



Florida Division of Cultural Affairs  
08-6016 - Arts in Education - Partnership Level 2

Applicant: VSA Arts of Florida, Inc.  
Phone: (813) 558-5095  
Email: Beals@tempest.coedu.usf.edu

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Florida Department of Cultural Affairs  
Program: Arts in Education

Application: 08-6016  
VSA Arts of Florida, Inc.



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### Organization Profile

Organization Name	VSA Arts of Florida, Inc.
Alternative Name	Very Special Arts
Chief Executive Official:	Marian S. Winters
Address	3500 East Fletcher Avenue Suite 234 Tampa, Florida 33613 County: Hillsborough
Main Contact Phone #:	(813) 558-5095
2nd Phone #:	(813) 558-5091
Fax #:	(813) 975-6596
URL:	www.vsafll.org
Tax ID#:	59-2758321
Fiscal Year Start / End:	October 1 - September 30
Florida Senate/House District #s:	20/60
U.S. Congressional District #:	11
Is the organization minority owned?	No
Is the organization state funded?	No
Is this an Arts Organization?	Yes
Accredited Museum?	No
Is your organization within a REDI designated area?	No
Has your organization ever received a grant from the Division of Cultural Affairs?	Yes - 2007
Organization Status:	Organization - Non-Profit
Primary Function:	Education
Secondary Function:	Arts Service/Advocacy
Institution Type:	Arts Service Organization
Organization Discipline:	Multidisciplinary -
Racial Demographic Characteristic:	No Single Group Listed Above
Organization Email:	Beals@tempest.coedu.usf.edu



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Application Cover Page

Funding Category: Partnership Level 2

NOT-FOR-PROFIT DESIGNATION:

I hereby certify that the above referenced applicant is eligible to receive grants from the Division of Cultural Affairs pursuant to the following not-for-profit status of the organization:

A not-for-profit Florida orporation according to these definitions:

- a. incorporated or authorized as a not-for-profit corporation, in good standing, pursuant to Chapter 617, Florida Statutes; (Chapter 623, FS. for private schools) and
- b. designated as a tax-exempt organization as defined in s.501(c)(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954



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General Information

Contact for this application	Winters, Marian
Proposal Title	Increasing Access to the Arts for Individuals with Disabilities
Grant Amount Requested	\$15,000
Start Date	July 1st, 2007
End date	June 30th, 2008
Number of different events	50
Number of performances	6
Number of individuals expected to participate in the proposal activities	2,550
Number of youth expected to participate in the proposal activities	700
Number of elders expected to participate in the proposal activities	250
Number of artists expected to participate in the proposal activities	50

A/V Materials

9 copies of a DVD showing the impact of the arts on individuals with disabilities.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) INFORMATION

Are the applying organizations's facilities and PROGRAMS accessible to persons with disabilities?	Yes
Has an ADA self-evaluation of the organizations's facilities and PROGRAMS been conducted?	Yes
If yes, give date completed	July 21st, 1999
Have policies and procedures been established which address nondiscrimination against persons with disabilities?	Yes
Do you have a complaint process for discrimination on the basis of disability?	Yes
Is this information posted?	Yes
Designated staff person responsible for Section 504, ADA and Florida Statutes 553 Compliance	Marian Winters
Are other staff members informed and trained in access issues?	Yes

Mission Statement

The mission of VSA arts of Florida is to create a society where people with disabilities can learn through, participate in and enjoy the arts.



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Grant Counties

These are the counties in which project / programming will actually occur:

Citrus, Dixie, Holmes, Jackson, Levy, Washington



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Operating Budget - Expenses

Expenses	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
1. Personnel - Administrative	\$226,462	\$240,345	\$264,380
2. Personnel - Artistic	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Personnel - Technical/Production	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Outside Artistic Fees & Services	\$150,450	\$164,153	\$180,568
5. Outside Other Fees & Services	\$67,853	\$95,800	\$105,380
6. Space Rental/Rent or Mortgage (interest only, not principal portion)	\$18,339	\$37,208	\$37,208
7. Travel	\$31,877	\$23,600	\$25,960
8. Marketing	\$2,240	\$7,200	\$7,920
9. Remaining Operating Expenses	\$105,347	\$96,587	\$106,246
10. Total Cash Expenses (add lines 1-9)	\$602,568	\$664,893	\$727,662
11. Total In-kind Contributions	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000
12. Total Expenses (add lines 10 + 11)	\$618,568	\$680,893	\$743,662



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Operating Budget - Income

Income	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
13. Admissions	\$0	\$0	\$0
14. Contracted Services	\$0	\$0	\$0
15. Other Revenue	\$91,683	\$72,725	\$79,998
16. Corporate Support	\$12,962	\$32,850	\$36,135
17. Foundation Support	\$7,250	\$0	\$0
18. Other Private Support	\$12,771	\$13,150	\$14,465
19. Government Support - Federal	\$369,529	\$363,000	\$399,300
20. Government Support - State/ Regional	\$68,089	\$115,906	\$127,497
21. Government Support - Local/County	\$42,911	\$68,857	\$75,743
22. Applicant Cash	\$0	\$0	\$0
23. Total Cash Income (add lines 13-22)	\$605,195	\$666,488	\$733,138
24. Total In-kind Contributions	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000
25. Total Income (add lines 23+24)	\$621,195	\$682,488	\$749,138
26. Cash Reserves (line 25 minus line 12)	\$2,627	\$1,595	\$5,476



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## Grant Proposal Summary

Identify the goals of the proposal. List the specific objectives and provide an overview of the methods.

