

# Youth in Arts®

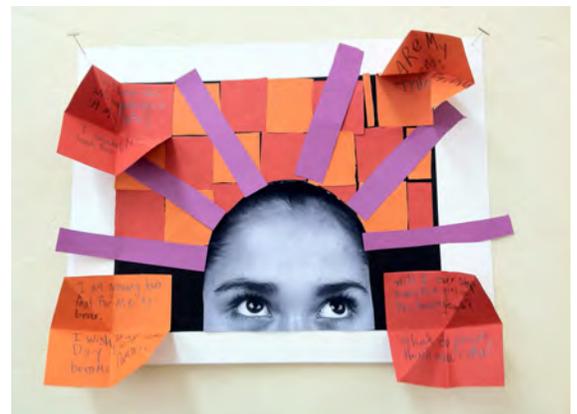
Fiscal Year 2010-11

## *Turning On the Lights: Creativity and Engagement*

We'd like to share some stories from the past year illustrating how Youth in Arts "turns on the lights" for children through arts learning. Each story emphasizes a key idea behind our approach: **Finding a Voice, Reaching All Learners, Artistic & Cultural Diversity, Community Engagement** and **Mentorship**. Each story also represents just a sample of the work we do with thousands of students each year. For stories from all our programs, all year round, subscribe to our blog or email list, or find us on Facebook or Twitter. Learn more at [youthinarts.org](http://youthinarts.org)



*"After I make a work of art, I feel a kind of relief that more of me is showing. I am starting to find out who I am."*



Vanessa has gained both art skills and a richer understanding of herself through her time with Brooke.

Her work demonstrates how art-making both stimulates children to think more deeply and provides a channel for sharing new ideas.

### **Finding A Voice: Vanessa's Story**

Helping each child **Find A Voice** is a core purpose of Youth in Arts' work. We support Mentor Artists in creating programs that not only teach technique and craft, but help kids discover and express what they uniquely want to say to the world.

Vanessa Lopez is a sixth grader at Willow Creek Academy. In 2010-11, Vanessa worked with Youth in Arts Mentor Artist Brooke Toczylowski as part of a district-wide model project.

Brooke built her curriculum around exploration, self-expression, and the core question: "Who Am I?" Vanessa's thoughts on art reflect this focus: "Art gives you a chance to express yourself without using words," she says.

*"Through Ms. Brooke, I learned quality projects...My favorite kind is abstract art, because it is a different way of seeing the world. Since class with Ms. Brooke...I've tried harder [to do] more detailed work. I push myself. I learned that even if you make a mistake there is always a chance, because it is about your mind and heart... She taught me this."*

In June 2011, an original work created by Vanessa was displayed in the Youth in Arts Gallery, as part of our inaugural "Lights On!" exhibit.

In her piece, Vanessa surrounded a digital photo self portrait with cut paper. She added fold-out notes such as, "Will I ever stop being the girl in the background?" and "I am growing too fast for me to bear."

Vanessa and her mother, Mayte Lopez, came to the "Lights On!" opening celebration. Mayte recalls:

*"When I saw Vanessa's work in the gallery, it really surprised me. She made art that showed she had deep questions and thoughts about herself and how people viewed her. I was really excited."*

Vanessa is continuing to work with Youth in Arts, now as a student of Mentor Artist K-Dub Williams at Willow Creek. Her mother reports that she has started sorting through the recycling bin, creating art that now decorates the whole house. As Vanessa so eloquently puts it,

*"Making art is a joy that is hard to find."*

## Reaching All Learners: Arts Unite Us

Arts education programs engage learners of all abilities as few other teaching approaches can. Youth in Arts has a long-standing commitment to serving children with disabilities and has been the only consistent provider of arts education in Special Day classrooms in Marin.

In 2008, we created Arts Unite Us to address a challenge we heard echoed by so many teachers and families--that Special Day students are often isolated and have few opportunities to interact with mainstream peers. Arts Unite Us provides opportunities for collaboration, learning and understanding between students of different abilities.

