

Overture Center Foundation  
**Racial Equity Initiative**  
Adopted - October 2014

**Executive Summary**

*Overture Center for the Arts was built to increase the capacity of professional local arts organizations. Those organizations and audiences are being served well. It is now time for Overture to turn its attention to the organizations and audiences that do not think Overture is for them...and show them it is.*

Overture Center Foundation takes its role in the community to heart. As steward to an impressive building for the performing & visual arts and the presenter of a multitude of free and ticketed events, Overture also takes seriously its role as a resource for the entire Madison community. In that regard, OCF was moved by the recent ***Race to Equity (R2E)*** report issued by the Wisconsin Council of Children & Families, and has held a series of meetings at the staff, board and community level to seek actionable ideas that will begin to enhance Overture's mission, its external relationships and the broader community it seeks to serve. Especially important to Overture is the core belief that the arts are a critical means by which a **whole community can come together, celebrate and thrive** educationally, artistically, socially and economically. Inspired by **R2E**, Overture can play a crucial role to ensure all people have an opportunity to experience the arts.

A 2013 study by the Americans for the Arts has shown students from low socioeconomic status (SES) who experience a **high participation in the arts have a dropout rate of 4 percent**, but their peers with a **low participation in the arts have a dropout rate of 22 percent**. The study went on to show that students from low-income environment who were highly **engaged in the arts are twice as likely to graduate college** as their peers with no arts education. Similar data holds true in finding a **better paying job and community volunteerism**. (See attachments) And study after study shows a direct impact on a student's ability to succeed with adult, family and community involvement and support. Overture believes the arts are a privilege and a right of every person regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or country of origin.

Overture's commitment to **R2E** in Madison begins with its Mission: to enrich the lives of individuals and the community by creating, encouraging and catalyzing extraordinary experiences. From internal discussions and meetings with community leaders in the past few months, Overture has developed four areas of focus and an initial list on the following pages of **actionable & measurable items** that address equity in a way in which Overture may initially serve its community in the next 1-3 years. Annual updates will add new and updated goals always including a new third year projection.

**Goals, Action Steps and Measurements**

**1. EQUITY IN EMPLOYMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
a. Increase the percentage of full and part-time Overture employees of color from 8.26% to 15% in three years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post all available full-time and part-time employment openings with City of Madison Office of Affirmative Action, Urban League, Centro Hispano, The Madison Times, and Capitol City Hues</li> <li>• Participate with local job training programs to highlight Overture career opportunities</li> <li>• Initiate Overture presence at job fairs organized by agencies serving persons of color such as Madison Urban League and Centro Hispano</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percentage of employees of color</li> <li>• Percentage of new employees who are persons of color</li> <li>• Percentage of employment ads to employment opening notices</li> <li>• Number of presentations at job training seminars</li> <li>• Number of job fairs attended by Overture</li> </ul>
b. Hire bi-lingual paid intern as community liaison; move position to full-time with available funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute job description according to steps in previous goal</li> <li>• Seek personal recommendations from leaders of agencies serving persons of color</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internship position filled within first year</li> <li>• Funding identified to upgrade position by end of year one</li> <li>• Position upgraded to full-time by end of year two</li> </ul>
c. Maintain or increase Board presence with persons of color to 30% in three years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish new relationships with professional organizations of color</li> <li>• Seek personal recommendations from leaders of agencies serving persons of color</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percentage of board members who are persons of color</li> </ul>
d. Initiate collegiate-level internship programs to train students of color in technical theater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate paid internship programs for students of color attending Madison Area Technical College (MATC) and UW Madison Office of Multicultural Arts Initiatives (OMAI)</li> <li>• Initiate new national Broadway League</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of programs established</li> <li>• Number of available and active internships by job type</li> <li>• Funds raised to support internship program</li> </ul>

