In Oregon, Artists and Arts Groups Weave a Fabric Called Community

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In 2006, the tenth year of the Arts Build Communities program, the Oregon Arts Commission, with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, awarded $96,400 to 22 projects across the length and breadth of our state.

Altogether, those projects served more than a million people either directly or indirectly – a good number of whom live in remote or underserved communities.

The grants recognize the expanding role that arts organizations play in the broader cultural, social, educational, and economic areas of our lives. Cynthia Addams, Chair of the Arts Commission, said that these projects “connect the arts with issues facing Oregonians: at-risk youth, downtown revitalization, facility development, and community building. These projects speak to the vitality of the arts in community life.”

Their voice, moreover, is clear, creative, and disciplined. Successful arts and community development projects reflect local partnerships, local impact, and careful project management. They merge the imaginative power, team-building energy, and problem-solving nature of arts and artists with community goals.

The ABC projects described here reflect a cross-section of geography, discipline, and approach. While each project is distinct and individual, you’ll discover common indicators that show how these efforts succeeded, and why they caught the attention of the reviewers.

It’s important to remember that these grants reflect just a small portion of the resources required to make these projects work. ABC awards ranged from $2,000 to $7,000, but what they lack in heft, they make up in validation and leverage power.

In 2006, the $96,400 granted by the Arts Commission was matched by more than $375,000 in revenues from other sources, most of them local. Another $150,000-plus was contributed in in-kind support, usually by companies and individuals in the neighborhood. Hundreds of Oregonians in communities across the state volunteered their time, muscle, and expertise.

Those volunteers, the funders, the community groups, and of course the artists, show us, through their ingenuity, energy, and generosity, the true face and character of Oregon. They demonstrate, once again, how the arts and culture serve as touchstones of community and civic livability, essential ingredients in our quality of life.

– Christine D’Arcy
Executive Director

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In a County Underserved by Arts Centers, Volunteers Have Been Building Community and Putting It on Stage for a Quarter Century

One aspect of living in a small city far removed from major metropolitan centers is that if you want art in your life, you very often have to make it yourself. This is an extremely fine thing - first, because the process can be enjoyable and fulfilling for participants and audiences alike. Second, few activities are better at building community than getting several dozen friends and neighbors together to put on a show.

Douglas County is not exactly off Oregon’s beaten track. It rests squarely on the I-5 spine, and is justly famous for natural splendor, history, and world-class fly fishing. But Roseburg is a small city in a large county with one of the highest unemployment rates in the state. The cultural riches of Eugene, Portland, and Ashland lie many hours and many dollars down the road.

Just minutes away, however, is the campus of Umpqua Community College. The county’s sole institution of higher learning, it’s also a cultural and recreational magnet that hosts events by a wide variety of local organizations and an active Fine and Performing Arts Department.

UCC students produce four theatre productions a year, more than 100 music performances, and continuous displays of visual art. But the cultural centerpiece is the summer musical. For the past quarter century, a wide cross-section of the community has joined together to create a work of art. “It’s quite common,” said Jason Heald, Music Director and Chair of the Fine and Performing Arts Department, “for an entire family to be involved in the summer musical as a summer project."

Participants come from a broad swath of Douglas County. All are unpaid volunteers who get involved for their own enrichment. This fits the UCC philosophy that “people of all ages benefit from personal growth, that continuing educational experiences contribute to individual development and competency, and that such development contributes to community growth and to the improvement of community and society.”

Through the musical, several thousand residents get to see a first-rate play at affordable prices. Equally important a hundred-plus others can share in the satisfaction of making theatrical magic, while developing skills in acting, singing, dancing, stagecraft, self-esteem, and team-building. State and federal spending cuts have left many Oregon schools without drama or music programs; in Douglas County, the summer musical helps fill that gap, providing valuable instruction in the performing arts for those who have little means of exposure to those disciplines.

Taking on the Beast

The 2006 summer musical featured “a tale as old as time” – Disney’s popular take on Beauty and the Beast. The Roseburg version had challenging roles for 60 actor-singer-dancers and 18 musicians. Another hundred-plus volunteers worked behind the scenes. They all spent two months putting the show together, then put it on stage before an audience of 7,000 in eight public performances.

“The new standard to beat,” wrote Richard Packham in his review for the Roseburg News Review. “Merely seeing how a cast of 60 can be coordinated into a unified team is an awesome experience.”

Perhaps the best notices came from the participants themselves, who marveled at the things they learned, the friendships they made, and the exhilaration of performing before large and appreciative houses. Each year, UCC surveys cast, crew, volunteers, and audience members. One participant summed up the value of the experience this way:

“It strengthens the creative and artistic talent of people. It teaches us responsibility and group cooperation. It gives us the understanding of how a big project is pulled together and made into a success. It creates fun and recreation for the families of this community.”