This past spring, Mentor Artist Melissa Briggs worked with Michael Lovejoy's Special Day students at Tamalpais High School to create and perform an original play entitled "The Sensational Nine" about seven superheroes who teach two supervillians how to



Photo by Nydia Gonzalez

"look inside" for the good within themselves. Parents, siblings, friends and mainstream peers attended their performance and all were touched by the story.

**"It was such a joy and privilege working with Melissa. She is amazing. She connected with the students so well and inspired them to present their voice(s). It was one of the highlights of our year."**

**-- Michael Lovejoy, Tamalpais High School**

Now this group of talented students is ready to take a big step and work with a group of mainstream peers on a fully collaborative piece to premiere in January 2012!

## Artistic & Cultural Diversity: Youth in Arts Presents



Photo by Brooke Toczylowski

Youth in Arts works with over 50 artists to create and lead our programs. We are committed to the artistic and cultural diversity of our artist roster, which gives us a rich range of options in developing new programs.

In February 2011, Youth in Arts created *The Paper Princess and the Piñata*, an original musical theater piece as part of our Youth in Arts Presents series.

The project drew upon the expertise of multiple artists, including Miko Lee (theater), Nydia Algazzali Gonzalez (Mexican vocal and instrumental music and dance), Miguel Martinez (traditional Mexican and contemporary Latin music), Zenon Barron (Ballet Folklórico), and Suzanne Joyal (visual arts).

The bilingual production, based on the popular book series by Bay Area author/illustrator Elisa Kleven, is a lively retelling of the Paper Princess story with a specific focus on kindergarten readiness through songs encouraging number, shape and color awareness, counting, vocabulary and positive social behavior.

Youth in Arts is currently hosting *¡Vuela! Paper Princess*, an exhibit of Elisa's original collage artwork alongside art items from *The Paper Princess and the Piñata* in our Youth in Arts Gallery at 917 C Street. A touring production of the show is also available to schools and community sites. Visit us during the holidays to catch a glimpse of how diverse artistic visions, talents, traditions and techniques can combine to create something new and beautiful!

## Mentorship: 'Til Dawn

Youth in Arts' approach is grounded in inspiring interactions between artists and students. Mentor Artist Austin Willacy's impact on students in our 'Til Dawn a cappella ensemble is impressive, lasting throughout students' high school years and carrying many into careers in the arts.



Lily Elise and Austin Willacy

'Til Dawn alum Lily Elise was recently a finalist on NBC's primetime show *The Voice* with Christina Aguilera. Lily's mom Tori recalls watching her perform "Lady Marmalade" with Christina onstage

before a live studio audience, calling it "one of those 'living the dream' moments for all of us." Lily is currently recording a five-song EP album in Southern California. Her first single, "Lock & Key," is available on iTunes.

**"I honestly don't know who I'd be as a performer without Austin and 'Til Dawn. Both played such a role in my learning who I wanted to become not only as an artist, but also as a person. The world needs more teachers like Austin." -- Lily Elise**

Drew Gasparini is in New York, where he has established a career as a songwriter and performer. His original musical *Crazy, Just Like Me* recently won the Best of Fest Audience Award at the 2011 New York Musical Theatre Festival. Drew says of his time with 'Til Dawn and Austin, "'Til Dawn taught me how to communicate through music. It's part of the reason I've gone on to do the things I've done and continue to do. Austin's guidance and mentorship certainly helped me individualize my song writing style and look at music as a realistic career path."

Siblings Ian, Eric and Brittany Hölljes and Elizabeth Hopkins are currently touring the East Coast with their North Carolina indie band Delta Rae (many will remember Delta Rae from the 2009 Youth in Arts Italian Street Painting Festival). Also keeping busy performance and tour schedules are solo artists Emily Rath and Natalie John.

For updates on the lasting impact of arts mentorship these and many other 'Til Dawn alums, follow our blog at [youthinarts.org/blog](http://youthinarts.org/blog).

## Community Engagement: Parent Training

Building community through the arts means engaging *all* the members of a school community, from students to teachers to parents.

