

# Youth in Arts®

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SAN RAFAEL, CA – Which visual arts lessons will help you communicate with a student who is on the autism spectrum? What music lessons will reach a student who is experiencing an emotional disturbance? How can dance include someone using a wheelchair? How do you teach collaboration in your 5th grade classroom?

These are just some of the questions that can be answered by Youth in Arts recently released [ARTS Bank](#) (Art Resources for Teachers and Students). The ARTS Bank is a first of its kind free database to find and contribute arts activities to reach all types of learners.

Youth in Arts Executive Director Miko Lee and Visual Arts Director Suzanne Joyal will present a beta version of the online resource at VSA Intersections: Arts and Special Education Conference later this month in Irvine, CA. VSA is an international organization on arts, education and disability that was founded in 1974 by former U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Jean Kennedy Smith and is headquartered in Washington, DC.

“This is our opportunity to share this tool with a broader community so we can build upon each other’s work,” Lee said. “We have intentionally made it a free resource to encourage people to use it, contribute and collaborate.”

The VSA conference will be the largest-ever with more than 350 participants from the United States and abroad. It offers professional development to address the challenges students experiencing disabilities face and how the arts can be used to address their individual learning styles.

Lee said the ARTS bank is an exciting new tool. With a click of a button, teachers, parents or caregivers can plug in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) goal or grade level or a key word and find an arts lesson designed to strengthen those specific skills.

“All learners deserve equal access to the arts,” Lee said. “We have received so much inspiration from all of the other members in the VSA network.”

The ARTS Bank is part of Youth in Arts’ Digital Toolkit, which includes [six videos](#) on inclusive teaching practices for artists, classroom teachers and parents. The ARTS Bank was developed pro bono through Salesforce under the leadership of Derek Schauffler. Funding for the videos was provided through the state Department of Education’s Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant that the Marin County Office of Education received.

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