Arts Build Communities

Report on the 2002 and 2003 Grants Program
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# Arts Build Communities

Report on the 2002 and 2003 Grants Programs

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Arts Build Communities Projects

2002 ABC Project Locations

2003 ABC Project Locations
Program Summary

The Oregon Arts Commission’s Arts Build Communities (ABC) grants provide support to strengthen communities through the arts. ABC-funded projects are specific to the critical issues and opportunities facing each community and the ways in which local organizers seek to connect local arts resources with these issues and opportunities. This program supports organizations serving people whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics or disability.

The increasing demand for Arts Build Communities grant funds and the variety of approaches to projects appear connected to a growing realization that arts have been under-utilized resources in community development. As both rural and urban communities continue to struggle with how to build stronger and more diverse economies, healthy and sustainable schools, other essential services and approaches to caring for all people in a community, it becomes clear that arts are part of the solution. Projects profiled in this document illustrate a variety of creative approaches to program development. Some common approaches include:

- festivals focusing on community heritage and ethnic diversity
- development of important cultural facilities
- public art created locally that reflects community history and values
- business and job development
- support for youth and families, especially for those most at-risk
- creative approaches to supporting minority communities, and understanding more fully the historical and cultural contexts of these communities
- projects that enhance understanding and appreciation of place: both natural and man-made environments
- approaches to documenting arts and cultural assets and community stories, and preserving valuable cultural traditions
- projects that bring people together in a safe environment to discuss painful issues such as breast cancer and homophobia.

All projects build either human or physical community, or both. Human community is built through generating dialogue on issues, strengthening relationships and partnerships, increasing inter-cultural understanding, and clarifying the place of arts, culture and history in communities. Physical community is built through the development of public gathering spaces, facilities, and other amenities such as public art. Often these two overlap in interesting ways.

The grants profiled in this report were funded during the 2002 and 2003 grant periods. 24 projects were funded in 2002; 31 projects were funded in 2003, with a total of $138,620 grant funds. From 1997 to 2005 203 projects across Oregon have been supported with $985,620 of Arts Build Communities grant dollars. Grants range up to $7,000 and grantees are private, non-profit organizations or units of local or tribal government. This program is supported largely through funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

As the manager of this program since its inception in 1997, I am struck by the ability of these local organizations, who are often operating on a month-to-month budget, to develop very successful community-based programming. Organizers are increasingly committed to ways of successfully dealing with very difficult issues (such as aging, hate crimes, breast cancer, etc.). Several of the projects you will read about used theater and storytelling as mechanisms for sharing stories and building dialogue. Project organizers also are becoming incredibly creative in partnership development. As one person said: “The key to reaching new people is through new partnerships.” Projects show a large range of non-arts agencies being utilized as partners—from housing developments to auto repair shops to wildlife refuges. And, at least a third of the projects centered around providing a forum of one kind or another for people to gather and experience the arts.

These projects are deeply creative and deeply committed to building stronger communities.

Bill Flood, Community Development Coordinator, Oregon Arts Commission
### 2002 Grant Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>Albany's Promise</td>
<td>Arts program for at-risk youth, Albany</td>
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<tr>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>Albina Community Development Corporation</td>
<td>Workshops, exhibits, performances of African cultural heritage, Portland</td>
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<td>$4,300</td>
<td>Arts Council of Pendleton</td>
<td>Pendleton Cultural Discovery Project, a collaboration among 11 cultural organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2,600</td>
<td>Central Northeast Neighbors</td>
<td>Photo project and exhibit involving neighborhood youth, Portland</td>
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<tr>
<td>$4,200</td>
<td>Clackamas County Employment Training</td>
<td>Playback theater with families living in County Housing Authority facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Columbia Gorge Arts and Culture Council</td>
<td>First Friday showcasing local artists and businesses in Hood River</td>
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<tr>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>City of Coquille</td>
<td>Gallery 37 training program for youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>Elkton Community Education Center</td>
<td>Artist-in-residence program, Elkton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6,800</td>
<td>Estacada Together/Estacada Arts Commission</td>
<td>Estacada Summer Celebration 2002</td>
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<td>$3,900</td>
<td>Ethos</td>
<td>Sound School Assemblies Program</td>
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<td>$4,000</td>
<td>City of Falls City</td>
<td>Commissioning public artwork in Falls City</td>
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<tr>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>The Haven Project</td>
<td>Afield program pairing underserved teens with professional actors, Portland</td>
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<td>$5,900</td>
<td>Hult Center for Performing Arts/Adelante Si Hispanic</td>
<td>Residency with Mexican puppeteers, Titiri-Tataara, Eugene</td>
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<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization</td>
<td>In My Country: A Gathering of Refugee and Immigrant Fiber Traditions, Portland</td>
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<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Jefferson County Library Foundation</td>
<td>Purchase of film equipment for new film facility adjacent to Library, Madras</td>
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<td>$4,000</td>
<td>Klamath Arts Council</td>
<td>Development of Klamath and Lake County artist registry</td>
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<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Lane Arts Council/Bring Recycling ReUse for Art, design plan for Bring's new facility, Eugene</td>
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<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Libraries of Eastern Oregon</td>
<td>Writing workshops in Eastern Oregon</td>
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<td>$6,800</td>
<td>Oregon Folklife Program of the Oregon Historical Society</td>
<td>Traveling exhibit of Oregon Latino folk arts, statewide</td>
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<td>$6,800</td>
<td>Oregon 4-H Foundation</td>
<td>Traditional Latino folkloric dance and costume design instruction, Hood River</td>
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<td>$3,500</td>
<td>RASIKA India Arts and Culture Council</td>
<td>Gurukulam—Children's Heritage Camp, Beaverton</td>
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<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Siskiyou Regional Education Project</td>
<td>Mountains and Rivers (literary magazine focusing on the Klamath-Siskiyou region), Cave Junction</td>
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<td>$1,600</td>
<td>Tamastslikt Cultural Institute</td>
<td>Series of workshops for Tribal youth exploring printmaking and native language with Tribal elders, Pendleton</td>
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<td>$2,900</td>
<td>Unete Center for Farmworker Advocacy Project</td>
<td>Project FIESTA supporting Latino arts, Medford</td>
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Albany’s Promise, Albany

Promise Arts
The city of Albany, population 45,000, is located in Linn County, a region known for its high numbers of teen pregnancies, high school dropouts and youth arrests. Substance abuse is widespread, and there are few cultural opportunities for local youth, particularly in non-school hours.

Albany’s Promise is a local non-profit organization that addresses these issues by connecting youth with the resources they need to become successful, healthy adults. Comprised of leaders from several community organizations, Albany’s Promise works to provide Albany’s youth with healthy mentors, safe after-school activities, health care, skills training and community service opportunities. In 2002 Albany’s Promise worked with Albany Free From Drug Abuse and the Linn-Benton Council for the Arts to produce Promise Arts, a summer arts program for middle and high school students who were considered at-risk.

The summer program was designed to increase participants’ self-esteem and to provide positive adult relationships with mentor artists. It offered students a safe, healthy place to spend summer hours and an opportunity to develop marketable skills through art and community service. Finally, it provided area youth a rare opportunity to explore various art media under the guidance of skilled artist mentors.

From June to August, over three hundred youth attended intensive art modules in ceramic drum making and drumming, storytelling, photography and creative expression through visual art.

Participants were selected based on their artistic inclination and interest, as well as their financial need and degree of risk. In exchange for free tuition, each participant agreed to perform five hours of community service, supervising youth art activities at Albany River Rhythms concerts and the Art and Air Festival.
Local artists, all with strong backgrounds in youth education, provided intensive arts instruction in their field of expertise. Working closely with these instructors, participants crafted shakers and drums from clay, practiced drawing from nature observations and experimented with different storytelling techniques. Their artwork was displayed at the Albany City Hall and the Old Armory Buildings during August and September.

How did Promise Arts build community?
Promise Arts strengthened the relationship between key partners: Albany’s Promise, Albany Free from Drug Abuse, the Linn Benton Council for the Arts and the Linn County/Oregon State University Extension Service. The local educational school district helped recruit youth for the program, as did the Community Service Consortium. Support for the planning and implementation of Promise Arts was outstanding.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Partners were very pleased with the success of Promise Arts. Participants were actively engaged in the various modules, and they reported increased knowledge of the targeted arts. They also expressed a sense of pride in their abilities and their finished products. Partners did not allow enough time for the drum-making module; as a result, the artist was not able to fire all the drums. This, and other small logistics, will be adjusted in future programs.

What’s ahead?
There is significant community support for doing this project again. Partners will apply for future grants from the Oregon Arts Commission as well as other sources, with a goal of providing similar activities to more community youth.
Albina Community Development Corporation, Portland

Pride and Energy of Africa Ensembles
Over seventy-five percent of the Albina community of north and northeast Portland is of African-American descent, although few have any connection with their cultural roots. In 2002, the Albina Community Development Corporation, which serves this low-income neighborhood, contracted with Pride and Energy of Africa Ensemble (PEACE) to provide a series of workshops in African dance, drumming and storytelling, with the goal of helping residents connect to their heritage, as well as their current community.

Pride and Energy of Africa Ensemble is a non-profit organization which promotes the culture and heritage of Africa through traditional dances, folk songs, drumming and storytelling. Born in Nigeria and raised in a family of cultural performers, director Kokomma Etuks is committed to sharing the rich culture and art of Africa in her new home. She has held numerous dance and drumming workshops and performances in the Portland area, all of which celebrate the essential role of dance in village life. The Ensemble boasts an eclectic repertoire of over twenty authentic Nigerian dances and costumes.

In May 2002, Kokomma and the Ensemble presented the first of three presentations during the Portland Multicultural Festival in northeast Portland. In full traditional costume, they performed several authentic Nigerian dances, including the Abang dance, which is used to celebrate weddings and naming ceremonies. The significance and history of each dance were presented to the audience before and during the performance.
A second performance occurred in August 2002, during the Mississippi neighborhood’s Night Out Festival. This was followed by a presentation and workshop in April 2003, during which Albina residents had the opportunity to help make and wear the traditional costumes. This hands-on experience generated great excitement throughout the community and created a demand for future Africa-oriented workshops. Many of the three thousand spectators and participants expressed their interest and enthusiasm to learn more about their culture and heritage.

**How did the *Pride and Energy of Africa Ensemble* build community?**

This project gave Albina residents the opportunity to gather under one roof and see, touch and experience a piece of African culture. It was a very powerful experience for all involved. The community was able to deal with some difficult issues, such as the lack of a cohesive, common history, because they finally had the opportunity to ask questions which had remained unanswered for a long time.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Post-project surveys indicated that Albina residents enjoyed the performances, learned a lot about Africa and looked forward to future presentations. Extended workshop hours would allow participants a chance to learn and experience Nigerian dance on a deeper level.

**What’s ahead?**

Project organizers would like to continue the project in Albina and other areas, if funding can be secured.

*Contact*

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Arts Council of Pendleton, Pendleton

Pendleton Cultural Discovery Project
Nestled in the rolling wheat fields of northeastern Oregon, the town of Pendleton serves as a cultural and commerce center to many smaller surrounding towns. With only 17,000 residents, the community has deep and diverse roots in both Native American and Western history. A site along the Lewis and Clark Discovery Trail, Pendleton is home to the Pendleton Round-up, one of the largest national rodeos, and to Crow’s Shadow Institute for the Arts, which provides training and career development opportunities for Native American artists.

For more than two years the Arts Council of Pendleton has facilitated the Cultural Non-Profit Round Table, a coalition of eleven non-profit arts, cultural and heritage organizations in the local area. The Round Table has become a key component of Pendleton’s identity and economy, which is growing more dependent on tourism as the agricultural sector weakens. To fulfill its new role, the Round Table initiated the Pendleton Cultural Discovery Project, as a means to identify cultural resources and to create an outreach program for community participation and cultural tourism.

The first phase of the project began with the development of a cultural assessment questionnaire which was used to identify community priorities, strengths and challenges. Working with a team of professional consultants, the Round Table developed a questionnaire which analyzed the audience, marketing efforts, program offerings and needs of each participating organization. This information was gathered and shared among all Round Table participants and used to plan future events, marketing efforts and resource sharing.

The second phase of the project involved developing common marketing materials to help attract more cultural tourism to the area. These materials include a brochure that features each participating organization and a television spot called “Come to the Crossroads” that promotes the community.
The final event of the project occurred in October 2002, when Round Table members hosted the first annual Pendleton Discovery Fair. Held on Main Street, this event included many arts and historical presentations, displays and enactments. Twelve pastel artists produced paintings of Main Street, while three performance artists recalled Pendleton’s days as the center of Oregon’s wool industry. The Children’s Museum provided hands-on arts activities for young people while an ensemble from the symphony performed in a local eatery. The Historical Society honored Pendleton’s agricultural past with an interactive display of tools and materials used in the wheat harvest.

**How did the Pendleton Cultural Discovery Project build community?**

The project solidified relationships between diverse cultural organizations by providing opportunities to collaborate rather than compete for attention and precious resources. The identification of diverse cultural strengths solidified the important role of the Round Table in Pendleton’s economic future.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Cultural organizations in a rural community can work together to create a unified role and voice for the future. By developing common goals and marketing techniques that highlight each organization’s unique contributions, the Round Table was able to attract far more attention and resources than if each organization had pursued such goals on its own.

**What’s ahead?**

The Pendleton Cultural Round Table is three years old, and here to stay. It will continue to operate in an inclusive manner, involving all partners in decision-making and implementation of new projects. The Discover Pendleton Fair will be an annual event, which will be expanded during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Celebration.
Central Northeast Neighbors, Portland

Youth Photo Project 2002

Twenty years ago Portland’s Northeast Cully neighborhood was a predominantly Caucasian community, with only four percent Hispanic residents, and even fewer African Americans or Asians. By the year 2000, however, the Hispanic population had more than quadrupled, and the African Americans and Asians each accounted for more than ten percent of all residents. As a result, this neighborhood is struggling to create a cohesive identity with shared values and stories. The Youth Photo Project 2002 set out to document this changing community from a youth’s perspective, and to promote a sense of community identity and pride among residents of all ages.

Expanding on the success of the Youth Photo Project 2001, Central Northeast Neighborhoods provided two professional photographers to work with at-risk Hispanic youth from NE Cully. Participants were selected through an essay application and interview process, with two of the fourteen participants returning as teaching assistants from the previous summer’s program. All students were chosen for their enthusiasm and commitment to the project.

For six weeks the fourteen students traveled to various neighborhood sites to learn and practice black and white photography skills. Students took photographs of community leaders, people at work and popular gathering places as a means of developing awareness and understanding of their neighborhood. They also visited artists’ studios to learn film processing, lighting and printing skills.

At the end of the project, each student selected three photographs to be mounted and exhibited as a group show that traveled to various neighborhoods throughout the year. Students kept written journals, which were used to create a story for the exhibit. All participants were given the cameras which they had used during the summer.

“I have learned that communication skills are very useful. Without communication people wouldn’t understand or accomplish these pictures. I loved this experience and know that it is useful for my life ahead.”

—Youth participant, 2002
Participants, teachers and community members deemed the Youth Photo Project 2002 a great success. The young people prospered in the small group setting, which allowed them to gain skills not only in photography but also in communication and community building. The vast majority said that they would change nothing about the project except expanding its length to three months. Community members expressed their appreciation for the youth’s talent, and some business owners would like to hire the students to do photography for them. The photo project was featured in several local newspapers including *El Hispanic Times* and *The Observer*.

**How did the Youth Photo Project 2002 build community?**

The project created an intimate connection between the participants and their community. By observing and capturing images of their surroundings, the youth developed a deep sense of cultural and community pride. Community members who viewed the final exhibit saw a different aspect of their neighborhoods in the rich and diverse imagery and ideas. This project helped build trust and collaboration within this changing community.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Because the small group setting is key to success, it’s important to maintain a low mentor/artist ratio. It is also critical to hire professional artists who have experience working with youth in a community setting.

Project partners encouraged the community to give its youth the opportunity to explore and express themselves in a creative way, and to involve them in community planning processes.

This community support, as well as the collaboration of other local organizations, was essential to deep and sustained success.

**What’s ahead?**

The two Youth Photo Projects helped the Central Northeast Neighborhoods identify and involve local youth who have the ability to transform community relations. The next logical step is for Central Northeast Neighborhoods to help develop a youth leadership group, which could serve as a model for communities facing similar challenges. Photo project partners and two of last year’s participants are currently organizing the first Latin Youth Network, which will act in partnership with the Latino Network, Portland Parks and Recreation and the St. Charles Youth Group on community development projects.

The Hacienda Community Development Corporation will use existing information and partnerships to lead the photo project in 2003. It is considering using digital photography for the first time.

**Contact**

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Clackamas County Employment Training and Business Service, Marylhurst

Playback Theatre Project
One-third of Clackamas County Housing Authority residents live at or below the poverty and almost double that number rely on public assistance or social security. Many youth in this environment have not been given the opportunity to learn the everyday human relation skills that they need to enter society as healthy, productive adults. The Playback Theatre Project enhanced local collaborations by providing three skill-building opportunities in theatre arts to Housing Authority youth and residents.

The first and largest piece of this project, a theatre arts workshop, was initiated by a group of local at-risk youth who wanted to produce theatrical events as part of a course in Entrepreneurial education. After a somewhat slow start, the workshop took off with a well-attended audition for the Neil Simon play The Man on the Floor. Nine students met twice a week for four weeks and in the end presented the play to an audience of fifty-five parents, friends and community members. They received a standing ovation, followed by a warm reception at the local community center.

The second and third pieces of the project utilized Playback Theatre, an innovative dramatic form that creates a sense of connectedness between audience members and actors. In Playback, audience members volunteer to tell their own stories with the assistance of a skilled facilitator. These stories are then “played back” by actors, with the subject of the entire play being the audience’s daily life. Through Playback Theatre, the witnessing of each other’s stories reduces people’s sense of alienation and leads to feelings of community revival.

Artist Marcia MacReynolds introduced local teen leaders to the concepts of Playback Theatre by having them examine their own lives through this form. These youth spent much of the day describing their lives to Marcia, who then...
embodied and vocalized what she felt each person was sharing. She kept doing this, using different expressions and body movements, until she received affirmation from the individual that she had successfully expressed what they were feeling. The program was highly individualized—and therefore highly effective—to each person in the room. Youth took this training out into the local elementary schools, where they facilitated Playback Theatre with younger children.

The final community Playback Theatre, although not as well attended, was very successful. During this session the artist helped three young girls work through an on-going relationship struggle that had been affecting all project participants. While one of the parents told the story, the three girls had to watch as others played them. They saw themselves and how much their actions had hurt and frustrated other people. By the end of the evening the three girls, who had been locked in a triangulated relationship for years, were finally able to talk honestly and begin to heal the chronic conflict.

**How did Playback Theatre build community?**

Playback Theatre used an innovative form of theatre arts to strengthen community connectedness and to enhance human relation skills among Housing Authority youth. It brought together members of the community and allowed them to relate to each other and to see each other in a new, less alienating light. It helped develop compassion among residents, as well as a sense of pride for what they and their children could do.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners overcame several obstacles throughout the project. Low attendance forced project organizers to reschedule the first theatre workshop at a more convenient time and place; attendance improved and the workshop was a success, despite a shortage of teaching time.

Partners also learned that the students’ active interest is critical to project success. If students are not totally engaged in the project, changes need to be made in the focus, idea or other logistics in order to gain their commitment.

**What’s ahead?**

Unfortunately, funding for many Housing Authority programs has been cut; many of these programs will soon disappear. But relationships between program and community leaders are strong and will last, as will the use of theatre to unite youth to each other. Partners are looking to establish a Community Theatre Center where at-risk youth can learn advanced dramatic skills.
First Friday
On the first Friday of each month March to December, Hood River’s downtown community teems with street musicians, belly dancers and chalk art contests. Children’s choirs sing on the corners and merchants rearrange their stores to showcase the work of local artists. Begun in September, 2001, the event known as First Friday regularly draws as many as a thousand people to the sidewalks, streets and shops of downtown Hood River.

A collaboration between Columbia Gorge Arts and Culture Council and the Hood River Downtown Business Association, First Friday provides regional artists an informal and low-cost venue for showing their work, while simultaneously promoting the downtown area as the cultural center of the community. By staying open three hours past normal closing, local businesses attract a broader, more diverse clientele, including many first-time guests who later return as patrons. Interactive arts activities draw students of all ages and cultures, often with their whole family. These evenings have become a much anticipated and well-attended fixture of Hood River social and cultural life.