And that, when you come to consider the importance of art, is another tale as old as time.

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**Project**

Summer Musical: *Beauty and the Beast*

**Organization**

Umpqua Community College; www.umpqua.edu

**Principal Partners**


**Why It Worked**

Success based on long experience; strong organizational capacity; high quality product; broad community involvement and access; media partners helped with publicity; well designed evaluation criteria and tools.
We are surrounded by art, if only we will see it. To help us, we call on the painter, the writer, the photographer to observe the commonplace and turn it into something special. Something that “speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives,” as the novelist Joseph Conrad wrote.

They perform this alchemy by paying attention to details others miss: of shape, color, function, relationship, and meaning. “It’s just how you look at it,” said Kelly James, a Salem photographer.

A dozen years ago, James had the idea for a photo exhibit that would encourage people to look at the world around them with fresh eyes and new appreciation. In 2006, The Details Show came to life as a collaboration between James, the Salem Art Association (SAA), and the Mary Lou Zeek Gallery in downtown Salem.

The centerpiece was a display of forty images of Salem architectural details, framed and cropped to capture their inherent beauty, grace, and abstract mystery. These were not art objects, but icons of everyday life: the swoop of a roofline, the curved slats of a bench, a steeple contrasted against sky, neon reflected on a damp street.

Typically, gallery-goers are observers; in this case, they were made participants as well. A Details Art Walk brochure was created to lead visitors on an interactive treasure hunt to track down the sources of the photographs.

What building has a roof like that? Where have I seen that graceful bench? I never noticed the carving on that façade before. What other undiscovered art lies just beyond my nose?

In the process, the seekers were inspired to slow down, look around, and contemplate Salem’s history, architecture, and beauty. Which fit perfectly with the mission of the Salem Art Association to “strengthen the fabric of the community through cultural development and joyful exploration of the arts.” To that end, the Details project was structured to engage a wide spectrum of the Salem community.

In concert with the exhibit of his own works at the Zeek Gallery, James conducted a two-day photography workshop with high school students. Under his guidance, the students sought out and captured their own details, which were then mounted as an exhibit at the Salem Art Association. The Details brochure, as luck (and good planning) would have it, cleverly led people from the James exhibit through downtown and ended at the student exhibit at the SAA galleries.

The business community joined in, along with dozens of ordinary citizens, who used disposable cameras to capture their own special details and places. The images were exhibited at shops and galleries throughout downtown.

Willamette University even integrated the show into its Oregon Writing Project for teachers. With the art walk brochure as a guide, students used the documented details as inspiration for short stories and poems, which were then published in booklet form.

The Details Show was so popular at the gallery during May, it was moved to the main concourse of the Salem Conference Center, where it ran for another two
South Salem High School students look through view finders at the architecture of the Ladd & Bush Bank in downtown Salem during The Details Show at the Mary Lou Zeek Gallery.

months in the fall. The Art Association’s rough count of participants was 3,500 people, “but we believe that the figure could easily be multiplied by five,” said executive director Don Drake.

Beyond helping people become better acquainted with their city, The Details Show strengthened the community by forging connections between artist-photographers, residents, and the downtown business core. “My whole focus with this show is to get people to see Salem for what it’s about,” gallery owner Zeek told the Statesman Journal newspaper. “There’s a lot to see.”

**PROJECT**
The Details Show

**ORGANIZATION**
Salem Art Association; www.salemart.org

**PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**
Mary Lou Zeek Gallery, Salem Downtown Association, Photographer Kelly James, Portland General Electric and Salem Electric, Salem Convention Center.

**WHY IT WORKED**
Strong organizational capacity behind the project; involvement of business community and other partners; accessible to a wide range of ages and ability levels; creative approach to involving community (disposable cameras); educational element; helped build civic engagement and pride; involvement of skilled local artist.
Oregon Coast Council for the Arts / Remembering Superman on the Beach

A Beach Community Celebrates the Arts – and a Composer Who Found Solace and Inspiration in Nature’s University

The first time she saw him, Peggy Raridan was a young girl and he was an imposing figure in a cloak striding along Agate Beach. “Are you Superman?” she asked. “Oh, no,” he replied. “I’m somebody much more important than that.”

He was Ernest Bloch, one of the twentieth century’s most noted composers and a man who needed no super powers beyond musical gifts, passion, and a strong sense of community to help make the world a better place.

In 2006, the Oregon Coast Council for the Arts joined with community partners on an Ernest Bloch Retrospective that would foster a greater appreciation for the composer’s life and times, while furthering Newport’s vision “to be recognized as a city of the arts.”

A concise booklet on Bloch’s life was created as part of the retrospective, and a videographer was hired to capture memories of the composer and develop presentations to strengthen arts and education in the community. In one video, Ernest Bloch II takes viewers on a tour of the house above the beach and roiling sea that offered such inspiration to his grandfather.

