

Message to the Community

It would be hard to envision a year full of more dynamic change than 2000. During this year, Very Special Arts New Mexico became **VSA arts of New Mexico**, created a new strategic plan, purchased a building, moved all its programs and services, and created a design plan for the renovation of our new home. With the creation of the **VSA arts Center of New Mexico** on the historic *Camino Real* and *Old Route 66*, the organization looks to a twenty-first century full of opportunity.

VSA arts of New Mexico provides more opportunities for **meaningful creative work** on a daily basis than our founders ever anticipated in 1981. These opportunities reinforce our commitment and are a tribute to everyone who has shared in making this abundance of creativity possible. The first part of our founders' dream is now a daily reality.

In our first 19 years the organization's philosophy included the statement that we were working toward the day when our services would no longer be needed. In our twentieth year, the Board has revised that philosophy. All references to self-destruction from the agency's mission and philosophy were removed.

The demand for our services has grown rather than diminished and we see ourselves as a vibrant heart of the community. We have made a long-term commitment to developing our services through a community center for the arts. Our commitment is to continue to improve services and work to assure that the opportunity for meaningful creative work in a supportive environment is an attainable goal for our Board, staff, persons receiving services, and volunteers.

We sincerely wish to thank the thousands of people who have helped us in making our dreams a visible reality. And we look forward to the involvement of old and new friends in continuing to shape opportunities for meaningful creative work and leisure for **all New Mexicans**.

Lucy M. Salazar
President



Adam's Story

VSA arts of New Mexico apprentice artist Adam Smith successfully completed a 45-hour course in child care, education and family support as part of his job at Little Lights Child Care Center. Adam secured the job through VSA's Arts Work employment project. In addition to the child development course work, Adam regularly attends continuing professional education classes in areas such as first aid and childhood psychology and behavior management.

Adam has worked for Little Lights for two years and has been an apprentice artist at **VSA arts of New Mexico** since 1994. Adam works in a variety of visual media, performs with the **Buen Viaje Dancers** and contributes to **The Enabled Writer**. "I love working with children, and I'm very grateful to **VSA arts** for hooking me up with Little Lights, Adam said, "My job is fun and worthwhile."

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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2000



Mission

The mission of **VSA arts of New Mexico** is to celebrate the creative power of individuals with disabilities and educate through the arts.



VSA arts of New Mexico
4904 Fourth Street NW
Albuquerque, NM 87107
Phone: 505-345-2872 Fax: 505-345-2896
NM Relay Network 1-800-659-8331
E-mail: info@vsartsnm.org
<http://www.vsartsnm.org>



VSA arts of New Mexico Programs and Services

VSA arts of New Mexico offers **three core programs** that incorporate models for best practices in the arts, education, and human services: **Enabled Studio Arts**, the **Buen Viaje Dancers**, and **Arts for All**. These programs are coordinated through the agency headquarters, the **VSA arts Center of New Mexico**, located in Albuquerque's North Valley. The **Center** strives to provide an optimum setting for creative endeavors, modeling the concepts of universal design, the artful environment, ecological responsibility, and the safety necessary for the risk-taking that is integral to the arts. **The programs and services of VSA arts of New Mexico annually reach more than 50,000 people.**

- **VSA Enabled Studio Arts Program** offers arts opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities, ages 14 and above, and their non-disabled peers. The structure of the program is guided by VSA's *ARTSWORK Curricular Framework*, a multi-disciplinary curriculum that includes classes in visual, performing, media, technology and literary arts. The studio provides a supportive environment for creative exploration and a sense of community for emerging artists. **Enabled Program** partnerships that provide lifelong learning opportunities in the arts include: Innovative Partnership Project with the University of New Mexico's Occupational Therapy Department; School Collaboration Project with Cochiti Elementary School; Legacy Project with the North Valley Senior Center; and The VA/VSA arts Project with the VA Medical Center.

Enabled Studio Arts Program has developed a system for assessing program outcomes using input from apprentice artists, families, funders, staff, and other stakeholders. In the year 2000:

- 100 % of apprentice artists had opportunities to interact and work with peers, both with and without disabilities.
- 100% of apprentice artists used adaptive techniques or technologies in the creation of their work.
- 89% of apprentice artists served received income from their creative work. Goal was 85%.
- Four new venues for VSA presentation of visual artwork by apprentice artists were developed. The goal was two.
- Attendance was increased from 50 to 55 (capacity) during the year, and a total of 64 individuals were served.
- 33% of apprentice artists presented their creative work in two or more community settings. The goal was 25%.

