

Advancing Careers of Artists with Disabilities: Summary Report on 2007-2008 Statewide Forums and Follow-up Activities

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Abstract: This report describes the Statewide Forums (Colorado, Michigan, North Dakota) and Follow-up activities (Florida, Nebraska, Texas) completed during 2007-2008. A total of 63 organizations partnered, and attracted over one thousand artists, with and without disabilities, arts organization representatives, service providers, educators, and others to their various events. This report highlights best practices including the importance of advanced planning of events, diverse membership of planning/advisory committees with delegated tasks, partnerships, marketing and outreach, and developing leaders.

Introduction

Since 2002, the National Arts and Disability Center at UCLA has administered the Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities Initiative through support from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and VSA arts. The Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities program had its genesis in 1998, when the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in partnership with three federal agencies held the first National Forum on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities. Its purpose was to assess the education and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and to identify strategies for overcoming obstacles. A key recommendation from the 1998 National Forum was for individual states to convene their own Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities.

Through the Statewide Forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities (“Forums”), selected states developed partnerships, identified artists with disabilities in their communities, and prioritized the educational and training needs of artists with disabilities and those who work with them. States that were awarded support to conduct “Follow-up” projects focused on a prioritized need emanating from their Forums and built upon those initial partnerships. Examples of Follow-up activities from previous awardees included: creating artists’ with disabilities networking groups, professional development workshops for artists (marketing, building a portfolio), training for rehabilitation professionals and/or educators on creating education related or employment goals in the arts; training for arts organizations on hiring and working with artists with disabilities, development of an online arts magazine, and creation of a website.

Over one thousand artists, with and without disabilities, arts organization representatives, service providers, educators, and others participated in Forum and Follow-up activities in 2007-2008.

By July of 2008, twenty-three states conducted Forums and nine states received support for Follow-up activities. This included the three states that conducted Forums for the first time during 2007-2008: Colorado, Michigan, and North Dakota. Florida and Texas received support for a second time to carry out new Follow-up activities with a different focus from previous years. Nebraska received first time support for their Follow-up project.¹

Over one thousand artists, with and without disabilities, arts organization representatives, service providers, educators, and others participated in Forum and Follow-up activities in 2007-2008. The number of participants ranged from 55 to 390 (mean=172, median=108) across all Forum and Follow-up activities. States conducting Forums had 70 participants, on average. In contrast, states conducting Follow-up

¹ Minnesota also received support during 2007-08, but was unable to complete their activities during that time period. Minnesota received an extension and their activities are described in the 2008-09 report.

activities tended to work with smaller groups of artists (3-25), but offered multiple events attracting hundreds in attendance.

States conducting Forums or Follow-up projects not only created networks of artists and arts organizations within their communities, but they also became connected to one another. States participated in monthly topic focused teleconferences facilitated by the NADC which enabled them to learn of each other's work and become aware of best practices in the field. During 2007-2008, teleconference topics highlighted innovative projects in states such as Indiana's ArtWORKS website and featured artist speakers from the Minnesota Artists with Disabilities Association (AWDA). In addition, VSA arts highlighted core programs at a national level and Deborah Lewis from the Ethel Louise Armstrong (ELA) Foundation spoke about finding funding at the foundation level.

This report represents the ongoing dialogue and activities occurring across the country at the state level. The purpose of this report is to describe the 3 Statewide Forums and 3 Follow-up activities completed during the 2007-2008 award period by synthesizing common themes across the states, pointing out unique features of Forum and Follow-up activities, and highlighting strategies for success. Information for this report was gathered from teleconference notes, and the progress and final reports submitted by each state.

Forum and Follow-up Activities

States conducting Forums followed a similar one or two day conference format with presentations by professional artists who shared their strategies for success, other sessions aimed at artists such as business skills workshops, and sessions for arts employers on making venues accessible and sharing success stories of hiring artists with disabilities. All three Forum states also showcased the talents of artists with disabilities in various performances. In addition, both Colorado and Michigan had exhibitions. Michigan and North Dakota offered opportunities for one-on-one assistance for artists. In Michigan, a staff member from VSA arts Michigan served as a creative coach to assist artists in identifying appropriate resources. In North Dakota, they had a resource room where participants could speak directly to Vocational Rehabilitation and Social Security Administration representatives with their specific questions regarding employment and benefits.