Bloch discovered Agate Beach in 1941 while driving the coastal route from Portland to a teaching post at UC Berkeley. Faced with a flooded road, he was forced to stop and spend the night. He was still there two days later, though the road had cleared. Soon he had bought the house overlooking Agate Beach – the only one he was ever to own – and it became his home for the last 18 years of his life. His wife, Marguerite, continued to live there until her death in 1963.

Bloch died in 1959. His music lives on, of course, but the significance of his time in Newport has faded with the years and the memories of those who knew him as a neighbor. His legacy is one well worth remembering for what it tells us of the power of art in building community and of the importance of place in fostering artistic inspiration.

Art in Service to Mankind

Bloch was known as a man of fearless passion and integrity in his life and his art. “My faith” he once said, “is in justice – even delayed – on earth, in the right of each man to live his life decently and usefully and giving to the community what he can give, according to his gifts, his forces.” His goal, said Helen (McFetridge) Kintner, his personal secretary for the final 13 years of his life, “was to write music that would bring peace and love to mankind.”

As part of the retrospective, a commemorative stone was moved from the north end of town to a prominent site at the Newport Performing Arts Center. On it, a bronze plaque reads: “Ernest Bloch, Composer, Philosopher, Humanist, Lived nearby. Ernest Bloch II stands by the “Bloch Rock” commemorating Ernest Bloch’s contributions to the cultural life of Newport. The stone and plaque were moved from Agate Beach to a more prominent site at the Newport Performing Arts Center.

Project
Ernest Bloch Retrospective

Organization
Oregon Coast Council for the Arts;
www.coastarts.org

Principal Partners
City of Newport; Bay Music Association, sponsor of the Ernest Bloch Festival; Ernest Bloch II; Mark McConnell, caretaker of the Bloch house; Helen Johnston Kintner, former secretary to Ernest Bloch; writer Nancy Steinberg; videographer Casey Miller.

Why It Worked
Strong organizational capacity behind the project; community recognition and pride; connection to economic development and cultural tourism; using an important cultural figure to spark local cultural preservation efforts.
with his wife Marguerite. ‘Give Me Solitude, Give Me Nature,’ Walt Whitman.

Those words by Whitman are a fitting tribute to a man who found new inspiration in the beauty and power of the Oregon Coast. Bloch had discovered Agate Beach during a bout of extreme depression brought on by World War II that had sapped his creative energy. “His new home provided the solace, quietude, and soothing natural beauty that helped restore his creativity after the war ended,” wrote Nancy Steinberg in the booklet published as part of the retrospective.

... His creative spirit renewed by the beauty around him, Bloch wrote some of his most magnificent and renowned works in the house at Agate Beach. ... Rather than winding down toward the end of his life, his last ten years were particularly prolific and creative. Robert Strassburg (in his biography of Bloch) wrote, “The creative sequence of Bloch’s closing years is remarkable for its unflagging vitality, spontaneity, and expressive force. Asked for the secret of his creative power during his last decade, Bloch pointed to his self-reliance and his almost child-like faith in God. “All my life I have attended God’s university. ... In God’s university, one finds many assistant instructors with Nature as the head of the faculty.”

Bloch had a “sense of being uprooted his entire life,” his daughter Lucienne once said. “The only thing that gave him a sense of belonging was nature.” He was a man, wrote Nancy Steinberg, “who studied and analyzed Bach manuscripts in minute detail, but found equal beauty and inspiration in the simple glint of an agate on the beach.”
In Portland, Northwest Artists and Inner-City Kids Join Forces to Help the Oregon Zoo Spread Its Message of Conservation

It’s a little word – just two letters – but oh the nuisance it can be: or. As in “art or science,” suggesting that one can embrace one or the other, in such areas, for instance, as educational emphasis and school funding. Yet both are important ways of learning about our world, and they are compatible and connected. Look at Leonardo, the original Renaissance Man, who used the sciences of anatomy and physics to develop his art, and the art of illustration to give shape to his scientific explorations.

The intersections of art and science – and of learning and art – are visible all around us, if we will but open our eyes. In Portland, the Oregon Zoo has a long history of incorporating the work of local artists into its interpretive and education programs. “The Oregon Zoo believes that successful conservation begins with education,” said the Zoo’s Rick Horton. “Interactive art – from ‘please climb’ sculptures to audio soundscapes – supports the Zoo mission by educating, empowering, and inspiring Zoo visitors through engagement of their senses, emotions, and intellect.”

