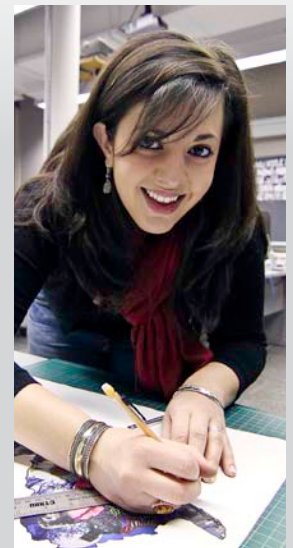




## STRATEGIC NATIONAL ARTS ALUMNI PROJECT

A Diverse Palette: What Arts Graduates  
Say About Their Education and Careers



Annual Report 2012

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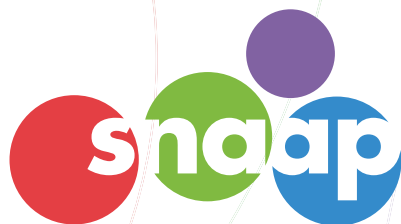
## Mission

The Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) investigates the educational experiences and career paths of arts graduates nationally. SNAAP provides the findings to educators, policy makers, and philanthropic organizations to improve arts training, inform cultural policy, and support artists.

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# STRATEGIC NATIONAL ARTS ALUMNI PROJECT

## A Diverse Palette: What Arts Graduates Say About Their Education and Careers

Annual Report 2012

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## SNAAP Fast Facts

### The Arts

SNAAP defines “the arts,” “art,” and “artist” to include a broad range of creative activity including performance, design, architecture, creative writing, music composition, choreography, film, illustration, and fine art.

### Survey

SNAAP is an annual survey administered online to the arts alumni of participating institutions. Completion time for the survey is generally 20 to 30 minutes. Alumni responded to the 2011 survey (results described in this report) between late September and mid-November 2011.

### Partners

SNAAP is based at the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and conducted in cooperation with the Vanderbilt University Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy. Designed to be self-supporting,

SNAAP was developed with start-up funding by the Surdna Foundation as well as additional support from the Houston Endowment, Barr Foundation, Cleveland Foundation, Educational Foundation of America, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

### Participating Institutions

SNAAP surveys arts graduates from a wide variety of institutions including arts high schools, comprehensive colleges and universities, liberal arts colleges, and special-focus arts institutions. Since 2008, more than 239 different institutions have participated in SNAAP. See Table 1 for details on institutions participating in SNAAP 2011.

### Respondents and Response Rates

In 2011, more than 36,000 arts alumni responded to the SNAAP survey from 66 institutions (8 arts high schools and 58 postsecondary institutions) in the United States

Table 1: SNAAP 2011 Institutional Characteristics

CHARACTERISTICS	% OF INSTITUTIONS
<i>Region</i>	
Northeast	12%
South	25%
Midwest	35%
West	28%
<i>Sector</i>	
Private nonprofit	35%
Public	65%
<i>Classification<sup>a</sup></i>	
High Schools	14%
Schools of Art, Music, and Design	11%
Baccalaureate Colleges	7%
Masters Colleges and Universities	18%
Doctoral Universities	51%

<sup>a</sup>Classification is based on Carnegie Classifications for all postsecondary institutions. Baccalaureate Colleges includes institutions classified as both Bac/A&S and Bac/Diverse. Master’s Colleges and Universities includes Master’s/L, Master’s/M, and Master’s/S. Doctorate-granting Universities includes RU/VH, RU/H, and DRU.

## SNAAP respondents confirm that arts schooling is a good economic investment as well as a ladder to meaningful work.

Ann Markusen, Director, Arts Economy Initiative, University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs

and Canada. (See page 31 for a listing of institutions participating in SNAAP 2011.) The average institutional response rate was over 20%. Table 2 provides selected respondent characteristics for those alumni that participated in SNAAP 2011.

### Calendar

Participating institutions registered to participate in SNAAP during the summer of 2011. Alumni received invitations to participate in fall of 2011, and the survey officially closed in November.

### Audiences

SNAAP provides valuable, actionable data to educators, institutional and public policy makers, researchers, and philanthropic organizations, as well as arts graduates and current/future arts students and their families.

### Cost

As a self-sustaining research project, institutional participation fees underwrite the cost of survey administration, data analysis, and school reports. Annual participation fees range from \$1,300 to \$7,800 depending on the size of the arts alumni population.

### Participation Agreement

Institutions participating in SNAAP agree that SNAAP can use the data developed through the survey administration in the aggregate for national reporting purposes. Results pertaining to a particular institution and identifying as such will not be made public except by mutual agreement between SNAAP and the participating institution.

Table 2: SNAAP 2011 Selected Respondent Characteristics

CHARACTERISTICS	% OF RESPONDENTS
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	38%
Female	62%
Transgender	<1%
<i>Graduation Cohort</i>	
1980 and before	20%
1981-1990	18%
1991-1995	11%
1996-2000	13%
2001-2005	17%
2006-2010	21%
<i>First Generation Student<sup>a</sup></i>	
Yes	32%
No	68%

<sup>a</sup>First generation students are those who do not have a parent or guardian that completed a 4-year degree or higher.



## Foreword

Introducing the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project's first annual report is a genuine delight for me. Since learning about SNAAP several years ago and joining its national advisory board, the project has never been far from my mind. I am composing this foreword after attending the SNAAP board's stimulating 2012 spring meeting—hosted by Douglas Dempster and his colleagues at the highly regarded College of Fine Arts at the University of Texas at Austin. Doug brings to the board the rich experience of a dean at a large public, comprehensive college with professional training programs and liberal arts concentrations in theatre and dance, music, and art and art history. With an academic background in philosophy, Doug spent many years at the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music as both a faculty member and administrator. Doug is one of 18 members of the SNAAP board (see page 2 for a full list), each of whom brings a unique perspective and deep understanding of the challenges facing arts education, cultural policy, and what artists need to flourish in these uncertain times.

Last year, Sammy Hoi, the president of Otis College of Art and Design, hosted the board in Los Angeles. During his 12-year tenure as Otis president, Sammy has shepherded new academic initiatives involving innovative partnerships and community engagement, such as integrated learning, which puts art and design learning in real-world, public, interdisciplinary contexts. Before pursuing his dream of studying art at Parsons School of Design, where he later directed the Paris campus, Sammy studied psychology and French and received a law degree.

Imagine what it is like to spend time with Doug, Sammy, and another board member, Antonia Contro, the executive director of Marwen, a nonprofit arts organization that provides out-of-school visual art, college planning, and career development programs to Chicago's underserved youth in grades 6–12. As well as being an educator of talented precollege youth, Antonia is a practicing artist who exhibits locally and nationally and whose work is in

notable private and public collections. Antonia co-hosted the 2010 SNAAP national advisory board meeting along with Carlos Martinez, principal and firm-wide design director at Gensler, one of the world's largest architectural firms. An industry leader, Carlos also teaches part time at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and serves on several arts boards in Chicago.

The time and effort it took for Doug, Sammy, Antonia, and Carlos and their staffs to host the board's annual on-site meetings testifies to their interest in, enthusiasm for, and commitment to SNAAP and to improving arts education. Their informed, insightful views mixed with those of the other board members provide SNAAP with advice and counsel from a diverse set of practicing artists, educators, and administrators from a variety of public and private institutions.