	<p>Diversity Program to provide internships with Broadway shows touring to Madison</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop internship program where students of color work side-by-side with staff and local unions (IATSE and AFSCME) to learn technical theater job skills and gain employment</li> <li>• Cultivate and solicit a donor base to support internship program subsidies</li> </ul>	
e. Conduct ongoing equity training and capacity building amongst staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send key staff to “Creating Equitable Organizations” training at YWCA</li> <li>• Send key staff to participate with Urban League Economic Development, Diversity and Leadership Summit</li> <li>• Introduce measureable goals of Overture senior staff in moving all goals in this plan forward</li> <li>• Maintain or increase percentage of staff participation on internal Racial Equity Team with persons of color</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of staff and programs where staff has participated in equity training/seminar programs</li> <li>• Number of senior staff with measurable goals incorporated within performance evaluations</li> <li>• Number and percentage of staff on internal Racial Equity Team who are persons of color</li> </ul>
f. Enhance Overture’s Community Advisory Board (CAB) role to more actively participate, monitor and report Overture’s progress with racial equity initiatives, and help identify and bring forward new opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redefine role of CAB and its members to incorporate endorsement of this plan</li> <li>• Re-engage current membership and/or recruit new members to become more engaged with attendance requirements; request new appointees from City of Madison as needed</li> <li>• Establish committees of CAB to focus on specific areas of responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A written revision of the CAB purpose and authority</li> <li>• Attendance taken at CAB meetings and reported</li> </ul>
g. Increase frequency of artists of color paid to perform for Overture’s free public programs such as <u>Kids in the Rotunda</u> and <u>MadCity Sessions</u> using <u>Rising Stars Talent Search</u> to identify talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select top, diverse talent from <u>Rising Stars</u> to contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number, percentage of artists and dollars paid to performers of color</li> </ul>

h. Increase number of persons of color in Overture's Teaching Artist Teaching Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and train musicians, actors, dancers and Hip-Hop artists as paid teachers for the public schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and percentage of new teaching artists who are persons of color</li> </ul>
i. Modify Overture's Strategic Plan to incorporate and better reflect commitment to equity initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overture staff will present updated Strategic Plan for Board adoption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated plan is adopted</li> </ul>

## **2. EQUITY IN PURCHASING**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
a. Develop equity guidelines for Overture spending and distribution of resources and update annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and initiate equity in purchasing guidelines outlining steps to be taken to improve equity in purchasing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines written and updated annually</li> </ul>
b. Proactively cultivate and formalize direct relationships with vendors of color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain lists of vendors of color from City of Madison and Dance County to identify areas of opportunities for purchasing goods and services</li> <li>Offer a vendor orientation of Overture to acquaint vendors of color with areas of relationship opportunity</li> <li>Begin seeking quotes from vendors of color for annual service contracts and purchasing consumable goods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of potential vendors identified</li> <li>Number of vendor orientations</li> <li>Dollars and percent of overall company spending with vendors of color</li> </ul>
c. Develop and initiate affirmative action employment expectations of all vendors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Edit and adopt affirmative action guidelines required of all vendors as administered by City of Madison and Dance County.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines written into purchasing agreements and updated annually</li> <li>Percentage of overall vendors reporting and dollars spent with vendors of color</li> </ul>

### 3. EQUITY IN PROGRAMS AND EDUCATION

Goals	Action Steps	Measurement
<p>a. Continuation of Overture <u>OnStage</u> (daytime school performances) with increased percentage of MMSD's SES students attending each year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicit donor gifts to directly support ticket subsidies and transportation grants to schools</li> <li>• Proactively increase awareness with MMSD teachers &amp; administrators to promote subsidies and access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of gifts and dollars raised to support program</li> <li>• Number of students and schools attending</li> </ul>
<p>b. Continue leadership role and partnership with MMSD and City of Madison to advocate, advance and implement <u>Any Given Child</u> (AGC) to ensure equity access to the arts for students grades K-8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to convene and support meetings of Community Action Team (CAT) to further AGC mission and its goals</li> <li>• Continue to meet with teachers, administrators and parents to promote AGC</li> <li>• Coordinate with MMSD Foundation and solicit donor gifts/grants as needed to support AGC initiatives</li> <li>• Periodically report to community on AGC goals and progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of CAT meetings and attendance</li> <li>• Number of meetings with teachers, administrators and parent groups</li> <li>• Number of gifts/grants and dollars raised to support program</li> <li>• Number of written and public presentations</li> </ul>
<p>c. Expand awareness, participation and locations of Overture's <u>Rising Star Talent Competition</u> to identify remarkable, diverse grass-roots artistic talent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen existing community center partnerships for audition hosting; Identify additional programmatic partnerships with those centers</li> <li>• Identify and develop relationships with additional audition sites reaching a diverse population</li> <li>• Promote <u>Rising Stars</u> program and participants using community center communication methods, media interviews, social media and media representing a diverse population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of community centers participating and geographic representation of community</li> <li>• Number of new programmatic initiatives with community centers</li> <li>• Number of new community center partners and geographic representation</li> <li>• Number of media stories generated and populations served</li> </ul>