Through the Forums and Follow-up projects, artists with disabilities were employed, networked with other artists, and had the opportunity to exhibit and perform their work.

While states share a similar purpose in organizing the Forum, each plans and responds to the unique needs of their state. For example, North Dakota convened four regional meetings throughout the state prior to their Forum to gather input for what the session should address. These regional meetings also provided the basis for the creation of a Resource Book which addressed barriers to careers in the arts and strategies to address them. Colorado responded to an initial low registration by removing the registration fee and offering the Forum at no cost to everyone. Michigan's Forum was unique in multiple ways. Michigan planned to host their two day Forum in conjunction

with an existing rehabilitation conference. Although the Forum received some crossover participation from the rehabilitation conference, it only attracted seven artists. Realizing they had not reached their desired audience, Michigan offered four additional workshops in various parts of the state focusing on the needs expressed by Forum participants. Through these additional workshops focusing on artists as entrepreneurs, navigating social security, and an inside look at approaching a gallery, Michigan involved another 45 artists.

Forum evaluations indicated that artists gained knowledge on how to further their careers in the arts and as a result, gained confidence to pursue an arts career. Arts administrators and others who support the work of artists with disabilities reported gaining confidence in their ability to assist artists with disabilities in gaining employment. Networking opportunities were viewed as the most useful aspects of the Forums along with specific sessions addressing the professional development of artists such as: skill based workshops on marketing, resume building, etc.

Follow-up Activities

The Follow-up activities by their very nature are state specific. Florida conducted a plethora of activities, each with a different focus. They gave presentations on careers in the arts for rehabilitation, and transition counselors as well: as professional development workshops, artists, and exhibition opportunities. As a result of these various activities, 20 artists were employed as workshop presenters, hosts/docents at the opening reception for an exhibition with participating artists, and sales representatives at fairs and conferences.

Texas responded to the need for social networking and resources by organizing regional artists networking groups in six parts of the state. This activity provided the basis to explore what locations could serve as ongoing sites of networking meetings and to identify the necessary factors for sustaining networking meetings. Artists benefitted from sharing their upcoming projects and received feedback from the group, as well as gaining connections to become part of the exhibitions.

Nebraska, rather than conducting multiple events, worked closely with a small group of six artists who received technical assistance, mentorship, and stipends for specific projects to further their careers. Artists were selected from the directories of Nebraska Arts Council and WhyArts? (VSA arts affiliate). Artists were asked to complete an application describing the need for the project, details of the project, and a budget. Applications were reviewed by a panel representing arts, education, and other agencies. The artists selected had the opportunity to present and perform their works at a culminating event attracting a large audience towards the end of the grant period. As a result of the various projects, 17 artworks were created which included photographs, murals, sculpture, and a play. Artists learned how to work with different materials or technology to create their art, while others looked forward to continued relationships with a mentor.

Budget

Forums and Follow-up projects were implemented based on support from the NADC in amounts of \$15,000 for Forums and \$4,500 for Follow-up projects in combination with in-kind resources such as staff time, other grants and contracts, and donations. The total budgets for Forum activities were reported to be roughly \$20,000 and the total budgets for Follow-up activities were around \$13,000. It is worthy to note that Texas received additional support from the ELA Foundation and the Texas State Council on Developmental Disabilities to implement their activities. For a detailed description of each state's activities, participants, project outcomes, and final budget see the State Profiles.

Lessons Learned

States reflected on their experiences in conducting Forums and Follow-up projects to highlight several elements significant to having a successful event. The major themes that emerged centered on planning, partnerships and advisory/planning committee, marketing and outreach, and developing future leaders to sustain activities.

Florida's partnership with West Tampa Center for the Arts (WTCA) gave artists with disabilities an opportunity to interact with the greater arts community. The WTCA was already home to many local artists and regularly hosted exhibitions drawing hundreds in attendance. Florida's partnership with WTCA created opportunities for artists with disabilities to participate in the exhibitions where they had a greater reach to the general public and to attend art classes offered at WTCA where they could connect with other artists.

Planning

The importance of planning and beginning the planning process early was mentioned as an important factor in ensuring venues and securing presenters. It was recommended that part of the planning process should involve checking events scheduled in the area so that the Forum is not competing with other events that would be of interest to the intended participants.