Our board meetings are orchestrated to encourage a dynamic give-and-take among the distinguished members, resulting in discussions that transform routine business items into engaging, highly participatory colloquia. The



## *SNAAP provides rich, detailed, confidential reports annually to all participating institutions.*

Kenneth C. Fischer, President, UMS, University of Michigan

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board has entertained a variety of issues over the years as the project has evolved from a concept on paper, through several years of field-testing, to this past year's first national survey administration. Over this time, we have advised SNAAP staff about the survey content, encouraged arts training institutions to participate in the project, served as ambassadors for the initiative by presenting at national and regional conferences, and contributed to articles and op-ed pieces sharing the survey findings with the general public. The meeting in Austin gave us a first look at the provocative results of the 2011 survey—results featured in this report.

SNAAP has come a long way since the board's first meeting in New York in 2009, hosted by Ellen Rudolph and her colleagues at the Surdna Foundation. Then director of the foundation's Arts (now Thriving Cultures) Program, Ellen has long desired to better understand what matters in arts education and what happens to arts graduates. Her commitment to discovering what data can tell us about how artists develop in this country and how their educational and subsequent work experiences can inform and improve what happens in arts training institutions was key to Surdna becoming SNAAP's lead funder. Although now retired from Surdna, Ellen and representatives from our other funders, including Debbie McNulty from the Houston Endowment, remain actively engaged with SNAAP. My board colleagues and I join everyone at SNAAP and its funders in celebrating Ellen Rudolph for her long commitment to improving the education that artists receive at both secondary and postsecondary institutions and for her leadership in attracting the resources to develop and launch SNAAP.

As a performing arts presenter on a university campus who did graduate work in the study of higher education, I feel we are especially fortunate to have SNAAP housed at the Center for Postsecondary Research (CPR) at Indiana University (IU) Bloomington. The CPR's well-known and highly respected annual surveys of student engagement have a track record of providing institutions with results that are valid, reliable, and useful. The center's reputation for producing reports that are rich with detailed analysis

and yet are user friendly is well deserved. SNAAP combines the IU CPR resources with those of the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy at Vanderbilt University. The Curb Center's mission is to identify and strengthen the public interest related to creative enterprise and expressive life. SNAAP benefits significantly from the collaboration of these two centers under the leadership of IU's George Kuh and Vanderbilt's Steven Tepper.

SNAAP provides rich, detailed, confidential reports annually to all participating institutions. Institutional leaders are telling us how their schools and the arts training field at large are benefiting from their own survey data as well as from the survey's national findings. Here are some examples of what they have told us:

*SNAAP enables arts education institutions to assess the effectiveness of their programs based on widely gathered statistical information from their graduates. In turn, it helps them to better prepare their students for the careers they enter—in the arts or not. —Mary Schmidt Campbell, Dean, New York University Tisch School of the Arts*





## Foreword (continued)

*My college, which has been tracking alumni outcomes for some years, uses SNAAP so that we can better understand our work in the context of nationally comparative data. — Samuel Hoi, President, Otis College of Art and Design*

*From SNAAP, we get an honest reflection from our graduates about their educational experiences and their subsequent careers. The reports we receive give us direction as we move forward to offer the very best in arts education to future students. —Scott Allen, Principal, High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Houston*

*I wholeheartedly endorse this initiative, and urge my colleagues in other music schools to take advantage of this unique and important resource. —Robert Sirota, President, Manhattan School of Music*

*Our SNAAP results are helping to address many questions that our stakeholders have been asking us for many years. —Chris Ford, Director, Baltimore School for the Arts*

Alumni respondents to the survey remarked that “this was a fabulous and comprehensive survey”; said “the questionnaire was concise, clear, and asked the right questions”; and thanked us for “this wonderful tool.”



We hope this report provides useful answers and suggests new questions. All of us associated with SNAAP were delighted to learn that the results of the 2010 survey, which was completed by 13,000 respondents, challenged the conventional wisdom that most arts graduates are driving taxis, waiting tables, or working at coffee shops and are totally frustrated by their situations. In fact, the 2011 survey results confirm that most SNAAP respondents are reasonably satisfied, consider their overall arts school experience to be good or excellent, and would attend the same institution again. About three quarters (74%) of those who intended to be artists reported that they have worked as professional artists at some point in their careers.

I am excited to be a part of this important initiative that promises to have a positive impact on the way some of our nation’s most creative young people are educated. As a result of SNAAP, arts training institutions at every level are learning what works and what doesn’t work for their students as they strengthen their relationship with alumni; compare themselves with similar institutions; enhance their admissions, public relations, and development efforts; and ultimately assess and reform their curriculum. SNAAP is also making it possible for parents and prospective students to make better informed decisions and for policy makers and funders to address the opportunities and hindrances that arts alumni identify.

Being a part of SNAAP’s pioneering effort and working with its dedicated and talented national advisory board and staff has been a great privilege and personal pleasure. Our goal is to increase the number and diversity of participating institutions and alumni and to continually improve the survey process and the utility of the results so that they are even more meaningful to all stakeholders.

*Kenneth C. Fischer  
Chair, SNAAP National Advisory Board  
President, University Musical Society  
University of Michigan*





## Director's Message

Educators, researchers, and policy makers have long been interested in what happens to students after they graduate. For this reason as well as others, some high schools and most colleges and universities try to stay in contact with their alumni. While the quality of K–12 and postsecondary education in general has long been debated, in recent years the value of arts education has been particularly questioned. Yet reliable data on some highly desired outcomes of postsecondary education, perhaps especially arts education—such as the capacity to continue to learn on one's own or to think deeply about and craft creative solutions to complex problems—may not be evident until many years after college. This report from the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) provides some answers as well as context for a better understanding of student learning outcomes in arts education.

Many years ago, Nevitt Sanford (1967), a psychologist with a passion for understanding college student development, observed that it was unfortunate that college seniors were about to leave the institution—unfortunate because it was not until this point that most traditional-age undergraduates were cognitively and intellectually advanced enough to synthesize, integrate, and reconstruct what they learned from their studies and other experiences and to use these abilities and knowledge to successfully deal with challenging issues and novel situations. This capacity for deep, integrative learning and reflection is essential for continuous learning. Jean Shin, an accomplished sculptor, alluded to this capacity for deep, integrative learning when reflecting on her arts training and post-college experience. “Art school,” she said, “taught me how to do art. It was only later than I learned how to be an artist.”

In today's accountability-sensitive environment, it is essential to demonstrate that arts education has the desired impact on artistic technique, creativity, sensibilities, and dispositions. Some practical business and marketing skills are also required. But it is also necessary to understand how well these outcomes match what arts graduates

need to live a personally satisfying and economically self-sufficient life. This understanding is especially important given the emergence of the contingent economy characterized by temporary, part time, and subcontracted employment prospects. To contend with such circumstances, people need to be cognitively flexible and inventive and to use design thinking and nonroutine, entrepreneurial approaches to deal with unscripted, complex problems. As Steven Tepper and I (2011) explained, formal training in the arts, when done well, may be ideal preparation for cultivating these abilities.