### Goals

The goal of VSA arts of Florida (VSAFL) Arts Education Partnership (2) grant Increasing Access to the Arts is to provide a comprehensive program of information and referral, technical assistance, professional development and seed funding so that all individuals with disabilities in two rural and underserved regions of Florida can have complete access to the arts in schools, community cultural facilities and associated programmatic activities. The goal will be achieved through the work of a locally based VSAFL program coordinator to work directly with the arts/education/disability organizations to assess needs for programs in the arts and develop local partnerships to address them.

The two selected regions for this grant are (1) Washington, Holmes and Jackson counties which are served by the Panhandle Arts Education Consortium (PAEC) and (2) Citrus, Dixie and Levy counties which are served by the Florida Inclusion Network. Each of these programs provides education services for children and adults with disabilities. VSAFL has successfully worked with each of these programs on a variety of disability related activities.

People with disabilities constitute the largest and most diverse identified minority group in the United States. They make up 15 percent of the population, and include the youngest and oldest among us. The 2000 census reports that the six counties earmarked for this grant have over 65,000 individuals with disabilities or 28% of the population, well over the national average and the 7200 students with disabilities in these counties constitutes 18% of the school age population.

### Objectives

The VSAFL program coordinator will work with VSAFL state office staff to facilitate:

1. A one day professional development workshop for each region for art teachers, general education teachers, special education teachers and teaching artists on how to provide successful learning experiences so all students learn in and through the arts.
2. Opportunities to showcase the artwork of students through local exhibitions and state and national calls for art.
3. Three long term artist in residence programs for each region for two school based inclusive classrooms and one for adults with disabilities.
4. Program support through an application process so new inclusive arts/education programs can be implemented.
5. A one day disability awareness and access training for arts organizations to assist them in the development of inclusive programming.

### Activities

The VSAFL program coordinator will:

1. Develop an advisory group comprised of teachers, parents of children with disabilities and representatives of local arts agencies and state programs working with individuals with disabilities to determine a consensus on the most pressing access issues through focus groups, one on one discussions and presentations at appropriate community wide meetings.
2. Determine the key program partners in each region and develop a service network to deliver and sustain programs.
3. Deliver technical assistance and professional development to build a strong infrastructure to successfully provide arts programs in inclusive settings.

### Evaluation Outline

1. Each professional development session will include a pre and post evaluation looking at increase in knowledge and skills to provide programs and services for people with disabilities.
2. Each artist in residency program will include an evaluation looking at academic gains for the





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Evaluation Outline (Continued)

participants, teaching artist and site support staff.

3. Evaluation for organizations provided program support will look at demographics and academic gains.

4. A pre and post grant survey of inclusive arts activities in each area will document the increase in programs/activities in the arts for people with disabilities.



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Grant Proposal Budget - Summary

Expenses

Expense Category	State Grant	Cash Match	In-Kind Contributions
Personnel - Administrative	\$0	\$10,000	\$0
Personnel - Artistic	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personnel - Technical/Production	\$0	\$0	\$0
Outside Artistic Fees & Services	\$0	\$5,000	\$0
Outside Other Fees & Services	\$11,250	\$1,000	\$0
Space Rental/Rent or Mortgage	\$0	\$2,000	\$3,000
Travel	\$2,750	\$1,000	\$0
Marketing	\$0	\$0	\$0
Remaining Operating Expenses	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$0
A. Total Expenses	\$15,000	\$21,000	
B. Total In-kind Contributions			\$3,000
C. Total Proposal Costs	\$39,000		

Income

Income Category	Cash income
Admissions	\$0
Contracted Services	\$2,000
Other Revenue	\$0
Corporate Support	\$0
Foundation Support	\$0
Other Private Support	\$0
Government Support - Federal	\$17,000
Government Support - State/Regional	\$2,000
Government Support - Local/County	\$0
Applicant Cash	\$0
D. Total Cash Income	\$21,000
E. Grant Amount Requested	\$15,000
F. Total Cash Income (D + E)	\$36,000
G. Total In-kind Contributions (from B, proposal expense page)	\$3,000
H. Total Project Income (F + G, Must equal C, proposal expense page)	\$39,000
I. Percent of Total Project requested from State	38 %



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Grant Proposal Budget - Expense Details

Expense Category	State Grant	Cash Match	In-Kind Contributions
<u>Personnel - Administrative</u>			
State office personnel	\$0	\$10,000	\$0
<u>Personnel - Artistic</u>			
<u>Personnel - Technical/Production</u>			
<u>Outside Artistic Fees &amp; Services</u>			
Artist Residencies	\$0	\$3,000	\$0
Professional Development	\$0	\$2,000	\$0
<u>Outside Other Fees &amp; Services</u>			
Site coordinators	\$10,000	\$0	\$0
Professional development	\$1,250	\$1,000	\$0
<u>Space Rental/Rent or Mortgage</u>			
Office space for coordinators	\$0	\$0	\$3,000
State office rent	\$0	\$2,000	\$0
<u>Travel</u>			
In state travel to sites	\$2,750	\$1,000	\$0
<u>Marketing</u>			
<u>Remaining Operating Expenses</u>			
Supplies	\$500	\$1,000	\$0
Overhead	\$500	\$1,000	\$0
A. Total Expenses	\$15,000	\$21,000	
B. Total In-kind Contributions			\$3,000
C. Total Proposal Costs	\$39,000		