Using Arts Build Communities funds, project partners planned and implemented several activities to draw children and families to First Friday. These included a chalk art contest, a peace ornament workshop and several performances by youth musicians and choirs. All were well-attended and brought many first-time visitors to the downtown area. Ornaments from the workshop were donated to an organization in Portland, which used them to help raise over two thousand dollars for needy children in Afghanistan.

A design contest resulted in an excellent First Friday logo, which is used on walking maps, banners and marketing brochures locally and regionally. Thanks to the additional funds, partners were also able to advertise the event to regional visitors, thus increasing the economic benefit of this event to the entire Gorge. Partners also used the grant money to leverage another grant from the Hood River
Chamber of Commerce, which supported a twelve-week coordinator’s position for the busy summer months.

First Friday has been an amazing success, helping the community realize and promote its artistic and cultural resources. The collaboration between artists and businesses has been exciting for all involved, and has provided tangible proof that Hood River is a cultural, as well as sports adventure, destination.

How did First Friday build community?
By using the arts to attract people from diverse neighborhoods into the downtown area, First Friday has served to strengthen the whole community economically and socially. It is an excellent example of how the arts and business can work together for the benefit of all.

Artists have enjoyed this unique opportunity to present themselves and their work to a broad audience, and many report making connections that have led to gallery shows, sales and commissions. Some businesses have begun carrying more locally crafted items after seeing what community artists have to offer. And five local artists, emboldened by their success at First Friday, have opened their own cooperative gallery in downtown Hood River.

What did the partners learn from the project?
The success of First Friday has confirmed partners’ belief that Hood River is ripe for more cultural development. Each month new artists come out of the woodwork with unique paintings, jewelry, sculptures and music.

There have been a few instances over the past two years where artists and businesses have not communicated clearly, resulting in either none or more than one artist showing up at the host business. Occasionally, businesses have expressed frustration at the lack of professionalism shown by a particular artist, and one or two artists have been disappointed by their sponsoring business’s lack of enthusiasm and effort. Project organizers are developing a written agreement that outlines roles and responsibilities for both businesses and artists.

Partners also had no idea how much work it would be to coordinate this monthly event. They are researching ways to fund a permanent, part-time position to oversee First Friday.

What’s ahead?
First Friday is here to stay. The community loves the event, as is evident from the steadily growing crowds each month. Businesses will continue to break for January and February, in order to evaluate the previous year, and to plan for the upcoming season. Future plans include a Hispanic Arts Festival, more family-oriented events and a developed banner system for marking participating businesses.

Organizers continue to solicit support from the local government and other organizations. The event has grown large enough to require its own paid coordinator; until funds permit such a position, the directors of Columbia Gorge Artists and Culture Council and the Hood River Downtown Business Association will work together to maintain and promote First Friday.
City of Coquille, Coquille

Gallery 37

Gallery 37 originated in Chicago in the early nineties as an arts-based job-training program for at-risk youth. By 1997 its innovative and effective approach had earned the program national and international recognition. Through production of a resource manual and promotional video, Gallery 37 has been introduced to communities across the United States and in Europe. Coquille’s community services director initiated the program several years ago in Arizona, and was anxious to introduce it to the Coquille community.

The specific goal of Gallery 37 in Coquille was to establish an arts-based summer employment program that would enable area youth to learn job and career planning skills. Secondary goals included promoting healthy interaction between youth and community, and developing a rural model for this historically urban program.

Young people from the southern coast of Oregon were recruited through an application and interview process, which was based on financial need, presence of risk factors and artistic ability and interest. In late July, fourteen teenagers began a five-week course of arts-based job training that included basic employment skills such as arriving on time, interacting with others in a professional and appropriate manner and working as an effective team player. Participants learned how to deal with the public, cooperate with project staff and observe safety rules and standards.

Artist instructors demonstrated various techniques of design and application in several different media including fiber arts, ceramics and furniture painting. Students learned how to apply a design concept to a specific assignment, in order to produce a final individual project. Most participants were surprised at the rapid progress they made in terms of artistic and technical ability. Their knowledge of art concepts and techniques, as measured by a pre- and post-project quiz, increased by an average eleven percent, with one individual’s score increasing by twenty-three percent.
How did Gallery 37 build community?
Gallery 37 required many new partnerships between city, business, school and arts organizations. The Coquille School District supported the project through many in-kind services, and the South Coast Business Employment Corporation provided job training and applicant screening free of charge. Local corporations and businesses provided much-needed cash contributions and discounts on materials and services.

The use of the Coquille Valley Arts Association gallery space engaged many people from the community and generated a demand for more arts classes. Many people supported Gallery 37 by buying student work created in the project.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Project organizers worked for two years to build a strong foundation for this program, but still felt they could have used more time. To be effective, Gallery 37 needs a year-round coordinator, with the number of students increased to make the program more cost-effective. The actual running time of the program should also be increased, in order to help participants develop skills and meet their individual art project deadlines.

What’s ahead?
Almost all participants indicated a desire to participate in the program in the future. Community response was also very positive, and planning has begun for next summer. In 2003 the name will be changed to the Coquille Academy for Education and Employment (Fine Arts C.A.F.E.).

Partners are developing a partnership with a local artist who needs employees for a long-range public arts project. While this arrangement may not bring money directly into the Fine Arts program, it will boost city revenue through an anticipated increase in tourism, which will in turn increase the likelihood of local financial support.

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Elkton Community Education Center, Elkton

Community Arts Program
Since 1999 the Elkton Community Education Center has set ambitious enrichment goals for the small, rural community in Douglas County. Achievements to date have included establishing summer and after school arts classes, designing and implementing plans for the Center’s park and hosting several community events such as the Annual Butterfly Release and the Elkton Drift Boat Days. All events have been well attended, and the first summer arts program was described as “an almost perfect picture.”

In 2002 Elkton decided to expand its Summer Art Enrichment program to include adults as well as children. With grants from the Oregon Arts Commission, the Douglas Community Foundation and the Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation, the Community Education Center hired several local artists to share their work and expertise with the community-at-large. Native American artist Grey Wolf taught workshops in Native American drum making, while local artist Holly Gwinn Graham led children and adults through the intricacies of creating giant parade puppets. Master potter Hiroshi Ogawa provided experiences with clay for participants aged three to seventy-one. As a result, over sixty Elkton residents designed and crafted their own creations in all three genres. These works became the highlight of the Elkton Fair Art Show, held on Labor Day weekend.

How did the Community Arts Program build community?
This community-wide, multi-generational arts program encouraged people of diverse ages and backgrounds to work together while creating unique art pieces. This inspired a feeling of community involvement, while at the same time furthering the Community Education Center's mission of educational renewal and regeneration.
The Community Arts Program also fulfilled several goals outlined in the Elkton Community Education Center’s five-year strategic plan. This was clearly a community effort, as evidenced by support from the Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation, the Elkton Public Schools, the Umpqua Valley Arts Association and the University of Oregon.

What did project partners learn?
Project partners were pleasantly surprised at the number of highly creative volunteers in the community, who stepped up to help with the Summer Arts Program. They would encourage other communities interested in producing such an event to look within their own area first for teachers and performers.

The Native American arts were very popular with the more mature members of the community. Grey Wolf’s workshops engaged people who had never before participated in the Summer Arts Program.

What’s ahead?
Plans are underway for a forty-five minute musical documenting the history of Elkton and its neighbors. Community members will work together to research the history, interview past and present community members, write the script and score, create costumes and props and bring the pageant to life. Project organizers are seeking support from the Oregon Cultural Trust, private donations and fundraisers.
Estacada Arts Commission, Estacada

Estacada Summer Celebration 2002
On a Friday evening in June, 2002, local musician Art Abrams and his Swing Machine transformed a vacant lot in downtown Estacada into an outdoor jazz feast for residents and visitors. Joined by twelve high school band students, Abrams kicked off the Estacada Summer Celebration, a lively two-day festival of local and regional arts.

Now in its fourth year, the Celebration provided a wide range of diverse arts opportunities to over two thousand youth and adults. Musical performances included Cajun rock, Taiko drumming and Texas blues. Ballet Folklorica de Woodburn performed, as did West African dancers and drummers. A temporary art gallery, The Purple Door, drew hundreds of visitors, many of whom expressed amazement at the quality of work produced by local artists. And for the third year in a row, the Artback Artist Cooperative painted a two-story community mural, *The Tree of Life*, while onlookers admired their progress.

On Saturday children of all ages created colorful masks and hats, decorative bars of soap and large Mexican flowers. They painted vases, made clay creatures and designed butterflies and other wire sculptures. Vendors sold food from diverse cultures, while local farmers supplied visitors with fresh fruit and flowers.

How did the Estacada Summer Celebration build community?
The Estacada Summer Celebration offered an open and engaging venue where people could interact, meet their neighbors and experience a wide range of cultures right in their hometown. It brought together seniors, youth, merchants, artists and commuters for two days of drug-free celebration of the arts, bridging cultural and language barriers. The weekend vitalized the downtown area and gave residents and visitors alike a sense of the talent and resources of this small community.
In addition, Estacada Arts Commission partnerships with other civic groups such as Estacada Together and the Chamber of Commerce were strengthened and new partnerships were formed.

The new mural received unprecedented support, and the mayor is considering creating a permanent park on the festival site. Other community improvements, including banners and planter frames, were initiated as a result of the celebration, and new attention was brought to the Estacada Auditorium Restoration Committee, a community group dedicated to revitalizing a 1930s-era auditorium.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Project partners learned that it’s essential to start early, with clear timelines and job descriptions.

More effective local publicity, with increased signage and more interaction with community groups, would have brought perhaps even more people to the festival. Team leaders felt overwhelmed at times, and would have appreciated more community and volunteer help.

**What’s ahead?**

This project will continue. The planning committee, which is actively seeking grant and corporate support for the annual festival, recently received a $5000 National Endowment for the Arts Fast Track grant to support the festival.

The success of the Festival has also resulted in the establishment of The Spiral Gallery, where local artists can display their work year-round. The Estacada Arts Commission is sponsoring a winter music series and the Art Abrams Swing Machine has agreed to work with the local school music programs and to perform a benefit concert for the Auditorium Renovation project. Finally the Chamber of Commerce and the Estacada Arts Commission plan to share resources and work more closely in the future.

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Ethos, Inc., Portland

Sound School Assemblies Program
Ethos, Inc.’s Sound School Assemblies program is an innovative, community-based approach to increasing music education opportunities for underserved youth. In 2002, it brought seventy-eight educational musical assemblies to over 19,000 students throughout Oregon. These presentations focused on diverse musical genres including blues, rock, jazz, hip-hop and folk.

Traveling all over Oregon in an 1977 Bristol Double Decker Bus, Ethos Inc. staff provided interactive, educational assemblies that included a short history and explanation of the specific style of music, as well as a discussion on what such music meant to the musicians. By involving students directly in the presentations, Ethos increased the level of engagement and enthusiasm of all participants. Several presentations were given from a stage that folded out of the side of the bus!

Principal partners in this project included the Cascade Blues Association, which provided some funding as well as artists for the blues presentations, and the InFocus Corporation, which donated a projector that was used for interactive presentations. A grant from the Ford Family Foundation helped purchase the “Music Mobile.”

How did the Sound School Assemblies program build community?
This project energized schools and gave them the tools to start their own music education program. Sound School Assemblies provided a great opportunity for school staff, teachers and students to get excited about music education, and several schools have since started their own after-school music education programs, often in concert with Ethos’ Music Corps program.
This program has also helped Ethos develop a creative partnership with the Portland Rose Festival Association, which awarded Ethos a Bronze Pinnacle Award for the Best Educational Event in the 2001 Festival. This recognition led to a full day of Sound School Assemblies on the Kids’ Kingdom State, as well as additional opportunities with the Waterfront Blues Festival.

What did the partners learn from the project?
This was a very ambitious project that succeeded largely because of the tremendous energy and enthusiasm of the Ethos staff, who traveled across the state on a shoestring budget. Additional funding would have helped Ethos accomplish even more.

Getting information out to rural communities was very challenging. Ethos Staff sent letters to the mayors of all Oregon’s smallest communities, and then scheduled assemblies with people who expressed interest. Once people began hearing about the project, staff received phone calls and emails requesting a presentation.

Other communities contemplating similar programs should try to develop a strong organization with committed staff and volunteers. Rural communities in particular were very appreciative of the program, as they do not receive much attention from urban-based projects.

What’s ahead?
The Sound School Assemblies Program continues to grow, and there are plans to make it self-sufficient within a few years, possibly by initiating a sliding-scale fee structure for schools and community centers. Ethos continues to develop partnerships for this project, and will host three full days of Sound School Assemblies at the Portland Rose Festival. The Festival will also use Ethos’ double decker “Music Mobile” as the Kid’s Stage in the Waterfront Village.

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“Between the new Main Street and the sculpture, I see this as a beginning for us.”

—Ginger Lindekugel, Falls City mayor

City of Falls City, Falls City

Art Sculpture Project
Falls City is a small rural community struggling to make the transition from dead logging town to vibrant and thriving community. A major main street revitalization project scheduled for completion in 2002 was designed to improve the town’s image and help diversity its economy. The Art Sculpture Project complemented those goals by providing a unique centerpiece and link between the downtown and the city’s park system.

First proposed by the Street Committee, the Art Sculpture Project gained the quick support of the local government, schools and garden club. The Falls City Art Committee was formed to work on the project and to encourage art development within the community. Many volunteers and business owners donated time and resources, including the land where the sculpture is sited and the sculpture base and surrounding sidewalks.

The Falls City Art Committee commissioned artist Raymond Hunter of nearby Kings Valley to create the fourteen-foot, stainless steel sculpture. With three sides and a canopy, the “Spirit Within” represents the wealth of forest, wildlife and salmon that distinguish the history of Falls City. “It’s reminiscent of the glory days,” Hunter says, “tall timber, salmon in the streams, a bountiful land and people blessed with the promise of prosperity.”

Prior to the sculpture’s unveiling, students at both elementary and high schools created art work and essays reflecting their appreciation for art in their community. Their work was displayed at the fire hall, where over 150 local residents attended the unveiling. This celebration inspired further art development in the community, with students now designing decorative tiles for the sculpture base.
How did the Art Sculpture Project build community?
Community reaction to the sculpture has been mixed. Some people see it as a “new beginning” for Falls City, while others feel it does not truly represent the community. Most agree, however, that it provides a critical focal point for the new street revitalization. Another significant benefit is the reduction of litter and vandalism since the sculpture’s installation.

What did the partners learn from the project?
More thorough planning in the project’s initial phases could have saved project partners a lot of time and challenges throughout the process. Because no timeline was ever established for the project, important benchmarks were not met, which kept the project from flowing smoothly. A step-by-step process, with thorough investigation of all permits and liabilities, would have reduced frustrating delays and helped keep the community more fully informed and engaged in its progress.

What’s ahead?
The Art Sculpture Project continues to evolve. The sculpture has been installed, along with a new waterline and sidewalk built by volunteer labor and donated concrete. High school students are creating tiles which will be mounted along the three-tiered sculpture base.

Once these structures are in place, the Falls City Garden Club will begin landscaping the park and constructing a rock garden around the sculpture base. The Club has volunteered to do the necessary watering for the first year; after that the plants will need less attention and the park will remain as an important and beautiful centerpiece for the community.
The Haven Project, Portland

The Afield Project
Since 1995, The Haven Project has been pairing underserved young people with professional actors to create original theatre. The Afield Project helps these youth realize that they have something special and worthwhile to offer, and that a commitment to openness and hard work will lead to successful art. Artist mentors gain a deeper understanding of the heart and spirit of these young people, whom they would otherwise never come to know. Afield communities gain human insight into the worlds of their at-risk young people.

In 2002 Afield project sites included Rosemont School, Portland Night School, Lents Education Center, the Clinton Street School, the Open Meadow School in St. Johns and Klahre House in Hood River. Over sixty students worked with approximately one hundred adult artists to produce six theatrical performances. At the Hood River site, Haven staff trained nine local artists and volunteers to be Haven mentors.

The Afield Project paired each youth with a professional actor who led him or her through the basic tenets of playwriting, using the young person’s own thoughts and feelings as a guide. Students learned to create and resolve conflict, to use metaphor and how to push through difficulties to finally produce a one-act play. Students routinely expressed astonishment that their mentors really listened to them and took their ideas and feelings seriously. Each two-week intensive culminated in an evening performance of the newly written one-act plays by professional actors.

At the same time, the Afield Program gave artists and community members insight into the lives and feelings of these young people. It exposed their creative, intelligent and funny sides, making it more likely that community members would want to get involved with these youth in the future.
Of particular note in 2002 was the addition of theatrical interpretation in American Sign Language. Julie Gebron, a noted theatrical interpreter, held an interpretation workshop which led to all plays from the Clinton Street School being interpreted. As a result, thirty-two members of the Deaf community of Portland attended the performance, an opportunity previously not open to them.

**How did the Afield Project build community?**
The Afield Project serves as an educational tool in the community for both local and rural artists, university students and various organizations’ staff, counselors and teachers. The young people learn how to use their feelings to develop metaphor and create a one-act play. Artist mentors learn to guide students through this process and to incorporate this holistic method in other areas of their art and teaching.

Finally, the Afield Program exposes a different side of at-risk youth to the community, helping the larger community see them not as “threats to society” but as intelligent, creative and productive members of the community.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**
Project partners learned again the importance of using the best professional actors available. The quality and motivation of the adult artists affect the process, and the impact on the young people is commensurate. Collaborative teaching in the Afield Project works well and gives a greater sense of ownership to the mentors.

**What’s ahead?**
The Haven Project’s The Afield Project was strong and effective, and demand for it exceeded supply. The Afield Project was successfully replicated in Hood River, with a network of committed community volunteers who plan to continue efforts in the Columbia Gorge. The Haven Project ceased to offer programs in 2005.

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Hult Center for the Performing Arts, Eugene

Titiri-Tatara Puppetry Workshop
The Hult Center for the Performing Arts is committed to creating programs and opportunities that reach out to individuals from diverse cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds. The Center had previously sponsored several events to engage the Latino community, which is the largest minority group in Lane County. Based on the success of these events, the Center partnered with Adelante Si Hispanic Organization to organize a ten-day residency with master puppeteers Titiri-Tatara of Guanajuato, Mexico.

Titiri-Tatara is an internationally recognized, two-person puppet performance troupe, which offers puppet-making workshops to participants of all ages. Following each workshop, Titiri-Tatara stage a performance incorporating participants’ creations. With over ten years experience performing throughout Mexico and Central America, Titiri-Tatara were well suited for engaging youth in and beyond the Latino community.

Performances and puppet-making workshops were held at schools, community organizations and various public spaces, with the final performance occurring at the annual Fiesta Latina in Eugene. Titiri-Tatara served over three thousand individuals, the majority of them Hispanic youth. The project supported the Hult Center’s mission of providing unique performances by non-local artists and creating arts educational activities for children.

By using professional artisans from Mexico and hosting the workshops in community centers, this project reached many Hispanic youth in their neighborhoods. They gave participating youth a basic understanding of
Mexican puppet making, and an increased appreciation for Hispanic culture. At
the conclusion of the residency, program directors, educators and local artists
learned the master puppeteers’ authentic technique, so that they could pass it on
to other community youth.

How did Titiri-Tatara help build community?
Both Adelente Si Hispanic and the Hult Center felt that this residency could
attract and engage Hispanic youth while educating them about authentic arts
from their native country. By asking other agencies in the county to inform their
youth about the residency, the Hult Center formed new partnerships with Eugene,
Springfield and other outlying towns.

Through this project the Hult Center strengthened community by concentrat-
ing on critical issues such as the marginalization of Latino youth and the lack of
cultural services available to them. Titiri-Tatara’s residency served as a model for
future collaborations focused on strengthening community through the arts.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Securing visas for the two artists proved to be an unexpected challenge, due to the
lengthy and difficult process since September 11, and project organizers feared
that Titiri-Tatara would not arrive in time for their residency. Rebeca Urhausen of
Adelante Si Hispanic made numerous calls to city and state officials, the
Mexican Consulate and the International Immigration Service to ensure approval
and expedition of the process. The two performers arrived just one day before
Fiesta Latina, effectively missing several scheduled workshops. Fortunately
project partners rallied to reschedule activities and events, so the residency could
occur as planned.

