

## Kronkosky Charitable Foundation

### Roundtable Discussions

**Title: Visual Arts and Youth**

**Date: January 8, 1999**

**Prepared by: Erich Dethmann**

#### **Participants**

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##### **Invited Participants**

Mr. Manuel Castillo	Executive Director	San Anto Cultural Arts
Mr. Eduardo Diaz	Director, Office of Cultural Affairs	City of San Antonio
Ms. Marybeth Gasman	Director, Project AIM	Ella Austin Community Center
Ms. Becky Gonzalez	Program Manager, Urban smARTS	Department of Community Initiatives
Mr. Jon Hinojosa	Executive Director	SAY Sí
Mr. George Ozuna	Director, Cinema-Animation-Video	North East School of the Arts
Mr. Larry West	Director, ArtTEACH	!Arts San Antonio!

##### **Foundation Staff**

Mr. Palmer Moe	Executive Director
Dr. Megan Kromer	Director of Program and Evaluation
Mr. Mike Bacon	Grants Manager
Mr. Mark Carmona	Grants Manager

#### **Summary of Problems and Possible Solutions**

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- Most school districts have music teachers; only the Northside ISD has one visual arts instructor in every school
- Many districts have a few visual arts instructors who visit each student at least once during the school year.
- SAISD had to cut its two visual arts instructors; there are now no visual arts instructors in the district for elementary schools.
- Schools hold too narrow a focus when it comes to the development of thought processes
  - Too many schools teach to the TAAS
  - Few teachers recognize the importance of visual learning to the thought processes
- Advocacy
  - The arts need more supporters within the schools to bolster the students' overall education and get the schoolrooms away from catering to a standardized test.
  - Goal: to have arts and music recognized as "crucial" to students' education.
- Too much competition among non-profit organizations, and not enough cooperation

- Funds are limited, and everyone wants their own share
- Organizations have a problem aligning objectives and helping each other
- Organizations should stop fighting amongst themselves, stop depending on the hotel/motel tax, and cooperate with each other to increase City Hall's funding to the arts
- City: requires strong supportive base to increase funding.
- Success of the Arts in San Antonio depends on the development of a *Vision*
  - Must change the mindset and paradigms of parents and other authority figures to accept the role of children in the arts.
  - Many kids are the first in their families to be artists.
  - Most people in San Antonio don't realize that there is money to be made in the arts.
  - Once San Antonians become artists, they move away.
  - Many children, especially in San Antonio, grow up disliking themselves and their cultural heritage; a drive for the arts is a positive outlet for emotions and an effective way to cope with problems.
- Say Si Parents Board -- getting parents to recognize the artistic merit their children possess.
  - Many children improve behavior and gain self-esteem when allowed to express themselves through the arts.
- Cooperation with museums is difficult.
  - McNay -- not very accepting of children
  - SAMA -- making some progress
  - San Anto is making an "Open Museum" through murals, creating Public Arts Spaces throughout the West side of the city.
  - Involvement in the arts is life changing: it provides students with viable alternatives to gangs and crime, and boosts self-esteem.

### **Overview of Participant Organizations**

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#### **Project AIM (Artists in the Making), Ella Austin Community Center**

- Goal: Foster a love for the Arts in at-risk youth through instruction and exhibition.
- Students
  - 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at 4 middle schools on the East side (Poe, MLK, Wheatley, and Davis).
  - 10 children in each section; 50 children total
- Teachers
  - Teachers must have B. A. or exhibition degree and verifiable references.
  - Sections divided among: Painting, Sculpture, and Mixed Media.
- Program
  - 5 4-month-long visual arts classes

- 3 days a week, from 3:00pm until 6 or 6:30pm
- Selection Board
  - Chooses students brought into program
  - Composed of women and men with diverse backgrounds from various community arts groups and universities.
  - Evaluates program during process
  - Assists with publicity and exhibits
- Evaluation
  - Evaluate work as well as self-esteem and information given by schools: grades, detention, delinquency.
  - Self esteem measured through a questionnaire as well as by any change in goals and ambitions: a change from wanting to work at the local supermarket or corner store to hoping to be a lawyer or doctor and setting sites on college graduation instead of only GED completion.

**Say Sí (San Antonio Youth YES)**

- Goal: to teach confidence in artistic merit and abilities
  - Treat students as insiders; many feel like outsiders in their schools.
- Students
  - Urban high school students, primarily from SAISD
  - Students commit to 10 hours a week instruction
  - Students recruited 3 times a year
  - Program director gives presentation to audience of eligible students
  - Students set up an interview -- competitive process
  - 50 students total
  - 30 students in high school program
  - 20 in middle school program (Project WAM)
- Teachers
  - Creative environment fostered by visiting artists from the Southwest School of Art and Craft
- Program
  - Students work on thematic projects and projects commissioned by outside entities
  - Artwork sold for immediate feedback on students' abilities as artist
  - 30% of sale price goes into scholarship fund for student
- Project WAM (Workers and Mentors)
  - Saturday mornings
  - Mentors: Paid interns (pilot program)
  - Workers: 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- Initiating graphic arts program

- Organization
  - 5 years as a non-profit organization; a long-term year-round program
  - Say Sí provides supplies and exhibition space.
- Evaluation
  - Through number of lives changed.
  - Number pursuing arts careers (artists and educators)
  - Other intangibles