Asserting or believing that arts training institutions help their graduates attain these outcomes is one thing. Empirically demonstrating that this is the case is quite another. By and large, anecdotal information assigns arts graduates to one of two archetypes. One of these represents the relatively small number of highly visible, successful artists who by all accounts make a comfortable living by doing their art. The other archetype represents the underemployed or unemployed arts graduate who, for example, drives a taxi or works in the food industry or some other minimum wage job or combination of jobs.

To put the questions plainly, what do we know—really—about how well arts training today matches what arts graduates need to know and be able to do to survive and thrive in the 21st century? How might we systematically





## Director's Message (continued)

gather such information to help interested parties determine whether arts training is relevant and rewarding? Where can arts leaders and educators as well as cultural policy makers turn for reliable, actionable information to guide efforts to improve the quality of arts educational programs and services to students and graduates?

### The Right Project at the Right Time

An annual online survey, data management, and institutional improvement system designed to enhance the impact of arts-school education, SNAAP is a cooperative effort that brings together arts training programs and institutions; researchers at the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and the Vanderbilt University Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy; and philanthropic organizations. I will say more later about this extraordinary partnership.

For the past four years, SNAAP has been collecting information from graduates of secondary and postsecondary arts training programs. To date, more than 56,000 graduates from 239 different high schools, colleges, and universities have participated. To our knowledge, this represents the single largest database on the educational backgrounds and careers of graduates of arts-intensive training programs.

The Web-based SNAAP questionnaire is administered by an independent third party—the Indiana University Center for Survey Research—a highly acclaimed professional survey organization whose involvement assures that industry standard data collection techniques are used. Institutions pay a participation fee to cover project costs. A distinguished national advisory board helps guide the work and set policy (see page 2). I am delighted that the chair of the SNAAP board, Kenneth Fischer, president of the University of Michigan Musical Arts Society, enthusiastically agreed to pen this report's foreword. His leadership and passion for the arts is shared by all other SNAAP board members as they continually challenge and support the SNAAP staff to stay true to the project's mission:

*To investigate the educational experiences and career paths of arts graduates nationally and share the findings with educators, policy makers, and philanthropic organizations to improve arts training, inform cultural policy, and support artists.*

The results presented in this report are from SNAAP's first national survey administration, in fall 2011, which followed three carefully conducted field tests. The data have important implications for arts training institutions and for the arts community at large. For example:

- Schools can use information from their graduates to modify curricular, co-curricular, and support offerings such as alumni and career services.
- The findings can be used to establish baseline and comparative information for individual institutions to track the quality of preparation of different alumni cohorts over time. Such results are of interest to governing boards, arts leaders, and the faculty and staff of arts training schools and programs as they



## What do we know—really—about how well arts training today matches what arts graduates need to know and be able to do?

George D. Kuh, Chancellor's Professor Emeritus and Director, SNAAP, Indiana University

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seek to determine whether institutions are providing graduates what is promised and what they need.

- Results from scores of arts institutions and programs provide an estimate of individual school and aggregated performance in response to calls for accountability and transparency. Indeed, few indicators are more evocative for stakeholders than those showing how their schools compare with their peers.
- Accreditors and others responsible for quality assurance can review and incorporate individual institutional results as part of their due diligence.
- Cultural policy makers and philanthropic entities can use the information to determine whether opportunities and support for artists are sufficient at the local, regional, and national levels, and whether art schools are providing the kind of preparation needed for changing circumstances.

### Meeting the Challenge

Four decades ago, the eminent social psychologist Theodore Newcomb (Tavris, 1974) opined about the paucity of studies that look systematically at what happens to people after they graduate from college. Because of two nontrivial challenges to such studies, few large-scale, multiple-institution efforts exist to obtain information from alumni about the quality of their training and its relevance to their postcollege experiences.

The first challenge is obtaining contact information for graduates. Many institutions do not have working email addresses for the majority of their alumni, especially for those who graduated more than just a few years ago. To increase the number of graduates with accurate email contacts, SNAAP contracts with Harris Connect, a “people finder” group that, on average, locates a working email address for about 20% more alumni than the typical school has in its own files. This adds more graduates into the institutional sample and helps to update school alumni files. Indeed, many institutions see finding lost graduates as an incentive to participate in SNAAP.

As with all surveys, the second challenge is getting alumni to complete the survey questionnaire. To address this motivation issue, SNAAP staff work with alumni relations offices and institutional research or assessment staff. The former are motivated to stay in touch with alumni, while the latter have the expertise to help analyze the results and produce internal reports that can guide improvement efforts. SNAAP provides a variety of message formats that participating institutions can incorporate into their regular print and electronic newsletters or post to their websites to announce the survey early (and often), and to encourage their alumni to complete the questionnaire. Some schools are using social media by sending messages via Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter before, during, and following the survey administration.

### Please Turn the Pages

The 2011 SNAAP results contain some surprises as well as confirm some widely held beliefs about arts graduates. The finding that many in the sample hold multiple, fixed-term jobs is not surprising. On the other hand, many people are surprised to learn that fewer arts alumni in our sample are unemployed than they might have expected.

Another surprise is that the vast majority are satisfied with the opportunities their “primary job” affords to demonstrate their creativity; most respondents say that their work—whatever it is—is congruent with their values and dispositions. Not surprising, perhaps, is that the nature of postcollege experience varies by the arts discipline one studied. For example, while design majors report doing work that is a close match with what they studied and intended to do, far fewer art history majors say this. Design majors and performing arts majors also tend to make more money than those with degrees in other arts disciplines.

There's much, much more to glean from this rich set of findings and their implications. Please find out for yourself by turning the pages.

*SNAAP's potential to be responsive to, and continually improve, arts training on a national and comprehensive basis is utterly compelling.*

*Antonia Contro, Executive Director, Marwen, Chicago*

## A Tip of the Hat

A project of this scope and import can only succeed through a team effort. The collaboration between Indiana University and Vanderbilt University is unusually effective and productive, in large part because of the quality of people involved; the expertise they bring to their respective responsibilities; and their deep, shared commitment to SNAAP's mission. Project headquarters are at the IU Center for Postsecondary Research, which enjoys a long, close working relationship with the IU Center for Survey Research. IU staff handle the day-to-day project management, survey administration, and preparation of customized institutional reports as well as contribute to the analyses that produced this report. Colleagues at Vanderbilt, under the leadership of Steven Tepper, assist with survey development and provide leadership for the preparation of annual reports such as this one and other SNAAP products. The names and affiliations of these talented colleagues are on page 35.

Finally, launching an enterprise such as SNAAP also requires significant financial resources. SNAAP has been made possible by a five-year leadership grant from the

Surdna Foundation, which in turn helped leverage support from other philanthropic organizations as well as the National Endowment for the Arts. A complete list of these visionary groups is on page 2.

It has been a pleasure as well as a privilege to be associated with these individuals and organizations.

*George D. Kuh  
Chancellor's Professor Emeritus and Director  
Indiana University*

Note: The difference in employment numbers between data from SNAAP and from other sources may be due in part to SNAAP's employment measures, which include intermittent work—not uncommon among professional artists—as among the ways of being employed. The U.S. Census, for example, would label such people as unemployed.