What’s ahead?
The many teachers and youth leaders who participated in the residency will
sustain the Mexican puppet-making technique through continued instruction at
their locations. Fiesta Latina can now offer these workshops to the several
thousand people who attend their annual event. Similar programs by Mexican
artisans that can build community through cultural awareness are in the
planning process.
In July 2000, the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization helped recent immigrants and refugees form the Sewing Circle, a place where they could work on individual projects, share stories and experiences, practice their English and provide mutual support in the resettlement process. The success of the Circle encouraged staff from the Arts for New Immigrants Program to develop a multi-faceted touring exhibit that documented individual members’ cultural traditions and heritage.

The exhibit, *In My Country: A Gathering of Refugee and Immigrant Fiber Traditions*, included individual works, panels of text and photographs, biographies of each artist, a video and a catalogue. Thematic displays described the role of sewing circles in refugee camps and the importance of fiber arts to refugees’ emotional and economic survival. Descriptive artifact labels provided technical information about the featured traditional art forms, as well as insights into the role of fiber arts in the diverse cultures represented.

Hosting venues were chosen carefully, with staff visiting sites in Pendleton and Ontario to help tailor the exhibit to each community’s needs. *In My Country* opened at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center in North Portland, then traveled to the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute in Pendleton for a two-month stay. It concluded its state tour in Ontario at the Four Rivers Cultural Center, where it remained for three months. Audience response at all venues was overwhelmingly positive, with many project visitors relating stories about the fiber traditions in their own families.

Sewing Circle members traveled to each site and hosted a slide presentation and open sewing circle where local residents could bring their own handwork. They also gave demonstrations of their craft for the public. This provided a unique opportunity for cultural exchange, particularly at the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute, where refugees, immigrants and Native Americans compared materials, techniques and the social roles of their art forms.
Because fiber arts are universal to all cultures, the sewing circle can serve as a model for working with any group or community. It is a replicable model for combining arts and social services, and could easily be adapted to other populations such as senior citizens, the disabled, incarcerated adults or at-risk youth.

**How did In My Country build community?**

*In My Country* led to new partnerships with the Portland Handweavers Guild, who provided honorary memberships for Sewing Circle artists and included the group in their annual show at the Oregon Convention Center. Multnomah County Library staff, impressed by the pilot exhibit, invited the Sewing Circle to meet in their community room every month. This partnership fulfills the library’s desire for more cultural programming, and it has allowed the Sewing Circle to open its doors to the public once a month. Several members and their families have acquired library cards as a result of this partnership.

In addition, the healing act of sitting down together to do handwork has eased tensions among several Sewing Circle artists whose counties have been at war. It has given participating artists a chance to explore and share their cultural heritage at a time when being an immigrant is increasingly uncomfortable in this country.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Working on such a new project, there was ample room for miscommunication between staff and artists about ongoing activities and special events. Because newly arrived immigrants are often confused by Portland’s transit system, project staff provided transportation to help artists attend Sewing Circle meetings and other events. As the group continues to grow, transportation remains a challenge.

In addition, most Sewing Circle members come from war-torn countries, where unimaginable loss and upheaval is the norm. Few have faith in large institutions or programs. Project staff had to work hard to gain participants’ trust.

Organizers found it difficult to price and market much of the artwork produced by the Sewing Circle. Working with consultants who specialize in marketing ethnic arts was a huge help.

**What's ahead?**

*In My Country* was envisioned as a two–year project, but it has become evident that the Sewing Circle is providing needed emotional and economic support for a growing pool of immigrants and refugees. To date, the Arts for New Immigrants Program has done all the fundraising and coordination for the group. The Arts for New Immigrants Program will continue to work with the Sewing Circle to help them develop a plan for becoming independent. One possibility is establishing a cooperative which would market the artists’ work through a storefront, catalogue or website. Proceeds would be used for space, materials, marketing and other costs necessary to continuing the project.
Jefferson Country Library Foundation, Madras

Community Film Center
Jefferson County is one of the poorest counties in Oregon, with almost one-fifth of its residents living in poverty. It is also one of the most culturally diverse, with large Native American and Hispanic populations. Cultural and recreational opportunities are limited, with the nearest cinema facilities forty-five minutes away. In open community meetings at the Jefferson County Library, local residents identified establishing a film center as a cultural and social priority. A second goal was to build community by showing films that would attract members from all ethnic populations in the county.

Project organizers’ first goal was met. Using Arts Build Communities funds, Jefferson County Library Foundation, in partnership with the Jefferson County Arts Association and Central Oregon Community College, purchased DVD and high performance video equipment suitable for a variety of film uses. It was installed in the Jefferson County Library District’s annex, which has an auditorium that is well suited for this use. A committed group of volunteers agreed to show both foreign and domestic films, with the first screening in August 2002.

The Community Film Center’s second goal was more difficult to attain. Although audience numbers are growing, they have yet to include significant numbers of Native American or Hispanic residents. Spanish language films have not drawn many Hispanic viewers, and tribal members have been few, although the Tribe continues to support the project.

At the same time, several community agencies have been utilizing the Film Center for screening films on diversity, rape prevention and poverty. These events, which could not have occurred within Jefferson County without the Community Film Center, have drawn an ethnically diverse audience.
How did the Community Film Center build community?
In a recent public address, Madras Mayor Rick Allen cited the Community Film Center as a model for what Jefferson County needs. The equipment has provided a missing piece of cultural infrastructure to the community, one which can be used for artistic as well as social programs.

Partnerships with the Jefferson County Library and the Willow Creek Bookstore have thrived as a result of this project. High Desert Herbs, a local business, recently began offering concessions on film nights, with ten percent of the net profits going to the Center.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Partners learned that everything takes much longer than anticipated. Three months of delay caused by the vendor meant that the equipment was not installed until August, with the film season starting shortly thereafter.

The type of equipment purchased limited organizers in their choice of films. Because they must purchase through specific companies, they cannot advertise the films in any way. Thus, they can tell people that a film is showing, but not what movie it might be. This inability to advertise has been a huge hurdle which has not been fully overcome.

What’s ahead?
The Endowment Foundation has agreed to support the Film Center until it is self-sustaining. Sponsors for the children’s films have committed annual donations, and the film selection committee continues the work of selecting films and running the Center on a volunteer basis. The Center has a paid projectionist and graphic artist, both part-time. Revenue from renting the Center covers other operating costs.
Severely depressed by the decline of the timber industry and the curtailment of water to agriculture, Klamath County has turned in recent years to tourism and technology for economic diversification. The arts have the potential to play a large and powerful role in this transition, as does the Klamath Arts Council, whose mission is to “foster and promote the arts” in this rural community.

To this end, the Klamath Arts Council implemented the 2002 Art in Public Places project as a means to establish an arts resource for community-based public art projects. Major project goals included increasing awareness of the arts, offering new opportunities for local artists, strengthening arts curricula in the schools and using the arts to revitalize the local economy. Most project goals were met, although not always according to plans or expectations.

Project successes included an adopted Public Art Policy for the city of Klamath Falls, the initiation of the city’s first public art competition and the publication of a regional visual artist directory. The Klamath Arts Council now has a mandated seat on the Downtown Urban Redevelopment Advisory Committee, as well as a Center and gallery space in a donated facility. Council memberships and volunteers have also been increasing due to this project.

One highly successful project activity was the organization of Third Thursday, a pilot series of evening events involving galleries, cultural organizations and businesses. All have been held in downtown Klamath Falls, and each month participant numbers have grown. In the future Third Thursday will be semi-independent of the Arts Council.

Largely as a result of Third Thursdays, the Forest Products Federal Credit Union has donated a three thousand square foot facility for use as office, exhibit and performance space. Klamath Arts is now home to changing exhibits, musical and
poetry performances and arts classes. The Arts Council is still seeking a permanent home, as the credit union space is up for sale and could be unavailable on sixty days notice.

How did _Art in Public Places_ build community?
Klamath Arts Council’s relationship with the local government has grown much stronger as a result of this project; through its seat on the Downtown Redevelopment Committee, the Arts Council is now able to influence public policy. In addition, new partnerships and avenues of communication have been established between various cultural groups, much of it flowing through the Arts Council.

Audience numbers for cultural events are increasing, as a series of successful arts events have provided credibility and demand for enhanced cultural programming. Klamath Arts Council is no longer the only organization initiating such events.

What did the partners learn from the project?
The Klamath Arts Council learned that it has reached its limits as a volunteer organization. The Board now needs both fund-raisers and project workers in order to meet the needs of the Council and the community it serves.

The project would have gone much more smoothly with adequate paid staff to administer programs and to staff Klamath Arts, which is open five days a week and during some evenings. Board members and volunteers have begun to burn out as a result of trying to do everything. The paradigm at Klamath Arts Council has shifted from “Let’s do all we can,” to “Let’s do adequately-funded projects that increase the Council’s viability.”

What’s ahead?
Most immediately, the _Artist Directory_ will be distributed to participants and venues in the area, and entries in the design competition will be collected and juried. The _Directory_ can be updated on a yearly basis and more widely distributed, provided there is funding.

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ReUse for Art Project
BRING Recycling, a community-supported non-profit organization, focuses on resource conservation through innovative recycling, reuse and waste reduction programs. Founded in 1971, BRING is one of the oldest non-profit recycling organizations in the United States. Its warehouses and recycling centers, located in and near Glenwood, Oregon, serve a broad cross-section of Lane County residents, including low-income, homeless, Hispanic and rural populations.

In 2001, BRING acquired three acres in the Glenwood area for use as an innovative re-use site, where reusable items could be sold and eco-friendly technologies could be demonstrated in a creative, art-friendly atmosphere. The ReUse for Art Project (RUFA) was established to create a design plan for integrating recycled artworks into the new facility. Using this plan, tons of discarded materials received by BRING would be incorporated, for both functional and decorative purposes, into the construction of the new facility.

The first step in this process was to organize a design charrette where BRING staff, artists and community members could develop an artistic vision for the new site. Lead artist Betsy Wolfson worked with the Lane Arts Council director, the general manager of BRING Recycling and other stakeholders for four months planning and preparing for the actual charrette, which was held on the new site on May 18th, 2002.

Creative energy was high, with the twenty-eight participating artists sketching, discussing and documenting ideas on how to integrate art at the facility. From a very long list of ideas the artists were asked to focus on ten discreet areas, including surfaces, the garden, the view from the train and education. In the end the group came up with an eleventh category, labeled “Other brilliant ideas.”
Mid-morning the artists were separated into four teams, with organizers serving as team facilitators. During this session artists were encouraged to brainstorm their wildest ideas, which were later presented to the entire group. Humor and creativity ran high. After lunch, artists developed their ideas further through discussion, drawing and networking. A tour of the current BRING site helped artists assess material availability. Finally, after six hours of hard, inspired work, each group gave a final presentation of their ideas and concepts. These ideas were organized into an “imaginasmium,” an electronic database of sketches, photographs and thumbnail descriptions of over one hundred suggestions and visions for the new center.

**How did the ReUse for Art build community?**

The ReUse for Art charrette brought artists, developers and project staff together for a highly creative, effective day of creating a vision for the new re-use center. The ideas gathered in the imaginasmium could never have happened had each person worked on his or her own.

On a larger scale, the new ReUse Center will use art to attract a large and diverse audience to its showroom, demonstrations and gardens, which will provide artists and non-artists alike with inspiration and skills to create beauty out of what would otherwise be thrown away.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners were astounded by the energy and creativity generated by putting twenty-eight committed artists into one room for six hours. The range and quality of ideas could not have been achieved any other way. Although the charrette took a lot of planning and organization, it was well worth the effort.

**What’s ahead?**

The construction of Building One is progressing rapidly, and BRING has created an Art Committee with a mandate to establish a process for integrating artwork. The charrette established the possibilities of what could happen, and now the Art Committee will determine how and when these things take place. The Committee is exploring ways to involve not only artists, but also businesses and arts patrons in the ReUse for Art project.
Libraries of Eastern Oregon, Moro

Rural Readers Project
Through a partnership with the nonprofit publisher Story Line Press, Libraries of Eastern Oregon was able to offer creative writing workshops and readings by nationally recognized authors to youth and adults in ten rural communities in eastern Oregon. The Rural Readers Project sparked interest in writing among area youth and provided cultural programming for young people and adults. It served over 600 residents, including 465 youth, many of whom had never met a professional author.

Workshops were provided by three Story Line authors: poet Ginger Andrews, poet Clemons Starck and poet and publisher Robert McDowell. All three authors are widely published, nationally known and experienced in presenting their work. Having real, published writers give first-hand instruction to students was a wonderful opportunity that most had not experienced before, and it led them to think of their surroundings and their communities in new ways. Workshops were held in junior high and high school classrooms in ten communities.

All three poets encouraged the youth in their workshops to reflect and write about what they know best: their lives and their surroundings. This enabled these students to see their environment, which is often portrayed as dismal and poor, with new eyes. Getting to work with professional writers encouraged many students to continue exploring creative writing; several have even submitted work to Story Line Press for consideration in upcoming anthologies.

How did the Rural Readers Project build community?
This project was the first collaboration between Libraries of Eastern Oregon, the public libraries it serves and public school districts. All are eager to partner on other projects in the future. In every instance, school officials expressed pleasure at being able to offer creative writing workshops for their students.
This project also built community by providing a venue for local residents to come together for an evening of cultural entertainment and learning. Wherever possible, readings were held in public libraries; all were well attended. In locations where the public libraries did not have ample space, partners worked together to find suitable facilities. In Condon, for example, poet Robert McDowell read to residents as well as visitors in the Hotel Condon’s lobby, in an arrangement made possible by efforts from the Fossil and Gilliam County public libraries, who had never worked together on a project.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Partners learned that even with meager resources public libraries and schools could accomplish incredible things by working together. Other communities who are looking for new art projects should explore partnerships they may not have considered in the past.

There is very little partners would change about the Rural Readers Project. The participating writers were excellent, attendance at the readings was consistently high and the project brought a lot of favorable publicity to both story Line Press and the local libraries.

What’s ahead?
Libraries of Eastern Oregon and Story Line Press intend to continue this partnership. They are seeking funding in order to bring youth writing workshops and authors’ readings to new communities in eastern Oregon.

In addition, the goodwill and creative thinking generated by this project have laid a foundation for future collaborations between artists, schools and libraries. The project has inspired many rural youth to express themselves through creative writing.

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Our Ways: History and Culture of Mexicans in Oregon
The Oregon Folklife Program, in partnership with Latino organizations and communities around the state, set out to produce a traveling exhibit featuring the history, arts and culture of Oregon’s Mexican population. Public arts presentations by some of Oregon’s finest Mexican folk artists were an integral part of this project, whose primary goal was to educate the public about the wealth of Mexican arts in Oregon, past and present. The exhibit was planned as the culmination of two years documentation and work in Latino communities.

Project coordinator Gabriella Ricciardi, working closely with an advisory group of Latino artists, teachers and cultural activists, spent the first six months of 2002 researching the traditional arts and culture of Mexicans in Oregon. With her advisors’ help, she wrote the text for Our Ways: History and Culture of Mexicans in Oregon and selected most of the photographs and art objects to be included in the exhibit. By late August, the text had been translated and refined, and the format and design were finalized.

The end product was a bilingual traveling exhibit that consists of two ten-foot, double-sided panels with a metal truss system that held the work of ten Oregon Mexican artists. The exhibit was designed to fit into various types of spaces in order to accommodate small libraries and communities, as well as larger facilities.

Our Ways opened on September 14, 2002, at the North Portland branch of the Multnomah County Library. It was subsequently displayed at the Woodburn Public Library, Portland State University Library and at Centro Cultural de Washington. Each site hosted a community opening as well as special arts performances and events with local Mexican artists. The exhibit and arts activities were very successful, as evidenced in responses collected in both Spanish and English. Forty thousand people, over half Latino, viewed the exhibit in the four months that it toured.
How did *Our Ways* build community?

*Our Ways* was the result of the work and contribution of many people from across the state, a fact that helped to ensure its widespread support within Mexican communities. People who had never before seen their culture represented in a formal public media took great price in viewing its accomplishments. Even the Consul General of Mexico commented, upon seeing the exhibit, that she did not realize the breadth of Mexicans’ contributions to Oregon’s cultural history.

Since it was bilingual and oriented toward mostly rural settings, *Our Ways* helped to promote cross cultural communication and understanding between Mexican and non-Mexican communities. The arts activities scheduled in conjunction with the exhibit raised the visibility of traditional Mexican arts, and exposed participants to new art forms as well. Many of these events were presented during Mexican community celebrations, which encouraged broad community participation.

What did the partners learn from the project?

This project was the culmination of several years of continuous work with Latino communities across Oregon. During this time, the project coordinator built trust and personal bonds with key Latinos in each region. The fact that she was bilingual allowed her to communicate directly with artists and educators, and it gave them the freedom to fully express themselves in their native tongue.

Community members were very positive about the exhibit, and many expressed appreciation for the recognition of the important role of Mexican culture in Oregon.

What’s ahead?

The exhibit will continue traveling statewide through 2003 and beyond, for as long as it lasts and people want it. The 2003 schedule includes public venues in McMinnville, Independence, Malheur County, Coos Bay, Beaverton and Klamath County. It will also be exhibited at the Mexican Consulate and the Oregon Historical Society.

The arts programming that has accompanied the exhibit will continue through its run at the Oregon Historical Society, thanks to support from the National Endowment for the Arts. After the exhibit closes, the Oregon Historical Society will offer to book Latino artists—with expenses to be covered by host sites.

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Hood River County is a rural region with a large Hispanic population, many of whom work in the agricultural sector. Poverty is prevalent throughout the county, with over half of school-aged students qualifying for the free or reduced lunch program. The dropout rate among Latino youth is high. Many of these young people rarely see their native arts and culture reflected in broader community events and gatherings.

Believing that it is vital for young people to see people like themselves recognized publicly for their talents and skills, the Oregon State University Extension Program partnered with the Hood River County School District and the Oregon Folklife Program to provide instruction in traditional folkloric dance and costume design to Hispanic youth in this area. Workshops took place year-round in three major communities: Hood River, Odell and Parkdale. They were held at the Project PM after-school sites and at the farm-workers’ community center in Hood River.

Local folklorico dancers, as well as local fiber artists, were recruited to instruct the youth in these traditional arts. Interest was high at all centers, with 124 youth participating in Baile Folklorico. In addition to learning skills in dance and costume design, youth developed leadership skills, project ownership and pride in themselves and their heritage.

Public response to Baile Folklorico was extremely positive, with twenty-nine performances requested throughout the region. Young dancers performed for over 4,500 people at sites including the Earth Day Celebration, the Hood River County Fair, Saturday Market and the Hood River County Harvest Fest. These performances brought Latino and Caucasian populations together in new ways in this region.
Los Bailadores del Sol, a non-profit dance troupe from Yakima, Washington, came to Odell and inspired youth and adults alike with their performance of traditional dance. And on Cinco de Mayo, Baile Folklorico participants were invited on stage with Los Temerosos, a well-known mariachi band, who accompanied the dancers with traditional music.

**How did Baile Folklorico build community?**

Participation in Baile Folklorico gave youth enhanced self-esteem and a sense of belonging and contributing to a larger community. The community was impressed with their dances and costumes, and wanted to see more. The project generated awareness and appreciation of an art form that is highly valued in Latino culture, but in danger of disappearing. This project offered recently immigrated Latinos the chance to interact cross-culturally and to develop leadership and volunteer skills.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners learned that the Hispanic sense of time is often relationship-driven, and that true engagement and participation cannot be rushed to meet what may be perceived as arbitrary deadlines. Genuine respect for such differences is a prerequisite for building true community, and must be maintained no matter how much time it takes.

Working with participants who have limited literacy skills also took more time than expected. Having a bilingual secretary to help with translation, telephone calls, radio announcements and paperwork would have been a great benefit.

**What's ahead?**

The Hood River County School District is continuing to support Baile Folklorico through its Project PM after school program. The county drug coordinator and the Commission on Children and Families are applying for various grants to help secure funding for 4-H Baile Folklorico in the future.
Rasika, India Arts and Culture Council, Beaverton

Gurukulam Summer Heritage Camp

In August 2002, the Beaverton Community Center was filled with the sights and sounds of India, as the annual Gurukulam Summer Heritage Camp opened to fifty area youth, mostly of Indo-American descent. Produced by Rasika, the non-profit India Arts and Culture Council, the camp immersed participants in the customs and arts of a rich culture. From classical Indian percussion to the ancient art of body coloring, the camp created a unique and impressive experience for these children.