### **San Anto Cultural Arts**

- Goal: To instruct students in the arts, build artists' self-esteem, and develop an "open museum."
- Students
  - Mainly middle and high school students from around San Antonio; primarily from Alazan Courts and the West side, and some artists have been adults.
  - Many artists continue to paint murals with San Anto as they go through college.
  - Artists do their own original murals assisted by a core crew of 4 - 5 learning artists.
  - Lead Artists and crews contact building owners for permission to use walls.
  - Artists responsible for researching cultural symbols used in artwork.
  - Artist controls pace of mural process and how many people outside the crew may help in painting the wall.
  - Students pick topics and do all of the video editing
  - Students have control over all aspects of the video.
  - Student staff treated as administrators of newspaper.
- Teachers
  - Coordinators provide technical training and guidance
  - Lead Mural Artists oversee work of crews
- Programs
- 3 components: mural painting, video/film, and *El Placazo* -- a youth newspaper
- Murals: aim to complete 5 per year, starting with 1999.
  - Largely funded through DACA for supplies and now in 1999, stipends for lead artists.
  - Starting to expand outside Alazan Courts neighborhood toward available walls.
  - Video: 4 videos produced last year
  - 1 shown in Smithsonian in October
  - Another accepted to San Francisco Film Festival and also to Smithsonian showing
  - *El Placazo* -- run completely by students
  - Includes articles in English and in Spanish
  - Published monthly
- Organization

- Started as a part of Inner City Development in 1994; incorporated as a separate organization in 1997.
- Evaluations now getting refined, mainly through talking to ex-students in college and at their jobs.

**Cinema-Animation-Video at the North East School of the Arts**

- Goal: to create filmmakers, and keep them in San Antonio
  - Film currently a minimal industry in San Antonio
  - The economic benefits could meet or exceed what the Spurs can generate (\$8-9 Million per year in Austin)
  - The cultural demographics of San Antonio make it perfect for filmmaking
- Students
  - 650 in magnet school; 41 of those in cinema and 150 cinema associates.
  - Students: 68% Hispanic, 31% Anglo, 1% Other; from 3 Counties
  - Students participate in all levels of the film process: writing, directing, acting.
  - Students must maintain an 80 average in their classes outside the arts to stay in program.
  - Students must do thorough research on all topics.
- Teachers
  - NEISD administration takes a hands-off approach to the school; allows the school and its students to use their best judgement in choosing topics.
- Program
  - Themes vary according to students' interests: so far, films have been done on AIDS, drunk driving, and Aztec human sacrifice.
  - Professional protocols: compete in film festivals with juniors and seniors in college.
  - Have access to 10 video editors, both linear and non-linear
  - Rent lighting equipment
  - Films vary in length from 22 minutes to one hour.
  - Frequently have to postpone filming to wait for funds
- Organization
  - Magnet school located at Lee High School
- Evaluation
  - Number of graduates who pursue careers in cinema and art.
  - Number of graduates who remain in San Antonio to pursue careers in cinema.

**Urban smARTS**

- Goals: Divert kids from being or ending up on the street
  - Develop social skills in students
  - Foster a love for art
- Students

- Students from 4 elementary and 4 middle schools (Originally only in middle schools)
- 30 - 35 students per school
- Children screened before entering program
- Teachers
  - Originally case workers were on-site with the students
  - Now there is a separate unit that deals with Class C violators
  - Follow up unit of social workers can make home visits if necessary
- Program
  - Schoolteachers identify students; program concentrates on students with difficulties in school.
  - Stay on-site (at school) from 3 to 6 in the afternoon
- Organization
  - 5-year-old program
- Evaluation
  - Tracking of students' progress in program, from elementary through middle school.
  - Measure changes in behavior.
  - But: difficult to get information from school district.
  - Outcomes have been positive, taking into account criminal activity.

### **ArtTEACH**

- Goal: to get full-time artists into residence.
  - To raise appreciation for the arts in San Antonio
- Students
  - 100% of workshops in elementary schools
- Teachers - visiting artists
  - Specific TEAKS matched up with visiting artists' skills
- Program
  - Provides 2 to 3-hours-long art workshops for schools
  - Workshops provided when requested by school
  - Teacher contacts ArtTEACH, they contact the specific artist who runs the workshop, and the artist contacts the teacher to settle on a time.
  - PTA is a large supporter of workshops: as a way to reach students
  - Classroom oriented workshops
  - \$40/hour for workshop
  - Primarily gives workshops in the NEISD, Northside ISD, and Harlandale ISD
- Organization
  - Started in DACA
  - Part of a "Cruise Control" program designed for more comprehensive programming

- As a part of ARTS San Antonio, now focusing on a more grassroots approach.
- Similar to Class Acts, except Class Acts gives large auditorium presentations.
- Evaluation
  - Teachers who hire the workshop use a provided evaluation form to gauge effectiveness of individual artists; data is entered into database.
- Provides a Catalog to every school in Bexar, Comal, and Kendall Counties who requests one
  - 194 workshops, 7 of which are Performing Arts
  - Organizes workshops alphabetically
  - Provides free publicity to non-profit organizations

**Office of Cultural Affairs**

- Goal: Funding effective, innovative arts programs.
- Programs
  - Has originated and spun-off several programs targeting at-risk youth, including Urban smARTS and ArtTEACH
  - Youth and youth crime were the number one priority of the then council; arts programs were developed to combat this
  - Youth crime still a major issue
  - Developed several programs aimed at injecting arts into the classrooms -- similar to those currently being initiated by other non-profit organizations.
- Developed a package to assist non-profits in attracting funds
  - \$75
  - Includes handbook, computer diskette and video assisting nonprofit organizations in attracting funds.
  - Released nationally in February
- Evaluations: by looking at programs and outside factors