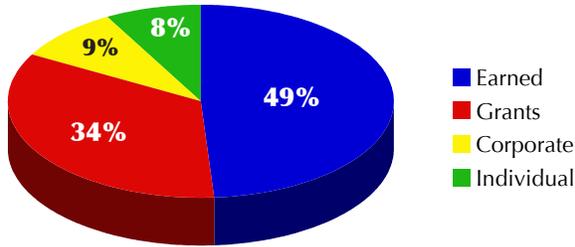
In January 2011, Suzanne Joyal, Director of Artists in Schools, established a series of trainings at Venetia Valley K-8 School for the Parent Art Docent Program. Suzanne created and led hands-on workshops for parents, in which they learned projects they could replicate with children in their classrooms. Take-away lesson plans and supply kits for five classrooms were provided with each workshop. As follow-up, parents had opportunities to observe and assist a professional Mentor Artist in the classroom and to have coaching from an artist as they replicated the lesson themselves.

According to Suzanne, "the results were fantastic! Some parents were so confident after just the first workshop that they were able to jump right in and begin portrait drawing lessons with the children." According to Venetia Valley parent Jessica Bosch,

**"Attending the Parent Art Docent training classes has reminded me that creating a work of art is pure stress relief. I work a full time job with two children, and after attending the first class I felt calm and refreshed AND I learned a lot. If it can do this for an adult, just think how important it is for our children." -- Jessica Bosch**

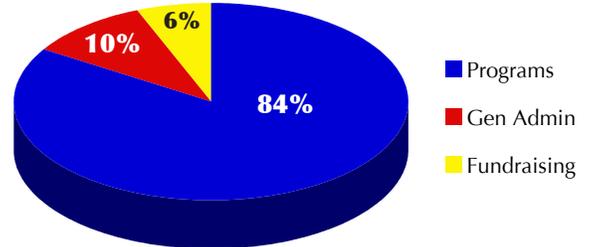
## Fiscal Year Ended July 31, 2011

### Revenue Sources



Revenue: \$748,600

### Expenditures by Category



Expenditures: \$688,833

### Cash Donors

#### \$50,000 & above



#### \$10,000 - \$49,999

Autodesk  
County of Marin  
Crescent Porter Hale Foundation  
Gloria McDonough  
Margaret A. Cargill Foundation  
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The San Francisco Foundation

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#### \$2,000 - \$4,999

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Terry Pearce  
The Jones-Smith Foundation  
The Lumpkin Family Foundation  
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VSA California

#### Pamela Levine Fund for Arts Education

*Established by Laszio N. Tauber Family*  
Bruce Caplan/The NY Gang  
Diane Bauman  
Elizabeth & Bertil Lundqvist  
Gloria McDonough

#### Corporate Gift Programs

Chevron Humankind  
eScrip  
Piper Jaffray  
Wells Fargo

*Plus hundreds of other dedicated donors under \$1,000*

### The Year In Numbers

Students Directly Served: **21,600**  
Audiences for Performance & Events: **48,600**  
Mentor Artist Hours: **2, 273**  
Classrooms Served: **435**  
Teachers & Parents at Arts Workshops: **347**  
Mentorship Hours per `Til Dawn Student: **386**

### Staff, Board of Directors and Auxiliary

#### Staff

Miko Lee  
*Executive Director*  
Austin Willacy  
Brooke Toczylowski  
Carol Slocum  
Erik Peerand  
Jen Daly  
Keith "K-Dub" Williams  
Lily Oglesby  
Marguerite Etemad  
Nydia Algazzali Gonzalez  
Suzanne Joyal

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Melanie Nichols *VP Program*  
Kele Gasparini *Secretary*  
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Deb Bennett  
Susan Feder  
Bruce Hopper  
Anna Melillo  
  
*Special Directors*  
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Jan Casey-Bertrand  
Eliot Holtzman

#### Auxiliary

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Deb Bennett  
Lynn Callender  
Suzanne Collins  
Jackie Dagg  
Coya Elliott  
Janiece Hittenberger  
Ginny Hofmann  
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