an artist, but was happy just to have quilting as a part of my daily life.

Between 1993 and 1994 my life took a drastic turn. After nearly a year of violent and debilitating attacks of vertigo, I became deaf in one ear and lost half of the hearing in the other. When I finally found a doctor to help me I was diagnosed with Menier's disease. While he helped me into the correct type of hearing aids I worked on adjusting to this new normal. One thing that remained unchanged was my love of art and quilting ... perfect hearing is not required for either.

While I have never felt that my disability has had a direct effect on my art, it does make me more mindful of my surroundings and gives me a wonderful opportunity to educate the children I work with on hearing loss and communication.

My primary art form is textiles, but that has grown into textile based mixed media combined with personal story. I began offering quilting services in 2002, primarily memory quilts. Although some work was coming my way I still fell short of making a living and still could not use the term artist to define myself. In 2005 I was accepted as a teaching artist with the Nebraska Arts Council. With this designation I could now go into schools as a teaching artist ... me an artist ... the idea began to take root. As my programs developed and students referred to me as "their artist" I found that I could finally begin to use the term artist as I spoke about myself.

I was thrilled to be invited to participate in the Forum activities and was able to network with and meet other artists with disabilities. Through these events I learned, gained confidence and heard others validating the work I was doing. I gained energy through this program that stays with me today.

From the Forum sessions another project was launched that I participated in, The Enabled Artist Project. Through this project, artists with disabilities were given the opportunity to submit a project description and compete for a \$500.00 grant to develop that project. I was awarded one of those grants, again sending my confidence soaring and helped me to continue to develop programs and skills.

Today I am just getting back to arts programming, creating and quilting after spending 3 years completing my Master's in Recreation Therapy. I am just beginning a new job and once again adding some arts programming to my schedule. My primary creative focus is now turned back to that original Arts Council designation as a teaching artist. Up to this point my identity as an artist comes primarily from work that I have done with a variety of groups.

Now I would like to begin working on the suggestion in the comments section of my acceptance to the arts council that stated, "would really like to see artist's own body of artwork further developed and exhibited" answering this call is my next quest. I am in the process of setting some creative goals and discovering who I am as an individual artist. The experiences I had as a part of the forum group continue to ignite my passions and motivate me to explore this new phase of my creative journey. Thank you for making this possible.

You can view examples of memory quilts and work done with some of my groups on my Facebook Page, Cherish the Memories at

<https://www.facebook.com/CherishYourMemories2?ref=hl>

Janie York

15906 Cedar Circle Omaha, NE 68130 (402) 880-3938

janie.york@outlook.com

Education University of Nebraska Omaha

May 2014 Master of Arts Recreation Therapy

Bachelor of Science Family and Consumer Science / Minor in Art History



Strengths Summary:

Highly developed people skills:

Unique ability to engage with everyone from child to executive
Outgoing yet gentle personality builds trust and rapport quickly
Passionate motivator, able to help others find confidence in their abilities

Over twenty years of programming experience including:

OPS – 10 years special needs and at risk youth
Community outreach
Staff training
Volunteer recruitment and training
Elders in long term care
Individuals with dementia
Individuals in short term rehabilitation
Mental health program facilitator
Persons with developmental disabilities

Skilled presenter and program facilitator:

Conference presenter in a variety of venues
Exceptionally high energy level, especially evident when teaching and presenting
Highly creative, unique ability to create programs for any age, skill level and interest

Computer Proficiencies

Microsoft Office Suite
IN2L – Computer applications for elders
Eager to learn new applications

Experience:

Brookestone Village – Life Enrichment Coordinator – Oct 2009 – Nov 2013

- Maintained and oversaw resident documentation according to MDS 3.0 guidelines for 140 bed facility
- Hired, supervise and trained Life Enrichment staff of 5
- Developed monthly programming calendar based on resident preferences and current research
- Managed annual department budget of \$35,000
- Created adaptations as needed to insure resident engagement in leisure

activities

- Developed teamwork and communication between departments and shifts
- Was active member of leadership team maintaining both department and facility wide responsibilities
- Assisted with development of Dementia Programming training video
- Provided hearing aid cleaning, care and education program for residents, family and staff