## Findings

The number of degrees awarded in the arts has increased exponentially in recent years (Americans for the Arts, 2012).<sup>i</sup> But thinking about arts graduates as a large, homogeneous group masks the rich diversity of their educational backgrounds and life and career experiences. This report teases out some of this diversity by examining SNAAP respondents' educational experiences, working lives, and arts engagement outside of their careers.<sup>ii</sup>

For example:

- What do arts alumni say about the quality of their training, and does it vary by academic major?
- How many graduates work in the arts, and are they satisfied with their jobs and their incomes?
- Outside of work, in what ways do arts graduates contribute to the arts?
- What are the career outcomes of graduates who earn a master's degree in the arts and those with only a bachelor's?
- Do the large number of arts graduates who work as arts educators at some point during their careers (well over half) find their arts training relevant and their teaching satisfying?

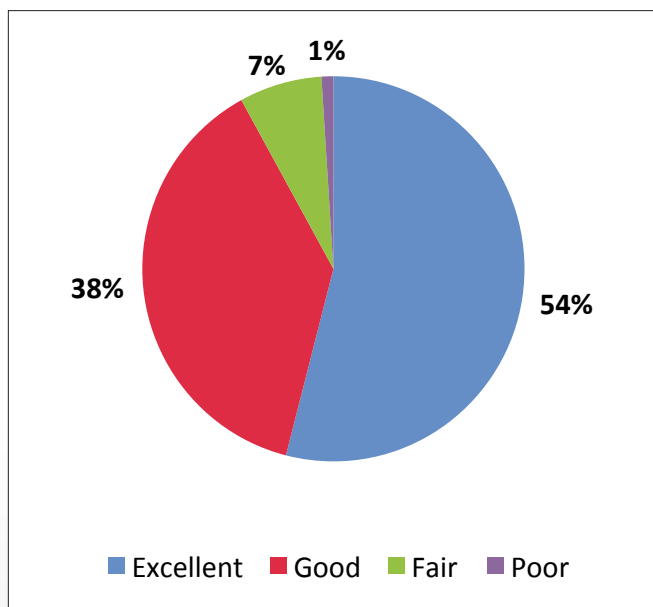
These are some of the questions that SNAAP data begin to help answer.



## Two Thumbs Up for Arts Education

SNAAP respondents are very positive about their arts educational experiences (Figure 1). Of course, satisfaction is only one indicator of educational quality. At the same time, it is critical to student success, because students who are not satisfied are less likely to persist and complete their education programs. In addition, knowing how alumni feel about and evaluate their educational experiences is essential for guiding curricular changes and improvements in services.

Figure 1: Rating of Overall Experience at Institution



The areas of undergraduate arts programs<sup>iii</sup> with which SNAAP respondents are most satisfied are:

- instructors (90%),
- opportunities to take non-arts classes (84%), and
- freedom and encouragement to take risks (81%).

Alumni of graduate programs are most satisfied with:

- instructors (88%),
- opportunities to perform, exhibit, or present their work (83%), and
- freedom and encouragement to take risks (80%).



## Findings (continued)

Other aspects of arts school experience, however, did not receive such high marks. Arts alumni of undergraduate and graduate programs were “somewhat” or “very” dissatisfied (Figure 2) with:

- career advising or information about further education options (50%),
- opportunities for degree-related internships or work (46%), and
- opportunities to network with alumni and others (41%).

Graduate education tends to emphasize professional socialization and career advancement. Thus, it is no surprise, but reassuring, that respondents with arts-related graduate degrees were somewhat more satisfied with advising, work experiences, and networking opportunities compared with alumni with undergraduate arts-related degrees. Even so, between one third and one half of

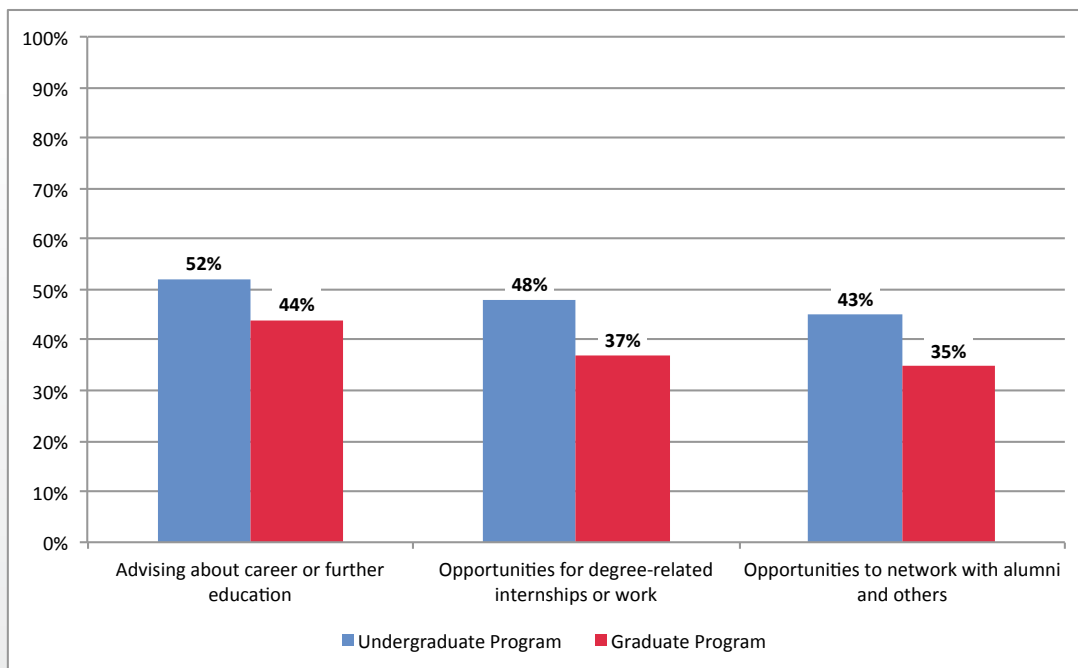
graduate program alumni were dissatisfied with their schools’ professional development efforts.

Other research suggests that differences in satisfaction across major fields can be expected (Garcia-Aracil, 2009; Wiers-Jenssen et al., 2002; Williams & Van Dyke, 2008) and this is true as well for SNAAP respondents.

For alumni of undergraduate arts programs:

- Nine of ten (93%) art history majors were satisfied with their opportunities to take non-arts classes, compared to only three quarters (77%) of arts administration majors.
- Only 28% of arts education majors were dissatisfied with career advising, a sharp contrast with art history majors (56%) and fine and studio arts majors (60%).

**Figure 2: Percentage of Alumni Dissatisfied<sup>a</sup> with Institutional Experiences, by Program Level**



<sup>a</sup>Dissatisfied refers to those who responded “somewhat” or “very” dissatisfied.

*An arts career is not an on-off switch, with graduates either becoming professional artists or leaving the field. Rather, many arts alumni work both in and outside the arts simultaneously, using their arts training in a variety of settings and careers.*

Steven J. Tepper, Associate Director, Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy, Vanderbilt University

For alumni of graduate arts programs:

- 87% of fine and studio arts majors were satisfied with freedom and encouragement to take risks, contrasted with 72% of music performance majors.
- 91% of dance majors were satisfied with their opportunities to perform or exhibit contrasted with 76% of media arts majors.
- Only 16% of arts administration majors were dissatisfied with their opportunities for degree-related internships, contrasted with half of media arts majors.