<p>d. Cultivate and guide local performing arts organization of color toward Overture Resident Arts Group (RAG) status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify existing local organizations that reach a diverse population and may potentially meet RAG criteria</li> <li>• Work with identified groups to guide through process of application, review and adoption of RAG status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of organizations cultivated and adopted as a Resident Arts Group</li> </ul>
<p>e. Expand scope and impact of free, community <u>International Festival (IF)</u> to two days to include attendance by MMSD students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand IF to two days and expand number of groups scheduled to perform during festival</li> <li>• Increase festival promotion to include media and organizations of color for communication</li> <li>• Coordinate with MMSD for class access and transportation subsidies similar to OnStage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of groups scheduled to perform</li> <li>• Number of gifts and dollars raised to support program</li> <li>• Number of students and schools attending</li> </ul>
<p>f. Increase participation by CAB in recommending programming of interest and connected to communities of color to include <u>Overture Presents</u>, <u>OnStage</u>, <u>Kids in the Rotunda</u>, <u>MadCity Sessions</u>, <u>International Festival</u>, and <u>Overture Galleries</u>;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop CAB committee to recommend new programs for students and families</li> <li>• Identify communities and organizations of color to develop input process</li> <li>• Organize community "Town Meetings" led by CAB to solicit input for future programming</li> <li>• Use CAB to report back to community of programs under development or launched</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of communities and organizations of color asked for input</li> <li>• Number of input meetings</li> <li>• Number of programs recommended and implemented</li> </ul>

**4. EQUITY IN COMMUNITY ACCESS**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
<p>a. Increase participation and subsidy of organizations of color making use of <u>Community Arts Access Program (CAAP)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicit donor gifts to directly support additional organizational use of Overture</li> <li>• Identify, recruit and retain organizations of color to use Overture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of gifts and dollars raised to support program</li> <li>• Attendance and number of organizations of color receiving subsidies</li> </ul>

<p>b. Initiate and promote \$10 seat program for events at Overture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include Overture’s RAG to identify inventory of available seats</li> <li>• Develop partnerships with Madison nonprofit agencies to build constituent awareness of program</li> <li>• Initiate method for ticket purchase and fulfillment</li> <li>• Organize and subsidize transportation with partners</li> <li>• Solicit donor gifts to directly support transportation subsidies to Overture events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of events offering program tickets</li> <li>• Number of partner agencies and populations served</li> <li>• Number of program participants, source of relationship and number of return visits by participants</li> <li>• Number of group transportation experiences provided and number of participants served</li> <li>• Number of gifts and dollars raised to support transportation</li> </ul>
<p>c. Create new Student Ambassadors Program recruiting high school students of color to work as volunteers and/or paid interns and learn about Overture’s programs and community outreach; also launch an adult Ambassadors Program to serve as liaisons with area community centers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify work positions and develop job descriptions</li> <li>• Launch awareness and recruitment program amongst MMSD high school students with interests in arts with assistance from arts teachers and adults with assistance from community centers</li> <li>• Develop orientation program for Ambassadors to Overture and work expectations; offer ongoing sessions to further knowledge and experience</li> <li>• Solicit donor gifts to directly support intern subsidies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of job experiences offered</li> <li>• Number of students recruited and retained in program</li> <li>• Number of gifts and dollars raised to support program</li> </ul>
<p>d. Develop partnerships with existing ethnic festivals and professional associations reaching persons of color</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify organizations that have existing constituency with impact in their community</li> <li>• Begin meeting with key leaders to explore new or existing programs of mutual interest and possible partnership</li> <li>• Develop implementation and marketing plan to build awareness and engagement from specific constituencies and general</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and name of organizations identified and constituencies served</li> <li>• Number and topic of possible program ideas discussed</li> <li>• Programs implemented and audiences served</li> <li>• Number of gifts and dollars raised to support program</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public</li> <li>Seek funding from donors where programs need support</li> </ul>	
e. Develop and implement strategic bi-lingual marketing plan to build awareness of Overture programs amongst populations of color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify featured programs, target audiences and develop strategic messaging to draw awareness and engagement</li> <li>Identify and employ means of access and awareness through printed materials, electronic media and personal presentation</li> <li>Develop relationships with vendors of color who may be used to help craft and deliver messaging</li> <li>Develop method of determining engagement impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of featured programs identified and campaigns developed</li> <li>Number and list of communication methods used to deliver messaging</li> <li>Number of vendors engaged in process</li> <li>Number and percentage of audiences of color attending programs</li> </ul>