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Grant Proposal Budget - Income Details

Income Category	Cash income
<u>Admissions</u>	
<u>Contracted Services</u>	
Earned income	\$2,000
<u>Other Revenue</u>	
<u>Corporate Support</u>	
<u>Foundation Support</u>	
<u>Other Private Support</u>	
<u>Government Support - Federal</u>	
Department of Education	\$11,000
VSA	\$6,000
<u>Government Support - State/Regional</u>	
Department of Education	\$2,000
<u>Government Support - Local/County</u>	
<u>Applicant Cash</u>	
D. Cash Income Subtotal	\$21,000
E. Grant Amount Requested	\$15,000
F. Total Cash Income (D + E)	\$36,000
G. Total In-kind Contributions (B from previous section, proposal expenses)	\$3,000
H. Total Project Income (F + G, Must equal C from previous section, proposal expenses)	\$39,000
I. Percent of Total Project requested from State	38 %



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## Narrative Questions

### 1. Organization

History Give a brief history of your organization.

VSA arts of Florida (VSAFL) is a state affiliate of the international nonprofit organization VSA arts, an affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. VSA arts was first known as Very Special Arts. The FL. affiliate started in 1981 by the FL. Dept. of Ed. and the FL. Dept. of State and was housed at FSU. The state office moved to USF, Tampa in 1996.

VSAFL, now offers programs/activities for all 67 FL. counties. In a year-long series of activities, communities hold VSAFL programs based on local needs. The state office offers comprehensive programs including: artist residencies; professional development; exhibitions; and cultural access. In 2005-2006, 191 programs were offered in 43 counties that directly impacted 47,000 students with disabilities, 157,000 other individuals and an indirect impact on 430,000 individuals.

VSAFL has received numerous accolades. VSAFL was selected to host the first VSA arts International Annual Meeting held outside of Washington D.C. The meeting was held in St. Petersburg in May 2001 and drew over 400 attendees from 36 foreign countries and 29 states. Through national Calls for Art, VSAFL student artists have been selected to represent Florida at Congressional Exhibitions. For three years, a VSAFL student's artwork has been selected for the Lt. Governor Toni Jennings annual holiday card. In 2006 VSAFL won the VSA arts national award for professional development and community program partnerships. In 2006 VSAFL was selected as the Tampa Bay nonprofit of the year for arts/social service agencies

In 1999 VSAFL presented its first cultural access workshop at the FAM Annual Meeting. A 2004 NEA grant funded Artists and Audiences to study access to the performing arts by IWD. The grant resulted in a publication "Survey on the Perceptions of Persons with Disabilities Regarding Attendance at Performing Arts Centers." Also in 2004, VSA produced a manual for museum docents on inclusion. VSAFL in partnership with VSA arts presented Educators and Museums- Building Inclusive Classrooms, November 2-5, 2005 at the Cummer Museum in Jacksonville.

In 2000, VSAFL started Putting Creativity to Work, the first program for adult artists with disabilities. This program included an on line artist registry. The registry has grown to over 100 members ([www.vsafl.org](http://www.vsafl.org)). In 2005 VSAFL was one of 5 programs selected for an NEA grant to organize a career forum in the arts for artists with disabilities. VSAFL received a second NEA grant to provide training on careers in the arts to workforce agencies that work with individuals with disabilities.

Exhibitions of student's artwork are shown at the state offices of the Dept. of Ed. and Voc. Rehab and the Division of Blind Services and in local/regional venues. Work is also on display at USF's, College of Ed., Tampa. In 2003, a traveling exhibition, Creating a Community Presence, brought the work of adult artists with disabilities into museums. In 2005-2006 VSAFL had exhibitions in 10 community galleries statewide.

Funding from the 2005-2006 Challenge Grant resulted in the opening of "The Open Door Gallery" to showcase the work of students and adult artists with disabilities statewide. Each year 2 adult and 2 student exhibitions are held. The Gallery is also used as a teaching space for artists to learn new skills and for visual arts organizations staff to see best practices in hanging shows in an inclusive space. The Challenge grant has also resulted in planned exhibitions in Tampa's premier art venues.

The VSAFL Artist in Residence programs for students and adults with disabilities started in 2002. Teaching artists receive training on disability awareness and differentiated instruction. In 2003 the program added early childhood, youth at risk and children in long term health care. In 2005-2006, VSAFL in partnership with DCA began cultural access work for organizations primarily in Miami-Dade.

VSAFL has an active website [www.vsafl.org](http://www.vsafl.org) with over 3000 new hits each month, publishes a tri annual Arts Connection newsletter distributed to 5000+ Floridians, produces Arts Access, a quarterly e-letter showcasing inclusive art programs statewide and routinely has articles in local and state print media.