Friendship Program – Aug 2008 – Oct 2009

- Maintained client records, daily charting and assessments
- Created educational programming to promote mental health recovery
- Obtained donations of products and services to benefit organization
- Developed monthly programming calendar
- Supervised Program Specialist staff of 10
- Assisted caseload of 16 clients in reaching recovery goals
- Monitored activities of 75 – 100 clients daily

Janie Lynn Textiles - Independent business – Jun 2002 – May 2008

- Conducted textile art residencies for schools and community organizations
- Collaborated with educators and stakeholders regarding program content based on state standards
- Developed adaptive textile arts programming for special needs populations
- Presented educational workshops for teaching professionals at conferences
- Produced marketing materials and maintain administrative records
- Marketed programs and products through community events and networking

Interim Executive Director - City Sprouts Feb 7, 2005 – Dec 31, 2005

- Cooperated with board and community to fulfill the mission of City Sprouts
- Gathered organizational documents used to set up City Sprout's first working office
- Coordinated events and garden work days to engage school children and community members
- Recruited and trained volunteers

Professional affiliations

- Teaching Artist - Nebraska Arts Council-Artist in Schools and Community Program



- Speaker - Nebraska Humanities Council Speakers Bureau
- Member – ATRA – American Therapeutic Recreation Association
- Member – NeRPA – Nebraska Recreation & Parks Association
- Member – GSA – Gerontological Society of America
- Member - [Delta Epsilon Iota](#) Academic Honor Society
- Graduate – Year one – Non Profit Executive Institute

Recognitions

- Nebraska Health Care Association, Activity Department of the Year
- YWCA Women against Violence Program - Children's Quilt Appreciation
- Magna Cum Laude graduate UNO Human Resources Family Science
- Nebraska State Quilt Guild - Integrating quilting with academic course work
- Miller Park YMCA Coach of The Year

What can we build together??

Janie York – Summary of Presentation and Teaching Artist Experiences

Omaha Public Schools – Burke High School – In School Suspension Supervisor – 1994-1999

During my five school terms at Burke High school I created a curriculum for students assigned to In School Suspension attending for 1-5 days depending upon the infraction. When I arrived at my post in September 1994 there was no curriculum, goals or order in the room. I set about to change that and created a program that was fully in place by the start of the 1994/95 school year. Using the reteaching definition of discipline the students, teachers, administrator, parents and I worked together to help at risk students set goals that included graduation. I loved my time at Burke and feel that I made a real and lasting difference for those students.

June – September 2002 – Children's quilt workshops and project:

Over 100 children took part in this series of workshops. All of the children had experienced domestic abuse either personally or through observation. The children designed 12" quilt blocks asking for an end to violence in all forms. I then created a quilt from these blocks. The former YWCA was the contractor and owner of the quilt.



Local substitute teacher – Wahoo and Yutan Nebraska – 2002-2003

With a Bachelor's degree an individual is allowed to act as a substitute teacher in some Nebraska counties. Saunders County is one of those. I substituted in both grade and high school over this 2 year period limited to 40 hours per school year.

ESU 3 Preschool – Gretna, NE – 2004/05

During the 2004/05 school year I worked as a teacher assistant for the ESU 3 preschool in Gretna while I prepared my application to be admitted to the Nebraska Arts Council Teaching Artist Roster. During this time I helped to guide our youngest learners toward success in school throughout their life. Although I knew this would be a short term placement I enjoyed interacting with the students and parents while I learned a number of classroom management techniques from the teachers. I have found many of those techniques to be universal regardless of the age of the student.

March 23, 2005 I was accepted as a Teaching Artist with The Nebraska Arts Council, opening doors to many schools and organizations not available to me prior to this designation. What follows is a sampling of the various residencies I have done as a teaching artist. I have not included dates but they were all completed between 2005 and 2013. I hope this gives you an overview of my abilities and adaptability in teaching situations.