While the results suggest a variety of strengths and weaknesses for institutions to consider, they also indicate that despite any less than stellar experiences alumni may have had, most who obtained an arts degree have few regrets. When asked if they would still attend their institution if they could start over again, over three quarters (77%) say definitely or probably yes. Furthermore, when asked if they would recommend their institution to another student like them, 88% say yes.

## Wherefore Art Thou? Most SNAAP Respondents Are Employed

Most SNAAP respondents are currently working, and those who are tend to be at least somewhat satisfied with their jobs. As with last year (Strategic National Arts Alumni Project, 2011), their unemployment rate is less than half the national unemployment rate for all Americans. In fact, SNAAP respondents' unemployment rate in 2011 is almost identical to that of other college graduates nationally, about 4% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011).<sup>iv</sup>

This rate of unemployment is surprisingly consistent across level of arts degree earned. Only four percent of those whose highest arts degree is a bachelor's and 5% of those whose highest arts degree is a master's report being out of work and actively looking for a job.<sup>v</sup>

## Going Pro: Which Majors Are Most Likely to Work as Professional Artists?

Not all students who study the arts plan to pursue professional arts careers. For example, some majors such as art history or arts administration are not primarily about making or performing one's own art, even though many students studying in these fields nonetheless say they intended to be artists. Others choose to major in the visual and performing arts (dance, theater, music, and fine arts), but never intend to be professional artists.

- Between 10% and 20% of students in most arts disciplines did not plan to pursue art as a profession.
- Forty-two percent of arts administration majors and 65% of arts education majors at some point work as professional artists, even though a smaller percentage (35% and 57%, respectively) intended to do so when they began their training programs.



## Findings (continued)



The SNAAP respondents most likely to work as professional artists<sup>vi</sup> at some point are dance, design, music performance, and theater majors. More than four fifths of graduates from each of these disciplines worked at some point in this capacity (Table 3). Unsurprisingly, those who majored in art history and arts administration are the least likely to work as professional artists.

As Table 3 illustrates, some majors are more likely to attract students who have their sights set on creating or performing their own work professionally.

- About nine of ten architecture majors<sup>vii</sup>, design majors, and dance majors plan to be professional artists compared with only one third of arts administration and art history majors.
- The largest gaps between those who intended to become professional artists and who have ever worked in this capacity are for creative and other writing (28% gap) and architecture (14% gap).

Degree level matters in terms of whether an arts graduate works as a professional artist. Eighty-six percent of those with an arts-related master's degree do so, compared with 71% of their counterparts whose highest degree is a bachelor's, a nontrivial difference of 15%.

### Surprise, Surprise: Most Arts Alumni Are Satisfied with Their Jobs

Eighty-seven percent of all currently working SNAAP respondents indicate that they are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the job in which they spend the majority of their work time. Only 3% say they are “very dissatisfied,” comparable to a national sample of college graduates.<sup>viii</sup> This positive pattern holds for many dimensions of satisfaction, such as:

- opportunity to be creative (82% are “somewhat” or “very” satisfied),

Table 3: Percentage Ever<sup>a</sup> Working as a Professional Artist and Percent Intending to Work as a Professional Artist, by Arts Discipline<sup>b</sup>

ARTS MAJOR	Ever Worked as Artist	Intended to Work as Artist
Dance	82%	88%
Music performance	82%	85%
Theater	82%	87%
Design	81%	89%
Architecture	79%	93%
Music history, composition, theory	76%	75%
Fine or studio arts	75%	86%
Media arts	71%	79%
Arts education	65%	57%
Creative and other writing	52%	80%
Arts administration	42%	35%
Art history	30%	32%

<sup>a</sup> Ever refers to those who responded “yes, I do this currently” or “yes, I have done this in the past, but I no longer do.”

<sup>b</sup> Excludes double majors.



*SNAAP data tell a much-needed story about the effect of arts training on the lives of arts alumni, feedback that provides educators with powerful justification for their arts programming.*

Barbara Hauptman, Visiting Assistant Professor, Arts Management, Purchase College

- good match with one’s personality, interests, and values (84%),
- opportunity to contribute to the greater good (81%),
- job security (78%), and
- balance between work and non-work life (75%).

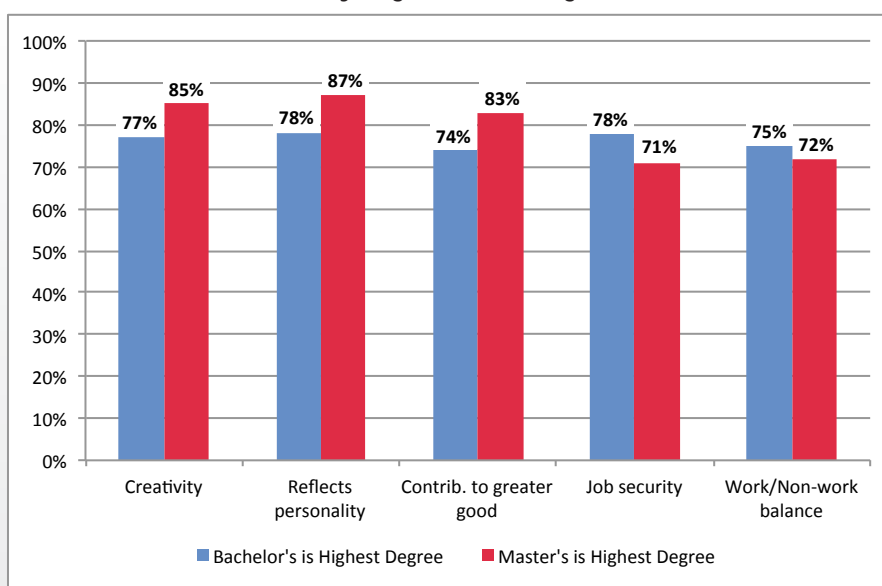
The same pattern persists across major fields, as more than four fifths of the alumni from every arts-related discipline indicate overall satisfaction with the jobs in which they spend the majority of their time. It’s worth noting that not all SNAAP respondents who majored in a particular discipline are currently working in that field. For example, while 83% of employed design graduates say they are satisfied with their job security in the occupation where they spend the majority of their time, this does not necessarily mean that 83% of designers are satisfied with their job security. Many design majors work outside the field of design, and arts alumni with other

majors may be working in the design field. For instance, architecture majors go into the interior design field at rates similar to those of design majors. About one quarter of both design majors (24%) and architecture majors (25%) have worked at some point as interior designers.

Those with arts-related master’s degrees tend to be more satisfied with their primary jobs than those whose highest degree is an arts-related bachelor’s. For instance, as Figure 3 illustrates, among currently employed SNAAP respondents, 87% of graduates whose highest arts degree is a master’s agree that their work reflects their personalities, interests, and values compared to 78% of their counterparts whose highest arts degree is a bachelor’s. Job security is one area where bachelor’s degree holders are more satisfied than their counterparts with a master’s (78% and 71%, respectively).

