

Expressions

WINTER 2018

Promoting the creative power in people with disabilities.

vsa

WISCONSIN

The State Organization
on Arts and Disability

I Want to Dance...

Free to Be Me

A collaborative program between VSA Wisconsin and a dance studio in Stevens Point was launched this summer creating an innovative opportunity for young dancers with disabilities to be mentored by and perform with more experienced dancers from Point Dance Ensemble. This nine-month project will culminate with performances on March 2-4, 2018.



VSA representatives worked with staff in the health and human services sector, schools and childcare programs to publicize the program. Several parents were concerned that their child's disabilities were so significant that they would be denied entry to the program. VSA staff assured them that any child with a disability

that wanted to participate could do so. VSA believes that art doesn't see disability – and Free to Be Me has welcomed all the children with disabilities with open arms.



Nine children with disabilities, ages 6-12, are participating in the program.

Pamela Luedtke, Artistic Director of Point Dance Ensemble says, "The collaboration between Point Dance Ensemble and VSA Wisconsin has offered the company members and community dancers a space to expand relationships beyond the dance studio or classroom and to develop professional connections with guest artist Angie Nyquist. Providing the VSA dancers with the environment simply to dance and enjoy the process of generating movement creates so many opportunities for growth and creativity, many of which we never anticipated."

Imagine the Possibilities!

VSA Wisconsin programs intentionally focus on the arts as a learning strategy. We know that the arts can enhance learning in other academic subject areas and we know that it can enhance vocational skills, problem solving, communication, fine motor skills and more.

I've been working in this field for 27 years and what I've learned about creativity is that disability is invisible. It simply doesn't matter. Let's embrace and celebrate the talents of all artists!



Kathie Wagner
President

& News Events

Art Exhibitions

A Look Back

VSA Wisconsin Gallery
February 5 - April 2

Visual Expressions

A Call for Art Exhibition
VSA Wisconsin Gallery
April 16 - May 5

Events

Free to Be Me

Theater @ 1800
Stevens Point

performances

March 3 7:30pm

March 4 2:00pm

Visual Expressions Public Reception

VSA Wisconsin Gallery
Madison
May 5, 2-4 pm

VSA Wisconsin
1709 Aberg Ave. Suite 1
Madison, WI 53704
608-241-2131
www.vsawis.org

Your Dollars...

Choirs

The VSA Choir of Appleton has 30 members and meets each week for an hour. They learn about pitch, tone and rhythm and have mastered a wide range of songs. Beth Detienne, a 20-year member, says, "I just think that music really brings out emotion with people and everybody's just there for each other and we have a special bond."

Janice Werlein, a member of the VSA Choir of Madison, tells us, "I've always liked music so I like to keep up my musical skills and VSA has provided me with opportunities. I enjoy the social aspect; I feel at home because I am disabled and I feel like I'm with people like me and I can go at my own pace. I enjoy going to the VSA Choir and it gets me out to socialize. I love performing and like to go to different places with the VSA Choir. I was able to perform a solo at the Overture Center in front of an audience."



Art Center



John Grande was first involved with VSA as a member of the Portage Choir. Last year he moved to Madison and his sister was delighted to learn that he could attend classes at the art center. He now attends with his roommate Chuck, who has been taking classes for many years.

Sally was enrolled in a music class, even though her support provider didn't expect her to actively participate. Surprisingly, she gradually started playing the drums, then the tambourine and other instruments. Sally now shows excitement and anticipation for the next class. "Sally's music teacher is great with her students and makes sure to include everyone. Junko interacts with students in a fun, patient and respectful manner. She provides a variety of music, instruments and other fun stuff like the parachute and balls, all to music. Great class!" ~ Gayle Hariu, support staff



Early Childhood Residencies

Residency evaluations documented improved speaking and listening skills, gross and fine motor skills, increased coordination, locomotion, hand-eye coordination, object manipulation, sensory awareness, and improved self-esteem. "I learned some great strategies for sharing instruments, or using rotations, or stations with instruments. The support staff were amazed with how one student in particular would do hand, arm, and other body movements without support as well as verbalize parts of the song, or mouth the words." ~educator, John Muir Elementary School, Madison



The Children's Advocate at Harbor House, Shelly Johnson, commented: "Our staff is appreciative of VSA's efforts in making a positive difference for kids. We hope VSA will partner with Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs in the future! This was an awesome learning opportunity for both agencies."