In 2005-2006, VSAFL, with DCA support, began comprehensive cultural access work. A program coordinator from Miami was hired to facilitate interest, awareness and program development for increased access to the arts for individuals with disabilities. The work, primarily in Miami-Dade, has led to an explosion of arts related activities. With a local resource person given the mandate to increase inclusive arts activities in schools, in the arts community and with agencies serving individuals with disabilities over 31 presentations/workshops and 27 collaborative meetings have taken place. The objectives and methods of Increasing Access to the Arts are based on this successful model.



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### 1. Organization

History Give a brief history of your organization. (Continued)

### 2. Artist

Description Provide a description of personnel and artists involved in the project; we recommend submitting the artist's resume as a support material.

The project will be managed by an advisory committee in each region.. Committee members will be individuals that have participated in VSAFL programs and representatives from the school districts, arts organizations, teaching artists, organizations that serve people with disabilities and individuals with disabilities and/or their guardians. The VSAFL education coordinator staff member will facilitate the committee activities. The role of the committee is two fold. First, the committee will work to identify the key members of the community to include in the project work. Out of this group, the local project coordinator will be identified. The second role will be to facilitate focus groups to identify the key needs of the area.

Once the key needs are identified, appropriate VSAFL staff and programs will be brought to the area. Increasing Access to the Arts is based on the successful community organizational work in Miami-Dade done by VSAFL staff member Beth Gordon. Ms. Gordon will be the key liaison for the planning and implementation of the focus groups and building the community network. Ms. Moniz, VSAFL Education Program coordinator, will work directly with the local project coordinator and help facilitate school based programs. Ms. Farber, VSAFL Professional Development Coordinator, will facilitate the professional development and the artist in residence programs. Ms. Bade, Adult Programs Coordinator, will be the staff liaison to work directly with the adult artists with disabilities, assist them in joining the VSAFL artist registry and facilitate local exhibitions.

Resumes of all staff associated with the project are included as are the resumes of teaching artists that will work in the area and act as consultants for the various trainings that will be held.

### 3.

Partners Describe your partner(s) - such as school district, community, social service or other; address how partners will be involved financially and otherwise. Remember an organization that provides money to your project is not necessarily an involved partner, but often a funding resource to the project.

The success of VSAFL on a state and national level is due to the strength of our program partner network. VSAFL program partners are categorized in a number of different areas. However, all are based locally and through their local network provide VSAFL programs based upon local needs on an ongoing basis year round.

In 2005-2006 seventeen program partners received direct program support from VSAFL. These partners offered 50 different programs that reached 54,000 individuals with disabilities and an additional 140,000 in direct services and 403,000 in indirect services. These partners are in the following counties: Bay, Brevard, Broward, Clay, Duval, Escambia, Hernando, Lake, Lee, Leon, Marion, Palm Beach, Polk, St. Lucie, Santa Rosa, Volusia and Walton and are housed in school districts, in museums, in social service agencies, county agencies, and park and recreation departments. In addition, another 4 counties (Alachua, Collier, Columbia, and Indian River) conduct VSA arts programs year round.

The VSAFL state office provides a number of statewide program initiatives that has developed a different network of program partners. Sites that participate in our artist in residence program include pre schools, public schools, hospitals, juvenile detention centers and programs that serve adults with disabilities. A total of 53 took place in 2005-2006 that served 2200 individuals in 20 counties (Alachua, Broward, Duval, Escambia, Gulf, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Hillsborough, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Pinellas, St. Johns, Sarasota, Seminole, Suwannee, Washington) and employed





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3.  
Partners Describe your partner(s) - such as school district, community, social service or ... (Continued)

26 artists. Year round VSAFL works with over 400 arts teachers who participate in calls for art for local/state/national exhibitions and recognition programs.

In the program area of cultural access, partners include local arts agencies, performing arts centers and museums. These partners work with VSAFL year round through workshops and technical assistance to build inclusive programs and facility access. Current work is being done with 10 cultural organizations in Miami-Dade County and the Miami-Dade Cultural Affairs Department, the Tampa Museum of Art, the Van Wezel PAC, Ruth Eckerd Hall, Broward Center for the performing arts and the Carnival Center in Miami.

In 2005-2006 VSAFL provided trainings that reached 840 teachers. These teachers in turn shared their teaching tips for inclusion in the arts with other teachers which begins the process of providing ongoing VSAFL activities.

Many program partners reach out to neighboring counties to provide VSAFL programs. Duval county program partner provides ongoing programs to 5 neighboring counties. Lee County presents programs in Hendry and Glades.

Through the partnerships already developed, VSAFL has provided a number of different inclusive arts experiences in the counties that are part of this grant request. The experiences include artists in residence for both students and adults with disabilities, professional development for teaching artists on successful strategies to work with people with disabilities and youth at risk, calls for art seeking art created by students with disabilities and nominations for the VSAFL Exemplary Participant Program which recognizes academic achievement and personal growth in and through the arts for students with disabilities. In addition, there are two adult artists with disabilities on our artist registry.

Our experience working with a program coordinator in Miami-Dade County and our success in program development through local program partners led to Increasing Access to the Arts. In addition to the partnerships described VSAFL will work directly with 2 primary organizations.

