

Visual Art

Dance and Movement

Theater and Drama



Annual Report 2015-2016



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Executive Director
jsabo@usf.edu

Jan Beals
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jkbals@usf.edu

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wfinklea@usf.edu

William P. Coleman
Education Director
wpcoleman@usf.edu

Dee Miller
Creative Coordinator
deemiller@usf.edu

Phyllis Guthman
Social Media Coordinator
pguthman@usf.edu

Sandra Sroka
Adult Programs Coordinator
srokas.usfafl@gmail.com

Susan Baldino
Regional Program Coordinator- Region 1
susandavisbaldino@gmail.com

Pat York
Regional Program Coordinator- Region 2
yorkpat51@gmail.com

Wendy Hawkins
Regional Program Coordinator- Region 3
wendyhawkins.usfafl@gmail.com

Patt Fosnaught
Regional Program Coordinator- Region 4
pr.fosnaught@gte.net

Steven Klotz
Regional Program Coordinator- Region 5
klotz@bellsouth.net



Dear Friends,

In 1981, the Florida Department of Education and the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs recognized the need for accessible art in the state of Florida and created VSA Florida. Over the years programs have shifted and changed, however our commitment to providing, supporting, and championing arts education and cultural experiences for and by people with disabilities has only grown.

While 2016 marks the 35th anniversary of VSA Florida; the 2015-2016 program year was also a year of firsts. This was the first year we hosted "A New Definition of Dance," a program highlighting internationally renowned dancers with disabilities. This was also the first year we partnered with the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts on a brand new type of music residency using SubPacs, a wearable device that transfers low frequencies directly to your body, providing a physical dimension to the music experience for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. In addition, this was the first year we began providing dance and movement programs for adults with Parkinson's disease.

We thank each and every one of you for your support over the last 35 years! Here's to another 35 years (and more!).

Jennifer Sabo, Executive Director

VSA Florida is a discretionary project of the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, and is housed in the David C. Anchin Center in the College of Education at the University of South Florida. VSA Florida is a member of the VSA Affiliate Network, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.



During the 2015-2016 program year, VSA Florida:

- Directly served over 74,000 people through 484 programs in 61 counties in Florida. An additional 24,000 students were impacted indirectly through teacher trainings. 94% of our programs were provided free of charge.
- Served 3,414 students in 207 schools and Department of Juvenile Justice facilities through multi-week artist residency programs, conducting 1,696 hours of residency programs.
- Trained 1,255 teachers, teaching artists, museum staff, and cultural organization professionals on accessibility and accommodations.
- Partnered with 42 organizations across the state of Florida.
- Participated in 17 exhibitions of art by students and adults with disabilities.
- Hosted our second annual “Animation Gets Real” summer camp for 30 teens with Autism and related disabilities.
- Served over 1,300 people, including students and veterans, through our weeklong “A New Definition of Dance” program.
- Employed teaching artists to conduct programs and classes, injecting \$207,047 into Florida’s economy.

VSA Florida At a Glance



“One of my students (K.) was very shy and did not engage with other students. Through this program, K. was able to engage in a dance that featured all students. He ended up performing on stage for the very first time since attending elementary school. The parents were overjoyed to see their child on stage and dancing before a crowd.”

Memorial Elementary, Highlands County

Providing Unforgettable Art Experiences

- Students painted, danced, and drummed their way to new or improved skills during 207 *My Art My Way* artist in residence programs. Residencies met an average of 7-8 Florida Standards each and have shown great success in increasing students' cognitive abilities and 21st century skills, with 97% of teachers feeling that the residency helped students express themselves in new ways, 96% of teachers feeling that the residency helped students learn to work cooperatively and/or share tools and materials, and 95% of teachers feeling that the residency helped students increase their communication and/or verbal expression.
- Partnerships with cultural organizations provided students once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, with 684 students exhibiting their artwork in a museum or gallery and 396 students performing on stage at a performing arts center or theater.
- Students explored hidden talents and learned safe and appropriate ways to express their emotions during 50 residencies in Department of Juvenile Justice facilities.
- VSA Florida partnered with the USF Contemporary Art Museum to provide girls from PACE Pinellas an in-depth study of the meaning of family through a 10-week residency, private tour of the exhibition "A Family Affair" and the USF campus, an educational presentation by Curator Megan Voeller, and a final performance and exhibition.



Special thanks to our museum and performing arts partners:

Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts
Appleton Museum of Art
ArtServe Museum
Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens
Eustis Museum of Art
Hillsborough Community College- Ybor HistoryMiami
King Center for the Performing Arts
Naples Art Association
Osceola Arts
St. Augustine High School
Tampa Museum of Art
USF Contemporary Art Museum
Venice Art Center

Dept. of Juvenile
Justice Residency





"S. was a quiet, although open student from the beginning of our time together who was more than willing to learn, but struggled with impulse control and following directions. When we first began working with clay, S. struggled with following the steps to create a pinch pot but was determined to overcome. Through continued sessions and assistance, I was able to watch him rapidly become quite proficient with clay.

One of the greatest moments that I was able to observe was when he successfully (and quite masterfully for his skill level) created a clay coil vessel, and a small turtle to live in it. He was beaming with pride, and asked me 'Miss Kerri, does this mean I'm an artist?' I responded (with a small tear in my eye) 'Yes, S.! You are an artist!' The smile that came across his face was unforgettable, as was his triumphant walk around the classroom to show his classmates what he had made. The best part was as he shared his piece, he said to everyone 'Did you know that I was an artist?' Absolutely awesome!"