Partnerships and Planning Committees

Among both the Forums and Follow-up projects, partnerships emerged as instrumental to the successful completion of an event. In total, states partnered with 63 organizations (mean=11, median=8). Organizational partners served multiple roles: members of the planning committee, event hosts, presenters, performers/exhibitors, and meeting facilitators. Partners also served an important role as connectors to a broader audience. For example, Florida's partnership with West Tampa Center for the Arts (WTCA) gave artists with disabilities an opportunity to interact with the greater arts community. The WTCA was already home to

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participate in the exhibitions where they had a greater reach to the general public and to attend art classes offered at WTCA where they could connect with other artists.

The basis for building partnerships often starts with an advisory or planning committee. Planning committees are most successful when they consist of committed, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable members who represent various facets of the arts and disability communities. This sometimes means expanding outreach beyond the usual partners. For example, one state commented that if they could do things differently they would have worked to gain greater buy-in from arts organizations. It is also vital to utilize each member of the planning committee by delegating tasks evenly across its members. This is critical to creating active participation of the members and shows respect for the multiple roles individuals have outside the committee. One state commented that it was strong cooperation among several partners that was instrumental to their success.

One state learned that in order to reach artists with disabilities it was important to market activities to all artists rather than specifying the event as for artists with disabilities.

Marketing and Outreach

For many states, identifying artists with disabilities is problematic. Artists with disabilities may be hesitant to disclose a disability, particularly when it comes to seeking employment. One state learned that in order to reach artists with disabilities it was important to market activities to all artists rather than specifying the event as for artists with disabilities. Providing accommodations and including sessions of interest to artists with disabilities, such as working and keeping disability benefits, may be a more effective outreach strategy than focusing on disability.

Another state, while conducting outreach with their registry members, learned that artists weren't responding to calls for art because the information was too dense. Findings from these conversations led to a revision of how calls for art were distributed. A shortened call for art of a few paragraphs rather than the full information along with a contact person led to an observable increase in responses.

Developing Leaders

For Texas, the key to having successful artist networking meetings was identification and recruitment of artists who could lead future meetings. The participation of arts and disability organizations in meetings also facilitated direct interaction with artists. This gave artists the opportunity to network with peers, as well as those who could offer guidance in seeking employment. In order to sustain networking meetings in various parts of the state, artist leaders need to be cultivated and local organizational support secured.

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2007-2008 State Profiles

Colorado

Forum Activity: The Colorado Forum on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities, entitled “Art Works,” was aimed at convening artists with disabilities from throughout Colorado to learn, teach, and strategize about creating positions in various artistic disciplines for people with disabilities. Key partners involved in the planning included the Colorado Council on the Arts, VSA arts of Colorado, and PHAMALY (the Physically Handicapped Actors and Musical Artists League, Inc). The Art Works Forum occurred on Saturday, March 8, 2008 at the Tivoli Hall on Auraria Campus, which is the center of three college campuses in downtown Denver (including one of the Forum’s hosts, Metropolitan State College of Denver).

The one-day forum consisted of concurrent breakout sessions with panel discussions by various local working artists with disabilities who shared their strategies for success, arts employers who have been successful in employing people with disabilities, making venues accessible, identifying opportunities in the arts for people with disabilities, tangible skills workshop for artists (resume building, promotion, using technology and the internet in developing career skills as an artist), and a presentation on the economic impact of the arts and people with disabilities in Colorado. The Forum involved a visual arts exhibition arranged by VSA arts of Colorado, a performance by Dance ImprovAbility (a dance organization for people with disabilities), and a musical performance by PHAMALY. The closing session was a roundtable discussion with the participants. Areas covered included overall thoughts about the programming and suggestions for future forums.

Participants: Over 75 people attended, not including 10 additional volunteers who donated their time to help at the Forum. Approximately 47% of attendees identified as artists with disabilities who were directly involved with one of the participating organizations, but there were approximately 8-10 artists with disabilities who attended who were not participating members of VSA arts of Colorado or PHAMALY. Approximately 17 were arts organization representatives, 10 were state agency representatives/service providers, and 12 were educators/teachers/students.