For five days, Gurukulam participants, ages five to fifteen, received hands-on instruction in yoga, painting, dance and Indian history and geography. They attended language classes, listened to Indian folk tales and practiced percussion under master percussionist Lalgudi Krishnan. Local miniature painting artists and Rangoli designers enjoyed sharing their art forms with the children, and henna artists demonstrated the traditional use of henna in body painting. Several participants commented that they felt they were actually in India for the whole week.

On the final day students produced a talent show featuring music and dance performances, readings and recitations at the Beaverton City Library; an exhibit of artwork was also presented.

Over 150 friends and family members attended the event, and expressed their amazement at the talent and skill developed in just five days.

Perhaps most importantly, Gurukulam gave many Indo-American children the rare opportunity to explore and appreciate their rich Indian heritage. As one parent wrote, “With the help of Rasika’s educational programs, we can help our son discover how his Indian and American heritages blend together.”
How did *Gurukulam* build community?

Gurukulam brought together well-known visiting artists, local artists and local children of Indian and non-Indian descent in a culturally rich environment which was both nurturing and informative. The camp gave children the opportunity to interact and learn under artists who have been practicing ancient art forms their whole lives. Participants learned not only the basics of these practices, but also their history, value and significance in the overall traditions of India. Families and friends shared the experience through the final talent show and art exhibit.

Partnering with the Beaverton Arts Commission helped Rasika reach out to the local non-Indian community. It allowed access to the Beaverton Community Center, which was an excellent, easily accessible venue.

What did the partners learn from the project?

The support and dedication of local artists and organizations were critical to the success of the summer camp. The coordination of twenty-five artists and volunteers had to be meticulous for the camp to run as efficiently as it did. Planning ahead and having back-up projects planned for last-minute cancellations were also essential. The camp director was involved in all aspects of planning and organizations, and was available to communicate with families, artists and volunteers throughout the week.

What’s ahead?

Rasika plans to present this camp annually with support from the community and grants from local and national organizations. It will also coordinate concerts by visiting artists to coincide with the summer camp. Future collaborations with the Beaverton Arts Commission and other local community organizations will be pursued.

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Mountains and Rivers: A Natural History Journal
Since 1983, the Siskiyou Regional Education Project has worked to protect the ecological integrity of the Klamath-Siskiyou region through education, advocacy and outreach. In 2000, it expanded its educational outreach by establishing *Mountains and Rivers: A Natural History Journal*, a literary magazine for readers interested in the natural and cultural history of this region. Modeled on *Orion Magazine*, *Mountains and Rivers* provides local and regional writers and artists, as well as 300 subscribers, a unique forum for place-based nature writing.

*MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS’* articles are short, highly readable pieces that explore the connection between natural cycles, ecology and the human heart and soul. Approximately one-third of each issue is dedicated to poetry, personal essays and literary nature writing. The magazine strives to increase awareness and protection of the Klamath-Siskiyou region, an area of global botanical significance. *Mountains and Rivers* serves a rural community with a high percentage of low-income people, many of whom are struggling to survive the transition from an extraction economy.

Oregon Arts Commission funds helped expand outreach to a wider circle of writers and artists, and to provide stipends for invited work. Response to outreach was very positive, and some of the collected work is in reserve for future editions.

*MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS* also deepened its relationship with Southern Oregon University’s Biological Illustration classes, Coos Bay’s writing classes and researchers and writers at Humboldt State University. Editors pursued the potential of weaving the production of the journal into the curriculum of Southern Oregon University’s Environmental Studies and English programs, but budgetary concerns have stalled the effort for the present time.
Outreach activities also helped the magazine locate a new assistant editor through the Rogue Senior Volunteer Program. Vella Munn is a professional writer specializing in Native Americana, the majority of which is set in the Northwest.

How did *Mountains and Rivers* build community?
This project strengthened the Siskiyou Regional Education Project’s relationship with faculty and students at Southern Oregon University, Humboldt State and the Rogue Senior Volunteer Program, all of which were targets of the expanded outreach. Several high-profile writers, such as David James Duncan and Robert Michael Pyle, were contacted and may be contributing to the magazine in the near future. Organizations such as the Crescent City Chamber of Commerce and the Natural History Museum in Douglas County have agreed to carry the magazine, as a result of recent outreach efforts.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Publishing is a difficult business, even for a non-profit organization, and a decent subscriber base does not provide enough funds for a high quality publication. A funded position in marketing would greatly assist outreach and development efforts, and web press printing could make distribution less expensive, although at a sacrifice in visual and tactile qualities.

What’s ahead?
Although *Mountains and Rivers* is highly valued by both writers and audience, the Siskiyou Regional Education Project envisions further changes for the publication. Staff reductions and a lack of supplemental foundation support may demand decreasing the magazine’s size and using a less expensive printing process.
Tamastslikt Cultural Institute, Pendleton

Print-making and Native Language Workshops
The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in eastern Oregon have over three thousand members, three hundred of which are school-aged youth. Many of these children live in single parent, impoverished households. The dropout rate is high among reservation youth, and few have the advantage of traditional teachings offered through the family. Of particular concern is the disappearance of native languages; fewer than a dozen middle-aged residents retain fluency in the Sahaptin dialects.

Tamastslikt Cultural Institute, a Tribal-owned interpretive center on the Oregon Trail, has a special interest in the preservation and presentation of native languages. In order to make native languages more accessible, Tamastslikt uses the international phonetic system to display native language texts in their permanent collection. In collaboration with the Confederated Tribes and Crow’s Shadow Institute, the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute offered reservation youth a chance to bring their native language alive through a contemporary block print-making project. The Institute’s director, Bobby Conner, envisioned the creation of a booklet containing both native language counting terms and block cut designs by Tribal children.

A total of sixty-five youth attended the printmaking workshop, which was held in conjunction with the Tribes’ summer language program. Each morning students attended Umatilla language lessons, taught by Tribal elders. There they learned counting terms, animal names and conversational phrases. The program uses a Total Physical Response teaching mode that reinforces language terms with movement, thereby engaging students while they learn.
In the afternoons, students attended a series of workshops with instructor Roberta Lavadour at Crow’s Shadow Institute’s printmaking studio. Lavadour introduced students to the concepts of relief printing, as well as to basic art principles such as color theory and composition. Students made Safety-cut block prints of various animals and counting symbols, which were compiled into a native language counting book. Lavadour digitized the students’ prints and over forty-five copies were produced, with handmade prints for covers. The books were hand-stitched in linen flax thread, with ten beads woven on the binding flax as a counting device.

Tamastslikt’s conservation technician created an impromptu exhibit which hung for two weeks in an alcove next to the permanent collection. The counting book was displayed in the Artist Books exhibit at Blue Mountain Community College through February 2003.

**How did the Printmaking and Native Language Workshops build community?**

Because arts education is limited in local schools, these workshops exposed many students to printmaking for the first time. The workshops gave children who were not inclined to sports a creative option during the summer recreation program. It also provided an opportunity for students to mingle with Tribal elders and access their knowledge of native languages and wisdom.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners intended to work with the same group of students throughout the project. Initially, however, a different set of youth appeared at each workshop session, with the size of the group varying wildly from day to day. In the end, a small group of committed students chose to return to the printmaking sessions, and worked hard to have their prints included in the book.

Participation from students’ families was not as high as expected. Partners hope to address ways to increase family attendance in future projects, particularly those involving language acquisition.

**What’s ahead?**

The next step involves translating *My Counting Book* into the Nez Perce and Walla Walla languages. Upon completing a print run in each of the three Tribal language dialects, the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute will hold a reception for the students and artists to recognize their achievement.

The Institute is also seeking funds to publish offset editions of the book, which it plans to donate to the Tribal Education program to increase accessibility of native languages. *My Counting Book* will be sold in the museum store, and partners have discussed the possibility of creating a CD to accompany the text.
Southern Oregon’s Latino population has doubled in the last five years, and continues to grow at a fast rate. Twenty percent of Rogue Valley residents are from Latin America, with the majority from Mexico. Many are migrant farm workers, with over ninety-five percent living at or below the federal poverty level. Although almost 25,000 Latinos live in this region, they have few opportunities to experience or learn about their native arts and culture.

Project Fiesta addressed these issues by establishing a Council for Latino Arts and Culture, and by providing hands-on presentations of traditional arts and culture to multi-generational audiences. Through outreach efforts, Project Fiesta recruited thirty-four Latino artists and referred many of them to various programs including Fiesta Latina, Academia Latina and the Oregon Historical Center’s traditional arts program.

Traditional Latino artists gave presentations at two schools and several large public events, serving over two thousand children and adults. The smaller demonstrations included hands-on instruction for participants age one to eighty-one. Parents were given the opportunity to discuss their own traditions and cultures, and to relate stories from their childhood. Children especially enjoyed seeing their parents and grandparents engaging in the various folk arts.

Project Fiesta was a collaboration between Unete, Center for Farm Worker Advocacy, Listo Family Literacy Program, Migrant Education, Flor Y Canto Instituto de Arte y Cultura and Jackson Elementary School. Although many of these organizations had worked together previously, they had never used the arts as a tool for building community.
How did *Project Fiesta* build community?

Above all the project offered a forum for youth and families to rediscover their native traditions and to feel pride for their culture. It increased awareness of local Latino artists and offered other ethnic groups an opportunity to experience some of the more unfamiliar parts of Latino culture through dance troupes and other traditional art forms. Project Fiesta helped develop stronger bounds between the collaborating agencies.

What did the partners learn from the project?

Good coordination with the artists was crucial, as was having a back-up plan for supplies. Most of Project Fiesta’s outreach to artists was accomplished via word of mouth, which was highly successful within the Latino community. Partners learned to be prepared to accommodate drop in artists, by having promotional information on hand.

Partners would encourage anyone working with immigrant youth to use traditional arts as a way to bring them closer to their culture. Seeing Project Fiesta presentations gave these youth pride and interest in their heritage, as well as a sense of common ground with their elders.

What’s ahead?

Response from the community was extremely positive, and there have been many requests for the cultural programs to continue. The main challenge now is to secure funds and to strengthen Council for Latino Arts and Culture.

Project Fiesta has become an important organizing tool for Unete. Other organizations that work with immigrant populations are now using similar models to increase cross-cultural communication and understanding.
### 2003 Grant Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Amount</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$6,020</td>
<td>Artists Repertory Theatre</td>
<td>The Laramie Project: a play/project about tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$4,940</td>
<td>Arts Central</td>
<td>After-school program for under-served children in public housing programs, Bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,750</td>
<td>Arts Council of Southern Oregon</td>
<td>Through the Children's Eyes, movable murals done by Illinois Valley pre-kindergarten through 5th grade children, Cave Junction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,490</td>
<td>Baker County Library District</td>
<td>Landscaping around the Halfway Branch Library, Halfway</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2,540</td>
<td>Bump in the Road Theatre</td>
<td>New play exploring aging and caregiving, Portland</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,760</td>
<td>Camp Fire USA Mt. Hood Council</td>
<td>Youth for Arts, after-school enrichment at public housing sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2,630</td>
<td>Chetco Tribe of Southern Oregon</td>
<td>Weaving our Past into the Future Cultural Education Workshop, Agness</td>
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<tr>
<td>$3,780</td>
<td>Crossroads Center for the Creative and Performing Arts</td>
<td>Renovation of Carnegie Library into a community arts facility, Baker City</td>
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<td>$1,950</td>
<td>East Linn Museum Society</td>
<td>Sweet Home mural project</td>
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<tr>
<td>$5,530</td>
<td>Eastern Oregon Regional Arts Council</td>
<td>Artists of Eastern Oregon 2002, a regional juried exhibition, La Grande</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2,330</td>
<td>Harney County Arts and Crafts</td>
<td>Malheur Refuge Legacy Mural Project, Burns</td>
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<td>$3,750</td>
<td>Haven Project</td>
<td>The Afield Program which pairs under-served teens with professional artists, Portland</td>
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<td>$5,550</td>
<td>Hult Center for the Performing Arts</td>
<td>Residency with the National Theatre of the Deaf, Eugene</td>
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<td>$6,160</td>
<td>Illinois Valley Community Response Team</td>
<td>Unifying rock sculptures in downtown Cave Junction</td>
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<tr>
<td>$6,300</td>
<td>Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization</td>
<td>In My Country: A Gathering of Refugee and Immigrant Fiber Traditions, tour to Portland, Pendleton, Ontario, Tillamook</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,980</td>
<td>Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center</td>
<td>Disability awareness and access improvement project, Portland</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,950</td>
<td>Joint Forces Dance Company</td>
<td>Integrated Performing Arts Outreach Project, Eugene</td>
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<td>$3,940</td>
<td>Lents Community Market</td>
<td>Three multicultural festival in the Lents neighborhood of Portland</td>
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<td>$5,670</td>
<td>MediaRites</td>
<td>Breast Cancer Outreach Project, Portland</td>
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<td>$5,740</td>
<td>Miracle Theatre</td>
<td>Unveiled Spirits: The Shared Heritage of Latino Jews</td>
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<td>$5,880</td>
<td>City of Mosier</td>
<td>Commissioning of a 29-foot totem in Mosier</td>
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<tr>
<td>$5,670</td>
<td>City of Newport</td>
<td>Whale skeleton sculpture in Newport</td>
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<tr>
<td>$5,170</td>
<td>City of Oakridge</td>
<td>Amphitheater in Greenwaters Park, Oakridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2,170</td>
<td>Oregon Festival of American Music and Central Latino Americano</td>
<td>Creando Puentes, Latino music and cultural project</td>
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<tr>
<td>$6,300</td>
<td>Project Adelante and Rainbow Dance Theatre</td>
<td>The Rainbow Project: dance workshops and performances, Monmouth</td>
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<tr>
<td>$4,760</td>
<td>Port Orford Arts Council</td>
<td>Arts Unite Us, a program for children and families of North Curry County</td>
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<td>$5,240</td>
<td>Portland Community College Foundation</td>
<td>The Cascade Festival of African Films</td>
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<td>$4,920</td>
<td>Portland Taiko</td>
<td>ArtExplosion Collaborations: A Showcase of Asian Pacific American Performers, Portland</td>
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<td>$5,880</td>
<td>Powers School District</td>
<td>Story gathering with Powers' elders</td>
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<td>$6,090</td>
<td>Wisdom of the Elders, Inc.</td>
<td>Story gathering with Oregon Tribal elders</td>
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<tr>
<td>$6,230</td>
<td>Write Around Portland</td>
<td>Creative writing workshops with low-income Portlanders</td>
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Artists Repertory Theatre, Portland

The Laramie Project Tour

The Laramie Project is a play drawn from several hundred hours of interviews with residents of Laramie, Wyoming following the murder of Matthew Sheppard, a gay college student. Focusing on how the citizens of Laramie dealt with the aftermath of this tragedy, the play explores issues of tolerance, hate, community, healing and hope. Originally produced by the Teutonic Theatre Project, The Laramie Project has enjoyed a successful run with Portland’s Artists Repertory Theatre.

Featuring a wide spectrum of characters from a small community, The Laramie Project offers rural audiences a rare opportunity to “see themselves” on stage. With this in mind, the Artists Repertory Theatre collaborated with the Rural Organizing Project, the Equity Foundation and local social justice organizations to tour this play to four rural communities across the state. Over 1,600 people viewed The Laramie Project and participated in facilitated discussions following the performance.

The tour began with an evening performance at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, followed by two performances at the historic Granada Theatre in The Dalles. Over five hundred people attended these shows, one of which was a matinee for area students. The community, including local ministers and arts leaders, provided tremendous support for the show.

The Laramie Project’s next step was Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, where actors conducted a workshop with high school and college students. Approximately 250 people attended the evening performance, which concluded with a very in-depth discussion of what it means to live in a small community. Perhaps because Pendleton is the most similar to Laramie geographically and culturally, this discussion was one of the most exciting moments of the entire tour.
In Bend, almost three hundred people stayed for the post-production discussion, which went on for almost two hours as people shared their personal experiences with hate crime in their community. Older members of the audience supported younger members and people made plans to meet at a later date and discuss similar issues facing Bend. Eventually the facility closed, forcing an end of this highly productive discussion.

The final performance, at the Newport Center for the Performing Arts, drew a small but diverse audience from up and down the coast and Corvallis. Equity Foundation staff members were on hand to promote their efforts in this region. A major storm prevented a sell-out performance, but the 150 people who did attend were treated to a powerful tour-closing performance.

**How did *The Laramie Project* build community?**
Exchanging what binds people together and what threatens to push them apart is at the heart of the Artists Repertory Theatre’s work on stage and in communities. The power of live theatre coupled with the message of *The Laramie Project* provided fascinating and revealing discussions in communities across the state. Project partners’ presence at the performance raised awareness of the important work they do on social justice issues, and profits from each performance were donated to local partners to aid their work.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**
Touring is incredibly expensive and labor intensive, so the work and support of local partners was invaluable. Each community presented unique levels of support and need; some, like Bend, were nearly self-sufficient while others required Artists Repertory Theatre to handle almost every detail. Being prepared to meet our partners “where they were” was a key component to the project’s success. This experience will help the Theatre prepare for its upcoming five–state tour of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

Partners were correct in assuming that *The Laramie Project* would have a tremendous impact on rural communities. Because the play is challenging but not judgmental, it allowed people to examine and discuss their experiences and perceptions.

**What’s ahead?**
Artists Repertory Theatre’s outreach and education program, Actors to Go, is returning to The Dalles to do several workshops based on material from *The Laramie Project*. The Theatre is open to touring the state again when a production like this one presents itself.
**Arts Central**

**Artist Residency Program**

Bend is the fastest growing city in Oregon, with a high rate of new, affluent residents. One consequence of these changing demographics is a spiraling high cost of living, which has increased the low-income and homeless segments of the population, many of whom are children.

Those who reside in low-income complexes often do not have opportunities for creative engagement with their peers and neighbors. They need positive role models, as well as activities that help them build confidence and self-esteem. *The Artist Residency Program* brought a variety of arts workshops to these underserved children and provided hands-on training to local arts educators, so they could better serve at-risk youth.

Project artists, who were experienced art instructors, taught workshops in ceramics, printmaking, masking, puppetry, silk painting and drama to over one hundred children residing at four low-income housing complexes. This was the only arts opportunity most of these children had all year because local schools currently do not have funding for arts education. Residencies, which were held on-site so due to parents’ lack of transportation, provided students with meaningful activities during the holidays and summer vacation when they are often unsupervised. Children were very excited and appreciative of having the artists come to their site and they participated eagerly in the residencies.

In conjunction with the residencies, arts instructors attended a four-hour training session at the Art Station, where they learned skills for teaching and mentoring at-risk students. This valuable training created a pool of local artists who are better prepared to deal with the challenges (and rewards) of teaching this special needs population.
How did the **Artist Residency Program** build community?

Arts Central partnered with the Central Oregon Community Action Agency Network and the Central Oregon Regional Housing Authority; both were indispensable in making this project a success. Through this project and others, these organizations continue to develop strong relationships with Bend’s under-privileged populations, especially its children.

Communities within the housing complexes were strengthened because the children became more connected and engaged in cooperative learning. The success of this project illuminates the need for more services of this type within this community.

What did the partners learn from the project?

The biggest challenge was engaging parents to make a commitment to have their children come to the residencies. Some children who were unsupervised had to be individually retrieved for the initial sessions. Once they were convinced of the value of the residencies, attendance rose and a sense of community was forged.

This type of project needs to be available on a consistent basis to build up and maintain attendance. Unfortunately, lack of funding often forces cancellations or breaks in programming.

What’s ahead?

This project had a specific timeline with a certain number of residencies and training sessions for the artists. Whether it will continue into the future depends upon obtaining new grant funding to augment the partners’ operating budgets.
“I didn’t have to do much guiding. They had ideas like crazy, especially the tiny ones.”
—Janet Vasquez, mural artist

Arts Council of Southern Oregon

Through the Children’s Eyes Mobile Murals Project

The *Through the Children’s Eyes Mobile Murals Project* began in September 2002 when residents of the Illinois Valley asked the Arts Council of Southern Oregon to support a moveable murals project for area children. The idea was to have children from the four Valley schools create murals that expressed their perceptions of life in their community. The primary goal of the project was to unify diverse segments of the Illinois Valley community by celebrating their children and the environment they call home.