The goal of the residencies at Guadalupe Head Start in Milwaukee was to promote literacy skills by linking each lesson to a book by well-known children's author, Eric Carle. Children explored a different book each week, and then proceeded to create a work of art based on the story line.

... At Work

School Residencies



Students at Mendota Elementary School in Madison created a permanent, outdoor installation of cast concrete pieces thematically related to the school's community garden.

Outcomes included expanded vocabulary; increased motivation, concentration and attention to detail; improved problem solving skills and creative thinking.



At Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center, students explored symbols and how to use them to create collaborative collages.

The teaching artist chose to use a map as the background for the collages as it represented the life journeys the students had taken. The symbols were selected by the students to represent their experiences.



A residency at Waunakee Middle School gave students a chance to explore new ways of making music which resulted in increased creative expression, motivation and engagement in arts activities and other core learning areas.

Students learned the drum parts that fit the call and response style of the folk song "John Kanaka" and then used the iPad's virtual guitar app to "strum" the accompanying chord progressions. In another session they learned "Put a Little Love in Your Heart" and then created original verses to be sung along with the melody. This resulted in a huge boost of self-confidence for several students.

Traveling Art Exhibition



"The exhibit gave us an opportunity to share with our community how art can be a way for people with special needs to communicate their thoughts and emotions to those of us who might not otherwise understand how they feel. While 75% of our facility is accessible, the Historic Vilas-Rahr Mansion does not have access beyond stairs. The popularity of the VSA exhibit with our ability impaired community reminds us that reconciling the historic integrity of the Mansion with added accessibility is a high priority for us." ~Rahr West Museum

"It was among the better exhibits we've hosted. Visitors were surprised by the level of talent and creativity of the artists." ~Greenfield Public Library

REPORT ON GIVING - JULY 1, 2016 - JUNE 30, 2017

Thank you to the following individuals, businesses, foundations, and partners who responded to grant requests, direct mail, newsletter and email solicitations, and workplace giving campaigns to provide generous financial and inkind support. This report reflects cash and documented inkind gifts received from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. Pledges made, but not received during this period will be included in the next fiscal year report.

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Community Residency

"VSA is a truly unique and critical program for our community. We have seen the excitement on our clients faces when the programs engage and stimulate them. Even clients who usually do not show much response to stimulus have responded positively during VSA's programs." ~Taneil Boerner, MTILP, Inc.

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REPORT ON GIVING - JULY 1, 2016 - JUNE 30, 2017

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In memory of Esther Larson
Burlingame, LaVonne
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Matching Gifts

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Art Fair on the Square

Tribute Gifts

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In honor of Dan Stace
Stace, Nellie
In honor of Jim Riordan
Nordby, Eugene J.
In honor of Jim Riordan & Tom
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Goke, Kim and Rodger
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Norris, Arlene L.
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In honor of Michelle Roberts
Rybowiak, Marla
In honor of Sharon Kessel
Gamzu, Elkan and S. Zelda
In honor of Steve Stricker
Olson, Betty

In honor of the VSA Staff
Spencer, June

In honor of our 3 daughters, their
husbands, and 5 grandchildren
Pautz, John and Penni
In honor of Tiffany Vollrath
and assistants
Luebke, Glenda and Mark
In honor of Zach Wians
Wians, Dawn

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Many thanks to the UW-Madison
Athletic Department and School
of Music

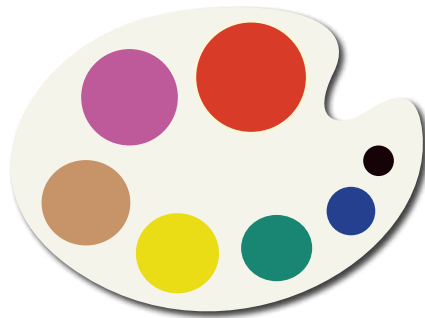


VSA Day

"One of our members was very nervous to attend this event. After we sang the National Anthem, he came off the field with a big smile. On the way home, he said, "Tiffany, you are the best teacher ever!" Before this event, he hadn't spoken more than short answers to questions." ~Tiffany Vollrath, Choir Director, Appleton