Outcomes: Based on an evaluation created by Colorado, 94% rated the program schedule as either a 5 or a 6 where 6 represented excellent. The most well received session was the tangible skills workshop; 100% rated the workshop as excellent. The opening session led by Elaine Mariner of the Colorado Council on the Arts and arts employment sessions were also highly rated. Comments on evaluations indicated that participants enjoyed the various sessions and the opportunity to network. As one participant commented: “Now we have a touchstone to start finding something. It was very eye-opening and interesting all day. Thank you”

Total expenses: \$19,750

Florida

Follow-up activities: The State of Florida, Division of Cultural Affairs and VSA arts of Florida (VSAFL) collaborated with several organizations for their “Creating a Community Presence” follow-up activities. Partners included Freedom Playground, West Tampa Center for the Arts, Florida Mental Health Institute, Dream society, Wall Arts Gallery, Florida Diagnostic Learning and Resources System), and Edfish Gallery. Florida engaged in a multitude of follow-up activities with diverse audiences. Highlights included:

- Nine Sessions for vocational rehabilitation counselors, transition counselors, parents and students on “A Career in the Arts” in Lake City, Miami, Tampa, Jacksonville, St. Petersburg, Daytona Beach, Sarasota, and Orlando from July 2007 to July 2008.
- Three professional development workshops for artists held in March and May of 2008.
- Nine exhibitions of work from members of the VSAFL artist registry in Tampa and Fernandina Beach from September 2007 to June 2008.
- 34 calls for art sent to VSAFL Artist Registry members.

Participants: Seventeen artists, 13 from the VSAFL registry and four others, attended professional development workshops. Thirty-six artists participated in the exhibitions showing over 86 pieces of art. Overall, a range of 40 to 390 individuals attended the various exhibitions. Over 100 vocational rehabilitation counselors, transition counselors, parents and students attended workshops, “A Career in the Arts,” in various locations.

Outcomes: Twenty VSAFL Artist Registry members had short term employment through the various follow-up activities conducted by Florida. Short term employment opportunities included: being a workshop presenter, conducting sales and public awareness at fairs and conferences, and acting as hostess/greeter for West Tampa Center for the Arts opening reception. Two VSAFL Artist Registry members were chosen to participate in a national exhibition at Princeton University in New Jersey.

Total expenses: \$12,500

Michigan

Forum activities: The Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) and VSA arts of Michigan (VSAMI) collaborated to host a 2-day Career Forum for Artists with Disabilities at the Michigan Rehabilitation Conference in Grand Rapids on October 24-26, 2007. Jaehn Clare from VSA arts Georgia served as a key presenter. Other sessions included the business of the arts, journeys of professional artists with disabilities, working as an artist without jeopardizing your benefits, and goal setting and strategic planning. In addition, a staff member from VSAMI served as a creative coach to assist artists with issues and concerns and to determine what additional resources they needed. The Forum itself had a low turnout. In response to this MCACA and

VSAMI offered four additional workshops to address needs expressed by participants. The four workshops were as follows:

- April 4, 2008 – *Artists as Entrepreneurs: Marketing* at the Michigan Library and Historical Center in Lansing.
- April 22, 2008 – *Navigating Social Security* at the Michigan Library and Historical Center in Lansing.
- June 18, 2008 – *Gallery Insider Talk* at the Detroit Institute of Arts.
- June 27, 2008 – *Artists as Entrepreneurs: Marketing* at the Dennon Museum Center on the campus of Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City.

The *Artists as Entrepreneurs* workshop involved a review of artist bios, statements and resumes, a writing workshop, writing a press release, creating a budget, and Q & A. The April workshop also included a professional photographer who took digital photos of the visual art of by workshop participants and mailed them a CD afterwards.

The *Navigating Social Security* workshop was an informal, in-depth session dedicated to questions surrounding disability benefits and earnings. The workshop was presented by a Work Incentive Coordinator and a PASS Specialist.

The *Gallery Insider Talk* included five gallery owners/directors. Gallery owners described their galleries and addressed questions posed by Forum participants including: What are you looking for when artwork is submitted? How many shows do you do a year, and for how long? What recommendations do you have for pricing work?