Artist Janet Vasquez worked with 240 pre-school and elementary students from schools in Cave Junction. Using themes that complemented current school curriculum, Vasquez helped students create murals inspired from their lives and communities. Twenty-five parent volunteers assisted during the creation and hanging of the murals, which are currently displayed on the exterior walls of four Cave Junction businesses.

In addition to planned activities, Vasquez supervised families in creating a fifth mural during the annual River Fest and Caves Day in June 2003. The Illinois Valley Community response Team funded this fifth mural, which now hangs on the exterior wall of a country store in Cave Junction.

Several barriers arose during the course of the project, some of which led to amendment of original plans. The goal of moving the murals from one business to another was reconsidered in view of the challenge and costs of transporting and hanging the murals. In addition, business owners did not want to release their murals to another business.
Another barrier concerned a pervasive belief that artists do not need to be paid for their time. By committing to paying Vasquez a family wage for her work with the children, the Arts Council set a standard with local businesses and sponsors. This led to the first funding of an artist by the Illinois Valley Community Response team.

How did *Through the Children’s Eyes Mobile Murals* build community?
The mural project brought together children, businesses, artists and parents in celebration of their creativity and environment. Each mural installation became a community-building event for the young artists and the hosting schools. Families who do not usually participate in school activities came to the Second Friday art walk to admire their child’s work. The addition of the Caves Day mural brought parents and children together in a creative process that is now displayed in their city.

In addition, the Arts Council formed working partnerships with the Illinois Valley Community Response Team, the local Forest Service and the Crater Lake Natural History Association. It also deepened its relationship with the Illinois Valley Arts Council.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Expectations for the quality of arts projects created by young people must be clearly understood by those working on the project. Artists need substantial time to teach students drawing and painting techniques before beginning work on the final product.

What’s ahead?
The Cave junction community is eager to have more murals created by Vasquez and local schoolchildren. Two schools have expressed their interest, as well as several business owners, who are researching ways to fund these projects. Vasquez has spoken with Arts Council staff about the possibility of working with her on these new mural projects.
Baker County Library District, Halfway

Landscaping Project
The Halfway Branch of the Baker County Library recently moved from a small facility into a spacious, lovely old building once owned by the Masonic Order. The new library is located on a double lot, whose landscaping consisted of weeds, worn-out sod and gravel. Citizens of Halfway, the Baker County Library, local merchants and other civic groups joined together to propose a landscaping project that would create walkways, flowerbeds, murals and a children's area and amphitheatre.

Gardens are a very important part of this region’s culture, which is proud of its long agrarian tradition. Artists and gardeners contributed their expertise in designing a landscape that would be attractive and functional year-round. Project planners viewed the exterior of the library as a backdrop for an artistic work comprised of vegetation and structures.

Landscaping work began in August 2004, with the excavation of topsoil from the north side excavation; this soil was used to create an amphitheatre for the children's garden on the south side. Large rocks were arranged on the north side of the building, with space in between for plantings and beds. Contractors dug irrigation ditches for the children’s gardens, and formed beds with landscape cloth and bed liners.

Project partners bought trees, shrubs and perennials to be planted in fall 2004, according to design plans drawn up by local master gardeners and artists. The Pine Eagle United Youth Fund paid for work done by several youth groups and various other groups contributed materials and labor to the project.
How did the *Landscaping Project* build community?

This project built community by involving many diverse groups and individuals in the planning, design and implementation of the library landscaping. Contributors included several youth groups, the master gardeners, two greenhouse owners, the hardware store owner, a local developer and the Presbyterian Church.

The primary goal of this project was to create a gathering place for citizens of Halfway, both patrons of the library and those who are simply looking for a pleasant place to be outdoors. In addition, the project sought to create an appealing view for travelers on nearby Highway 86. Although the project is not yet finished, it is well on its way thanks to funds from the Arts Build Communities grant.

What did the partners learn from the project?

The community of Halfway, like so many small towns, is going through the stress of losing its economic base of natural resources. There are few jobs for young people and the population is aging and diminishing. These strains often cause divisiveness within the community. With this in mind, partners were truly amazed at the level of commitment and enthusiasm that community volunteers brought to this “little oasis” at the south end of town.

What’s ahead?

The landscaping project is ongoing. Work continues on the children’s rooms, the amphitheatre and various plantings on both north and south sides. Project organizers hope to create a mural for the long north wall in the near future. The library has promised that resources will be available to finish and maintain the landscaping project.

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Bump in the Road Theatre, Portland

(Old Age Ain’t) No Place for Sissies

Bump in the Road Theatre is a relatively young company that creates theatrical productions and educational opportunities about difficult events in our daily lives. Each year the Theatre chooses to explore one of life’s “bumps in the road” through community workshops, input and showcased productions. Since its inception in 2001, Bump in the Road has covered topics such as grief, dying and loss through its unique blend of workshops, interviews and theatrical performance.

In 2003, Bump in the Road turned its attention to the issues of aging and care giving. Partners Parish Nurse Ministries, Providence Center on Aging and Loaves and Fishes helped identify participants from their staff, volunteers and clients who were willing and able to tell their stories about challenges in this arena. Partners coordinated and hosted workshops, which were led by the Theatre’s artistic staff. Five Theatre writers attended the workshops and used the material to craft a full-length play, (Old Age Ain’t) No Place for Sissies.

Fifty people attended the first reading of the play on July 27, 2003. Based on audience response, both verbal and written, revisions were made and a second reading was presented on October 12 to seventy-five people. Both performances were held in the Concordia University Fine Arts Building in Northeast Portland.

This project gave workshop participants a new idea of what theatre can do. Seeing their stories produced onstage showed participants that their lives have meaning in a broader social context than they realized. Many expressed gratitude and wonder after the performance.

Theatre actors, playwrights and designers also commented on the changes that have resulted in their thinking after working on this material. Several have commented on the value of facing our fears of aging and of discussing these issues with those around us.
How did the *(Old Age Ain’t) No Place for Sissies* build community?

The entire process and production of this play was about building community. Not only did it bring together people from various walks of life, but it also united theatre patrons with people who never attend live performances.

After the first reading in July, several audience members expressed a need for more diversity in the stories represented. As a result, Bump in the Road contacted the Urban League’s Senior Center and the Old Lesbians Organizing for Change to conduct additional workshops and interviews. Additional interviews were conducted at the Marie Smith Center in North Portland. Through these new partnerships the Theatre found engaging stories from a more diverse group of elders and their caregivers.

The Theatre has greatly benefited from these new partnerships. Providence Center on Aging sponsored the recent touring version of *I Think about Life*, a show based on end-of-life issues, and plans are underway for a future tour to Providence facilities statewide.

What did the partners learn from the project?

Partners learned that it’s very important to clearly lay out project guidelines and expectations, so that participants have the opportunity to truly commit to the process. In one instance, partners failed to clearly communicate to their clients the level of participation required. This resulted in confusion among participants and valuable time lost during the actual workshop. One person even walked out because he didn’t want to talk in-depth about these issues. Partners also need to fully understand and accept their role and responsibilities for the process to work smoothly.

What’s ahead?

Bump in the Road Theatre is currently in rehearsal for a full production of the show, which will open January 23, 2004, at Concordia University. Following its run, the Theatre plans to create a shorter version for touring to hospitals, schools and community organizations as part of its Theatre in a Suitcase program.
Camp Fire USA Mt. Hood Council, Oregon City

Youth for Arts
In the summer of 2003 Youth for Arts, an after-school enrichment program, brought a theatre arts program to 170 students residing in two Oregon City housing projects. Through a partnership with the Northwest Children's Theatre and School, Camp Fire USA's Mt. Hood Council provided hands-on theatre games to youth in grades one through six. The goal of these games was to help these youth discover positive ways to express themselves to their community while learning basic theatre skills.

The two housing projects have a high percentage of Russian and Hispanic children, who frequently harbor negative stereotypes about each other. Bringing these diverse cultures together in a playful, artistic environment helped quell many of their prejudices. Project partners decided to utilize theatre games rather than the production of a full-length play because it would allow students to focus on concepts rather than completion. Many of the participants had short attention spans and other behavioral problems, which would have made a full-blown theatrical performance difficult to achieve. The use of games enabled project partners to focus on teamwork, cooperation and trust building, a critical but difficult component of successful theatre. Students did produce a final performance for their friends and family.

How did Youth for Arts build community?
Through partnerships with the Housing Projects and several other county agencies, Camp Fire has helped provide arts programming to youth in these communities since 1992. The overall goal of these programs is to build strong, healthy families and to help youth express themselves through art.
The after-school theatre classes provided a forum where students could interact positively and safely, and where they could build skills and confidence. Parents, teachers, agency staff and the community who attended the final performance all enjoyed seeing these children “perform” theatre games, and they were amazed at their creativity in the ad lib segments.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Organizations contemplating similar programs, particularly in low-income housing communities, should start at a level where the children can succeed, rather than focusing on a full-length theatrical production. Relieved of the pressure to produce and perform, participants thoroughly enjoyed the classes and were eager to do more.

What’s ahead?
Partners have secured additional funds to continue theatre classes through the summer. As long as funding is available, they plan to continue this life-changing program.
Chetco Indian Tribe, Agness

Weaving Our Past into our Future
The town of Agness in remote Curry County was once the ancestral home to a vast population of Native Americans. For perhaps thousands of years, indigenous people gathered and prepared wild materials along the banks and lowlands of the Rogue River, in order to construct their basketry. Each village had its own artistic style and elements; delicate geometric designs of dyed ferns and bark distinguished not only the weaver’s ability, but also the identity of her people. Unfortunately, the great influx of European people and the relocation of many of Oregon’s indigenous people altered forever the traditional teaching of this unique art form. As a result, this fragile and magnificent art has been nearly lost.

On August 22–24, 2004, the Chetco Indian Tribe collaborated with several other tribes, the Oregon Cultural Trust, Foggy Creek Cultural Arts, the community of Agness and the Oregon Arts Commission to host a workshop dedicated to reviving traditional Native American basket weaving. Careful planning went into the workshop; organizers contacted four instructors from as far away as the Olympic Peninsula so that a variety of techniques could be taught. All skill levels were welcome and grant funds subsidized registration fees for low-income participants.

For three full days Native and non-Native enthusiasts immersed themselves in the world of Native basketry. Agness’ remote location kept outside distractions to a minimum and people were able to leave politics and negativity behind as they explored five different styles of Coastal basketry. Participants left with a renewed sense of the history and importance of Native basketry in indigenous cultures.

How did Weaving Our Past into our Future build community?
Native American basketry has traditionally been shared only within tribal communities, but project organizers felt that the preservation of this art form de
pends upon creating a wider base of knowledge and appreciation. Allowing Non-Native people into the workshop encouraged a new level of dialogue and appreciation between the two groups.

Overwhelming attendance filled every available room at the Lucus and Singing Spring Lodges, and local merchants, artisans and the Agness museum benefited from the large number of visitors. Workshop participants were able to view a new collection of Ancient Stones now on exhibit at the Agness museum. These stones are inscribed with ancient artistic markings portraying elements of nature; they were taken to Gold Beach twenty years ago and have only been recently returned. Museum staff was able to share their knowledge of these and other museum holdings with a captivated audience.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners learned that successful workshops take months of planning and collaboration, as well as a firm mission statement of goals and projected outcomes. The workshop, which was originally scheduled for June, had to be postponed until August so planners could work through some difficult questions concerning the inclusion of Non-Native people and the general desire to keep politics and personal agendas out of the workshop. The postponement helped increase attendance and allowed planners to secure a more positive outcome.

**What’s ahead?**

One project goal was to help form an association of South Coastal basket weavers. Thanks to grant funds, member fees and donations, this goal was achieved. The South Coast Basket Weavers Association has filed for its incorporation papers and hopes to receive non-profit status by June 2004.

The Chetco Indian Tribe is partnering with other tribes as well as Foggy Creek Cultural Arts to produce a series of four workshops in Agness in fall, 2004. These workshops will focus on collecting photographs and stories that document various weavers as they gather, prepare and weave traditional materials into sacred art designs that have been handed down from generation to generation. This material will be collated into a pictorial publication that will inspire greater appreciation of the beauty and artistry of Native Basketry.
Crossroads Center for the Creative and Performing Arts, Baker City

Renovation Project Phase One
Crossroads Center for the Creative and Performing Arts, a thirty-nine year old community arts center, has been looking for a permanent home for several years. After a one-year feasibility study, Crossroads, Baker City and the communities served by the arts center agreed that the 1909 Carnegie Library could be renovated to meet Crossroads’ needs. Baker City signed a sixty-year, rent-free lease with Crossroads, contingent upon its renovating the building in the next five years.

The Crossroads Center provides arts opportunities, events and performances to residents throughout Northeast Oregon, including Baker City’s 16,500 residents and approximately 4,000 people from Grant, Malheur, Union, Wallowa and Umatilla Counties. Crossroads programs offer arts education and cultural events to schoolchildren, at-risk youth, adults in drug rehabilitation programs, the elderly, disabled and disadvantaged adults and the community-at-large. Because no person is ever turned away due to lack of funds, Crossroads provides what may often be the only exposure to the arts for many local residents.

During 2003, after receiving the Arts Build Communities funds, Crossroads wrote grants to several foundations including the Meyer Memorial Trust, the Ford Family Foundation and the Oregon Community Foundation. Each foundation encouraged Crossroads to conduct a local campaign, and the Collins Foundation issued a $150,000 challenge grant for completion by December 1, 2004. A local fundraising team has been formed and to date has raised $25,000. Target goals are to raise $1.3 million by 2008.
Many people are coming together to make this goal a reality. The local fund-raising committee includes several outstanding community leaders, who are working hard to educate the public about the achievement and values of the Crossroads Center. This public education will be critical to the success of the renovation campaign.

**How did the Renovation Project Phase One build community?**

Many people and groups, including artists, businesspeople, civic leaders and county government, have come together in support of the Renovation Project. A new committee formed under the umbrella of Baker County Economic Development will work to develop area arts as a destination attraction, with the Carnegie project as a central component of the plan.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Communities seeking to raise funds to renovate a historic buildings should educate the local business people about the value of the arts in terms that they care about, such as economic prosperity, tourism enhancement and services to children. Project organizers have networked with other projects around the state, who report the same experience.

**What’s ahead?**

The Carnegie Project plans to raise $125,000 by December 1, 2004, to answer the Collins challenge grant. At that point Phase One of the construction process will begin, while organizers continue to write grants to foundations who expressed early interest. Crossroads staff and volunteers will continue to meet with business leaders, one by one, to solicit their specific interests in the renovation project. They are also developing a needs assessment that will be useful in a variety of future projects.

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East Linn Museum Society, Sweet Home

Kids, History and Murals Project

One hundred years ago, an Oldsmobile nicknamed “Old Scout” created quite a stir by being the first automobile to cross the Santiam Wagon Road into the little community of Sweet Home. Driven by Dwight B. Huss, Old Scout was competing in the first transcontinental car from New York City to Portland, Oregon. The Santiam Wagon Road gatekeeper puzzled over an appropriate fee and eventually concluded that the car’s size and noise qualified it for a three-cent toll, the going rate for hogs.

Local resident and photographer George Mealey took a picture of Old Scout as it passed through Sweet Home in 1905. Nearly a century later, East Linn Museum chose to sponsor a mural drawn from this photograph as part of statewide activities honoring the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. They hired Portland artist Larry Kangas, who has created a number of murals in Sweet Home.

Striving for historical accuracy, Kangas created a ten-by-ten foot mural on the side of the Terry Bentley Auto Repair building on Main Street, visible to eastbound tourists. The mural depicts Old Scout coming down the Santiam Mountain Road, dragging a fir tree behind for braking purpose. The Oldsmobile went on to win the transcontinental race.

Weather conditions delayed work on the mural, which was initially scheduled for painting in April 2003. Kangas completed the mural in June 2003 and an unveiling was held shortly thereafter. Several dozen people attended this event, which was followed by an open house at East Linn Museum.

The Museum enlisted the help of fourteen Oak Heights Elementary School students to develop a brochure promoting the town’s murals. These students, from the Talented and Gifted program, researched and wrote text describing all seventeen murals in Sweet Home. This professional quality brochure is now used by the museum and the local Chamber of Commerce for local and regional outreach.
How did the *Kids, History and Murals* Project build community?

This project brought together diverse people from the Sweet Home community. Auto repair shop owner and outlaw class auto racer Terry Bentley was enthusiastic about having the mural on his building. As part of the project, school children visited the East Linn Museum, many of them for the first time. Finally, local veterans appreciated the opportunity to have artist Kangas paint a large, waving flag on the side of a building adjacent to the new Veterans Memorial Park, which was dedicated the same day as the Old Scout mural.

What did the partners learn from the project?

Project partners regret that weather kept Kangas from beginning the mural in April. The delay until June meant that the at-risk high school students were not able to help with the painting as planned. Other than that, the project went well and the resulting mural has been well received by the community.

What's ahead?

During the painting of the Old Scout Mural, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Club recruited two local artists to paint a wrap-around mural on their building. With donated materials and great enthusiasm, the artists have created a mural that uses symbolism and military insignia to honor veterans.

The East Linn community is very proud of these murals that showcase local history, and the Sweet Home Economic Group continues to research funding for murals. Other businesses have offered their buildings as potential mural sites.

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Artists of Eastern Oregon 2003

Artists of Eastern Oregon 2003 began as a collaboration between the Eastern Oregon Regional Arts Council and Eastern Oregon University’s Nightingale Gallery, each of whom serve the ten-county remote region. Building on the expressed needs of regional artists for professional development and marketing opportunities, these two partners designed a project that would vitalize and support a community of regional artists, thus energizing the arts in the various local communities. A secondary goal was to inspire economic growth by nurturing the arts throughout Eastern Oregon.

Held in June 2003, Artists of Eastern Oregon began with two daylong workshops in art marketing, facilitated by arts marketing professional Marty Rudolph. Artist guilds were established during these workshops, as well as an on-going marketing group. Rudolph helped artists set specific individual and group goals and identify incremental steps toward meeting these goals. She also helped each group identify tracking mechanisms and target dates to keep them headed toward their goals. Artists reported an increased sense of community and networking possibilities as a result of this workshop.

The following Saturday several professional artists and gallery owners served as panelists for a set of seminars on critical issues for artists living in this remote area. These panelists were also available for individual consultations with artists throughout the day, a service that many artists found extremely helpful.

Artists of Eastern Oregon 2003 culminated with a juried show at the Nightingale Gallery entitled Connection to Place. Comprised of work from over two dozen regional artists, the show received a great deal of positive feedback from artists and community members; one panelist called it “the ideal model for all regional art shows.”
How did Artists of Eastern Oregon build community?
For many artists, the most valuable part of this project was engaging in professional development and networking with other artists. During the course of the project, these artists defined difficult issues and helped each other identify new resources. As a result of this process, the Eastern Oregon Regional Arts Council has become more aware of the needs of local artists, such as assistance with legal and accounting issues. The Council is working to address these and other identified needs.

The existing partnership between the Eastern Oregon Regional Arts Council and the Nightingale Gallery was deepened through this project. The Gallery appreciated the summer presence which the exhibit provided and has decided to schedule the 2004 exhibition’s opening reception to coincide with graduation, which will greatly enhance the number of attendees.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Partners felt that the project was an overwhelming success and they would encourage other communities to experiment with a similar model. Partners’ decision to offer dorm rooms at a reduced rate drew a number of distant artists who might not have come otherwise; this enhanced networking opportunities.

One piece of advice would be to refrain from scheduling other arts events during this time. A concert scheduled for after the opening was not as well attended as it might have been on another night; it is probably better to save one’s resources for the main event and hold performances at other times.

What’s ahead?
Project partners intend to make Artists of Eastern Oregon a biennial event. In alternate years they will exhibit the work of artists honored in the previous year. They will continue to write grants to support this event and to solicit funds from the Oregon Economic Development Commission, the US Department of Agriculture and the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as local businesses.
Harney County Arts and Crafts Association, Burns

Malheur Refuge Legacy Mural
Betty Ashlock, owner of the Silver Spur Motel in Burns, Oregon, had a vision to recreate part of Harney County’s history through a mural on an exterior wall of her motel. She wanted to educate travelers about the area’s rich history, depict the natural beauty of Harney County and showcase the talents of local artists. The County Chamber of Commerce and Arts and Crafts Associations quickly expressed an interest in the project, as did the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, who proposed using the mural to celebrate the upcoming centennial of the National Refuge System. The five partners met, planned the project and applied for an Arts Build Community grant, which they received.