PAEC: Florida's oldest regional educational consortium, PAEC began in 1967, for the benefit of school districts to share services made available through leading edge technology. PAEC is one of Florida's leaders in multi-district initiatives. Success stories include leadership in staff development initiatives, such as Florida's first multi-district Teacher Education Center, accountability in business support operations, such as Florida's first self-insurance for property casualty and employee benefits, and Florida's first in multi-district distance learning, such as the PAEC electronic Professional Development Connections, and PAEC's Tuesday Teacher Training, a nationally recognized professional development model using distance learning, broadcast over the Florida Education Channel housed at PAEC. PAEC serves the following counties as members: Calhoun, Franklin, Holmes, Liberty, Gadsden, Jackson, Madison, Gulf, Jefferson, Taylor, Wakulla, Washington and Walton as well as the FAMU Developmental Research School and FSU Schools, Inc. Participating districts include Bay, Escambia Santa Rosa, Leon, Nassau, Suwannee, Hamilton and Okaloosa. It has active partnerships with 51 different educational organizations including Florida Diagnostic Learning Resource Services (FDLRS) and SED network ( Severely Emotionally Disturbed Network. Both departments specifically serve students with disabilities. Wings (Winning Intellectually aNd Gaining Success) a Century 21 grant funded program ran the VSAFL Express Diversity programs for 2 consecutive years. PAEC has also housed VSAFL professional development workshops for arts inclusion for youth at risk.

Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) provides learning opportunities, consultation, information and support to educators, families and community members resulting in the inclusion of all students. Work will be done with the two FIN offices that serve the counties of Levy, Citrus and Dixie. In addition, the program partner in Hernando County has worked extensively in these counties and will be a key player in this grant. FIN is a special project of the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services.

The program partners for Increasing Access to the Arts will provide staff and logistical support for the



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3.  
Partners Describe your partner(s) - such as school district, community, social service or ... (Continued)

grant activities. The partners will help to facilitate the professional development in inclusion for the schools districts and they will help to extend the outreach of this program through their networks. They will be asked to provide meeting space, send appropriate staff to workshops/meetings. No direct cash outlay is required.

4. Project  
Impact Describe how the proposed program will make an impact in your geographic or program area. Demonstrate how your project will serve rural or underserved counties and/or neighborhoods. Address the racial and cultural diversity of your project participants. Also provide information on the counties and populations you will be servicing.

People with disabilities constitute the largest and most diverse identified minority group in the United States. They make up 15 percent of the population, and include the youngest and oldest among us. The 2000 census reports that the six counties earmarked for this grant have over 65,000 individuals with disabilities or 28% of the population, well over the national average and the 7200 students with disabilities in these counties constitutes 18% of the school age population. The U.S. Department of Education reports that: the drop out rate for students with disabilities is twice as high (20%) as compared to the 10% rate for students without disabilities; only 37% of students with disabilities graduating from high school enroll in post secondary education compared with 78% of non disabled high school students; and only 35% of people with disabilities were employed full or part time as compared to 78% of those without disabilities.

The arts invite you to leave familiar territory, to explore new answers, and seek new questions. The arts allow you to explore concepts and subjects that were previously inaccessible, or difficult, or unappealing. By learning through the arts, you become engaged today and lifelong learners for tomorrow. The arts provide the vehicle to value each other's ideas and perspectives. That's real inclusion.

Studies on cultural access indicate that people with disabilities are no different from non disabled peers in their general attitudes towards the value of the arts. This suggests that all efforts should be made to encourage people with disabilities to learn through, participate in and enjoy the arts. Studies also indicate that for a person to be actively engaged in the arts as an adult, the introduction to the arts must be made in childhood. However, access to school based arts activities has become increasingly less available and the lack is even greater for students with disabilities. Increasing Access to the Arts will provide technical assistance and facilitate programs and program initiatives to insure that everyone can participate in the arts. Work in the community will be in partnership with the local arts organizations and social service agencies. Together, a plan will be developed to increase cultural access. VSAFL will provide appropriate training and resources.

The counties which the grant supports - Citrus, Levy, Dixie, Washington, Holmes and Jackson- are designated as rural and underserved. The percentage of individuals with disabilities is equal to or significantly higher than the state and national average. Some counties have no arts teachers, some have no cultural venues and some have limited services for individuals with disabilities. Each county has shown interest in the work of VSAFL by having a teacher participate in a call for art, attend a professional development workshop or request an artist in residence. The evaluation of the service or activity provided indicates that more and more needs to be done to provide increased opportunities to access the arts.

VSAFL programs provide students with valuable academic advantages and teachers with research-based, innovative strategies to ensure participation and progress for each student by using the arts to enhance the learning process. They provide individuals with an artistic means of self-expression, create self-confidence, and teach marketable skills while fostering communication and independence. By utilizing the arts to enhance education, advance socialization, and promote inclusion, VSAFL programs are making it possible for more people with disabilities to contribute to the social, cultural and economic life of their communities. VSAFL programs and materials are inclusive and designed to be equitably accessible for all participants.