The Canyon Cascade Trail, which opened in 2006 as the final phase of an ambitious Great Northwest project, is the latest case in point of the Zoo’s productive art-science partnerships. Ten years in the making, the Great Northwest presents a close-up look at Oregon’s diverse habitats, from the slopes of the Cascades, to fertile bottomlands, to the Pacific coastline. At the start of the new trail, an interactive “Introduction to the Forest” mural leads visitors to a suspension bridge (bears below!), then into a winding forest canyon. Along the way, interpretive panels and observation posts provide information and intimate views of such creatures of the Northwest forest as bobcats and cougars.

Using Arts Build Communities Grant funding, the Zoo commissioned two Northwest artists to create artwork for the mural and the interpretive exhibits along the trail. In the process, the Zoo continued its collaboration with the Regional Arts and Culture Council, which helped mount a region-wide search to select the artists.

Bobcats and Cougars and Kids – Oh my!

A zoo is an oasis of nature plunked down in an urban environment. For many city kids, it offers perhaps the only opportunity to get close to, and learn about, the lifeforms that share our planet. Sculptor Steve Jensen captured this defining point in his proposal for the “Introduction to the Forest mural.” “I propose working with the community,” he wrote. “I would come to Portland and do drawing with youth on the common theme of the Cascade Canyon Trail in the Great Northwest....”

Which is exactly what he did. Children from the Blazers Boys and Girls Club and associated with the Zoo’s Urban Nature Overnights were invited to work with Jensen in creating their own forest images to be incorporated into the mural. The result is a 27-foot cedar fence teeming with unique and totally engaging beasts that is as significant for the communal way it was created as for the purposes it serves. “The opportunity to involve young people made this project special,” said Horton. The young people thought so too. The experience encouraged them to develop their own display about the project to be mounted at the Boys and Girls Club facility in inner Northeast Portland.

As throughout the zoo, visitors along the Cascade Canyon Trail are encouraged to use their senses of artist Steve Jensen and student designers from the Boys and Girls Club of Portland at the Oregon Zoo.

**Project**
Cascade Canyon Trail Exhibit

**Organization**
Oregon Zoo Foundation; www.oregonzoo.org

**Principal Partners**
Blazers Boys and Girls Club; artists Steve Jensen and Gary Whitley; Regional Arts and Culture Council;

**Why It Worked**
Solid organizational capacity behind the project; community recognition and pride; creative involvement of youth; focus on organization’s mission; strong science-art-environment-education connection; partnership with regional arts council; access to large audience; strong artists, high quality product; good oversight, evaluation.
sight, touch, hearing, and even humor. Nine interpretive panels provide important and friendly doses of information on lifestyles of the wild and furry and, of course, on conservation. Northwest artist Gary Whitley provided illustrations that capture the real-life (not cartoon) essence of the natural denizens, in all their spontaneity, drama, serenity, and playfulness.

With annual zoo attendance at 1.3 million and counting, the Cascade Canyon Trail has the capacity to educate a large and diverse segment of the public about issues relevant to the health of our regional forest habitats. The artwork along that trail, said Horton, "serves to make the educational message a personal and meaningful experience for each visitor. In addition, the Zoo creates an environment for the educational and art communities to interact."

It’s a straightforward equation: science + art = learning. Simply no or’s about it.
In a Vast Reach of Central Oregon, a Roving Arts Ambassador Helps Boys and Girls Unleash the Power of Self-Expression

It’s no secret that schools throughout Oregon have lost comprehensive arts education programs due to budget constraints. As a result, many young people—especially those in Oregon’s far-flung rural areas—depend on organizations like Bend-based Arts Central to fill the gap with teaching artists and services.

As a regional arts council, Arts Central showcases and supports local artists and is a leading provider of arts education to students in Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties, a vast expanse covering 8,000 square miles.

But how do you bring a sense of community to a chunk of geography larger than the state of Massachusetts? A chunk, moreover, where budgets for art teachers and in-school residencies with teaching artists are few and far between, families are pressed for time and often money, and public transportation is nonexistent?

“We want to make the arts more accessible to everyone,” said Arts Central Executive Director Cate O’Hagan. If people can’t easily get the arts in school or by driving to Bend, she reasoned, the obvious solution is to take the arts to them. “You don’t have to sacrifice quality. It can be a first-rate art experience and fun at the same time.”

She was referring now to VanGo—not a creative misspelling of a certain post-impressionist painter’s name, but a brightly painted Honda Element fitted out as a mobile art studio. With a cargo full of arts supplies and a professional artist at the wheel, VanGo makes the rounds of sites where children and youth congregate for various activities—Boys and Girls Clubs, recreation centers, schools, after-school programs, and juvenile justice facilities. And wherever it comes to a stop, children flock to it.

Between June and December of 2006, VanGo made a total of 90 visits to nine different community agencies and reached more than 900 children and youth with arts learning experiences. The key word, perhaps, is “reached.”

“You got me hooked on this art stuff, and now I can’t stop.”