A Malheur Refuge volunteer painted a large sign for the motel, announcing the coming mural. Project partners talked with local ranchers and residents, who voted for their favorite design from three prepared by Refuge artist Robert Paramore. The final design depicted wildlife found on the Malheur Refuge, as well as portraits of Theodore Roosevelt, founder of the National Wildlife Refuge System, and John Scharff, who managed the refuge for thirty years. Over 150 people attended the mural unveiled at the annual John Scharff Migratory Bird Festival on April 5, 2003. The mural was later hung on the Silver Spur Motel facing Burns’ main street.

The Malheur Refuge Legacy Mural had a strong educational component, including a residency with local artist Amos Burk, who helped 140 primary school students create bird masks. Wearing these masks, students became interested in birds by pretending to strut, dance and fly like local cranes and geese. Mural artist Paramore gave presentations to younger students and helped junior high students design and assemble separate squares to make a large picture. Four young artists, the winners of a youth art contest, painted a series of mini-murals entitled “Seasons in the Marsh,” which was unveiled at the first annual Harney County Day. Over two hundred residents drove sixty miles to the refuge on an exceptionally cold day to enjoy the event.

“Fill the tank but take an empty belly to Malheur Refuge’s Harney County Day.”
—Terry Keim, Burns Times-Herald
The Legacy Mural has given a new, vibrant look to a rather empty section of Burns’ main street. It has connected the motel to the library and museum, as part of the town’s cultural center. Its presence, along with the entire mural project, has given Burns’ an increased sense of community pride.

How did the *Malheur Refuge Legacy Mural* build community?

One of the primary goals of this project was to encourage greater understanding and unity between the local community and the Malheur Wildlife Refuge. Students gained a greater appreciation of the Malheur Refuge through their work with local artists. And local ranchers appreciated being included in planning discussions, with the direct result that cattle were depicted in the final mural. Paramore’s portrait of John Scharff also engendered support from the ranching community, who had admired and respected the Refuge manager.

What did the partners learn from the project?

Shifts in personnel within the partnering organization caused delays that forced the artist to be somewhat rushed in the days before the Bird Festival. In retrospect, partners can see that this detailed and ambitious project needed a paid project director, who could have coordinated the many activities in order to make it go more smoothly. At the very least, a pre-established meeting schedule among all partners would have ensured better communication despite unforeseen changes of personnel.

Nonetheless, the project proved that five diverse groups could cooperate and complete a project of this magnitude. Community response has been very favorable, especially among downtown business owners. The Refuge was pleasantly surprised by the large turnout at the Harney County Day, which they attributed in part to the mural project.

What’s ahead?

The mural project is completed, but already there have been two new projects begun as a result of its success. The Refuge is planning its second Harney County Day for 2004. And the owner of the Riley Store plans to complete a “Welcome to Harney County” mural depicting county scenes on his building.
The Haven Project, Portland

Afield Program

Created in 1997, the Haven Project’s Afield Program is a series of residencies that provide playwriting workshops to at-risk youth ages twelve through eighteen. These workshops culminate in performances by professional artists of student-written plays. The primary goal of these workshops is to help these underserved young people discover that they have something special and valuable to offer themselves and their community. To date, The Haven Project has conducted thirty-five Afield workshops, resulting in the creation and staged reading of over three hundred student plays.

Principal partners for 2003 included the Rosemont School, Portland Night High School, Lents Education Center, the Clinton School, the Open Meadow School and Centennial Learning Center. At each site Haven mentors worked one-on-one with students to help them craft imaginative and often poignant one-act plays. Students enjoyed the positive attention and support from these artists, while the mentors themselves gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of these at-risk youth.

Each site had its unique successes and challenges. Young women living at the Rosemont facility had no access to television and consequently produced some of the most inspired and creative work, full of enthusiasm even when the interior struggle was painful. Youth at the Lents Education Center struggled with the difficult and demanding work, but with the help of a creative, committed group of mentors they succeeded in producing a series of plays that were given a dramatic reading by professional artists.

The Afield Program’s first residency at the Centennial Learning School engaged faculty as well as students, several of whom experienced profound changes as a result of the work they were doing. One boy who was assumed to be developmentally disabled and illiterate became very communicative and funny, and wrote an extremely smart play. Two of Centennial’s faculty came to a Haven training for mentors because they wanted to learn how to continue this important work at the school.

“It teaches you to dig deep within and pull out that creative person in you.”
—Melissa, student participant

“I learned that adults can be cool, too.”
—Elise, student participant
Partners initially planned to produce plays written by the Portland Night High School at Portland State University, but communication broke down in early February due to a shift in personnel at the University. The Haven Project chose to delay collaboration with the University until the following year and instead produced the plays at the high school. This turned out to be a great success, with the whole student body in attendance. The young writers, who had displayed a solid commitment to the project, were clearly proud of their accomplishment and touched by the support of their peers.

How did the Afield Program build community?
The Afield Program awakened appreciation within the community for the creativity, humanity and artistry of these young people, who are too often marginalized by society. The young writers frequently expressed their astonishment that the artist mentors really listened to them and took their words and ideas seriously. When the plays were performed before an audience, the validation these young people received was apparent to everyone involved.

Since 1999, the University of Portland has taken ownership of one Haven Project residency annually. University students look forward to producing, directing and performing these moving and surprising plays. This ongoing relationship has become a model for similar residencies that help university students reach out into the community and bring underserved populations onto campus.

What did the partners learn from the project?
The Haven Project learned that within each collaborating partner it needs a key person who will take the lead in fulfilling project obligations. Each university needs to designate someone to oversee production of student plays.

Evaluations from this year’s residencies also showed that the Afield Program really works, with significant positive changes reported in the behavior of participants. These include improved persistence in difficult work, increased enthusiasm for new creative projects and a greater appreciation for the artistic endeavors of others.

What’s ahead?
The Haven Project made a two-year commitment to provide workshops to several coastal communities where Haven artists taught local artists to become mentors as they provided the Afield Program to Tongue Point Job Corps kids. Haven planned a bilingual residency with the Rigler School; a residency with Native American students and Portland State University; and a residency creating a visual vernacular for Deaf students and professional actors.
On the first weekend in May 2003, over seven hundred people participated in the first Oregon Deaf Theatre Project, a three-day residency with the National Theatre of the Deaf, the nation’s leading deaf theatre company. Using a combination of lectures, workshops and performances, the Theatre united Deaf and hearing participants through theatrical works aimed at increasing public awareness about Deaf culture. The project brought Oregon’s underserved Deaf community together in workshops designed to strengthen participants’ creativity and practical skills, and it helped raise awareness among the hearing community about issues Deaf people face.

The National Theatre of the Deaf combines sign language and spoken words to create a unique visual language that has been described as “poetry for the eye and ear.” A presentation by the Theatre is a living lesson in teamwork, tolerance and self-reliance, as these actors perform original works as well as classic stories, fables and poems. In this residency, actors from the National Theatre worked one-on-one with Deaf participants to enhance their theatrical skills and to enhance their pride in their culture and language.

The residency began with a full-length performance at the Hult Center, which was followed by a workshop on the history of Deaf theatre and the use of American Sign Language to present stories to Deaf and hearing audiences. A comprehensive lecture at Western Oregon University engaged over one hundred post-secondary students who were either Deaf or studying to teach American Sign Language. The National Theatre also presented a workshop and performance to thirty-eight youth at the Oregon School for the Deaf.

Oregon’s Deaf community has very little opportunity to experience an accessible art performance, particularly one created by their own culture. This project strengthened Deaf pride in their cultural and language and it fostered a healthy cultural exchange between the Deaf community and the hearing public.
Using theatre to inspire Deaf youth to look beyond what others perceive as their limitation was a powerful message that the National Theatre of the Deaf communicated extremely well.

The National Theatre of the Deaf’s message of hope, inspiration and the importance of each individual was particularly effective at reaching out to children of all ages. Students at the Oregon School of the Deaf were fascinated and inspired to think that they too could be an actor on a stage, communicating through a variety of theatrical methods.

How did the Oregon Deaf Theatre Project build community?
The participatory nature of the Theatre’s performances and classes strengthened ties between the Deaf and hearing community. Actors shared acting techniques through hands-on workshops that strengthened participants’ creativity and practical skills, and they introduced hearing audience members to sign language, Deaf theatre and a variety of cultural diversity issues. Finally, National Theatre actors gave educators a new appreciation of the potential of Deaf theatre through their American Sign Language Theatre Arts Workshops.

This project brought together a host of new partners: The Oregon School of the Deaf, the University of Oregon’s American Sign Language Club, the Northwest Theatre of the Deaf and Oregon’s Disability Commission, to name a few. Partners learned a great deal from the residency and from each other, and were eager to use their new skills and connections to expand services to the Deaf throughout the state. This project created a foundation for similar projects in the future.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Community partners are essential in trying to reach a specific audience, such as the Deaf community. Without these alliances, the effectiveness of the workshops and performance would have been limited.

A longer residency would give Deaf participants from around the State the opportunity to meet actors from the National Theatre, and to network among themselves. Receptions after each event would also be very beneficial to the Deaf community.

What’s ahead?
This project has become a model for the Hult Center’s outreach program. Its strategic implementation and planning timeline worked particularly well, and will be replicated in future programs of this nature. At this time, a project as extensive as this one is not scheduled. However, the doors remain open for project partners to explore new ideas and activities for Deaf people throughout the state.
Illinois Valley Community Response Team, Cave Junction

Rock Sculpture Project
Cave Junction is a rural town of 1200 people that serves as the business center of the Illinois Valley, an economically depressed region still in transition from its former timber and mining economy. In recent years this community has made tourism as a focus of its economic development strategy. Cave Junction’s proximity to the Redwood Highway makes it a natural stop for travelers, but residents and business owners agree that the town needs cosmetic improvements as well as a unifying theme to encourage this stream of visitors.

With this in mind, the Illinois Valley Community Response Team proposed to use sculptural rock formations found throughout the Valley to create an architectural theme for the main street in Cave Junction. Rock sculptures had been cited in the town’s Public Arts Plan as a potential theme for beautifying and enhancing the town. Prior to this project, four rock sculptures had been built in the Valley with private donations and eleven more were commissioned and awaiting matching funds.

Building on this growing interest, project partners assigned several local artists to work directly with area businesspeople to solicit, plan and create functional art sculptures at sites around the city. This approach worked extremely well and resulted in the creation of twelve highly individualized rock sculptures throughout town. In addition to improving the appearance of Cave Junction, this project helped to create an awareness of the positive impact of public art.
How did the *Rock Sculpture Project* build community?
The project helped unify the mismatched architecture of Cave Junction and, as a result, boosted pride in the community. The fact that so many businesses participated, either with project artists or on their own, speaks strongly of a growing sense of identity and pride in the community’s appearance. Every day new examples of this investment are appearing, in the form of sculptures or other beautification projects in Cave Junction as well as in the nearby towns of Kerby and O’Brien.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Partners learned that there is a far deeper sense of civic pride in Cave Junction than previously thought. In many cases, businesspeople who had not participated in other community projects gave significant amounts of money to have a piece of the project on their site.

Other communities contemplating similar projects should try to remain flexible in their solicitation of participants. Allowing business owners to help determine what was created on their particular site helped keep the project moving forward. In an area of rugged individualism this project has proven a great success, uniting many diverse business owners with the common goal of improving the appearance of the town.

What’s ahead?
The future of this project now resides in the hands of business owners and community members who stand to benefit from the beautification of the town. Since beginning this project, organizers have noticed that planters that had long been empty are now sporting seasonal plantings and shrubs. Business owners are putting new roofs and fresh paint on their buildings and many are providing their own vision of functional rockwork and landscaping.

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Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization, Portland

In My Country: A Gathering of Refugee and Immigrant Fiber Traditions

The roots of In My Country: A Gathering of Refugee and Immigrant Fiber Traditions may be traced all the way back to July 2000, when an intercultural group of refugee and immigrant fiber artists formed the Sewing Circle. Twice a month for the past three years these women have met to work on individual projects, share stories and experiences, practice their English and provide mutual support in the resettlement process. In 2003, thanks in part to Arts Build Communities funds and assistance from the Arts for New Immigrants Program, the group was able to develop a traveling exhibit composed of their work, photographs and interpretive panels.

The exhibit tour included the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute in Pendleton, the Four Rivers Cultural Center in Ontario and the Latimer Quilt and Textile Center in Tillamook. Audience response to the exhibit has been overwhelmingly positive, and many visitors related stories about their own fiber traditions through the In My Country Traveling Journal.

Videographer Roberto Gonzalez shot footage from the sewing circles, the first two exhibits and individual interviews with the artists in preparation for the In My Country video which was, unfortunately, not completed in time for the statewide tour. Difficulties with funding and project personnel delayed production, but staff and artist remained committed and the video premiered at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center in December 2003.

One of the main goals of In My Country was to assist refugee and immigrant fiber artists by providing social gatherings, materials, childcare and transportation so artists could pursue their traditional art forms in their new country. This project also encouraged cultural preservation in immigrant communities and it promoted economic development and self-sufficiency among participating artists.
How did In My Country build community?

*In My Country* led to a partnership with the Portland Handweavers Guild, who provided honorary memberships for Sewing Circle artists and included the group in their annual show at the Oregon Convention Center. The Multnomah County Library has continued to invite the Sewing Circle to meet in their community room once a month. The project has also fostered real interest in the local media, resulting in feature stories and articles on immigrant and refugee arts and artists.

The Sewing Circle continues to be a model for building community, both within refugee and immigrant communities and between these communities and the general public. The Sewing Circle has helped many refugee youth and adults positively reevaluate the value of their traditional arts and cultures, and it has helped ease tensions between generations as they navigate acculturation at different rates. Project documentation has created a valuable oral, written and visual archive of refugee and immigrant populations in Portland.

What did the partners learn from the project?

Project partners are more firmly convinced than ever of the value of the Sewing Circle as a community-building tool. It is a replicable model for combining the arts and social services and it could be used to serve other populations such as the elderly, disabled individuals, domestic violence survivors, prison inmates, at-risk youth and more.

What’s ahead?

To date, the Arts for New Immigrants Program has managed all the fund-raising and logistics for the Sewing Circle and related programs. Now participating artists are beginning to take over these responsibilities and the group is taking a more egalitarian approach to coordinating various group events and activities. The Arts for New Immigrants Program staff will continue to collaborate with ethnic art experts to help Sewing Circle members market their work and to connect members interested in teaching with sponsor organizations.

Other organizations around the state are interested in hosting the *In My Country* exhibit in 2004. This will also help in the marketing and distribution of Sewing Circle fiber arts.

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Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, Portland

Audiences and Artists Accessibility Committee
Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center is committed to serving artists and audiences with disabilities. All three floors of the historic building are wheelchair-accessible, as are the dressing rooms and galleries. Interstate Firehouse performances frequently include disabled actors or characters in order to better connect with audience members who share similar disabilities.

In January 2003, Interstate Firehouse convened the Audiences and Artists Accessibility Committee with the goal of devising and implementing a plan to make the Center more accessible to people with a wide range of disabilities. The Committee, which consisted of representatives of Interstate Firehouse and Lumiere Players Theatre of the Imagination, identified barriers to accessibility at the Center and set priorities and a timeline for completion of tasks. Other project partners included the Northwest Theatre of the Deaf and Portland Accessible Theatre. This meeting was complemented two weeks later by a teleconference on Arts Access for Persons with Disabilities.

Following these discussions, Interstate Firehouse removed two front row seats in the theatre to improve wheelchair access. Staff also placed Handicapped signs throughout the interior and exterior of the building. In July 2003, Larry Cross, a disabled person, joined the Center’s Board of Directors.

How did the Audiences and Artists Accessibility Committee build community?
The Audiences and Artists Accessibility Committee helped staff and project partners understand more clearly the challenges of presenting the performing arts to disabled audiences. The Center’s existing relationship with the Lumiere Players was strengthened through this collaboration, which led to the planning of a joint project in 2005.
What did the partners learn from the project?
Organizations approaching similar projects should conduct adequate research to develop a strong and viable proposal. Lack of such research hindered project partners from developing a strong team of collaborators and accurately estimating the real costs of equipment and human resources. Assistive listening devises, which were initially included, could not be purchased due to under-budgeting in the initial proposal.

What’s ahead?
Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center is in the process of researching and scheduling several identified elements in the drive toward accessibility. Changes need to be made to the organization’s website to make it compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Staff members are developing a list of American Sign Language interpreters; both paid and volunteer, for future performances and meetings. They are also developing a staff and volunteer plan for improving disability services.
Joint Forces Dance Company, Eugene

Integrated Arts Outreach Project
Since 1988 Alito Alessi, the Artistic Director of Joint Forces Dance Company, has been very successful in bringing people with and without disabilities together through movement improvisation workshops known as DanceAbility. These workshops have provided a place where disabled people can express themselves through movement in a safe and supportive environment.

In 2003 the Integrated Arts Outreach Project took this concept one step further by expanding the DanceAbility workshops to a variety of venues where people of mixed abilities could meet and dance together. The primary goal was to show that dance, as a community activity, should be inclusive of all people, regardless of ability, age or class.

The project began by hosting a short training to help dance teachers from a variety of forms learn how to include disabled people in their classes. Thirty-eight instructors from Eugene and Cottage Grove attended these trainings, which taught them how to make their dance forms more accessible, thereby bringing down barriers facing people with disabilities.

Two-day performing arts festivals were held in both Eugene and Cottage Grove, offering twenty-four workshops in everything from children's theatre to folk dancing. Over five hundred people attended, including forty people with disabilities. Additionally, over two thousand people visited an exhibit of photography and painting in the WOW Hall Art Gallery, which featured artwork on the theme of dance by artists with autism. A live band and mixed-abilities dance performance brought festival attendees together for a diverse celebration of dance.

The Integrated Arts Outreach Project also provided mixed ability dance performances to 2,880 children at eight Lane County schools. These performances raised students' awareness of the diverse possibilities of mixed-abilities dance and they increased student attendance at the Festival.
The fact that people with disabilities generally attend cultural events far less than people without disabilities contributes to making disabled people somewhat invisible. The Outreach Project raised the visibility of disabled arts participants and broadened the perspective of those participants without disabilities. The project helped open people’s eyes to the power and necessity of self-expression for all people.

How did the Integrated Arts Outreach Project build community?
The Dance Festivals connected people of varying experience, expertise and ability through a celebration of dance and movement. People who came to the hip-hop class, for example, ended up staying for the break-dancing class and then returned in the evening for the Latino tropical band and the Joint Forces dance performances. The Festival forged links between the tango and salsa dance communities, and between theatre and dance communities. The pre-Festival teacher trainings brought together dance professionals from different forms and gave them exposure to new disciplines.

A resource directory listing Festival faculty and their teaching and performing schedules helped attendees contact instructors and performers in the future. Several festival teachers said this project brought new students into their classes.

What did the partners learn from the project?
This project succeeded in offering equal dance and theatre choices and opportunities to all people, regardless of ability or disability. It helped teachers draw new students and helped students find new teachers, while opening all participants’ eyes to the potential and possibilities of those with disabilities.

Better outreach among the University of Oregon and Lane Community College Students with Disabilities Union would have increased the number of disabled participants. Greater care should also be taken not to schedule festival events in conflict with other focal events.

Based on feedback from participants in the instructors’ training, Joint Forces is looking at more effective ways to teach dance educators how to comfortably integrate disabled people into their classes. They also plan to encourage instructors to remain at the Festival beyond their own class time in order to build community with participants.

What’s ahead?
A similar project has been planned for spring 2004 in Eugene, with a smaller version in Salem. Funds for these events were raised through business sponsorships and other in-kind support. Umpqua Valley Disabilities Network in Roseburg is planning a similar project.
Lents Community Market, Portland

Multicultural Festivals

Located at the margins of the city of Portland, the community of Lents is divided geographically by the freeway, leaving no central gathering point for residents. In 1999, in response to this fragmentation and other local issues, a group of neighborhood women came together to establish the Lents Community Market as a means of community revitalization. In the past few years the Market has thrived and grown, receiving support from private, public and non-profit sectors of the community.