The activities of Increasing Access to the Arts will focus on the classroom with a spillover to the community at large. The activities will follow the model laid out in the highly significant work done in Miami-Dade County to increase arts access. A brief summary of the work done in Miami-Dade will indicate the expectations of this project. Miami-Dade, rich in cultural offerings, had virtually no connection with the disability community. In 2005-2006 VSAFL funded a staff position specifically devoted to cultural





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#### 4. Project

##### Impact Describe how the proposed program will make an impact in ... (Continued)

access. The staff person selected for the position of cultural access coordinator was a vision specialist for Miami-Dade Public Schools and had close ties to the social service agencies serving individuals with disabilities. This background resulted in a strong connection with key groups to build the network needed for the success of the work. With a local resource person given the mandate to increase inclusive arts activities in schools, in the arts community and with agencies serving individuals with disabilities over 31 presentations and/or workshops and 27 collaborative meetings have taken place. Through a series of seven focus groups held with individuals with disabilities and representatives of social service agencies key issues in cultural access were identified. Programs were put in place to address these needs and after one full year of work 75 arts organizations have participated in access training, specific programs for the hearing impaired and vision impaired have begun. Within the school district an artist in residence program for students with disabilities has been funded and there is increased use of assistive technology. The Miami-Dade Department of Cultural Affairs has been a vital partner with VSAFL in this endeavor and, agencies receiving support from the department must now document current levels of access and demonstrate programs that have a strong access component. An Access Task Force was formed through a VSAFL partnership with DCA. Sixteen task force members participated in the first teleconference meeting in July, 2006. Participants included individuals with various disabilities, representatives from arts councils across the state, and representatives from different cultural venues. The Access Task Force will be meeting quarterly to address a variety of issues during the year, including the development of a user friendly accessibility self-assessment for cultural venues, best practices for accessibility, and training needed to support best practices.

There is no question that students with disabilities are frequently excluded from meaningful education and therefore from opportunities in life that many people take for granted. The work plan for this grant will include focus groups to identify inclusion concerns of need within the school districts and in the community. Plans to address these needs will be developed through discussions with district staff, school improvement teams, the ESE and arts supervisors and PTA and concerned parents. Local FIN and FDLRS will provide expertise on inclusion and members of the arts community will be asked to participate. VSAFL programs will be provided to showcase the impact of the arts on learning Teachers who use the arts in their classrooms will tell you that they see their students create products and use information in ways that they never anticipated and with an enthusiasm that was previously unmatched.

Each participating county will have VSAFL funds earmarked for new program initiatives provided through the network of local partners. A 10 week artist in residence programs for students and adults with disabilities will be offered in each county. The adult programs will be coordinated through the ARC program (Association of Retarded Citizens) located in each county. The school based residency will be coordinated through the county ESE department. Funds will be allocated to school districts to develop specific VSAFL activities based on their school improvement plan. The regional Centers for Independent Living will provide the consultants to train organizations on disability awareness.

Similar VSAFL work in other counties shows that following a plan, to organize and put in place a sustainable infrastructure to develop and implement inclusive arts programs and experiences, the community is able to step in to sustain the activities. VSAFL program partners in Lake, Charlotte, Hernando and Indian River counties are examples of this kind of growth. All have secured local financial support to continue inclusive arts programming and call on VSAFL to provide technical assistance or additional training as needed.

#### 5. Project

##### Benefit Describe how your project will benefit the community and participants.

For arts organizations, the VSAFL program coordinator will work to develop a local access committee to review art venues facility and programmatic access. The result will be twofold. First, the individual with a disability will be able to actively participate in an arts activity along with friends or family members. The organization will be recognized for welcoming individuals with disabilities which will increase attendance, find new patrons and volunteers. Local organizations that serve people with disabilities will be asked to recommend individuals for the access committee. Most likely, this will be a new linkage between the arts and disability community, one that will lead to increased leisure activities and the development of new programs.

Professional development for staff and volunteers of arts organizations will learn how to transform their organization through inclusionary practices with the result of becoming increasingly relevant to their



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## 5. Project

Benefit Describe how your project will benefit the community and participants. (Continued)

entire community while adding to the bottom line, increasing attendance numbers, and creating new opportunities for non-traditional partnerships.

Artists will be used as consultants for professional development and as teaching artists. Artists participating in the program must intrinsically believe that every participant has unique physical and mental abilities and that the only way to be successful is to identify the needs and abilities of the each participant and create art through individual strengths. In order to work with people with disabilities artists must meet the following criteria: demonstrated artistic abilities; educational background and experience as a professional artist; participated in a regional/statewide artist in residency professional development workshop on strategies on working with individuals with disabilities; and demonstrate an ability to work with other professionals in the proscribed setting.

Each teaching artist has the opportunity to work in a new environment and build their referral base. Previous artist evaluations document how the residency experience made a profound impact on the artist's understanding of disabilities and what people with disabilities can accomplish through the arts. In many cases the artist has worked with the site to find additional funds to continue the residency.

Workshops for teachers will develop tools to build an inclusive learning environment where all participants experience significant learning in and through the arts. Artists will act as consultants for this training.

The VSAFL program coordinator will work with the local arts organization to identify artists with disabilities to join the registry. The registry is an online data base of Florida artists with a disability. It is located at [www.vsasfl.org](http://www.vsasfl.org). Membership is free and assistance is provided to complete the application. Registry artists are also linked to the VSA arts national artist registry. VSAFL is in continuous contact with registry members via calls for art, exhibition opportunities and for workshops in strategies to build a career as an artist. These trainings are open to all artists in the regions and are usually done in partnership with the local arts agency.