Conferences:**Creative Minds Conference – Two consecutive years
Sweet Briar Virginia****Attendees – Teachers most from Special Education, Art and Curriculum
Development**

I taught workshops on journaling and mixed media landscapes showing teachers how to integrate these methods into their classroom activities and state standards.

**Alegent Hospice volunteers appreciation and training conference
Omaha, NE**

I taught journaling for healing to adult hospice volunteers to help them through the many losses they encounter in this role

Nebraska Parks and Recreation Association Annual Conference Omaha, NE

I presented a journaling workshop on how to use journaling in a recreation therapy setting. The participants learned a number of painting techniques that could be used to make the journal along with writing techniques that could be used for a number of applications by recreation therapy clients.

National Community Gardening Conference Minneapolis, MN

During this conference I taught a mixed media workshop titled Stories Grow in My Garden. The intent of the workshop was to give participants new ways to engage both garden members and the community in telling the stories that promote the growth of gardening in general and community gardening in particular. The session was a huge success!

Educational Webinar Omaha Nebraska – Sponsored by Vetter Health Services

I am an advocate for teaching communication techniques to assist individuals who are hard of hearing and their families. Due to my own hearing loss I have become quite an expert on the matter. During this webinar I explained how to care for and wear hearing aids, how to assist someone needing help with their hearing aid and helpful communication tips. This webinar was presented to Recreation Therapists and Activity Directors.

Teaching Artist Experiences:

I Make the World a Better Place Yates Alternative School – Omaha, NE

Using a quilted banner the 100 students in this school created in art and word documentation of how they make the world a better place. This was very relevant work for these students, as many of them only saw themselves as a problem with nothing

good to contribute. While some students took more encouragement than others they all created a meaningful work of art during this residency. Each student did his/her own machine quilting on the piece.

Douglas County Youth Correction Center – Omaha, NE
The Next Chapter

Using the same style of banner that we used at Yates, young men who were incarcerated created a work in both art and word that told the story of the next chapter of their lives when they were released. These stories again took encouragement to develop but over the course of this residency the young men poured out their deepest wishes through these pieces of art. Each young man also did his own machine quilting on the piece.

Life Story Project – Omaha, NE

This project was done with 25 elders at the Rose Blumkin Home and was then repeated with 140 individuals with developmental disabilities from 7 local agencies.

Using a round quilted wall-hanging approximately 15" in diameter, each participant quilted his/her own piece on the machine, painted a background on the piece and then created a collage style representation of his/her life story. This was a powerful project collecting stories from individuals who often have no opportunity to tell of their life's accomplishments, dreams and goals.

Gomez Heritage Grade School

I conducted residencies at Gomez Heritage two consecutive years with the eight kindergarten classes. The first year we made 2 large mixed media landscapes that depicted the school and surrounding neighborhood. The students learned how to construct roads, make trees and buildings. Most importantly they learned skills in planning, cooperation and delayed gratification. Parents took great pride in acting as volunteers and students enjoyed being the translators, as most of the parents spoke no English and me no Spanish.

The next year we completed an Eric Carle author study with the eight kindergarten classes. The students painted a variety of white fabrics and from these fabrics created the illustrations for the book their class had selected. Again parents assisted, children

translated and through much laughter and determination the project was a huge success!

Omaha Public Schools/Sister Cities Landscape Project Omaha, NE

During this project five third grade classrooms in the OPS system created landscapes to depict their school neighborhood. In addition, an oval cameo was created in the upper center of each piece representing one of Omaha's Sister Cities. Working with the Sister Cities organization I scheduled speakers to come to the schools and provide information about the country that their school was representing. Again the students learned to work cooperatively, plan their work and learn about both delayed gratification and mindfulness. Students came in daily with new observations they had made that could be added to the piece. Because I also did individual classroom workshops creating a small landscape with each student, total student participation for this project was 350 students.

Omaha Public Library 140 Anniversary Quilt Omaha, NE

During this project I met with small groups of library patrons at each of the 12 branches in the OPL system. After meeting with these groups to gather the stories of their branch, I worked with volunteer quilters to create the final piece, a textile art history of the Omaha Public Library. I felt honored to have been invited to coordinate this project.