In 2003, the Market introduced an Eastern European Cultural Celebration and a Latin American Independence Day Festival as part of its season events. Coordinated largely by volunteers, these festivals grew diverse and appreciative crowds, and inspired Market volunteers to plan a more developed series of festivals celebrating Lents’ cultural diversity. In 2003, with support from the Oregon Arts Commission and the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, Lents Community market held three festivals celebrating cultures represented in the local communities.

The first festival highlighted the food, arts and music of Eastern Europe. Leonid Nosov from Cultural Expressions circulated through the market playing folk songs from Eastern Europe on the accordion and Donna Siefer, a Russian professor, displayed Russian arts and crafts by a number of local artists, including boxes and plates hand-painted by elementary school students. Ms. Siefer also acted as interpreter for Igor Maksimov, who displayed artwork crafted from wood and straw.

The August festival put the spotlight on Asian Pacific culture. The ten-member gamelan group Sari Pandhawa engaged the crowd with melodic and peaceful pieces from Indonesia. Calligrapher Willow Zheng, a local artist, wrote people’s names in beautiful Chinese characters.
In the final festival of the season, the Latin American Cultural Festival showcased young performers from Binnsmead Middle School. The youth performed several dances, ranging from the more traditional ballet folklórico to a lively contemporary swing dance. One of the boys sang two pieces, and a festival attendee was encouraged to sing a popular Spanish song. For a finale, the disk jockey played a Spanish pop song, and people flooded the stage in a true community celebration.

Each successive festival drew a larger crowd, with more excitement, energy and appreciation of the diverse cultures represented. The festival days became spirited afternoons in which friends and strangers circled the plaza, listening to Eastern European folksongs played by accordionist Leonid Nosov of Cultural Expressions and enjoying sweet Taiwanese drinks. Children took turns trying to break community piñatas and the Knights of Pythias, a local fraternal order, gave away free bicycle helmets. Fabric sales and other community events helped increase foot traffic, bringing in people who might have felt uninterested or even awkward about coming to a cultural festival.

How did the Multicultural Festivals build community?
Few things draw people like music and art, which can be understood across language and cultural barriers. Members from the Lents community and beyond communicated with one another, not only through words, but also through the shared joy of appreciating art. In addition, they were exposed to groups they had never heard of before, thereby creating ties to underutilized resources.

Market staff recognized these events as perfect forums for building community. As each group celebrates its own richness, residents and visitors come to recognize and value the community’s richness as a whole. Through partnerships with Southeast Works, the Asian Pacific American Consortium on Substance Abuse, the Northwest China Council, Binnsmead Middle School, Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement and Lewis and Clark College, partners succeeded in holding three successful cultural festivals.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Because so few events in outer southeast Portland highlight the area’s cultural diversity, residents appreciated the opportunity to gather and meet one another. Local organizations were grateful for the chance to connect with new communities.

Although the project organizers formed many new relationships, they failed to clearly outline and maintain each partner’s responsibilities. As a result, most of the partners did not provide the level of publicity and outreach anticipated. Locating that critical mass of people who are willing to take on a project and see it through is challenging. Starting early is critical to project success.

Partners strove to appeal to a large audience, but found it difficult to maintain a consistently high turnout. Project organizers wished they had set up a survey system to help with future event planning and marketing.

What’s ahead?
Lets Community Market day-to-day market functions have become increasingly dependent upon volunteers, and there is still no budget for paid staff. Project organizers are looking at new partnerships with local organic farms as a means of sustaining and expanding this valuable community gathering.
MediaRites, Portland

The Breast Cancer Radio Arts Project
The Breast Cancer Radio Arts Project was a yearlong collaboration between MediaRites, the Media Project, KBOO Community Radio and Project Quest. Designed to raise awareness of the valuable role of the arts in breast cancer treatment, the project provided a series of healing arts workshops and retreats to women with breast cancer and their loved ones. The project also included a series of feature radio stories and call-in programs, as well as a town hall and performance in late October.

The project began with February and March workshops in Visual Art Therapy, poetry, creative writing and movement, storytelling and creating memory boxes. Workshops resumed in July and August, with an emphasis on helping breast cancer survivors and their loved ones tell their stories through creative writing and artwork. Workshops culminated in a two-day retreat that helped participants explore their own creative process through visual art, creative writing and movement. People who attended also had the opportunity to experience various healing modalities, including acupuncture, massage and Qi Gong.

Throughout the year KBOO Community Radio produced various radio programs on breast cancer. These included monthly call-in programs that featured a guest panel of experts who addressed a variety of topics including detection of breast cancer, bridging the gap between complimentary and allopathic treatments and navigating cultural differences in surviving breast cancer. The radio station also sponsored a unique mentorship program in which five KBOO volunteers created a series of feature stories for airing. KBOO used this project to create a health beat model that could be used for coverage of future health topics.

The Breast Cancer Radio Arts Project culminated with Beyond the Pink Ribbon, a community town hall and performance that addressed the current epidemic of breast cancer. The evening began with music by local musicians, a staged reading of works by women with breast cancer and an exhibit of survivors’ artwork curated by project artist Ping Khaw. Entertainment was followed by an hour-long discussion with six panelists who included health care professionals,

“The experience helped me continue my healing process by releasing feelings through movement and writing…”
—Workshop participant

“It opened the floodgates for me. I will now be able to do the writing that I so desperately need to do.”
—Workshop participant
cancer program administrators, activists and survivors. Over one hundred people attended this informative and inspiring evening.

**How did the Breast Cancer Radio Arts Project build community?**

This project built community by uniting and serving a segment of the population that MediaRites hasn’t specifically served before: women over forty who have breast cancer. Project Quest helped locate a core group of fifty women for the workshops and retreats, and they staffed a booth at the local Race for the Cure.

This project created a new partnership with KBOO Community Radio, something MediaRites plans to continue in future projects. KBOO provided a great deal of airtime and staff resources for this project, and it helped promote the town hall and workshops.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Because the Healing Arts Retreat was so successful in building strong bonds among participants, project organizers wished they had scheduled it at the beginning of the project.

Project partners underestimated the difficulty they would face in finding funding for a theatre presentation on breast cancer. Grant proposals were turned down repeatedly for being either too “health oriented” or too “artsy.” In the end, project organizers turned the original town hall meeting into a public affairs and performance event, which made it a rich experience but difficult to market. Broadcasting the event live was exciting, but many people chose to listen to it on the radio rather than attending.

**What’s ahead?**

MediaRites will produce a one-hour documentary on the Breast Cancer Radio Art Project, which will be available for distribution in March 2004, in celebration of Women’s History Month. MediaRites will hold a listening session for the women who participated in the workshops, most of whom are featured in interviews or dramatic readings of their work.

MediaRites will use this model for future projects such as Survivors for an Effective System and Restorative Justice through the Arts.
Miracle Theatre Group, Portland

Unveiled Spirits: The Shared Heritage of Latino Jews
For the past eighteen years, Miracle Theatre has brought the magic and color of Latino theatre to Northwest communities. It has provided a place for Hispanic cultural expression and enriched the local community with various outreach and educational programs. In the spring of 2003, Miracle Theatre introduced a new program designed to create ongoing community dialogues between Latinos and other cultural groups. Unveiled Spirits: The Shared Heritage of Latino Jews explored the shared cultural heritage of Hispanic and Jewish communities.

Unveiled Spirits began in late February with a series of lectures and panel discussions that touched upon different aspects of Latino-Jewish culture and history. These discussions, which were academic in nature, explored such diverse topics as the history of the Spanish Inquisition and the struggle of Crypto (or hidden) Jews in Latin America. Attendance was high at each discussion, with many people attending the entire series.

A subsequent exhibit of photographer Gloria Golden’s work helped illuminate the stories of the Crypto Jews and Conversos of New Mexico. Using oral history as well as photographs, Golden revealed that Judaism was not lost among the descendants of the Spanish Inquisition.

The main event of Unveiled Spirits was the production of Kathleen Alcala’s novel Spirits of the Ordinary, a work that focused on the history of Crypto Jews in Mexico. Seattle-based Alcala came to Portland to work with director/writer Olga Sanchez to create an original stage adaptation that ran three nights a week throughout the month of May. Over one thousand people attended these performances and lectures.

Post-show talkbacks provided audience members with an opportunity for open expression and exploration of cultural issues related to Jewish history in Latin America. Participants discussed the meaning of personal identity in a
multicultural setting, as well as the cultural, religious and political history of Jews in Latin America. Many attendees were excited to learn that Avdey Torah Hayah, the only Crypto-Jewish synagogue in the United States, is located in Portland. Others gained a new insight into the shared heritage of these two diverse groups.

**How did *Unveiled Spirits* build community?**
This project raised awareness of the bridges that exist between the Latino and Jewish communities of Portland. It strengthened the presence and visibility of several local synagogues, who reported increased attendance after the project.

This collaboration also developed partnerships between Miracle Theatre, the Mittleman Jewish Community Center, the Portland-Guadalajara Sister Cities Association and Portland State University’s Latino and Jewish Studies programs. *Unveiled Spirits* created community by synthesizing artistry and scholarship, historical materials and contemporary cultural experiences.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**
The process of adapting the novel to the stage was lengthy and involved, requiring a certain sensitivity that could not be rushed. Working with a novel in this capacity increased the time theatre staff needed to devote to the production as well. While project partners celebrate their ultimate achievement, they acknowledge that such a project is best approached with significant resources to ensure its success.

**What’s ahead?**
*Unveiled Spirits* successfully built bridges between Portland’s Latino and Jewish communities and provided a forum for community members to share their own stories. These discussions have continued since the project’s completion. In September 2003, members of the Latino community were invited to a meeting of the American Jewish Committee to continue dialogues sparked by this project.
Mosier Totem Project
The Mosier Totem Project began as the idea of a few local residents when an imposing Ponderosa Pine at the city’s entrance was struck by lightning and blown down. The tree was a local landmark and its loss was transformed into the idea to create a wooden totem pole as the focal point of the downtown area.

Project organizers commissioned Wasco County artist Jeff Stewart to create the totem pole out of a beautiful red Alaskan cedar that was four times as large as the original design. Stewart, with the help of AmeriCorps members and community volunteers, created a magnificent, twenty-nine foot sculpture that pays homage to Pacific Northwest Native American tradition of using a totemic figure to represent the essence of a community’s spirit. The Mosier totem pole depicts native animals such as sturgeon and osprey, and it creates an optical illusion of leaning away from the prevailing wind for which this region is famous.

The Mosier Totem Project has received overwhelming public support, with over ninety percent of surveyed residents approving of its presence and design. Installed in the area immediately adjacent to the Historical Columbia River Highway, it has become the focal point of town, school and Columbia River Gorge.

How did the Mosier Totem Project build community?
The Mosier Totem Project united several diverse organizations in the creation of a new community landmark. The cooperation of the Oregon Department of Transportation, the Historic Columbia River Highway and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department was integral to the project’s success. Other key partners included the Northwest Service Academy/AmeriCorps Program and the Union Pacific Railroad, who helped secure the land where the totem pole was installed.
The *Totem Project* has also benefited the recently formed Mosier Community School, by playing a key role in its fundraising efforts. The school has copyrighted the totem pole, so any depiction of the artwork will directly benefit this important part of the community. In addition, the Mosier Totem Plaza will be paved with bricks sold by the school’s fundraising committee.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**
Great art is controversial. Although response to the Totem has been overwhelmingly positive, it has created conversation throughout the town. It has also enhanced community pride by reflecting Mosier’s natural beauty and resources.

**What’s ahead?**
The Mosier totem pole will be joined by at least two other sculptural works, as well as a city services building which will house city offices, an interpretive center and an emergency clinic. This development will be financed primarily through a Federal Highway Administration grant, which has been approved and is currently awaiting appropriation.

The Plaza will feature a mortared stone entry wall that will incorporate thirty-five mosaic tiles made by fifth grade students at Mosier Community School. The tiles, designed with objects that the students have collected at the river, will represent the Columbia River and the local environment. Each student will be identified in the interpretive center and honored for his or her contribution.

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City of Newport

Whale Skeleton Sculpture

The Whale Skeleton Sculpture began as a series of community discussions prompted by Newport’s Vision and Action Plan, with a goal of using public art to heighten awareness of culture, history and ecology along the Oregon Coast. Project partners chose the Gray Whale as the subject of the sculpture because it is an important regional symbol with appeal to a wide population. The newly landscaped Nye Beach area of Newport was chosen as the sculpture site because of the opportunities it offers for multiple use and appreciation.

One of the primary goals of the project was to highlight Newport as a city committed to the arts, as outlined in its Community Visioning 2000. In addition, project partners sought to increase appreciation of regional identity and to expand and enhance tourism.

Upon receipt of a Challenge America Fast Track Grant in spring 2002, project organizers began fundraising in earnest. Grants were submitted to the Oregon Arts Commission and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and donations were solicited from members of the community. These funds were used to hire Lon Brusselback, an artist experienced in large-scale public sculpture, whose pieces reside in Portland, Seattle and the Midwest.

The entire project process went smoothly, despite some disappoints in fundraising which forced the artist to switch from a bronze foundry method to a process that used alternative materials, including a stainless steel foundation. The substitution did not in any way sacrifice the original concept or the quality of the work.

The sculpture now resides at the Don Davis Park, an easily accessible oceanfront park that attracts people of all walks of life. Thousands of people annually will have the opportunity to view the sculpture and interpretive messages. Many populations will be served through activities and programs featuring whale watching, history tours and storytelling.
How did the Whale Skeleton Sculpture build community?

This sculpture created a community of partners, as project organizers worked closely with funders and design partners to make the vision a reality. These strong relationships helped create a process that went quite smoothly and was, in the end, highly successful.

The sculpture itself provides a focal point for residents and visitors who find their way to the site. Public response to the artwork has been very enthusiastic.

What did the partners learn from the project?

Project partners learned that it’s important in a project of this scope to keep the faith and believe that all the pieces will come together in the end. Communication is essential when working with so many different groups and individuals.

What’s ahead?

A formal dedication will be held soon, and there are plans for additional programs including Oregon Parks and Recreation’s Whale Watching Spoken Here and the Stories by the Sea storytelling festival. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz also plan to hold ceremonies at the sculpture.

In addition, the sculpture may become the catalyst for better maintenance of the park, which over the years has fallen into disrepair. The committee for the maintenance of the nearby Vietnam Veterans Memorial is including the sculpture in a grant application for improvements at the park. More projects may result from this sculpture as artists in the community feel encouraged to propose other public art pieces.
City of Oakridge

Oakridge Amphitheatre Project
The city of Oakridge, once a timber mill town, is a small community in the process of reinventing itself as the “Center of Oregon Recreation.” The Oakridge City Council’s economic development goals call for creating more events and activities for residents and visitors alike, as part of this new image. One of the main challenges the community faces is a lack of facilities for performing arts, interpretive presentations and educational activities. With this in mind, Oakridge City Council and partners proposed to create an amphitheatre in Greenwaters Park, which sits adjacent to the Willamette River amid large fir trees.

The City Public Works Department agreed to construct the facility, with funds from the Arts Build Community Grant earmarked for materials. Public Works employees began shaping the landscape in 2003, with foundation work set to begin in the fall of 2004. The finished facility will seat between fifty and one hundred people, with room for future expansion.

Many community organizations are already waiting to reserve the amphitheatre once it is completed. Locally based Zero Clearance Theatre Company is interested in performing in an outdoor setting, as are the school district’s drama and music departments. The United States Forest Service plans to present educational and interpretive programs at the amphitheatre for residents and tourists.

How did the Oakridge Amphitheatre Project build community?
Project partners held several design meetings with the architect and potential user groups to make sure the amphitheatre would meet the needs of all intended users. This process was extremely interesting, and helped ensure a structure that will work for the entire community. The Oakridge community is very excited about this new facility.
This project has brought together a number of organizations and people for a common community cause. Project partners include the Oregon Arts Commission, the Forest Service, Lane Electric Cooperative, Oregon Parks and Recreation, the Lane Arts Commission and the Zero Clearance Theatre Company.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**
Partners learned the importance of bringing all potential facility users together early and often, so that their input could be part of the project design. Valuable time was lost in this project because groups submitted their ideas and needs piecemeal, instead of having a facilitator meet with all the groups in an organized design session. Otherwise, the process has gone very smoothly.

**What's ahead?**
Foundation work will begin this fall, with an anticipated completion date of Summer, 2004. Groups are lining up to reserve the amphitheatre once it is finished.
Oregon Festival of American Music, Eugene

Creando Puentes

*Creando Puentes* began as a research project to learn more about the cultural needs and interests of Lane County’s Hispanic population, as well as the barriers which prevent Latinos from attending mainstream cultural events. A collaboration with the Centro Latino Americano, this project sought to develop a long-term relationship between local Latinos, the Oregon Festival of American Music and The Shedd, Eugene’s new performance and educational facility.

In Phase One of this project, Cuban American Singer/songwriter Jessie Marquez conducted interviews with seven Hispanic focus groups comprised of church families, school families and one teen youth group. Using an open-ended interview style, Marquez asked each group to identify existing cultural opportunities in their community and to suggest possibilities for future activities. He also asked participants to identify barriers to participation in cultural events.

Families expressed a strong desire for formal music lessons for their children, with an emphasis on learning to read music. They also revealed that they made little use of the city bus system, unless absolutely necessary, and that they tend to learn about cultural events primarily through word of mouth. An interesting list of Hispanic artists and musical styles, which could be used for a performance series, emerged as a result of these interviews.

Using insights gained from these interviews, the Oregon Festival of American Music initiated several “ripple effect” activities in an effort to bring more Hispanic participants to their classes and performances. These included translating class and summer camp information into Spanish; dedicating a phone line for Spanish speakers to leave messages and questions if no bilingual staff was available to help them; and developing new classes to respond to the identified needs and interests. Festival staff also made presentations at Latino Family Night meetings in various neighborhoods and they recruited Latino faculty and board members to help with outreach efforts.
One of the most exciting results of this phase of Creando Puentes was the addition of several Latino classes to the American Music Institute’s schedule. Topics included Latino guitar, Rhythm and Musicality, Salsa and Baile Latino. Six or seven students, both boys and girls, enrolled in each class.

How did Creando Puentes build community?
Building relationships with the Hispanic community is a slow, one-on-one process and student recruitment is extremely time-consuming and labor-intensive. Still, the Festival’s efforts in translating materials and recruiting new Board members and faculty did pay off, as the number of Hispanic students enrolled in Festival classes increased from one to eight. Equally as significant, the first two students to sign up for the Baile Latino classes were two Anglo girls who were attending the Spanish immersion school and wanted a bilingual class.

Festival staff also formed a valuable partnership with La Casa de la Cultura, a new Hispanic organization committed to providing cultural services to Spanish-speaking families. Their founder, Argentinean recording artist Irene Ferrara, has agreed to join the Festival’s advisory board.

What did the partners learn from the project?
The focus groups were invaluable learning forums and the Festival hopes to conduct more in the future. Data gained from the meetings helped staff design programs and recruitment strategies to best serve the community. One tangible result of the forums is a new musical series, Now Hear This, that will include Latino artists such as Los Tigres del Norte and Pedro Fernandez.

What’s ahead?
Festival staff, with the help of Marquez, will continue to host forum groups as new questions arise, possibly through increased Advisory Board activities. Services such as translated program material and the Spanish phone line will be continued, and ties with both Centro Latino and La Casa de la Cultura will be strengthened. Staff will explore additional ways of advertising programs to the Hispanic community, and they will work with El Norte to help publicize events. Creando Puentes activities will serve as the model for outreach to other Lane County minority populations, notably the African American and Korean communities with whom the Festival of American Music has had good initial connections.
Project Adelante (Central School District Independence) and Rainbow Dance Theater, Monmouth

The Rainbow Project
The Rainbow Project, a yearlong collaboration between Project Adelante and the Rainbow Dance Theatre, provided after-school dance classes and evening performances for youth in Monmouth and Independence public schools. Over 490 youth participated in these workshops, which ranged from hip hop to West African dancing and drumming; equally large numbers attended the Rainbow Dance Theatre’s evening performances called *Roots of Hip Hop*. The project culminated with a concert production of *The Camouflage Trilogy*, with local dance troupe Danza Azteca as special guest performers.

While serving the Monmouth/Independence community as a whole, the Rainbow Project targeted at-risk youth and teens, many of whom were Latino, through after-school dance classes. Its primary goals were to facilitate interaction between ethnically diverse populations in Monmouth and Independence, and to engage local at-risk youth in positive activities after school. All classes were well attended and there was a demand for even more classes after the Rainbow Dance Theatre’s performance.