## 6. Evaluation

Plans Expand on the evaluation plan for this project. Describe how the information will be gathered, analyzed and used.

The focus group will meet quarterly to review the grant activities to date to make sure the project is on track and to make any adjustments. The focus group will first look at how it is working and then look at: connections between cultural organizations and the public schools for increased access to arts programming for students with disabilities; training for staff and volunteers of cultural organizations, awareness of inclusive activities for cultural groups, and the facilitation of new partnerships.

Each VSAFL program is designed with a specific evaluation component.

VSA arts defines an artist residency as a minimum of five contact hours per participant with multiple visits. The Division of Cultural Affairs defines a residency as long term when it is five weeks or more. VSAFL residencies have grown to at least six hours, and depending on the population being served contact has grown to 8- 10 hours. The goal of each residency is to be either outstanding or excellent as defined below. (Teaching Artist Rubric (work-in-progress Oct. 2002) Created by the MINNESOTA STATE ARTS BOARD AIE program officer) The residency is also evaluated for achievement in social/behavioral or academic areas. (See attached summary of evaluations)

### Outstanding Residency

- Diverse range of residency activities uniquely designed with school goals
- Team teaching
- Clear learning goals including evaluation strategy
- Integrated activities with current school theme/ curriculum/grad. standards
- Addresses long term benefits for students & teachers
- Community component increases community awareness
- Raised expectation of artistic potential/ quality
- Efforts to address inclusivity

### Excellent Residency



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## 6. Evaluation

Plans Expand on the evaluation plan for this project. Describe how ... (Continued)

- Innovative residency activities that continue to grow & evolve or; sequential exercises that build towards the inclusion of more complex elements & principles of art form.
- Fully integrated arts education (interdisciplinary approach?) with teacher/artist collaboration
- Long term strategies and goals for student learning and assessment integrated
- Innovative high impact on community participation
- High success of teacher in-service & partnerships
- Inclusive and adaptable of student cultures and abilities

All professional development workshops are evaluated through a pre and post tool. The tool looks at information gained on working with individuals with disabilities. (See attached sample evaluation).

Sites that receive Program funds submit an application which includes a statement on how the funded program will be evaluated. Program sites are also asked to follow up to 3 participating students for one school year to document academic gains made through participation in inclusive arts activities.

## 7. Public

Participation and Marketing Describe community involvement in project activities (planning, production, evaluation and/or attendance). Also describe the methods used to inform the community of your project. Include detail on marketing activities.

The project activities will be included on the VSAFL website with links to the calendar and specific activities. Activities will be included in the Arts Connection Bulletin and the E-letter Arts Access. A regional Arts Access will be developed to highlight the work and sent to local government and school officials.

To market special events including exhibitions and culminating events, the VSAFL program coordinator in each region will develop a data base for local media contacts and organizations. In addition, the coordinator will work with the media office of each school district.

To increase attendance at art venues the regional coordinator will work with the venues to link to appropriate social service agencies that serve people with disabilities. The linkage will provide specific ways to engage people with different disabilities about upcoming events. It may be through newsletters sent at a specific date, flyers distributed at group meetings or direct mail in accessible format, radio listening services or through print or on air.

The entire project will be reported to VSA arts and will be presented as a best practice at the VSA arts annual meeting, Spring 2008.

## 8. Project

Timeline Provide a description of the timeline of project activities occurring during the grant period. Do not include activities that take place before or after the grant period.

July 1, 2007: Program Coordinators begin focus groups to understand the key issues in the arts in each community and regionally and specifically access to the arts for individuals with disabilities.

August 1: Focus group results analyzed and appropriate programs are planned

August 15: Professional development calendar for teachers is confirmed based on each county's requirements.

September 15: Professional development for cultural organization is scheduled. Professional development for organizations that serve people with disabilities to value the arts as a career option, and as a leisure activity

Work begins to identify regional artists with a disability to join VSAFL registry of artists with a disability. October 2007 through March 2008 -Residencies take place leading up to VSAFL festival. Presentations to businesses, social groups, schools boards on the impact of the arts for all individuals. Calls for art for regional exhibitions for work created by students and adults with disabilities. Work is prepared for



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### 8. Project

Timeline Provide a description of the timeline of project activities occurring during ... (Continued)

exhibitions locally, regionally and at the national level.

April- May : Regional VSAFL festivals and then culminating events such as music or theater performances based on the year long VSAFL project and/or residency work are held. The events are marketed locally and the community is invited. Local/regional reports to program partners on outcomes from this project. A regional program partner assumes role of project coordinator.

June 2008: Project activities are followed by state VSAFL Education Coordinator. Job activities of regional coordinator are included in new program partner site.

### 9. Project

Description Describe your project. Be sure to identify the focus areas required by your funding category. Consider how your project addresses those focus areas.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that public places must be physically accessible to persons with disabilities. Now, we must look beyond those basic physical requirements of the ADA. Access to the cultural life of our communities is a basic right of every person in our society, regardless of their disability. Increased access to the arts, through education, cultural facilities, events, and in the workplace, will help to provide people with disabilities full participation in their communities, and equal opportunities to contribute. Because art is a universal language, it has the ability to unite people of all abilities. For a person who cannot speak, a dance performance can clearly communicate even the most complicated message. For a person with a mental disability who cannot communicate effectively through words, a painting rich with color and life may say more than verbal sentences ever could. And, for a person who has limited mobility, a song sung with emotion and spirit may have the capacity to move others. By engaging in the arts, people with disabilities are able to contribute to our workplaces and communities, help extinguish old stereotypes regarding disability, and create a global culture truly representative of all people.

