ANNUAL REPORT
Fiscal Year Ended July 31, 2008

Building Arts Skills Year by Year
The STARS Model

One of the challenges Youth in Arts has grappled with in recent years is how to help schools create richer, more comprehensive arts programs that address students’ needs at all grade levels.

We’re not alone. A new independent study by SRI International found that despite California’s 2000 adoption of comprehensive standards in music, dance, theatre and visual arts, 89% of schools are unable to provide a sequential program across all these art forms and 29% have no sequential arts program at all. Schools lack instructors to implement programs, as well as curriculum, arts program at all. Schools lack instructors to implement programs, as well as curriculum, training, and other resources.

To help bridge this gap, Youth in Arts has launched Sequential Thematic Arts Reaching Students or STARS. The model combines standards-based arts lesson plans with training for artists, teachers and volunteers. Youth in Arts is working with both the Larkspur and the Sausalito/Marin City school districts to pilot the program. Funds have been provided by both districts and by the Corte Madera Larkspur Schools Foundation. Seed funding for assessment has been provided by the Marin Community Foundation.

STARS has generated great excitement within the participating communities. Teachers have expressed new commitment to integrating the arts into their work, and have commented on the growing pride students show in their art.

In the Larkspur schools, a parent group has formed to help shape the program. Youth in Arts has trained parent volunteers who have in turn helped create classroom art supply kits and develop new community arts events.

In Sausalito/Marin City, the district has expanded STARS themes to after school hours, working with Youth in Arts to create a daily, arts-infused program for K-8 students. The Twilight Program is also building new links to the community, developing partnerships with arts and service organizations and bringing in parents and other volunteers for activities and events.

Youth in Arts was also delighted to share the work of STARS students with our broader Marin community at the first ever Youth in Arts Day at the Marin County Fair.}

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Revenue Sources

Expenses by Category

Cash Donors

In Memory of Alex Moore
Ingrid & Jack Purcell
Julie & Jim Ballard
Lemen Family Fund
Margaret Callison
Max & Phyllis Thelen
May Lee
Melanie Nichols/The Funger Foundation
Mesa Beverage
Mike Lee
Raghupathi Freitas LLP
Rileystreet Art Supply
Samuelson Schafer
Seagate Properties, Inc.
Susan & John Feder
Target
The Mechanics Bank
VSA arts of California
Westamerica Bank

Pamela Levine Fund for Arts Education

Diane Bauman
“New York Gang”
Mimi Murphy

Corporate Matching Gifts

Cline Corporation
Levi Strauss
Mars’
Mill Valley Market Shop & Give
Piper Jeffery
Charles Schwab
Wells Fargo

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Artists in Schools

Artists in Schools (AIS) brings professional artists into pre-K-12 classrooms for several weeks, a semester, or even a whole year. In 2007-08, as we developed the STARS model, we intensified our artist training and worked in-depth with teachers. We also built links to other Youth in Arts programs.

Last year, AIS served over 7,000 students in 287 classrooms. In addition to student performances and exhibitions at school sites, we featured student art at our Italian Street Painting Festival and in a huge maze created with STARS families for Youth in Arts Day at the Marin County Fair, which also featured activities led by AIS artists.

Through STARS, we provided artist trainings on planning, curriculum development and assessment, and we led 2-hour workshops for grade level teams of teachers to offer hands-on experience with art forms and plan the year’s program.

Links to our other programs included Family Day performances by AIS artists at the Italian Street Painting Festival and a featured performance in the Youth in Arts Presents series by Ensambles Ballet Folklórico led by AIS artist Zenon Barron. Students from Zenon’s classes at Hamilton Elementary were able to attend the professional performance, learn music, dance and costuming at school, and then present their own show. The connections gave children a rich understanding of the art form and a chance to see their teacher as a working artist.

In 2007-08, we served 285 VSA arts students in 28 Special Day classrooms. We also served students with disabilities in mainstream classes, reaching a total of approximately 1,250 youth with physical, developmental, emotional and psychological disabilities. Program Director Nydia Gonzalez traveled to Washington, DC to represent California at the national VSA arts conference and has since been named Vice President of the state chapter.

We have been working to increase accessibility in all our programs, so that youth served through VSA arts can enjoy other aspects of our work. For example, we added accessible stations on Children’s Avenue at the Italian Street Painting Festival that allowed children in wheelchairs to enjoy the fun.

Youth in Arts Presents

Formerly the Performing Art Series, Youth in Arts Presents provides live theater, music and dance for K-8 students by local, national and international touring companies.

The 2007-08 season included 28 performances by 13 companies for a total audience of over 10,000. We provided over 1,500 scholarship seats for low-income students, maintaining our commitment to making live arts economically accessible.

We revamped our study guide design, focusing on links to standards and hands-on activities. We also established a sponsorship program enabling local businesses and community organizations to bring classes to the theatre to enjoy educational performances.

Italian Street Painting Festival

Our fifteenth annual Italian Street Painting Festival featured perfect weather, delicious food, lively performances and gorgeous artwork created by volunteer artists. The theme of the event was Celebrating the Spirit of Youth and artists blended classical and contemporary images of childhood with original visions of the concept of “youth.”

Incoming Festival Director Laurie Vermont’s first event included a new Family Day activity on Saturday morning, accessible areas on Children’s Avenue, ASL interpreted performances, and our first “ISPF Eve” celebration for sponsors and donors.

In total, the event included 180 sponsored squares created by 417 professional and student artists, and over 1,000 Children’s Avenue squares.

‘Til Dawn

‘Til Dawn, Youth in Arts’ high school a cappella ensemble, is our most intensive program for students with a commitment to study and performance. ‘Til Dawn builds their repertoire around positive messages and social awareness. The group holds an annual series of retreats with Director Austin Willacy to explore issues like environment and culture.

VSA arts

VSA arts is an international program dedicated to helping people with disabilities learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. Youth in Arts is the Marin County affiliate for VSA arts and our program is one of California’s most extensive, providing in-depth sessions for children and young adults with physical, cognitive, and developmental disabilities.

The 2007-08 ‘Til Dawn tour included 27 performances for K-8 students by local, national, and international touring companies. The program’s repertoire includes arrangements of classical and contemporary images of childhood with original visions of the concept of “youth.”

Italian Street Painting Festival

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Youth in Arts is going green! We can keep you informed and save paper if you send your email address to yia@youthinarts.org.

For more information on any Youth in Arts program, contact our staff at 415-457-4878.

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Youth in Arts learning communities lies at the heart of the STARS project. We look forward to continuing this work in the year ahead. For more, see community-created websites at ncvisualarts.googlepages.com and twilightprogram.blogspot.com.