Four Family Night performances of Rainbow Dance Theatre’s *Roots of Hip Hop* drew over three hundred children and parents, many of whom had never seen a professional dance performance. These performances sparked interest in the after-school dance classes and built excitement for the upcoming *The Camouflage Trilogy*. All performances were offered free of charge to the public.

The world premiere of the Rainbow Dance Theatre’s *The Camouflage Trilogy* was held in October at Western Oregon University’s Rice Auditorium. The show, which featured the Company’s athletic dance style and gravity-defying aerial choreography, explored the idea of camouflage through three acts involving everything from bag lady puppets to computer games brought to life. Company dancers were joined by members of the Latino dance group, Danza Azteca, in a combination of martial arts, hip-hop, West African and modern dance styles.
Low-income families received subsidized tickets, as well as transportation, to the performance. This resulted in more a diverse audience than is normally seen in Rice Auditorium, with almost one-fifth of attendees identifying themselves as non-Caucasian (compared to an average three percent for most theatrical events). Eighty-seven percent of those attending said they would strongly desire to see a similar dance performance.

How did The Rainbow Project build community?
For many lower-income families, the arts can seem like an unaffordable luxury. This project, however, brought the arts into these communities and made them accessible through free presentations and workshops. It gave many local residents their first encounter with the performing arts, and the interactive nature of the classes and performances encouraged future arts exploration.

The performance of The Camouflage Trilogy brought diverse people together in a unique, cultural setting, allowing people from the local Monmouth/Independence community to mix with the University community. Many of these people had never been to a college campus and most expressed a strong desire to return.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Administration of this project took more time and resources than anyone anticipated. In the future, project partners will budget more staff time and money for trouble shooting, scheduling, marketing and debriefing the project.

Eighty complimentary coupons were distributed by lottery at Family Nights; these coupons could be redeemed at the box office prior to the show. This worked well, because unredeemed tickets were released for sale fifteen minutes before the performance. Another 120 tickets were given away to low-income families in Monmouth/Independence. This system worked less well; many of the tickets were not utilized, resulting in 50–70 empty seats in what would have been a sold-out show.

What’s ahead?
Although funding to continue work with area at-risk youth will end in June 2004, local organizations have expressed interest in sponsoring some of these programs. Rainbow Dance Theatre is researching facilities that might house a community dance studio and performance space that could be used by area youth and their families.

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Port Orford Arts Council, Port Orford

Arts Unite Us
Nestled between the Coast Mountain Range and the Pacific Ocean in remote southern Oregon, North Curry County is a geographically isolated corridor characterized by high unemployment and poverty. With the notable exception of the music program, no art is taught in the public schools and there are few cultural opportunities for local children. For these reasons Port Orford’s summer arts program, known as Arts Unite Us, has become increasingly popular, with classes filled past capacity and a community demand for more offerings.

In July and August 2004, Arts Unite Us organized ten days of visual, audio and kinesthetic arts classes for children and adults in North Curry County. Offered free of charge, Arts Unite Us strove to increase arts appreciation and to build community pride in the region’s artistic heritage. Seventy-two youth benefited from involvement in healthy, supportive arts activities that celebrated their creativity and that of their community.

Arts Unite Us classes included everything from yurt building to casting in bronze. Children learned the art of clown make-up and performance, and they visited several galleries on a guided art walk. Artists helped students create clay lanterns, scrapbooks and decorative birdhouses, and children learned to build their own kites which they then entered in a community kite-flying contest.

Adults too had an opportunity to express themselves and expand their creative skills in workshops as diverse as creative writing, pastel painting and book making. Arts Unite Us culminated in an afternoon arts gala, complete with student exhibitions and performances.

How did Arts Unite Us build community?
This project brought arts instructors from around the region into the North Curry County to work with local children and adults. New partnerships were formed and
existing partnerships were deepened. Nesika Bronze, a local foundry, joined the project by offering bronze casting workshops for teens and adults. This helped expand the project to neighboring Gold Beach. Nesika Bronze plans to offer additional classes throughout the year and to expand their class size next summer.

Teen mentors gained a sense of purpose through their experiences assisting with the workshops. When the instructor for the yurt-building class became ill, the teenagers took over the supervision of youth participants and directed the construction of a felted yurt! All students appreciated the caring attention from arts instructors during times when they otherwise might have received little supervision or stimulus.

**What did the partners learn from the project?**

Because many adult participants were turned away due to filled classes, partners hope to expand next summer’s camp to three weeks. This longer time frame will allow for more classes and more than one session of each class. They also plan to have a two-day interactive registration, where participants can meet and talk to instructors about the courses they are offering.

Community members, who gave over 655 volunteer and participant hours, were vocal in their praise for *Arts Unite*. The Port Orford Arts Council is grateful for the Arts Build Communities funds, which made this incredible summer program possible.

**What’s ahead?**

The Port Orford Arts Council will continue this project, expanding it to three weeks in 2004. They will use resources developed through the sale of children’s art cards and through the Chair-A-Tea fundraiser to fund the additional week. The success of this program has inspired interest in year-round adult art classes and partnerships with the local schools.
Portland Community College Foundation, Portland

The Cascade Festival of African Films
The thirteenth annual Cascade Festival of African Films premiered at Portland Community College in February and March 2003. By providing a venue for rarely screened African films, the Festival brought together diverse people from all walks of life. It also served as a forum for the exchange of ideas about a variety of topics related to life in Africa. Because it is one of the few film festivals in the nation devoted solely to African cinema, it has earned a reputation among African filmmakers and scholars for its excellence and seriousness of purpose. Over three thousand people attended the 2003 Festival.

Films, which came from all corners of the African continent, as well as the African Diaspora, were chosen for their cinematic quality and their ability to captivate and move audiences. The Festival committee did an excellent job of selecting a compelling mix of historical, contemporary, documentary and dramatic films. While acknowledging that no one festival could represent the whole of Africa, the selection committee did try to represent a wide range of countries, cultures, views and issues. Topics ranged from the transatlantic slave trade to the HIV/AIDS epidemic to religious fundamentalism; two animated films took the audience into fictive worlds within Burkina Faso and the Congo.

One highlight of the Festival occurred following Ethiopian director Haile Gerima’s film *Adwa*. This film chronicles the 1896 epic battle of Adwa, in which an army of Ethiopian men and women defeated an invading Italian army against almost impossible odds. Through a series of interviews, oral histories and documentary photographs and artwork, *Adwa* explores long-standing myths of colonialism, while celebrating oral traditions. Following the screening, Gerima conducted an audience discussion that lasted ninety minutes and addressed the complex relationship between Africans and African-Americans. The memorable evening was capped when an Ethiopian man rose and recited a praise poem that he had just created for Gerima.
How did the *Cascade Festival of African Films* build community?

Festival audiences included African-Americans, African expatriates, Caucasians, children, retirees, returned Peace Corps volunteers and academics from a number of local institutions. Post-screening discussions were lively and insightful, and a number of new relationships were formed over the five weeks of the festival.

Haile Gerima’s presence drew a large number of Ethiopian immigrants to the Festival, many for the first time. Over four hundred people attended the screening of *Adwa*, and an additional two hundred came for a reception hosted by the Ethiopian community.

The screening of *Middle Passage*, a beautiful yet harrowing film about the transatlantic slave trade, brought up some very difficult issues. Thanks to the excellent facilitation of Dr. Daryl Millner from Portland State University, the audience was able to honestly discuss the film’s power as well as its shortcomings, and to explore the complex issue of reparations for slavery. It was a powerful evening of community building for those who attended.

What did the partners learn from the project?

The strength of this project lies in the unique mix of volunteer leaders, whose passion for African cinema and culture has sustained the Festival for thirteen years. These individuals have continued to bring together a unique mix of artists, scholars and community members in exploration of African art and realities. Pride in their accomplishment continues to fuel these individuals and to attract new volunteers to the project; the current volunteer leadership team numbers nearly thirty.

Still, project partners recognize the need to evolve as an organization and to move toward self-sustainability. The Festival committee continues to adapt and plan for the future.

What’s ahead?

The Festival is a solid part of Portland’s arts and cultural scene, despite its entirely volunteer nature. The Festival Committee is currently working to institutionalize its structure, policies and procedures, and to perfect its web site as a resource for anyone interested in African film and culture.

The Festival has begun a partnership with Portland State University’s Black Studies program, which has just earned the ability to confer Oregon’s first degree in that field. The Committee plans to use partnerships with this university and others to engage the community in on-going experiences with African-based culture and art.
Portland Taiko

ArtExplosion Collaborations
Building on the success of ArtExplosion 2001, Portland Taiko teamed up with Vietnamese dancer and choreographer Minh Tran to stage ArtExplosion Collaborations: A Showcase of Asian Pacific American Performers. Two sold-out performances in June 2003 celebrated ten of the region’s top Asian American artists in dance, theatre and music. The shows reflected the artistry of many heritages from a wide range of genres and backgrounds.

Work on ArtExplosion Collaborations really began two years earlier, through relationships formed during the first ArtExplosion. Several artists who met at that time continued to collaborate on three works that debuted at this year’s event. Minh Tran teamed up with Iranian musician Dariush Dolat-shahi to create a stunning Persian lute and dance piece. Japanese American dancer Chisao Hata and Chinese American jazz vocalist produced Iowa, Idaho, a reflection on their childhoods as Asian Americans in rural America. Finally, Portland Taiko worked with Lawson Inada, a Japanese American poet, to restage an earlier piece inspired by the experiences of early Japanese Americans in Oregon.

Prior to the two performances, an open rehearsal gave community members an opportunity to learn more about each artist’s work and the developing collaborations. Attendees experienced the dialogues and exchanges that helped shape Minh and Dariush’s piece, and they learned that Sahomi’s piece was to be performed exactly as it had been in Japan in 1753.

As in 2001, ArtExplosion Collaborations had broad community support from over twenty local Asian American organizations. The event strengthened ties between the artists and helped them explore new ways of working together. The two performances provided critical exposure for emerging artists, and it increased the visibility and value of Asian American arts in the community.

“What we have, what we’ve learned, what we do as artists is a mixture, rooted in our Asian soil but expressed as American experience.”
—Tinh, Vietnamese acoustic guitarist and storyteller
How did *ArtExplosion Collaborations* build community?

This project strengthened and developed the loose network of Asian American performers in this region. It connected the audience to the artists and brought diverse Asian Americans together across many historical and cultural divides.

Early in the process, project partners reached out to local Asian American organizations who helped promote the event to their constituencies through mailings, posters and newsletters. Each organization sold a minimum of twenty tickets at greatly reduced prices, and all partners were given a table at the concerts where they could share information about their organization with a broader audience. The community partner concept was key to building audience numbers, diversity and support.

What did the partners learn from the project?

Both performances ran smoothly and were well received. Nevertheless, Portland Taiko learned that, as curators, they needed to take a clearer, more directive role in future productions. Artistic and technical directors could have rectified errors and made the overall appearance of the program more consistent and professional.

Project partners also learned that educating the media is a slow process. Although the performance received unprecedented in-depth coverage, the general public remained surprised that these performers are local and regional treasures.

What’s ahead?

This performance, which has become an important event for the Asian American community, is tremendous work for Portland Taiko. Curating and presenting other artists presents financial and staffing challenges to the organization. Still, Portland Taiko would like to see this event and the relationships it has nurtured continue to grow. Project partners are interested in presenting this event again in two years, if grant and community support permits.
Powers Action Team

Spirit of the Siskiyous: Tales of Tradition

The seeds for this project were planted in June 2002, when the Powers Action Team contracted with folklorist Eliza Buck to help develop a cultural asset inventory for the Powers community. Members of the team were amazed at the number of artists, artisans and community elders residing in Powers, and they arranged for Buck to return to demonstrate interviewing techniques for gathering stories of local history and traditions. The following year the Powers Community Learning Partnership, a project of the Powers School District, applied for and received Arts Build Communities funds to continue gathering information about the logging history of this community.

Buck returned to provide interview techniques training to six community members, three 4-H students and one leader. Following the training, they videotaped an interview with a current logger with Buck present to provide assistance, feedback and suggestions for future interviews.

She also helped volunteers learn how to handle and sort the various audio and videotapes, as well as supporting historical documents: pictures, diaries and other written records. The entire training was videotaped so that people who were not able to attend could still participate in the project.

Altogether, eight elders were interviewed about their role in Power’s logging history. Volunteers videotaped and made a log of each interview, a process that was time-consuming but very helpful in the editing process. Volunteers are working to edit the somewhat lengthy interviews into five-minute videos that will introduce residents and visitors to the history of the area.

Elma Frye, Powers elder whose stories were gathered by community volunteers. (Photo courtesy of Eliza Buck.)
How did Spirit of the Siskiyous build community?
This project helped the Powers community realize the importance of documenting its unique history. It drew new volunteers to the Action Team and sparked interest in community elders and the stories they have to offer. There has been an increased level of communication between the interviewers and subjects, building a stronger sense of community between longtime residents and newcomers.

As part of this project, historic photographs have been copied and collaged onto a wall at the Timberline Lodge, creating a pictorial history for residents and visitors. Once the interviews have been edited, they will be shown at the Pioneer House, a local museum in the heart of town.

What did the partners learn from the project?
There is significant interest in gathering local history, and the interviews were a meaningful experience for both interviewer and subject. Partners discovered that many people tend to downplay the importance of their story and may need to be reminded that these “common” stories are exactly what the project is seeking.

Subjects need to be informed beforehand that they will be videotaped, and interviewers should anticipate some amount of nervousness over the microphone and video camera. When the interviewers admitted to being nervous themselves, everyone felt more at ease.

Finally, project partners would strongly recommend having a folklorist on-site to provide training, guidance and assistance. Buck helped volunteers gain confidence in their interviewing ability, and she helped develop appropriate and effective questions. Volunteers also appreciated having assistance with the equipment and the editing phase.

What’s ahead?
Project partners plan to continue interviewing in the fall when school resumes. Future story ideas may include the annual scrap metal drive, “Ol’ Swede Stories,” wisdom from community elders and women’s role in logging. They also hope to plan a series of Story Swaps for Sunday afternoons. Finally, project volunteers are working with local teachers and 4-H leaders to incorporate interviewing techniques into their classes and programs.
Wisdom of the Elders, Incorporated, Portland

Folk Art and Wisdom Project
Wisdom of the Elders is a Native American non-profit organization dedicated to recording and preserving the traditional cultural values, oral history and folk art of indigenous elders in tribes throughout Oregon and the Northwest. As part of its mission to reconcile differences between Indians and non-Indians, Wisdom of the Elders strives to share these teachings with diverse audiences through a variety of venues including publications, documentaries, public gatherings and the media.

In 2003, with the help of the Oregon Arts Commission, Oregon Public Broadcasting and the Oregon Historical Society, Wisdom of the Elders interviewed nineteen elders respected for their roles as oral historians, storytellers and artists. These individuals, who came from the Umatilla, Warm Springs and Grande Ronde reservations, gave new insights into their tribes’ history, cultural and arts. Wisdom of the Elders followed protocol with tribal councils to identify the most appropriate subjects for these interviews. The organization also consulted with the Oregon Historical Society and other oral history experts to insure a quality process and product.

Oregon Public Broadcasting helped complete broadcast-quality digital audio recordings of the interviews, as well as ambient sound from tribal museums and the natural environment. These recordings will be used to produce radio programs about Native Nations along the Lewis and Clark Trail, as part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. They will be aired on Indian radio stations and on National Public Radio. Compact discs were also produced and distributed to the tribes, individual elders, Title VII Indian Education and the Oregon Arts Commission.

Although the budget was inadequate to complete curriculum materials as planned, several educators (Native and Non-Native) are meeting monthly to develop study guides and glossaries for elementary and secondary students. These educational materials should be available through the organization’s web site by 2005 when the series airs.
How did the *Folk Art and Wisdom Project* build community?
Information about the tribes’ culture and people has been misused in the past; as a result, many tribal leaders initially had mixed reactions to the project. Despite being a Native organization with a Native American Board of Directors, Wisdom of the Elders had to prove their credibility over time by responding consistently and respectfully to a number of questions and concerns. Most tribes did not want to participate in anything commemorating the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, although they gradually came to see the recordings as an opportunity for healing and for educating a larger audience on their history and culture.

Tribal artists shared the philosophy and tradition behind their art and medium. Through this process project partners and interviewees came to trust one another and to look forward to working together on other recording projects.

What did the partners learn from the project?
The process was very lengthy and required a lot of patience and perseverance, but in the end strong bonds were formed between Wisdom of the Elders and the three reservations, all of whom now believe that the recordings honor their elders and storytellers.

In future projects of this nature, partners would devote additional time to the communication process, allowing for more face-to-face meetings with tribal elders and councils. They would also increase the honorariums paid to the elders for the valuable time and information they shared. Finally, partners recommend finding a tribal liaison who can openly communicate objectives and benefits to the tribes, while listening and communicating the tribes’ perspectives to the organization.

What’s ahead?
A radio series featuring Native nations along the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Trail will be produced and aired in 2005. It will help to broaden Oregonians’ awareness and appreciation of previously inaccessible Native American elders, artists and storytellers. Curriculum materials will be offered via the Wisdom of the Elders’ web site at that time.

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Write Around Portland

Creative Writing Workshops
For the past four years Write Around Portland has been offering creative writing workshops to low-income Portland residents as a way to bring them out of isolation, enhance their self-esteem and build community. This empowerment through self-expression has increased the writers’ sense of connection to their community, and it has frequently inspired them to pursue abandoned goals such as school or meaningful work. Since 1999, Write Around Portland has served over five hundred people and produced eleven anthologies of participant work.

In 2003, Write Around Portland held ten ten-week writing workshops and three five-week drop-in workshops, serving 110 low-income and socially-isolated Portland residents. Write Around Portland also published and marketed 350 copies of its Spring 2003 anthology, and brought 150 people to public readings of participants’ work. Participants included adults struggling with mental illness, seniors living in public housing, men and women recovering from addictions, at-risk youth, inmates and refugees from Africa and Bosnia.

Nine local agencies helped identify and recruit participants and provide space for the weekly workshops. During spring 2003 these partners included CODA Alpha Family Treatment Center, New Mezz, a program of Cascadia Behavioral Health Care, REACH Community Development Corporation, Youth Employment Institute, William Temple House, Immigrant Refugee Community Organization, p:ear (program: education, art and recreation) and two correctional facilities. This project would not have been possible without the help of these organizations.

The spring 2003 network culminated in a public reading attended by 150 people at the First Congregational Church in downtown Portland. Readings were also held at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility and the Multnomah County Correctional Facility. Many participants did not believe they could read in front of a large
crowd, but the voices of their friends gave them the courage to make their way to the podium. Participants brought large contingents of family and friends, and at times the supportive cheering sounded more like a football game than a literary event. No one listening could resist the spirit of celebration and empowerment.

How did the Write Around Portland Workshops build community?
The experience of coming together to write about a shared experience, be it mental illness, poverty or drug addiction creates strong community and restores dignity. When workshop participants take this one step further and share their writings through the anthologies and public readings, they put a face and a voice to their experiences and thereby create awareness in the larger community.

What did the partners learn from the project?
Long-term partnerships help create sustainable workshops run by and for participants. In 1999, when Write Around Portland first visited Hollywood East, a Housing Authority apartment complex in Northeast Portland, there were few opportunities for positive interaction among tenants. Jul Karp, a Hollywood East resident, was so captivated by her first workshop that she continued in the writing and community building process. Today, Jul is a workshop facilitator, committed to bringing people in her community together through writing.

At the same time, new partners are critical to the goal of reaching new populations and writers. During 2003, Write Around Portland developed four partnerships around a new model of five-week, drop-in workshops for individuals whose lives are in transition. These workshops offer one-time attendees the experience of writing creatively and expressively in a safe, supportive environment.

What’s ahead?
Write Around Portland will continue to sponsor ten-week writing workshops in the spring and fall and five-week workshops during the summer. It will also continue to publish anthologies and host participant readings. By maintaining and creating partnerships with a wide range of organizations, Write Around Portland plans to expand its programs and reach new and diverse populations. These programs are sustained by generous support from the Meyer Memorial Trust, the PGE Foundation, the Ben and Jerry’s Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation and various individual donors.
Artist Lon Brusselback installing Whale Skeleton Sculpture in Newport’s Don Davis Park. The sculpture symbolizes the culture, history and ecology of the Oregon Coast.