

Building Arts Participation FY08 Projects

Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission

Based on a previous steward participation study of several established southern New Jersey organizations, Cumberland will select six local re-grantee recipients with a proven track record of exemplary performance to participate in a study that builds participation among local stewards. Three consultants will work with the selected organizations to determine how steward participation is influenced by organizational mission, programming, planning, implementation and governance. The study's analysis will provide recommendations for participatory growth and will provide indicators to track performance over a period of time. It is anticipated that the results will prove applicable to the majority of smaller, sub-regional, statewide cultural institutions.

McCarter Theatre Company

McCarter Online is the Company's newest audience development pilot program developed to transform existing audience outreach and education efforts into a web based interactive platform. Consisting of the McCarter Theatre Blog, video, research guides and audio, the goal of *McCarter Online* is to deepen and diversify its core subscribers (those who attend on a regular basis). Along with the launching of *McCarter Online*, the Company will commission an email survey to gather information to better understand the participatory behavior of single and multiple ticket buyers as well as current and lapsed subscribers. The survey will help to determine audience demographics and explore motivating factors such as pricing that influence patron participation. Project outcomes will be measured by the increase in the number of single and multiple ticket buyers who convert to subscribers. Long term goals include deepening the audience experience to cultivate an audience that is better prepared for new and innovative work therefore diversifying those participating at the core level.

Monmouth County Arts Council (MCAC)

MCAC will research and further develop its *Teen Arts Connection (TAC)* to include a web based component offering information on local arts opportunities for teens. Originally *TAC* served a small group of teen artists giving them the opportunity to attend local and regional art events, meet professional artists and peers, try different artistic disciplines, participate in performances and exhibit opportunities and intern with or work for local organizations. The new web component will expand the reach of *TAC* and build participation among teens. MCAC developed the project concept based on teen surveys and discussions with local high school teachers and students. MCAC will further develop the program as it continues conversations with two additional county arts high schools. Project outcomes will be evaluated through teen website participation, attendance at the partner arts organizations, a survey at the 08 Teen Arts Festival and discussions with student artists and their teachers.

Montclair Art Museum (MAM)

MAM is in Phase II of its *Diversity Marketing Initiative*, a campaign designed to increase attendance among the African American, African and Caribbean regional communities. MAM seeks to extend its reach to serve more multicultural audiences that more accurately reflect the diverse regional mixture of socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic demographics. A major focus of the initiative will be the personal and grassroots relationship building effort to develop trust and raise awareness while increasing MAM's presence in media that serve the communities. Staff and volunteers are being trained to provide a more welcoming encounter for visitors from diverse ethnicities which will result in the development of a Visitor Experience Mission Statement. Key to the initiative is the participation of two professional consultants, Donna Walker-Kuhne and Tanya Poteat who both offer key media contacts and existing regional relationships that will connect MAM to the communities. Emphasis is being placed on better coordinating the efforts of MAM's minority stewards, which include trustees, docents and other volunteers who will play integral roles in working with staff to develop sustainable relationships. Evaluation efforts will include focus groups with community partners and a possible online survey through Survey Monkey to learn what programs participants may have attended and what their experiences have been.

Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey

Midday with Masters presents four lunch-time events offering a rare and exciting glimpse of the "world behind the curtain" and an invitation to learn from resident and guest artisans about the many "magical" techniques that help create the physical world of the theatre. The program is aimed at attracting women ages 25 to 45 who have disposable time during the midday work/school week. A comprehensive patron and economic impact study conducted in 2003 revealed that this demographic currently represents approximately 10 percent of the Theatre's audience base. The program intends to engage this new patron community with insights about the theatrical tradition in an informative and entertaining way that may begin to modify resistant perceptions associated with classical theatre. Current purchasing analysis indicates that nearly 28% of the attendees are brand new to the Theatre and an additional 18% have not participated in the last two years. Following the program, evaluation plans include a mailed survey with incentive to respond to fully document the demographic of the attendees, their current and future interest in the program and in additional programs offered by the Theatre. Emphasis will also be placed on encouraging patrons to become active attendees as subscribers to the Theatre's main stage season.