Demographic Profile of Apprentice Artists served in 2000:

Gender:44% male, 56% female

Ethnicity:56% Anglo, 30% Hispanic, 13% Native American, 1% Asian

Age Ranges: 19% 18 - 24, 33% 25 - 34, 34% 35 - 50, 14% 51+

- **VSA Buen Viaje Dancers** offer modern dance performances, workshops, and residencies throughout the state and the nation. Buen Viaje means good journey in Spanish. Founded in 1984, the Dancers provide a good journey for their audiences and serve as the organization's performing ambassadors. The company, composed of dancers with and without disabilities, redefines dance as an expressive art form for all bodies.

- **VSA Arts for All** assists local communities in developing accessible arts programming. All arts, all abilities, all ages - this basic **VSA arts** philosophy is spread statewide through our **Arts for All** component. To demonstrate accessibility and showcase creative talents, Very Special Arts Festivals and special events are presented at sites throughout the state. Information is disseminated to 100 program coordinators through regular bulletins and to more than 5000 individuals and agencies through the quarterly newsletter. Trainings in cultural access, universal design, and other efforts that increase inclusion of persons with disabilities are offered. Several national and local projects are utilized as models to reach new audiences including *Opening Doors:Uncovering and Discovering Disability Culture* and *Start with the Arts*.

Special State Initiatives:

The Very Special Arts Gallery and **Creative Power Products** provide professional development opportunities and avenues for expressing the experience of having a disability. The **Gallery**, showcasing the most vibrant work produced in the **Enabled Studio Arts Program** and selected work by other artists with disabilities, opens the doors to the world of **VSA arts**. Other venues for the promotion of artists' work are coordinated through the **Gallery Exhibition Program** and **Creative Power Product** sales.

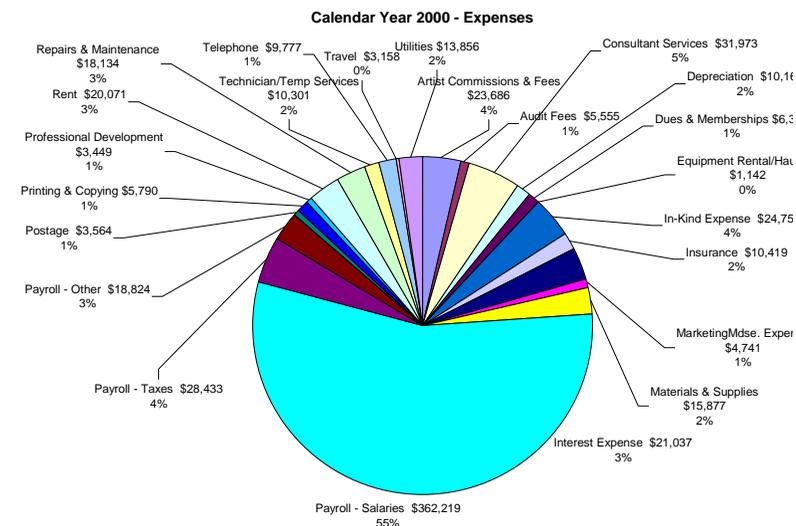
The VSA AmeriCorps Global Depot Team facilitates opportunities for members with and without disabilities to collaborate together in service to the community. VSA's AmeriCorps members teach recycling skills through the **Global Depot Recycle Art Studio** and take the message of recycling into the community using environmentally friendly visual and performing arts activities.



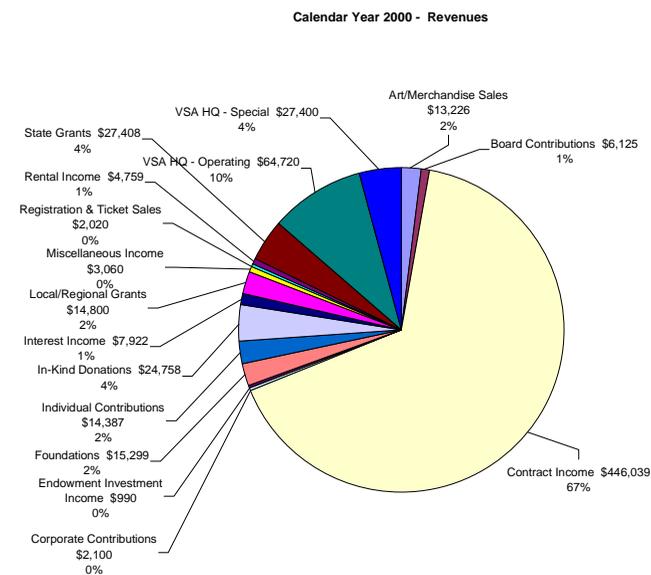
Dance of Joy

by apprentice artist Carlan Gettman

VSA arts of New Mexico Financial Information



Total Expenses = \$653,249.47



Total Revenues = \$675,012.68