Participants: A total of 52 artists, 28 of whom had disabilities, attended Forum activities. Only seven artists attended the Forum itself, although 20 others who were attending the Michigan Rehabilitation Conference came to various Forum sessions. Overall artist participation increased through the provision of the additional workshops. The breakdown for each workshop was:

- April 4, 2008 – *Artists as Entrepreneurs: Marketing* (Lansing) – attended by 14 artists, five with disabilities.
- April 22, 2008 – *Navigating Social Security* (Lansing) – attended by eight artists with disabilities and two service providers.
- June 18, 2008 – *Gallery Insider Talk* (Detroit) – attended by 11 artists, three with disabilities.
- June 27, 2008 – *Artists as Entrepreneurs: Marketing* (Traverse City) – attended by 10 artists, five with disabilities.

Outcomes: Aggregated across all Forum activities including the workshops, 92.3% of artists reported they were satisfied or highly satisfied as did 83.3% of professionals with the event. Approximately 79% of artists agreed or strongly agreed that they gained knowledge on how to further their career in the arts, and 67.9% felt the forum had strengthened their self-confidence in pursuing a career in the arts. Among professionals, administrators, educators, and supporters, 63.6% agreed or strongly

agreed that the forum strengthened their self-confidence in assisting artists with disabilities in gaining employment in the arts. Slightly less (58.3%) felt the forum activity provided them with resources to help artists with disabilities gain employment. The discussion and networking opportunities were viewed as useful aspects of each event.

Total expenses: \$20,910

Nebraska

Follow-up activity: The Nebraska Arts Council and WhyArts? (formerly VSA arts of Nebraska) provided technical assistance to artists selected for their follow-up activity Enabled Artists Collective. The Enabled Artist Collective included six artists with disabilities who applied for stipends to pursue a project that would further their career. The five artists and their projects were as follows: Janie York- three workshops with autistic students; Jan Nipper-a collection of 12 photographs of women with disabilities in all stages of life entitled “Life Loving and Learning”; Fran Sillau-creation of an original play about being a child with a disability entitled “My Dad Said I Could”; Stacie Wonder-two murals by individuals from the Munroe Meyer Institute; Jennifer Radil-created one sculpture. A sixth artist was selected and part of the collective, but unable to participate in the September event due to ongoing health issues.

The culminating event was held on September 30th at the Omaha Community Playhouse. Craig Dunn from VSA arts of Minnesota served as the keynote speaker for the event. An afternoon workshop was conducted by the Ollie Webb Center, WhyArts?, Nebraska Arts Council, and Interact Theater. Topics addressed included “working with mixed ability students” and “establishing a model of Interact Theater.” There was an exhibit highlighting works of the Enabled Artist Collective, a reading by Fran Sillau from his newly created play, and evening performance by Interact Theater.

Participants: Five artists with disabilities completed arts projects related to career development. Four were female. Artists had a variety of disabilities including: cerebral palsy, (2), lower body paralysis (20), hearing impaired (1). They ranged in age from 24 to 51.

Approximately 300 people, including those attending the performance by Interact Theater from Minneapolis, attended the culminating event. Fifty were described as state agency representatives, 10 from arts organizations, 20 administrators, and 20 educators. Twenty-five participants were identified as youth.

Outcomes: Nebraska reported on several items of interest with their selected artists. Findings from their evaluation indicated that 100% created new works and removed barriers to success. In addition, one artist moved from one artistic area into another (from dance to visual arts). Another artist gained confidence to work with different materials as described in this narrative: “Jennifer Radil commented on how this project allowed her to work with a mentor who could assist her in working with large-scale pieces. According to her, since she has been in a wheelchair, her pieces have gotten

smaller and smaller and through this project, she could work with glass and large pieces of wood. She has even ventured into welding! She will continue to work with her mentor.”

Total expenses: \$13,300

North Dakota

Forum activity: The primary partners for the forum were: North Dakota Council on the Arts, the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD), a university center of excellence in developmental disabilities, and the Dakota West Arts Council (DWAC), a VSA affiliate. The North Dakota Statewide Forum on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities occurred on April 7, 2008 in Bismarck. The forum included 4 main speakers, three performances, three networking breaks, and a resource room where participants could speak one-on-one with representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation, Social Security Administration, and others about benefits planning.