The arts program is a moving demonstration of the power of art as a tool for rehabilitation and empowerment. Freddie, the young man behind the words quoted above, encountered VanGo at the Deschutes County Department of Juvenile Community Justice, where it has been integrated into the Wellspring Rehabilitation Program.

“We know firsthand,” noted Don Minney, manager of the Department’s Resource Center, “that many children have a difficult time communicating verbally and can often find their voice through art—getting in touch with their feelings and becoming involved with their own recovery.”

He might have been referring to Jerome, who started out resistant (“This is stupid”), but became so inspired by the drama segment that he wrote his own story into a skit and has now started writing a book. “I used to hate art,” he said, “and now I love it. It took me out of my comfort zone.”

In Madras, students in the program were inspired to exhibit their artwork in a local gallery during
Sweet Notes from the Road

Debra Fisher reports these highlights from her first year as VanGo Artist/Instructor:

1. Walking through the door and having kids mob me.
2. Waiting lists of students wanting to be in the class in several sites.
3. Students eager to help and be involved.
4. Kids doing artwork at home and bringing it to show me.
5. Quality of work has improved, evidenced by more complicated projects.
6. Focus of students during class continually improves.
7. Boys at Juvenile Justice Center have moved from mask-making to writing stories for performance.

Children’s Art Month. At the Boys and Girls Club-Prineville, young artists’ relief mural sculptures and monoprints were entered in the club’s arts exhibition and went on to national competition.

Looking beyond the personal stories, it becomes clear that VanGo is an ambassador for more than the arts. For, as we have surely learned from that other Van Gogh, genius lives in the most unexpected places. Certainly, the van’s arrival on the scene helps reduce the psychological distances between Bend and outlying communities, between adult and child. Like the Chautauqua travelers of an earlier age, VanGo signals opportunity, the promise of something interesting, a connection to the wider world. In that connection comes assurance that, though we may be remote or solitary, disadvantaged or troubled, we are not alone.
In a Columbia Gorge Town, School Kids Learn the Power of Wordless Communication through Rhythm, Movement, Painting

We’ve all seen the movie: A stagecoach shudders to a stop in a dusty frontier town. The door swings open and out steps a comely young woman, radiating innocence and noble purpose. The cowboys pause their rowdiness; even the horses sense something has changed. The woman is the schoolmarm. Dissolve to a few weeks later. Mothers and children stroll safely down the sidewalks. Cowboys tip their hats, a few bid good morning. Horses no longer gallop through town. Even the dust has been tamed.

Hollywood knew it, and so do we: the school is a powerful symbol of civilization, a resource for community and hope. Yet while a school can certainly help build a community, it also takes a community to make a school. Nowhere is this more evident perhaps than in Mosier, a town of 430 nestled alongside the Columbia a few miles east of Hood River.

Mosier opened its first school in 1865, just 60 years after Lewis and Clark passed through. For 137 years, the school was indeed the heartbeat of the community, serving as concert hall, meeting room, funeral parlor, and of course, learning center.

In 2002, budget issues forced the Chenowith School District to close Mosier Elementary. But the town was resolute. A year later, thanks to a dedicated group of parents and community members, Mosier Community School was born as the first charter school in the Gorge.

The school charter focuses on small class sizes and a well-rounded education that includes reading, science, math, and – significantly – developing the students’ ability to learn and express themselves through the arts. The efforts of teachers and parents quickly began to pay off: in 2002 and 2003, Mosier Community School students scored highest in Wasco County on statewide standardized tests for grades three and five.

A very active Parent Teacher Organization plays a leading role in that success through its commitment to raising funds and providing educational activities for students, staff, and community. These include sponsorship of artist-in-residence programs through Columbia Gorge Arts in Education (CGAE), a nonprofit organization that serves schools, communities, and artists in Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties. The walls of Mosier Community School today are lined with permanent works of art created in these student-artist partnerships.

Drums Along the Columbia

In 2005, the school’s Move, Groove, and Louvre program brought multicultural programs to the school as local artists introduced students to African drumming, Brazilian dance, and silk painting. The activities were designed to teach children new ways to express themselves and how to collaborate on the development of larger works.

The painting project was structured to allow the students to work on large pieces that would then join the gallery of art created by past student bodies, and to create individual pieces to take home. In the process, they learned how to combine respect for individual ideas, with the compromise and team building needed for collaboration.

The drumming and dance phase gave students the joy and fulfillment of expressing themselves through rhythm and movement. “To drum together in perfect rhythm created a unique feeling for the participants, allowing them to feel connected to their classmates in a new and profound way,” said Peggy Bogard, chair of the Mosier Community School PTO. “Learning to work as a group will only help our children in the future.”

Drumming and dance can also open the door on the wider world. “Students learn to create a sense of community which allows them to appreciate the value of cultural diversity,” CGAE notes in its literature. “Students learn about how other ethnic groups celebrate life and how to apply that knowledge to their own lives.”