Perhaps more SNAAP respondents with an arts-related master’s degree are satisfied with their jobs because they are

**Figure 3: Percentage of Employed Alumni Satisfied<sup>a</sup> with Aspect of Current Job<sup>b</sup>, by Highest Arts Degree Earned**



<sup>a</sup> Satisfied refers to those who responded “somewhat” or “very” satisfied.

<sup>b</sup> Current job refers to the job in which each respondent spends the majority of his/her work time.



## Findings (continued)

more often working in an arts field (79%), 20% more than those whose highest degree is an arts-related bachelor's (59%). For example, the 8% difference in satisfaction with the opportunity to be creative in one's primary job (Figure 3) shrinks to only 2%—a differential decrease of 75%—when looking at only those who spend the majority of their time working in an *arts-related job* (Table 4).

The differences in job satisfaction between SNAAP respondents whose highest degree is a bachelor's and those whose highest degree is a master's, job type notwithstanding, may be in part a function of the type of position held within their occupational hierarchies. For example, arts-related master's earners may work in higher status positions, which may involve spending more time at work (resulting in lower satisfaction with work/life balance) but greater freedom to pursue projects that relate to their personalities and stronger platforms from which to contribute to the greater good.

Even so, those who work primarily in non-arts fields are generally satisfied with their work (Table 4). Figure 4 shows the reported job satisfaction of alumni who say that they currently work as professional artists and spend a majority of their work time doing so, compared with those professional artists who spend the majority of their time working in other jobs.<sup>ix</sup>

As one might expect, in most areas of satisfaction assessed by the SNAAP survey, professional artists currently spending the majority of their work time creating and/or performing art express higher levels of satisfaction than those who work primarily in other areas. The only aspect in which those working primarily in non-arts jobs express higher satisfaction is income, but this is only a 5% difference. However, across every area of satisfaction, over 60% of those working as professional artists but spending the majority of their work time in other jobs are at least somewhat satisfied with their job. This finding cuts against the stereotype of the frustrated artist who endures a distasteful “day job” to pay the bills.



**Table 4: Percentage of Employed Alumni Satisfied<sup>a</sup> with Aspect of Current Primary Arts-Related or Non-Arts Job<sup>b</sup>, by Highest Arts Degree Earned**

JOB ASPECT	Arts Job		Non-Arts Job	
	Bachelor's	Master's	Bachelor's	Master's
Creativity	89%	91%	60%	63%
Reflects personality, interests, and values	87%	92%	65%	68%
Contributions to the greater good	78%	87%	69%	70%
Job security	74%	69%	84%	78%
Work/Non-work balance	77%	72%	73%	72%

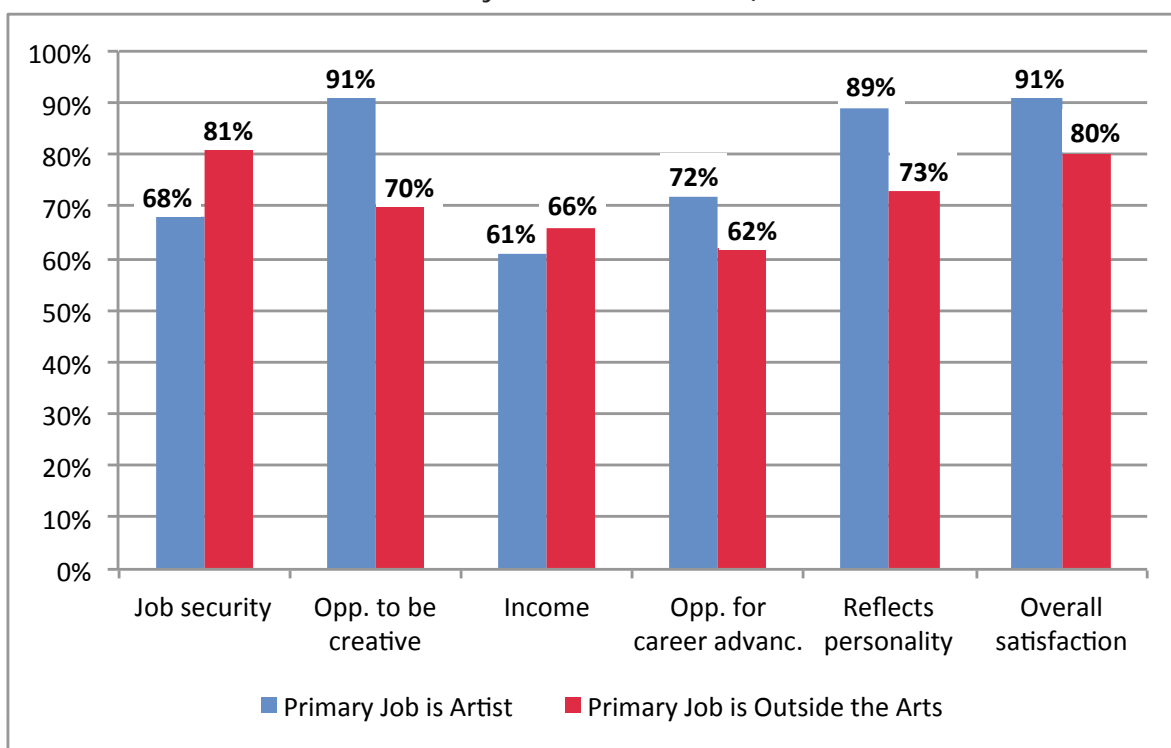
<sup>a</sup> Satisfied refers to those who responded “somewhat” or “very” satisfied.

<sup>b</sup> Current primary job refers to the job in which each respondent spends the majority of his/her work time.

*I cannot emphasize enough how important my education in project management, responsibility, and leadership have been in my career!*

2011 SNAAP Respondent

Figure 4: Satisfaction<sup>a</sup> with Aspect of Current Primary Job<sup>b</sup> (Professional Artists Who Work Primarily as Professional Artists Compared to Professional Artists Who Work Primarily Outside of the Arts)



<sup>a</sup> Satisfied refers to those who responded “somewhat” or “very” satisfied.

<sup>b</sup> Current primary job refers to the job in which each respondent spends the majority of his/her work time.

### The Income Outcome: Alumni with Different Arts Degrees Vary When It Comes to Earnings

SNAAP respondents with different majors vary widely when it comes to earnings and job satisfaction. Table 5 (next page) shows the percentages of SNAAP respondents who earned more than \$50,000 in 2010<sup>x</sup> by arts major and job in which they currently spend the majority of their time. For instance, just over half (54%) of *architecture majors* earned more than \$50,000, compared with almost two thirds (64%) of arts graduates who *work primarily as architects*.

The income information in Table 5 includes individual income from all sources *excluding* spousal income or interest on jointly owned assets, not just income from the job in which the respondent spends the majority of his or her work time. To illustrate, a SNAAP respondent who works primarily as an architect earning more than \$50,000 in 2010 may have earned part of that income by working at a job unrelated to architecture or even the arts. This is an important clarification inasmuch as many arts alumni earn income from multiple sources. In fact, 40% of those who currently work have two or more jobs. Even so, these data help us better understand how alumni from different disciplines and those working in various arts fields fare in



## Findings (continued)

terms of annual income, including their *satisfaction* with their earnings from the job where they spend the majority of their work time, as shown in Figure 5.