In preparation for the Forum, four regional meetings were conducted throughout the state to gather ideas and key concepts to incorporate in the Statewide Forum agenda. Barriers to participation in careers in the arts were compiled and strategies to address these barriers were described in a Resource book. The regional meetings were held in Bismarck (October 2007), Grand Forks (November 2007), Minot (January 2008), and Fargo (February 2008). Other partners who assisted in regional meetings included the Plains Art Museum in Fargo, the North Dakota Museum of Art in Grand Forks, Minot State University Library in Minot, and the Bismarck Public Library in Bismarck.

Participants: Fifty-five individuals participated in the April 2008 Statewide Forum in Bismarck. From the 18 evaluations completed, eight identified as artists with disabilities. Half of the artists were female. The most frequently reported disability was physical (6) followed by learning (3), other (3), visual (2), emotional/psychiatric (2) and developmental (1). Artists ranged in age from 25 to 60 years. Artists primarily identified as Caucasian with 2 identifying as American Indian. The two most common arts disciplines reported were visual (5) and music (4). In addition, 10 individuals who completed evaluations identified as representatives from a state agency (5), administrators (2), educators (2), and another from an arts organization.

Outcomes: From the artist's survey, 90.9% were satisfied or highly satisfied with the Forum. Seventy percent of respondents indicated they had gained knowledge on how to further their career in the arts and 60% agreed or strongly agreed that the forum strengthened their self-confidence in pursuing an arts career. On the arts administrators/professionals surveys, 70% expressed being satisfied or highly satisfied with the Forum. Nearly 80% felt they had gained self-confidence to assist artists with disabilities in gaining employment in the arts and 66.6% felt the Forum provided them with the resources they needed to do so.

Total expenses: \$20,000

Texas

Follow-up activities: In response to an identified need of social networking for resources and support, Texas developed Artworks Network. Artworks Network involved regional meetings throughout the state including Houston, Fort Worth, El Paso, Tyler, San Antonio, and Austin. The Texas Commission on the Arts and VSA arts of Texas collaborated with the Offices of Cultural Affairs in each city to find local arts organizations to host the meetings. Twenty partners contributed space for meetings, presented at meetings, and helped publicize the meetings. The goal was to have two meetings in each location facilitated by VSA arts staff with the idea that artist leaders would be identified to coordinate additional meetings. Overall, 14 networking meetings occurred between October 2007 and June 2008. San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, and Austin each had two meetings. The El Paso group held three meetings. Tyler had one meeting.

Participants: The regional meetings were attended by 129 participants, 93 (72%) of whom were artists with disabilities. A variety of disabilities were represented including psychiatric, physical, hearing, visual and developmental disabilities. Meetings in El Paso ranged in size from 7 to 25. In San Antonio meeting attendance ranged from 5-8. Tyler had one meeting 3 individuals. Fort Worth engaged 6 to 7 participants. In Houston, 3-7 gathered. The added group in Austin comprised 8 to 23 individuals.

Outcomes: Texas felt that El Paso was the most effective group, as they demonstrated leadership in organizing three additional meetings on their own after the first two led by VSA arts staff. Two artists were invited to paint murals at the El Paso State Center. The San Antonio group was small, but had several positive outcomes. In the San Antonio group, Joy Deadrick, an artist with a physical disability, planned an art exhibition at a local gallery featuring the work of artists with disabilities. Joy sought input from the group to help her organize the exhibition and through this process another group member, Susan Beattie, showed her artwork at the exhibition. Susan, who has a mental illness, had not painted in a few years prior to this opportunity. Susan went on to exhibit her work in another exhibition hosted by VSA arts of Texas. John Evans, an artist with paranoid schizophrenia, had this to say about his experience, "I found the courage to overcome my anxiety at going to the reception at Gallista Gallery and I met Joy Deadrick and she is a wonderful lady. I wrote to her prior to attending and she wrote to me words of comfort so I put one foot in front of the other and had a wonderful time...Thank you for everything you do and we as artists value your tremendous efforts at giving us some comfort and exposure."

Evaluation forms given at the end of the meetings indicated that in all six networking groups, artists felt they would benefit from a gallery space to show and sell their work. The idea would be that the cooperative gallery would be run by the artists where they could sell their work and gain customer service skills.

Total expenses: \$13,500 - Received additional funding from ELA Foundation and Texas Council on Developmental Disabilities.