Attached ACA Report Summaries:

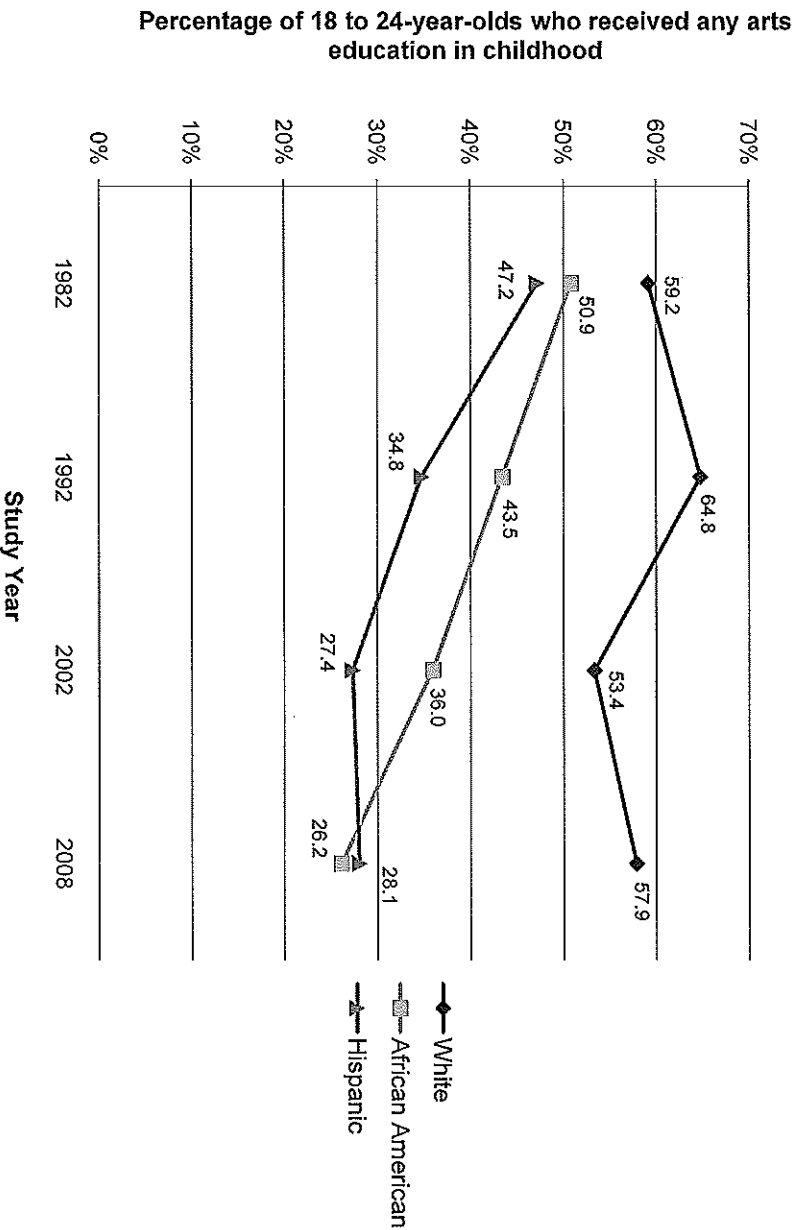
1. ACA Chart - Decline of Arts Education in Underserved Populations
2. ACA Chart - Students with Levels of High Arts Involvement
3. ACA Chart - Finding a Better Job, Earning a College Degree, Volunteering