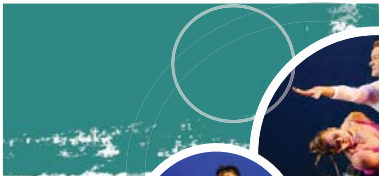
A New Definition of Dance



In October 2015, VSA Florida hosted “A New Definition of Dance”, bringing together 10 internationally renowned dancers with disabilities or inclusive dance troupes, including Canadian breakdancer Luca “LazyLegz” Patuelli, African musician and dancer Sidiki Conde, World and European champions in wheelchair ballroom dancing Hanna Harchakova and Ihar Kisialiou, classical Chinese dancer Lui Yan, contemporary wheelchair dancers Marcie Ryan and Frank Hull, Sonsheree Giles and Dwayne Scheuneman from AXIS Dance and REVolutions Dance Group, Karen Peterson and Dancers, and more.

1,380 people were directly impacted, including 430 students and 60 veterans who explored dance as a form of communication and self-expression through public school and VA hospital workshops, 330 dancers who explored dance forms through varying types of bodies and abilities in six Master dance classes, and 225 audience members who attended the sold-out final performance.





"In coming together we were given the opportunity to teach one another, which for me has expanded my dance world into endless possibilities. The joy of finally being able to share my 16 years of power chair dance experience and technique validated my ability to teach dance. Most of all, we were able to show that as dancers with disabilities we could partner with able-bodied dancers and other dancers with disabilities. We danced from our hearts and discovered new abilities though partnering together. We overcame fears of self-doubt and body image. We found a new definition of dance, an inclusive one for all bodies and abilities."

- Frank Hull, guest artist



ADA Art Exhibit
Adult Artist Award of Merit
Jack "Mr B" Beverland



Supporting Emerging and Established Artists with Disabilities

- Three very talented teens with disabilities were selected as the 9th Annual Florida Young Soloist winners: 20-year-old lyric soprano Lyudmilla Fuentes from Polk County, 18-year-old pianist James Williams from Pasco County, and 21-year-old Jacqueline Blanche from Charlotte County. The three artists were selected through a strict adjudication process facilitated by professors of music at the University of South Florida and Hillsborough Community College- Ybor.
- Nineteen students with disabilities were recognized at a School Board meeting or school assembly for their outstanding artistry, personal growth and leadership in the arts during our 2015-2016 Student of the Month program.
- Artists with disabilities on the VSA Florida Artist Registry participated in numerous exhibitions around the state, including exhibitions at the Tampa International Airport, McDonald Training Center, and ArtMundo.



Young Soloist Winner,
Lyudmilla Fuentes

Student of the Month
Ethan Vasquez



Animation Camp 2015

Enriching Lives and Communities

- Dani Bowman, a 20-year-old Powerlight Studios' animator with Asperger's Syndrome, and Dr. Clint Randles, Assistant Professor Music Education at the University of South Florida, taught 30 teens with Autism during our second annual "Animation Gets Real" summer camp. This camp combined animating, writing, storyboarding, and editing as well as music making through iPad application programs to create final short films.
- Athletes became artists as we continued our four-year partnership with Special Olympics Florida. Over 2,100 athletes, families, and friends participated in accessible art activities during 14 Special Olympics' Spring Areas Games.
- Our partners and affiliates across the state continued to provide unique VSA Florida programs to their communities, serving over 7,571 people through classes and festivals.
- VSA Florida began our new dance and movement program for adults with Parkinson's disease, serving 17 people during the first multi-week session.
- People of all abilities contributed their ideas about ability and inclusion to our "Together and Able" community artwork, a triptych designed by Tallahassee artist, Su Ecenia. Over a period of three weeks in January, volunteers helped Ecenia prepare the background painting and travel the piece so that students, teachers, and parents could contribute their comments. The work was finished April 16th and 17th at the LeMoyne Chain of Parks Art Festival.



"Together and Able"

Championing Universal Accessibility



- With a focus on increasing skills and sharing strategies for teaching art to students with disabilities, over 960 teachers and teaching artists attended VSA Florida webinars and trainings.
- Eight cultural organizations made a commitment to becoming more disability-friendly, providing VSA Florida Cultural Access Training to their staff, docents, and volunteers.
- Through a program sponsored by the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, five cultural organizations partnered with VSA Florida to send a staff member to the annual LEAD conference, in order to increase their knowledge about accessible and inclusive arts experiences.



96.4% of VSA Florida training participants felt they increased their knowledge and 96% plan on implementing what they learned in their everyday work.



Program Types



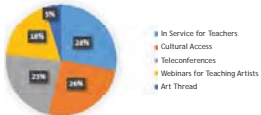
How We
Make a
Difference



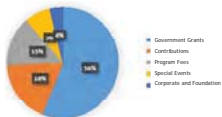
Paid Programs vs. Free Programs



Professional Development Programs 1,255 participants



Revenue



Expense



Thank You To Our 2015-2016 Sponsors and Donors!

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(in honor of Edmund McCarthy)
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(in honor of Peggy Willumson)



VSA Florida
University of South Florida
4202 E. Fowler Ave. EDU 105, Tampa, FL 33620
813.974.0721 www.vsafl.org

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