Project
Move, Groove, and Louvre
Organization
Mosier Community School; www.mosierschool.com
Principal Partners
Mosier Community School Parent Teacher Organization; Columbia Gorge Arts in Education; local artists Nii Okaidja Afroso, Shelly Toon Hight, and Jana Hannigan.
Why It Worked
Good energy; significant parent involvement; strong partnerships; experienced teaching artists in the Gorge; strong sense of local pride.
Snapshots: Summaries of Arts Build Communities Projects

The Oregon Arts Commission awarded $96,400 through the Arts Build Communities grant program in 2006. Those funds supported 22 diverse projects, including the six showcased in this publication. Here are capsule descriptions of the remaining projects. Comments are excerpted from reports and materials submitted by the grantee organizations, and have been edited for brevity and clarity.

**ART ON ALBERTA**

**Annual Art Hop**

The 7th annual Art Hop took place on May 20 and 21, 2006. Working with businesses and artists in the Northeast Portland neighborhood, Art on Alberta built the event to two days instead of one. ABC funding supported more programming in all art forms and the hiring of an event coordinator.

“The Art Hop has proven to be one of the most effective expressions of our mission to promote Alberta Street’s distinct culture and identity. In 2006, over 15,000 people attended, coming from all over the metropolitan area. The Hop is over a mile long - one of the longest street fairs in Oregon. Highlights included the theme art show with over 20 participants, the Mercy Corps photo exhibit, and kids’ activities. The vendors in the Marketplace and those artists displaying/selling their own creations street-side numbered more than 300.” www.artonalberta.org

**ARTS COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN OREGON**

**Josephine County Arts and Economic Prosperity Study**

The Arts Council of Southern Oregon and its partners – Americans for the Arts, Rogue Community College’s Art Works, City of Grants Pass, and Evergreen Bank – conducted the study to document the key role played by the nonprofit arts industry in strengthening the economic health of Josephine County. ABC funds underwrote the collection of data from arts organizations and audience members. Local data were included in Americans for the Arts’ national survey results announced in May 2007.

“Participating in the audience surveys helped people to understand how their purchase of dinner before attending a monthly artwalk or purchasing tickets for a symphony helps build the economy of Josephine County. The surveys also demonstrated how many people attend free arts events and therefore spend very little to participate in a cultural activity. The findings will serve as a benchmark for organizations working to develop cultural tourism and to improve the quality of life in the county.” www.artsCouncilso.org  
www.artsusa.org/information_resources/research_information/services/economic_impact/default.asp

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE ROGUE VALLEY**

**Arts4Kids**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Rogue Valley sought to increase area arts programs for youth through a collaboration with the Grants Pass Museum of Art. Arts4Kids linked club members with the museum’s resources, enabling both partners to expand their reach. ABC funds supported a needed arts coordinator, art supplies, stipends for artists, and administrative expenses. Project outcomes included recognition for artists and youth through displays at the museum, the Boys & Girls Club, and the art galleries at the community college.

“Our Boys & Girls Club works with young people from disadvantaged economic situations, providing quality after-school and summer education and recreational programs. This project connected club members with the museum’s artists in weekly classroom sessions. Art gives young people an opportunity to build self-esteem and confidence, while developing their creativity and discovering new talents and skills - that is what our mission is about.” www.bgcrv.com

**COLUMBIA ARTS**

**Environmental Art Show / Glass Show**

Columbia Arts promotes an arts-rich environment in the Columbia Gorge “in which novices as well as established artists and performers discover and develop their full creative potential.” ABC funds helped mount two shows at the new Columbia Center for the Arts to reinforce the connections with local businesses, art patrons, and public. An Environmental Art Show featured workshops by a prominent artist and an exhibition by Gorge-area artists. The Glass Show showcased the work and studies of local and regional glass artists, many of whom located to the region for its majestic natural beauty.

“An estimated 350-400 people gathered at each of the opening nights. The Columbia Gorge Ecology Institute created a display of children’s art in response to the Environmental Show. Each of the five glass art classes sold out. The project brought nonprofits and for-profit groups together to explore art and natural science processes with the general public. Alliances were forged with the library in Hood River, the local Rebuild-it Center, and area orchards. Visiting artists were available to the community and to schools: a local kindergarten made its first field trip ever to see the show.” www.artsinthegorge.org

**COLUMBIA GORGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION**

**2006 Spring Humanities Series**

Columbia Gorge Community College, its foundation, and Gorge Literacy sponsored a Spring Humanities Series, spotlighting four diverse artists and writers from the Pacific Northwest. The project aimed to broaden discussion of cultural and artistic perspectives. Emerging writers and artists had the opportunity to explore the art, process, and career of writing or visual arts. ABC funds paid for writer and artist honoraria and travel expenses.