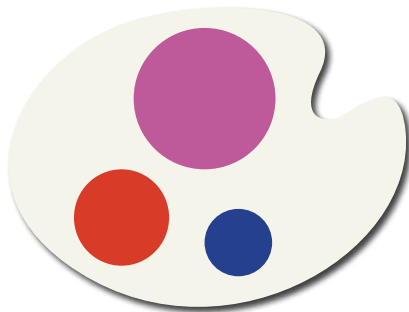
"This [program] continues to be a terrific way for school music and special education departments to work collaboratively, as well as provide a positive arts experience to students who aren't always able to be involved with music. The event was incredibly well run and organized, and I commend my alma mater and VSA for continuing to support this project and continuing to give our young people these opportunities." ~Rob Perkins, Wausau East High School

Revenues

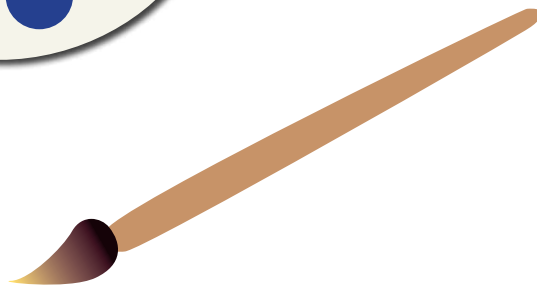


- Government Support - 29%
- Fees, sales, investment & miscellaneous income - 24%
- Foundations - 19%
- Inkind - 14%
- Individuals/service organizations - 8%
- Corporations - 5%
- Workplace giving - 1%

Expenses



- Programming - 84%
- Management & General - 10%
- Fundraising - 6%



FY17 by the numbers

Educational art programs directly served **1,604** individuals, most with disabilities

84% of annual expenses were directed to programming

Nearly **327,000** people were impacted by exhibitions, concerts, and special performances given by individual with disabilities

38 volunteers provided **228** hours of support for administration, events, and programs

23 Teaching Artists conducted:
5 Community Choirs
27 Artist Residencies
43 Classes at the Art Center

Face to face instruction, **874** hours

Visual Expressions Exhibition



- *Very awesome artwork all the way around. So much talent, glad to see it being displayed.*
- *Bravo! Fantastic display of unique talent. So enjoyable.*
- *Thank you-another great collection of talented artists with wonderful treasures to share!*
- *VSA helps make my sister feel special about her hard work.*
- *So glad [VSA] Wisconsin has such a commitment to art and individuals of every ability.*
- *A gorgeous show that is totally representative of the creative talent in our community!*

Professional Development

VSA Wisconsin conducted two professional development workshops at the Madison Metropolitan School District Launching into Literacy and Math conference and another at Creative Learning Preschool in 2017. More than 80 educators attended. Topics included an overview of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Picture Puzzle Storytelling. The sessions were interactive so educators could physically experience the activity and become more comfortable modeling it for their students.



The presenters demonstrated how to dynamize visual art projects to promote early learning, with a focus on early literacy and math skills. In addition, the presenters demonstrated an arts-integrated lesson, which combined geometry and spatial skills with storytelling. The sample lesson included a number of visual art projects that could be used as stand-alone activities or combined into a cohesive lesson. Each art activity utilized inexpensive, readily available materials accessible to learners of all abilities.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) was the central teaching and learning principle embedded in the workshops. The process of dynamizing images promotes play, which, in turn, fosters whole-brain learning. The arts integrated instruction calls on students to process and engage via multiple modalities, including visual, kinesthetic and verbal, simultaneously. Fostering whole-brain learning in this way promotes early literacy and math skills, and, further, promotes academic success in all subject areas.

Comments from attendees:

- I really enjoyed the overall amount of “tools” to use – many times I catch myself only putting out markers or crayons. Need to allow them [kids] to use their imagination and not worry about the mess.
- I gained an understanding on how to incorporate art into many domains.
- I loved how we acted out our art. First time for me. Loved the Montessori triangle idea.
- I loved the art tearing idea! Such a great collaborative activity. So excited to try it.
- Great session, fun and interactive.
- I gained knowledge integrating geometry and literacy into Art and Drama.
- I learned to meet kids where they are developmentally and every response is “perfect”.

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The mission of VSA Wisconsin is to expand the capabilities, confidence and quality of life for children and adults with disabilities by providing programs in dance, drama, creative writing, music and visual art.

VSA Wisconsin is a member of the VSA affiliate network, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

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**Visual Expressions
 Exhibition**

VSA Wisconsin Gallery
 April 16 - May 5

Gallery Hours
 Mon - Thur: 9am - 4pm