- SNAAP respondents working as sound and lighting engineers or technicians and K–12 arts educators report being generally satisfied with how much they earn in these jobs.
- Alumni who spend the majority of their time working as writers, authors, and editors and as fine artists are much less satisfied.

Figure 5 illustrates the great variance in satisfaction with earned income across artistic workers. At the same time, most arts graduates who are working are at least somewhat satisfied with their income. For instance:

- Seven of ten (70%) spending the majority of their time working in an occupation *outside of the arts* say that they are “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with the income they earn in this job.
- Sixty-three percent of SNAAP respondents working primarily in a job *within the arts* say the same.

**Table 5: Percentage of Arts Alumni Earning More Than \$50,000 in 2010<sup>a</sup>, by Selected Arts Majors<sup>b</sup> and Current Primary Jobs<sup>c</sup>**

ARTS MAJOR	CURRENT PRIMARY JOB
Percent Earning More Than \$50,000 in 2010	Percent Earning More Than \$50,000 in 2010
Architecture (54%)	Architect (64%)
Music history, composition, and theory (49%)	Multimedia artist/ animator (53%)
Arts education (48%)	Arts educator <sup>d</sup> (50%)
Design (46%)	Film/TV/Video artist (50%)
Media arts (46%)	Designer/Illustrator/Art director <sup>e</sup> (49%)
Music performance (43%)	Theater and stage director or producer (39%)
Arts administration (42%)	Arts administrator or manager <sup>f</sup> (36%)
Art history (37%)	Musician <sup>g</sup> (33%)
Other arts fields (37%)	Writer, author, or editor (31%)
Theater (37%)	Museum or gallery worker <sup>h</sup> (28%)
Fine and studio arts (34%)	Actor (26%)
Dance (31%)	Fine artist (22%)
Creative and other writing (30%)	Dancer or choreographer (9%)

<sup>a</sup> Income is self-reported individual annual income in 2010, excluding spousal income or interest on jointly-owned assets. Income was collected as a categorical variable in \$10,000 increments. Table includes only those respondents who reported their 2010 incomes.

<sup>b</sup> Excludes double majors.

<sup>c</sup> Current primary job refers to the job in which each respondent spends the majority of his/her work time.

<sup>d</sup> Includes K–12 arts educators, higher education arts educators, private teachers of the arts, and other arts educators.

<sup>e</sup> Includes graphic designers, illustrators, art directors, interior designers, web designers, and other designers.

<sup>f</sup> Includes those who work in development, marketing, and box office sales.

<sup>g</sup> Includes instrumental and vocal musicians, conductors, composers, and arrangers.

<sup>h</sup> Includes curators.

*SNAAP allows us to imagine a future where schooling, public policy, and data merge to form new ideas about igniting the passion and creativity of the next generation of artists.*

Sarah Bainter Cunningham, Executive Director of Research, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts

Of special note, greater income does not necessarily lead to greater overall job satisfaction among SNAAP respondents (Table 6, next page).

The disjuncture between income and overall job satisfaction is starkest for dancers and choreographers, less than a tenth of whom say they earned at least \$50,000 in 2010 but 97% of whom are at least somewhat satisfied with their jobs. Conversely, multimedia artists earn more than other artists, but they are less satisfied overall with their work. Other research suggesting that arts majors care less about monetary rewards than other majors (Allport et al., 1960; Getzels & Csikszentmihalyi, 1968) may help explain why income and satisfaction do not go hand in hand for SNAAP respondents, a point addressed later.

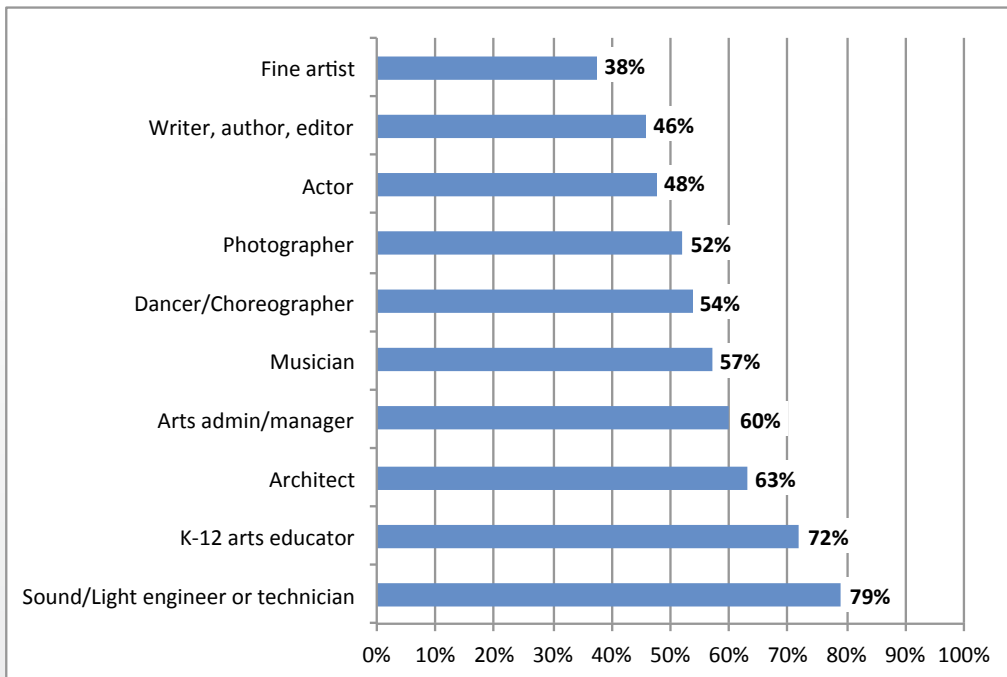
**Some Educational Reading: Arts Graduates Who Teach**

Well over half (57%) of all SNAAP respondents have at some point worked either full time or part time as teachers of the arts, and 27% do this currently. Teaching, moreover, is strongly related to type of degree earned.

- Four of ten (39%) SNAAP respondents whose highest degree is an arts-related bachelor’s teach at some point.
- Eight of ten whose highest degree is an arts-related master’s (82%) teach at some point.

These findings are expected, given that many individuals pursue master’s degrees expressly to work in the teaching field; also, many arts teaching jobs require or prefer a master’s.

**Figure 5: Percent Satisfied<sup>a</sup> with Income, by Selected Current Primary Jobs<sup>b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Satisfied refers to those who responded “somewhat” or “very” satisfied.

<sup>b</sup> Current primary occupation refers to the job in which each respondent spends the majority of his/her work time.