Symphony in C

Symphony in C (formerly The Haddonfield Symphony) is in its first season performing under its new name and in its second full season performing at the Gordon Theater at Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts. With this re-branding and move to the City of Camden, it is imperative that the Symphony continues to deepen its relationship with its current core constituency, broaden its reach to communities throughout southern New Jersey and Philadelphia and diversify its audience to become a meaningful part of Camden's social fabric. The Symphony's goals for FY08 are: to hire an outside consultant to develop, administer and analyze an audience demographic and attitude survey; maintain and deepen its relationship with core audience members by offering expanded transportation services to patrons; and, broaden its audiences in the southern New Jersey and Philadelphia region through targeted marketing initiatives.

The Symphony will evaluate its progress through a baseline survey, the number of season ticket holders, multi-ticket purchasers, patrons using extended transportation options, personal conversations and anecdotal information gathered throughout the season.

WheatonArts and Cultural Center

Undergoing a renaissance, WheatonArts is moving from its origins as a “market driven” cultural tourist destination toward a more “mission driven” agenda of programs and services for the community. WheatonArts will undertake an Audience Research project, the first phase of a three-year initiative, to build and deepen participation of Cumberland, Gloucester, and Atlantic county residents. The research will inform the future development of programming, marketing, and outreach. The Audience Study is designed to: help broaden participation by connected audiences (those who attend but are not committed to a particular provider) and deepen participation by core audiences (those who attend on a regular basis); identify strategies to encourage participants who are interested in one type of offering to sample others; discover barriers to participation that can be eliminated; explore the challenges and opportunities in building participation by members of ethnic communities; and better communicate a coherent and compelling experience that connects with audiences. The Study will feature a marketing survey distributed via email, three focus groups, and interviews with leaders from two ethnic communities.

Visual Arts Center of New Jersey

Project Access is a multi-phased research and marketing program designed to help the Center deepen involvement of current participants, attract new members, students, visitors and donors, and to develop and implement a cost-efficient marketing plan. The project has four key phases which include a program audit, qualitative research, quantitative research and a marketing plan. The audit and qualitative phases have been completed and the findings were presented to the board. Research and marketing firms conducted the program audit by reviewing all Center communications materials produced over the past year and spent a day meeting with key staff and trustees. Constituents were culled for the qualitative research which included four focus groups and ten one-on-one interviews. Quantitative research will begin this month and will test the hypotheses learned from the qualitative research regarding dedicated funding appeals for outreach programs, methods for increased utilization of class space and methods to make the Center a destination of choice. The qualitative phase will consist of two sets of telephone interviews to measure the current and potential size of the Center’s target audience within the current geographic footprint and in a broader geographic area. On-going self-administered surveys will also be distributed among students, parents and visitors to measure interest in potential Center initiatives.

Warren County Cultural and Heritage Commission

Building on the success of its previous pilot program, Warren will continue to offer a variety of music genres and story telling to three senior facilities to build participation among the county’s residence bound senior community. The program responds to two significant needs in that it offers both Warren county artists presentation opportunities and the residence senior community a chance to experience the arts. With the assistance of the Arts Action Research team, Warren is developing new and refining previously used research instruments that will include interviews

and questionnaires designed to target residents as well as site personnel. The research will be designed to help determine what type of programming is most effective for the community. A statistician has been secured to analyze the data with input from the participating site personnel.

Young Audiences of New Jersey (YANJ)

YANJ's *Adopt-a-School* model will focus on exploring the creation of partnerships between businesses and school communities for the purpose of funding arts education programming in schools. The research will explore existing business/school partnership models; assess attitudes and perceptions of arts education among business owners and executives, school administration, and key parents; explore current business patterns of giving and strategic interests for recognition; and, examine schools' and parents' willingness to coordinate and lead fundraising activities. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be implemented and include surveys, interviews, observations, analysis of focus groups/round tables, the number of businesses joining the initiative and the amount of increased funding for school arts programs. As a result of the research findings, YANJ will have the necessary information required to move the project to the design phase in year two.