**Arts Facts...Access to Arts Education is Not Equitable**  
 In 2008, African-American and Hispanic students had less than half of the access to arts education than their White peers.

## Decline of Arts Education in Underserved Populations



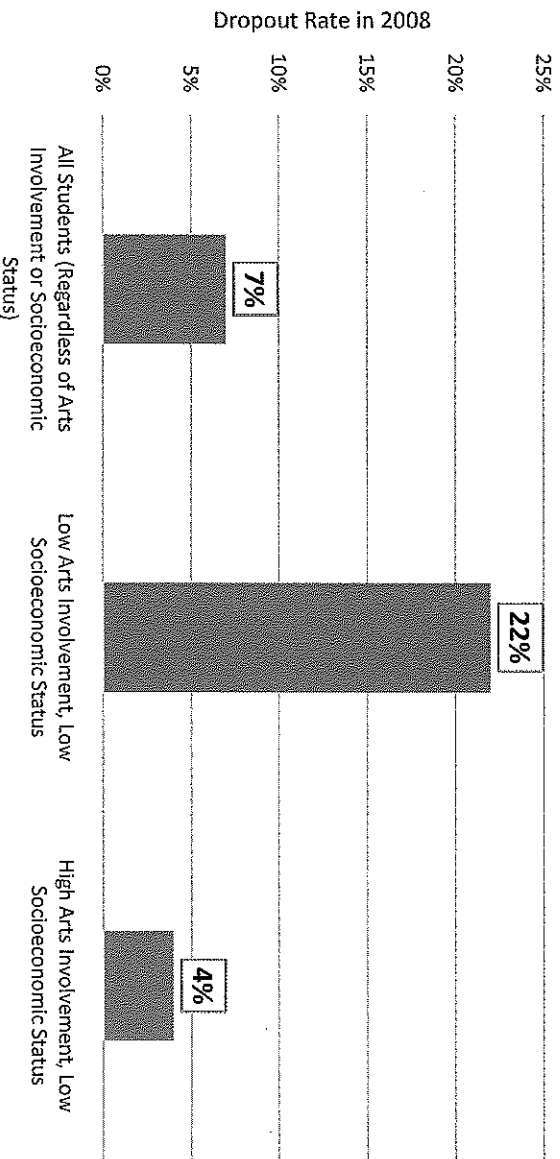
- Access to arts education for Blacks and Hispanics is significantly lower than for their White peers, and has been steadily declining for three decades.
- Findings by UCLA researcher James Catterall indicate that low socio-economic-status students who are engaged in arts learning have increases in high school academic performance, college-going rates, college grades, and holding jobs with a future.
- Despite these findings, the decline of arts education is most drastic in underserved populations, where students who could benefit the most from arts education are getting it the least.

Source: NEA Office of Research & Analysis, NORC at the University of Chicago (Rabkin&Hedberg,2011).



**Arts Facts...Improved Academic Performance**  
 Students who participate in the arts, both in school and after school, demonstrate improved academic performance and lower dropout rates.