“It was our goal to emphasize the similarities between the professional writers/artists and our audience in hopes of encouraging more individuals to take up their pens and paint brushes. We wanted participants to see writers and artists as accessible, hardworking individuals who struggle with words and ideas like anyone else. The Writer-to-Writer/Artist-to-
Snapshots: Summaries of Arts Build Communities Projects

Artist Chats and classroom visits were most successful in getting this message across.” www.cgee.cc.or.us

DREXEL H. FOUNDATION
Teen Film Project, Children’s Film Festival and Filmmakers Competition

Located in the tiny community of Vale, The Drexel H. Foundation provides multi-discipline art programs for area youth under the mission “to promote the study of humanities, art, and cultural diversity … and bring cultural events to Eastern Oregon.” The projects – a teen film project, a film festival for kids, and an adult competition – animated the community, creating opportunities for filmmakers in Malheur County on several levels. A window display was created showing the work of local artists and offering resource information on art organizations. ABC funds were used to purchase film/video equipment and cover artists’ fees.

“The project facilitated broader alliances of educators, children, and artists with our organization. It showed the public what Drexel Foundation has to offer, which aids in increasing tourism and economic development in Vale. Now the Film Festival is an annual event people throughout the Treasure Valley can look forward to. The project deepened our existing partnerships with historical groups and local artists.” www.valeoregon.org/openingpage_001.htm

FARMWORKER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Cipriano Ferrel Education Center Murals

Farmworker Housing Development Corporation is a Woodburn-based community organization dedicated to improving the lives of farmworkers and their families through housing development and services for education, leadership development, and economic development. In 2003, the corporation built the Cipriano Ferrel Education Center. In 2006, ABC funds were used to train children in mural art techniques, including the history and traditions of Mexican mural art, and to complete two murals by noted Latino artist Hector Hernandez at the center.

“Each visual element of the two murals reflects important moments in Mexican history and culture, in the Mexican immigration to the United States, and the struggle of families to find a place here. The mural project helped the young people understand and appreciate art and the value of the stories art can tell. This project informs them about a history which is often unknown to many, it instills pride and teaches them about their parents’ efforts to achieve a better life for them here, and it shows the adults that their personal history is understood and valued.” www.fhd.org

LANE ARTS COUNCIL
HeART of Lane County Awareness and Training

In 2006, the Lane Arts Council developed the HeART of Lane County awareness and training program to involve and benefit an estimated 200 arts and cultural organizations. The HeART of Lane County is an online, collaborative information clearinghouse that collects information on area arts and culture news and provides arts organizations the technical support needed to promote their offerings to the public.

“Lane County is blessed with an abundance of talent. This will become apparent with the HeART of Lane County’s ability to showcase the arts and culture of the county and to level the playing field for smaller and/or rural organizations. The HeART of Lane County will include public, private, and nonprofit offerings in an easy-to-navigate website featuring calendars, gallery guides with maps, and interactive communications capabilities.” www.lanearts.org

MEDIARITES
Many Waves Asian Art Festival

MediaRites Productions, a nonprofit radio production and arts outreach organization in Portland, presented the Many Waves Asian Art Festival to celebrate Asian Pacific American month in May 2006. Asian American artists from Portland and the Northwest participated. ABC grant funds were used for artist and event technician fees and to help cover travel and expenses during the program.

“We were especially pleased at the number of attendees who were not of Asian-American background, as relevance to all listeners is one of our ongoing goals. The Crossing East radio documentary presents aspects of history that many listeners do not know. Presenting dancers, musicians, and visual components helps an audience absorb audio history more easily. Sitting in an auditorium and listening to radio excerpts many seem impossible, but through well-chosen clips, we kept the audience’s interest throughout and shared some little-known history along the way.” www.mediarites.org

Teatro Milagro/Miracle Theatre Group
Puentes! Bilingual Theatre Arts Residencies

In the spring of 2006, Teatro Milagro collaborated with educators and community leaders in Jackson and Tillamook counties to implement two Puentes! (Bridges!) bilingual theatre arts residencies. Participants experienced Latin American culture through storytelling and theatre activities. Students wrote stories based on family histories for a community-judged competition. The residencies culminated with a free community performance of a Milagro play involving community and student actors and a display of art projects and stories from the competition.

“The goal of Teatro Milagro’s educational outreach initiatives is to further Hispanic participation in the arts and build communities that have a greater tolerance and appreciation for cultural differences. These efforts were aimed at making bilingual arts education an integral part of curricular activities in schools and promoting literacy to the community at large.” www.milagro.org

THE MUSEUM AT WARM SPRINGS
Living Traditions Project

The Living Traditions Project brought tribal member artists to the museum to present arts and crafts demonstrations to promote cultural arts and educate the public about the heritage of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. ABC funds provided stipends to the tribal artists.

