

START Project Descriptions

ArtPride New Jersey Foundation “Who's Who, Where and How?”

ArtPRIDE developed a Measuring Arts Participation (MAP) project to provide a customized audience survey tool that increases the ability of arts organizations of all capacities to accurately and consistently measure arts participation. The goal is to help organizations better understand current arts participation so that they may develop new marketing and development strategies that broaden, deepen and diversify participation. Groups design their own printable surveys online by selecting from components most appropriate to their needs. Written guidelines and a web video on how to administer an audience survey are available as are affordable data entry services. The survey contains both basic questions about audience participation and more in depth questions about background and quality of experience. The survey offers a well defined standard of measurement, which may not only potentially increase an organization's earned and contributed income, but also increase the accuracy of audience participation data collected individually and statewide.

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Camden County Cultural and Heritage Commission “Word of Mouth Ambassadors”

Partnering with Camden area arts organizations, the Camden County Commission created a County Arts Ambassadors Program, a diversification strategy targeting the 3,000 employees of the county for increased participation utilizing special incentives and the communications networks of county government. Employees from different departments were selected as County Arts Ambassadors and offered reduced rate and free tickets to events. They were interviewed prior to and after attending events regarding the quality of the arts experience, background information on their participation habits and the effectiveness of the communications. The Ambassadors were charged with encouraging their coworkers to participate by sharing their personal participation experiences. While the impact of the project on diversifying participation is yet to be determined, much was learned and gained including that meticulous advanced planning is required as well as clear measurement tools. And while the notion of working with a defined group that mirrors the general public is a sound premise, preparedness for changes in that universe, in this case government, can seriously impact maintenance of effort.

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Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission “Bring in the Board”

The Cumberland County Commission in conjunction with the Delaware Valley and Down Jersey Folklife Centers researched the participation of the governing and advisory boards of six South Jersey arts and cultural organizations to identify ways that superior stewardship can lead to both broader and deeper participation. The project sought to deepen the participation of board members by increasing their level of personal contributions while using their unique position to leverage participation from other sectors. Surveys and live interviews revealed both perceptual and practical barriers concerning board roles and responsibilities that can hinder effectiveness to carry out mission and provide valuable

service to its audiences and communities. The need for more clearly defined terms and expectations of service as well greater cognizance of the compositional requirements of boards in relation to an organization's life cycle position led this project to posit certain principles that can be employed both by participating groups and others wrestling with this issue. The project prompted systemic change among some of the participating board members and they are currently engaged in examining and restructuring their organizations' governance.

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The Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission
“Diving Into Diversity: Becoming a Cultural Resource”

The Middlesex County Commission partnered with The State Theatre Regional Arts Center to explore ways to deepen and diversify both audience participation and institutional behavior through new approaches in programming through, for and with the Asian Indian community. Drawing upon extensive fieldwork that identified several Asian Indian artists, the Commission established a schedule of folk arts events to offer to the community focusing on traditions from the various regions of this diaspora in dance, Rangoli drumming, Mehndi (body adornment with Henna), foods and spices, and exhibits of ancient instruments and fine crafts. In addition to the Commission cosponsoring programming with four Asian Indian organizations, all of the programs were covered by foreign language media and local press. The Commission broadened performance and venue opportunities for Asian Indian artists while expanding its own programming and succeeded in attracting both larger East Indian attendance as well as larger non Indian attendance. Key to its success, the Commission utilized the services of an Asian Indian public relations consultant to develop the promotional strategy helping them to reach audiences and media that conventional means could not have attracted. The project serves as a replicable model in building relationships with culturally specific communities based on shared planning, innovative programming and new ways of marketing.