### Students with High Levels of Arts Involvement: Less Likely to Drop Out of School



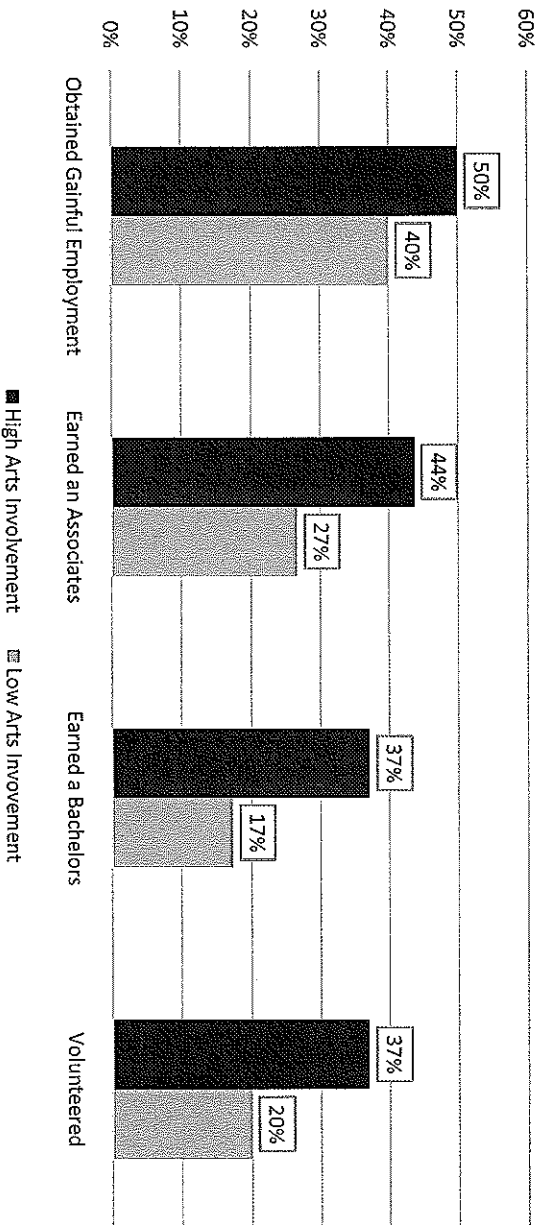
- Longitudinal data of 25,000 students demonstrate that involvement in the arts is linked to higher academic performance, increased standardized test scores, more community service, and lower dropout rates (see chart above). These cognitive and developmental benefits are reaped by students regardless of their socioeconomic status.
- Arts in the schools increase test scores and lower dropout rates. The report, *Critical Links*, contains 62 academic research studies that, taken together, demonstrate that arts education helps close the achievement gap, improves academic skills essential for reading and language development, and advances students' motivation to learn.
- Research conducted between 1987 and 1998 on young people working in the arts for at least three hours on three days of each week throughout at least one full year, demonstrated the following:
  - ✓ 4 times more likely to have been recognized for academic achievement
  - ✓ Being elected to class officer within their schools more than 3 times as often
  - ✓ 4 times more likely to participate in a math and science fair
  - ✓ 3 times more likely to win an award for school attendance
  - ✓ 4 times more likely to win an award for writing an essay or poem

Sources: NEA Office of Research & Analysis (Catterall 2012); Arts Education Partnership (Deasy 2002); Americans for the Arts (Heath 1998).



**Arts Facts...Advantages of Arts Learning Continues over Time**  
 Low-income students who are highly engaged in the arts are more than twice as likely as their peers with low arts involvement to earn a Bachelor's degree.

**Increased Arts Involvement Among Disadvantaged Students Leads to:  
 Finding a Better Job, Earning a College Degree, and Volunteering**



In the late 1990s, James Catterall analyzed data from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey, a study of some 25,000 secondary school students, over four years. He found significant connections between high involvements in arts learning and general academic success.

In 2009, Catterall analyzed ten additional years of data for the exact same cohort of students, now age 26. The results strongly connect arts learning with continued success in academics and in life.

- The study found significant advantages for “arts engaged low-socioeconomic status[low-SES] students” in college-going and types of employment, as well as strong advantages in volunteerism and voting.
- Gainful employment for this group of students included better jobs with higher pay, more responsibility, more promotion opportunity, and more employee satisfaction.
- Dr. Catterall concludes that the benefits to arts-engaged disadvantaged students are measurable and unparalleled. He states: “In the annals of education research, it is hard to find average performance or outcome statistics reported for low-SES students that exceed such measures for the entire population.”

Source: Catterall, James S. (2009). *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art: The Effects of Education in the Visual and Performing Arts on the Achievements and Values of Young Adults.*