Kendal R. Miller

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Photography by Kendal-Kendal R. Miller on Facebook PhotosbyKendal on Twitter -



Indiana Artisan-

I greatly appreciate "Photography by Kendal" being featured on both the website and the Facebook page. While there are no specific incidents that occurred because of this, the fact remains that it was positive exposure and publicity for myself and my business. This could easily lead to something for me in the future or could be an opportunity for another artist with or without disabilities to move forward in their artistic career despite any reservations. Sometimes it's extremely hard to "put yourself out there" but seeing others paving their way is helpful.

I greatly appreciate any opportunities that come my way through ArtsWORK Indiana and can't thank everyone enough for including me.

Nadine Pinede

www.nadinepinede.com

ArtsWORK had a tremendous impact on me as a writer with disabilities. During my time as an artist facilitator, for the first time I was able to come "out of the closet" and feel comfortable discussing my fibromyalgia without shame or the need for long-winded explanations. My contact with the other artists I met was often the highlight of my month, especially because physical mobility was an issue, and I worked from home. Therefore, there weren't office colleagues with whom to socialize, and even if there had been, I would have felt the need to explain myself, and I wouldn't have felt the support and understanding I did at an ArtsWORK meeting.



In fact, my experience with ArtsWORK, both as artist facilitator and later as a grantwriter for a subsequent mentoring workshop, helped me create a special panel session on Writing Pain, Loss & Trauma for the largest professional writer's conference in the US: https://www.awpwriter.org/awp_conference/event_detail/435

May I add that Jane has been a particularly encouraging "believing mirror," to borrow a phrase from Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way*. These are the people who remind us that our art matters, when we find ourselves filled with doubt.

P.S. When I think of it, what I loved most about our monthly meetings is that across our many different artistic disciplines, ages, backgrounds, and disabilities, we were able to serve as believing mirrors for each other. That's a rare and precious gift, and it's one I still miss.

South Central ArtsWORK Indiana Helping Forge a Stronger Arts Community

Author Nadine Pinede will tell you that, as a writer one becomes rather used to "working in isolation." While the quiet solitude of the creative process is something many artists are familiar with, Pinede is certain it can also be a hindrance in developing a career.

Pinede is the artist facilitator for the South Central ArtsWORK Indiana meeting monthly in Bloomington. One of two satellite programs of ArtsWORK Indiana's Creative Networks project,

South Central provides opportunities for networking, sharing, and learning.

"ArtsWORK Indiana's series of regional workshops on careers in the arts for people with disabilities helped provide some of the impetus for developing the satellite sites," said Jane Harlan-Simmons, research associate at the Indiana Institute on Disabilities and Community (IIDC). "For people with disabilities, transportation can often be a significant



Artist Nadine Pinede
(Photo by Erick Janssen)

challenge. The satellite program helps us reach beyond Indianapolis and provide face-to-face programming for all people interested in careers in the arts."

Partnering with the City of Bloomington through its Bloomington Entertainment and Arts District (BEAD) and IIDC, ArtsWORK Indiana set about expanding the Indianapolis workshop model. The first step was securing Pinede as the artist facilitator.

"Bloomington feels like a natural location, with lots of artists, but also a place with a very strong level of community support," she said. "When they told me the artist facilitator had to be a person with a disability, I was a little concerned. I have what many consider an unseen disability, but from the moment I came to the first meeting I felt welcome and at home. That was the impetus for me getting more involved."

It is that level of support and encouragement Pinede and Harlan-Simmons want to share with others interested in careers in the arts. It is also something they hope to expand upon through the development of a mentorship program currently under funding consideration by a local funding source.

Pinede says attention to social justice and the arts makes the ArtsWORK program special. Whether artists come for direction and networking, or more in the role of mentors, sharing ideas on how they have worked through their challenges makes a very real difference.

"We had brought Indianapolis artist Nina McCoy here with several pieces of her artwork to share her story with us, and it was very inspiring," Pinede said. "This is the sense of community we have in the arts. The force that keeps people working together is very strong, and this lets people know that their work matters."

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