

**Final Report**  
**Summary of 2005 Statewide Forums on**  
**Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities**

Olivia Raynor, Ph.D.  
Katharine Hayward, Ph.D.  
National Arts and Disability Center  
University of California Los Angeles

**Arizona**

***Building Your Career Forum***

- October 1-2, 2005-Scottsdale, Arizona: Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts

**Participants:** Fifty-six participants attended the forum, with the majority being artists with disabilities. Participants had to apply to go to the forum. The purpose of the forum was to focus on individuals who had begun taking steps toward an arts career.

**Forum Activities:** The forum was held on the final day of the LEAD Conference. The first day of the forum consisted of a keynote speech, lunch, facilitated panel discussions on the current landscape for Arizona artists with disabilities, services available to artists with disabilities, dinner, and roundtable discussions. The second day of the forum focused on action planning. Small groups were formed based on artistic discipline.

**Outcomes/Future Activities:** Four participants of the forum were supported to attend the ACA's Southwest Arts Conference (01/27/06) and design an agenda for one of its sessions. VSAA is connecting artists with disabilities to resources via e-mail and is developing a web site that will have easy access for artists with disabilities to show their work. One participant linked up with another and is opening a gallery.

**Total Expenses:** \$17,000.

**Florida**

***Creativity works!: A forum on careers in the arts for people with disabilities***

- November 5, 2005-Jacksonville, Florida: Cummer Museum of Arts and Gardens

**Participants:** There were 76 artists with disabilities in attendance at the forum from areas all across the state of Florida. The artists were of all ages and represented multiple arts disciplines.

**Forum Activities:** The forum was held at the end of the VSA arts Institute. There was a plenary session on career options followed by concurrent workshops on vocational rehabilitation, accessible transportation, navigating Social Security benefits, financial resources, and an open arts studio. At lunch there was a performance. After lunch there were concurrent workshops on thinking outside the box and career guidance for those in the literary arts, visual arts, and performing arts. The last workshops of the day were on the business side of the arts and advocacy and networking.

**Outcomes/Future Activities:** Networking was thought to be the most useful part of the forum along with the session on the business side of the arts. VSAFL will follow-up with participants and discuss their Action Planning Worksheets. VSAFL has also developed a strategy for planning future regional trainings.

**Total Expenses:** \$29,870.

### **Nebraska**

#### ***A Forum for Exploring Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities***

- October 18, 2005-Kearney, Nebraska: University of Nebraska, Kearney
- November 1, 2005-Omaha, Nebraska: Omaha community Playhouse

**Participants:** Fourteen participants attended the forum in Kearney. Sixty-eight participants attended the Omaha forum. Artists had a variety of disabilities and represented multiple arts disciplines.

**Forum Activities:** The format of the forums was the same at each of the venues. There was a keynote speaker followed by a panel of four artists who shared their experiences and backgrounds. Following lunch, the participants attended breakout sessions in varying arts disciplines.

**Outcomes/Future Activities:** There are plans to reconvene the planning committee to create an ongoing permanent committee to advise both the Nebraska Arts Council and VSA arts Nebraska. They are also continuing to seek additional funding from various sources.

**Total Expenses:** \$27,070.

### **New Hampshire**

#### ***Creative Work Opportunities for All: New Hampshire's statewide forum on careers in the arts for people with disabilities***

- November 1, 2005-Concord, New Hampshire: Courtyard Marriott

**Participants:** The forum consisted of 72 participants. Participants had a variety of disabilities and represented individuals in the visual, literary, and musical arts.

**Forum Activities:** The forum consisted of two plenary sessions on how to retain Social Security benefits while working and polishing presentation skills for visual artists, musicians, performers, and writers. In the afternoon three workshops were offered including: school to work transition, self-employment, eliminating the fear factor of accommodations for people with disabilities. There was also an informal gallery set up for the day and resource materials available to all participants. The final session was on next steps.

**Outcomes/Future Activities:** Many individuals reported on their evaluations their next steps: working on their portfolios and contacting galleries, calling vocational rehabilitation for assistance, researching information on publishing, developing retail markets, and looking into the possibility of offering workshops or classes in their communities. The New Hampshire Arts Council responded to the needs of artists for networking with one another and receiving additional training by implementing the Artists Opportunity Grant. Professional artists may request \$250 to \$1500 to support a wide variety of opportunities that can advance their work. This includes structured mentoring sessions between master level and emerging professional artists, professional development opportunities such as attending classes or conferences, the development of promotional materials including a web site or printed materials, and opportunities to develop, exhibit or perform works. This is a matching grant.

**Total Expenses:** \$37,497.

## **Ohio**

### ***Careers in the Arts: Exploring inclusive ways for artists with and without disabilities to build and enhance their careers***

- September 19, 2005-Columbus, Ohio: Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts

**Participants:** There were a total of 78 participants at the forum including 31 individuals who identified themselves as artists. The remaining group was comprised of educators, employers, treatment specialists, forum presenters and members of the career forum planning committee.

**Forum Activities:** The forum consisted of two plenary sessions on identifying obstacles and Ohio Arts Council resources. There were also six breakout sessions. The breakout groups included sessions on polishing your professionalism as an artist, looking beyond the obvious jobs, understanding SSDI as a working artist, rehabilitation services commission and the business plan, adapting space for creating and exhibiting work, and mentoring 101.

**Outcomes/Future Activities:** A Resource Workbook has been created as a result of the forum. Future plans include continuously refining, evaluating, and distributing the Resource Workbook. There are also plans to compile a list of mentors and hold the networking workshops for career coaches.

**Total Expenses:** \$22,500.