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The Arts Council of the Morris Area
“ArtWorks! Exhibitions of Art in the Workplace”

The Arts Council of the Morris Area's program sought to broaden and diversify participation by infusing arts into the work environment, by providing visual arts exhibitions and events in and around the work day as well as information on area arts organizations. The project also increased exhibition opportunities for regional and local artists. In partnership with the Gale Company corporate park, which houses 35 businesses and 4,000 employees, the Council presented four, six-week exhibitions. Each was mounted in the lobbies of four separate buildings throughout the corporate campus featuring the work of regional and employee artists within the park. A total of 244 works by 71 artists were exhibited, and the fourth exhibit showcased 12 employee artists. The project provided participants the opportunity to communicate with artists about their work (at "meet the artist" receptions) and to share their art experience with their co-workers with the intention of fostering broader participation in the arts. Through a series of surveys, the project also provided insight into how people respond to art in the workplace and how that experience may impact their future arts patronage. Overall events were judged to be successful; however, work is still underway to gauge longer range impact on outside attendance. One major lesson

learned is the need to secure advance commitments of facility operations in addition to management.

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**The Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission
“Ocean's Outreach”**

The Ocean County Commission proposed to broaden arts participation among the county's rapidly growing older population through publication and targeted circulation of a free bimonthly newsletter highlighting the arts and cultural offerings in the county. The Commission created its pilot focusing on adult living communities. Through pre and post-project evaluation that included surveys and focus groups, the needs and practices of these residents were documented and the impact of the newsletter was examined. One of the preliminary findings underscores the need to address transportation issues. The Commission is sharing all of its lessons with its entire arts constituency and other sectors serving the population to aid it in re-tooling programs and services. In direct response to the transportation finding the Commission has created a new grant program called the Special Out-Reach Project (SORP) which is designed to offset the costs of carrying out special projects at off-site locations serving individuals whose participation is limited due to mobility impairment or transportation issues.

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**Cultural Access Network of New Jersey
(formerly The New Jersey Arts Access Task Force)
“Enabling Our Cultural Organizations”**

The Cultural Access Network of New Jersey sought to understand and share with arts groups how they can do a better job of attracting people with disabilities to participate in their events. It developed surveys and conducted a series of focus groups to explore the interests, buying patterns and participation in cultural events among people with disabilities. The goal of the project was to create meaningful marketing tools for cultural organizations. Expected outcomes of the project are an increased number of access programs offered by organizations as their knowledge of the community's specific needs grows and to better reach the disable community with information about cultural participation opportunities. The data collected has been shared with cultural organizations and the Network will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the findings to facilitate organizations with enhancing their services. The Network is working to create a statewide marketing plan based on the findings and will also join with the National Endowment for the Arts to develop ways to share their discoveries with arts organizations and arts service partners nationwide.

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**Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs
“Building Pre-School and Parent Participation”**

The Union County Division and the United Way of Greater Union County partnered to explore the proposition that more intensive arts involvement among pre-school aged children and their parents can lead to more active long term arts involvement and superior school performance. It worked for nearly two years with four early childcare centers that serve at risk children by offering specialized art experiences through Learning MI Way, an

artist in residence program. The program, created and provided by Artsgenesis, Inc., is based on Howard Gardiner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI), which proposes that different types of intelligence account for a broad range of human learning potentials. The project focused on children and their families currently not participating by immersing children in arts education guided by professional artists and connecting their experience in the classroom to their parents at home. Quantifiable data on outcomes has not been achieved; but summative statements of participating educators and artists on behavioral criteria point to success as does the commitment of the sites to continuation and the interest of the Union County Superintendent of Schools and others to explore similar programs.

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Warren County Cultural and Heritage Commission
“Bringing the Arts to the People”

The Warren County Commission delivered new art experiences to the county's under-served, accessibly challenged older population and introduced new venues for artists. Through its Senior Outreach Arts Program (SOAP), the Commission worked with the county Division of Senior Services to provide arts performances at residential health care facilities and senior nutrition sites. The project focused on broadening performance opportunities for artists and diversifying participation among under-served senior populations with limited access to arts venues. Through surveys and questionnaires, the project also provided a valuable opportunity to gather information on the special needs of this population as well as from the sites in order to inform programmatic enhancement. The Commission's success with the program has led to its continuance through funding from the local board of freeholders.

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