“Community members were appreciative of the opportunity to watch and learn from master cedar basket weavers. The general public was impressed by
the beauty of the arts demonstrated by the participating artists and were delighted to learn about Warm Springs history and heritage directly from community members. They tell us they look forward to sharing what they have learned with their family and friends.”

**Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Inc.**

*Untold Stories & Unsung Heroes*

The Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Inc., in partnership with the Sullivan’s Gulch Neighborhood Association, Grace Academy, City Repair, and local artists, sponsored the design, construction, and installation of local public artworks. Through the Untold Stories & Unsung Heroes project, Grace Academy students collaborated with teaching artists and neighborhood leaders to create a mural, a park bench, a literary/photographic anthology, theatrical presentations, and a DVD on the past/present/future of the neighborhood. **ABC** funds were used for art supplies, support of community events, artist stipends, and fees required for the installation of the public artwork.

“Together, through the arts, the young and old of Sullivan’s Gulch community engaged in civic dialogue surrounding aesthetics, design, history, city planning, feasibility, as well as ecological concerns of the neighborhood. Cultural participation revitalizes neighborhoods, bridges social barriers, increases the quality of life, and promotes collective efficacy in communities.”

**Oregon Children’s Theatre**

*DEEP Theatre*

Oregon Children’s Theatre’s DEEP Theatre (Discover, Engage, Explore, Perform) project supports partnerships with local service organizations to ensure access to a continuum of theatre-learning for underserved children in Portland. **ABC** funds helped the theatre provide children with quality theatre programs, including free tickets to the theatre’s productions, on-site workshops, and scholarships to Oregon Children’s Theatre Acting Academy.

“In initial discussions with Boys & Girls Clubs, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Friends of the Children, representatives confirmed that the children they serve love to participate in drama activities, but that they lack the staff with theatre training and background to provide programming on a regular basis. DEEP Theatre was created to meet this need. It also helped us develop new alliances by providing professional development training for two new agencies: Campfire USA and Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement. The program has introduced theatre to children who might not otherwise have access to the arts, and revealed how the activity...
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can nurture students who may have been previously overlooked.” www.octc.org

**OREGON CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION**

**Bush School Library Murals Conservation Project**

The Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission, in collaboration with the Salem-Keizer School District and the Salem Art Association, spearheaded a community project to salvage, restore, and re-install two historic murals painted in Salem during the 1930s as part of the Works Progress Administration. The murals are the early work of Louis Bunce and Clifford Gleason, two artists who became prominent members of the Northwest art community. ABC funds were used to develop curriculum and display materials to expand the audience for these historic and important works.

"More than 100 individuals contributed financially to the effort. The Bush Murals Restoration Committee was comprised of community members who worked tirelessly and for over 16 months to see this project completed. The partnerships among the school district, nonprofit, and arts community strengthened relationships. The murals are now in an appropriate location and will be enjoyed by students, parents, and visitors for many future generations.” www.ochcom.org

**SILVERTON ARTS ASSOCIATION**

**Sixth Annual Silverton Arts Festival**

The Silverton Fine Arts Association’s annual arts festival was established to highlight interest in the arts by providing a venue for local and regional visual and performing artists. A large covered demonstration area and free children’s activities offer hands-on ways for attendees to learn about the process of making art. The late-summer festival attracts more visitors to Silverton than any other single event.

"The Art Festival brings all kinds of art to the forefront in an inspiring and educational way. It makes money for the Silverton Arts Association as well as for specific groups, and for individual artists. It educates attendees by showing them possibilities; it brings the community together by welcoming all to come and enjoy, and by working together to put on a community event. Silverton is known as a place where art happens. The word ‘magical’ is used a lot.” www.silvertonarts.com

**WRITE AROUND PORTLAND**

**Spring 2006 Anthology**

Write Around Portland runs writing workshops for people affected by HIV/AIDS, people in prison, survivors of domestic violence, senior citizens, individuals recovering from addictions, people with disabilities, and others who face barriers of income, isolation, or other factors. Each workshop is developed in collaboration with a community organization that serves the intended populations. ABC funds helped pay for workshop coordination and the design and artistic production of the spring 2006 anthology.

"Write Around Portland transforms lives by using the power of writing to connect the diverse people of our city. People report that participation in Write Around Portland helped them see for the first time that their lives do, in fact, matter. In their own words: 'Writing has made me brave' and 'I now feel like I have a voice, a line of communication, a way of being heard.’” www.writearound.org

The Arts Build Communities grants are available to nonprofits, schools, and local governments interested in building community through art. The program provides $3,000 – $7,000 grants for arts and community development projects in rural and urban under-served communities. To request an application or for information, contact the Arts Commission at (503) 986-0082 or visit www.oregonartscommission.org. FY2008 applications must be postmarked by October 2, 2007.