Early and sustained engagement in the arts produces social and academic results, particularly for students with disabilities and special needs.

VSAFL is seeking support to provide access to quality arts within education and quality learning within the arts as a means of addressing many of the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities:

- high drop out rates - the 6.6 million students with disabilities that enter our nation's high schools remain twice as likely to leave before graduating, a drop out rate of over 20% compared to 1 in 10 (10%) for students without disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003) and high school dropouts are three times more likely to slide into poverty than those who finish high school (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000)
- low rates of enrollment in post-secondary education - only 37% of students with disabilities graduating from high school enroll in post secondary education, compared with 78% of non-disabled high school graduates (U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics, 2003) and only 16% of students with disabilities enrolling in post-secondary education will receive a four-year degree compared to 50% of those without disabilities
- lack of vocational training – only 35% of people with disabilities were employed full or part time, compared to 78% of those without disabilities (2004 National Organization on Disability/Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities)— 27% of adults with disabilities live at, or below the poverty level, which is three times the level of the general population. (National Organization on Disability, 2004).

Through work done in partnership with programs statewide, VSAFL has provided direct services to over 50,000 children, students and adults with disabilities and provided professional development to 840 teachers. The learning that takes place through VSAFL is evident in the summary of the outcomes from the artist in residency programs and the evaluation of a museum based program partner's work based on the arts and literacy curriculum, Start with the Arts. (both attached)

Throughout this application, strong emphasis is being placed on ensuring that proper care is taken in





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## 9. Project

Description Describe your project. Be sure to identify the focus areas required ... (Continued)

getting effective and inclusive arts programming into schools and communities by controlling the quality and depth of the arts experience. Much thought and attention has been given to: the types of information and training needed by artists to work with special needs populations; how best to address the teachers needs, as well as the student needs; how to engage arts, education and community leaders; and in creating effective public awareness initiatives designed to not only inform but to teach understanding of the value of the arts and the importance of inclusion in the lives of people with disabilities.

The work begun through this project will be sustained through the strengths of the grant partners and the resulting network of new partnerships. The success of VSAFL is based upon the partnerships it has developed through its 20 year history. VSAFL provides technical assistance and professional development to assist in the development of programs that bring the arts to individuals with disabilities. This succeeds because it brings together the arts/disability/education communities for one goal – inclusive learning, participation and enjoyment in and through the arts. The initial input of time and resources builds capacity to sustain the work. An organization within the community comes forward to “adopt” the VSA project and then continues to nurture it to meet the local needs. For each program partner statewide, VSAFL continues to provide ongoing technical assistance and professional development.

This project meets the mission of VSAFL and focuses its efforts on fulfilling its mission through our guiding principles:

- Every young person with disability deserves access to appropriate arts learning experiences;
- All artists in schools and art educators should be appropriately prepared to include students with disabilities in their instruction;
- All children, youth, and adults with disabilities should have complete access to community cultural facilities and activities; and
- All individuals with disabilities who aspire to careers in the arts should have the opportunity to develop appropriate skills.

The project is supported by the VSAFL Board of Directors and meets the criteria set forth in items # 2 and 4 of the 2006-2009 strategic plan approved October '06.

10. Accessibility/ADA compliance Describe efforts within your project to meet ADA compliance regulations. Identify and describe ongoing measures to increase accessibility. List measures currently in place as well as any that may take place in the future. Also describe efforts to make your program inclusive for participants of all ages, backgrounds, experience levels and abilities.



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### Final Submission

Application Status: The application was submitted electronically on November 15th 2006, 2:01 pm

#### CERTIFICATION:

I certify that the information contained in this application, including all attachments and support materials, is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I will abide by all legal, financial, and reporting requirements, such as matching funds and final reports, for all grants received by this organization from the Division of Cultural Affairs (Chapter 1T-1.001, Florida Administrative Code).

NOTE: BY SUBMITTING THE INFORMATION BELOW, THE AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL CERTIFIES THAT THE LAST COMPLETED FISCAL YEAR INFORMATION PROVIDED ON THE OPERATING RESULTS AND PROJECTIONS PAGE (FORM B) IS COMPLETE, ACCURATE, AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF HIS/HER KNOWLEDGE.

Name of Authorizing Official: Marian Winters  
Title of Authorizing Official: Executive Director  
Telephone # of Authorizing Official: (813) 558-5095  
Date of certification: November 15th, 2006

#### Support Materials

1. Letter from the Executive Director
2. Letter requesting Bonus Points
3. Letters of Support
4. Resumes of VSAFL staff and teaching artists/consultants
5. Statewide map of VSAFL services
6. VSAFL Strategic Plan 2006-2009
7. VSAFL Organizational Chart
8. Lists including Board, Staff and Program Partners
9. Sample Evaluation Tools
10. Collateral Materials including exhibition promotions, magazine articles, Arts Connection Bulletin, Arts Access, Anniversary Celebration Invitation, promotional rack cards