## Findings (continued)

**Table 6: Percentage of Arts Alumni Earning More Than \$50,000 in 2010<sup>a</sup> and Percent Satisfied<sup>b</sup> with Selected Current Primary Jobs<sup>c</sup>**

PERCENT EARNING MORE THAN \$50,000 IN 2010	PERCENT INDICATING SATISFACTION WITH PRIMARY JOB
(By Current Primary Job, Highest to Lowest)	(By Current Primary Job, Highest to Lowest)
Architect (64%)	Dancer or choreographer (97%)
Multimedia artist/Animator (53%)	Fine artist (94%)
Arts educator <sup>d</sup> (50%)	Musician (93%)
Film/TV/Video artist (50%)	Arts educator (92%)
Designer/Illustrator/Art director <sup>e</sup> (49%)	Museum or gallery worker (91%)
Theater and stage director or producer (39%)	Theater and stage director or producer (90%)
Arts administrator or manager <sup>f</sup> (36%)	Writer, author, or editor (90%)
Musician <sup>g</sup> (33%)	Arts administrator or manager (89%)
Writer, author, or editor (31%)	Designer/Illustrator/Art director (89%)
Museum or gallery worker <sup>h</sup> (28%)	Architect (88%)
Actor (26%)	Film/TV/Video artist (88%)
Fine artist (22%)	Multimedia artist/Animator (88%)
Dancer or choreographer (9%)	Actor (87%)

<sup>a</sup> Income is self-reported individual annual income in 2010, excluding spousal income or interest on jointly owned assets. Income was collected as a categorical variable in \$10,000 increments. Table includes only those respondents who reported their 2010 incomes.

<sup>b</sup> Satisfied refers to those who responded “somewhat” or “very” satisfied.

<sup>c</sup> Current primary job refers to the job in which each respondent spends the majority of his/her work time.

<sup>d</sup> Includes K–12 arts educators, higher education arts educators, private teachers of the arts, and other arts educators.

<sup>e</sup> Includes graphic designers, illustrators, art directors, interior designers, web designers, and other designers.

<sup>f</sup> Includes those who work in development, marketing, and box office sales.

<sup>g</sup> Includes instrumental and vocal musicians, conductors, composers, and arrangers.

<sup>h</sup> Includes curators.

Graduates from some artistic disciplines are more likely than others to teach at some point:

- Arts education majors are, understandably, the most likely to teach, with 94% having done so at some point and 55% currently teaching.
- More than eight out of ten dance (83%); music history, composition, and theory (82%); and music performance (81%) majors have been teachers of the arts.
- Only one third of graduates in the fields of architecture, arts administration, design, and media arts have taught at some point.

And those currently working primarily as arts educators in some capacity (higher education, K-12 education, as private teachers of the arts, or as other types of arts educators) are more likely to be “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with their jobs (92%), compared to all currently working arts graduates (86%).

Those who spend the majority of their time teaching are also more likely than other graduates to be satisfied with their:

- ability to be creative in the jobs,
- opportunities to contribute to the greater good through their work, and

*The power of the arts may seem mysterious, but what it takes to train artists well should not be. SNAAP data and metrics help understand what is needed to reform arts education at every level and in all disciplines.*

Susan Petry, Professor and Chair, Department of Dance, The Ohio State University

- work reflecting their personalities, interests, and values (Figure 6).

In addition, alumni who are currently working as teachers express satisfaction with their incomes at rates comparable to other employed arts graduates. However, this does vary by type of educator. For instance, 72% of K-12 teachers are satisfied with their income, compared to 60% of private arts instructors.

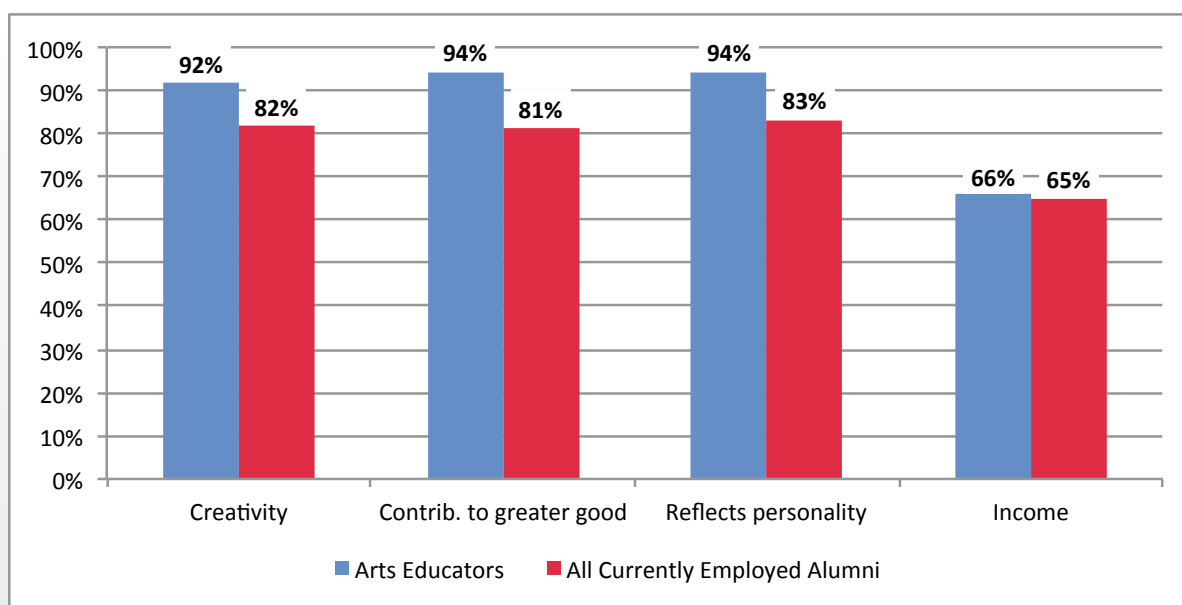
### Artistic Contributions: Participating in the Arts Outside of Work

One of the arguments for public support for the arts is that the presence and contributions of artists add depth and meaning to the human experience, thereby enhancing the quality of life for all. Thus, it's important to know how arts graduates contribute to the arts and their communities independent of their income-producing work. For frame of reference, only 2% of all Americans volunteer for

arts, cultural, or humanities organizations (Independent Sector, 2001). More than 13 times as many arts graduates (27%) indicate that they have volunteered at an arts organization in the past 12 months. In addition, almost half (45%) of arts graduates donated money to either an arts organization or an artist during the same period. This percentage is particularly noteworthy since only about 6% of all U.S. households earning under \$100,000 a year make financial contributions to the arts (Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2007).

Looking at those arts graduates whose household incomes are under \$100,000 (who represent 77% of all SNAAP respondents who indicated their 2010 household income on the survey), 37% have given money over the past year. This is more than six times the rate for Americans in general. In addition, those with arts-related master's degrees are more likely to volunteer for an arts organization, serve on the board of an arts organization, and donate money to an artist or arts organization than

Figure 6: Satisfaction<sup>a</sup> with Selected Aspects of Primary Job<sup>b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Satisfied refers to those who responded “somewhat” or “very” satisfied.

<sup>b</sup> Current primary job refers to the job in which each respondent spends the majority of his/her work time.

## Findings (continued)



their counterparts whose highest degree is an arts-related bachelor's (Table 7).

Although more than a third of arts graduates across all majors donate to the arts, those with certain majors were more likely to contribute to the arts in their non-work time:

- Dance majors were nearly twice as likely to have volunteered within arts organizations over the past year (34%) as their media arts counterparts (18%).
- Arts administration majors were the most likely to

donate money to arts organizations or artists (53%), with design majors being least likely (34%).

Overall, more than nine out of ten (92%) of SNAAP respondents supported the arts in the past 12 months in ways other than performing, creating, or exhibiting their own artwork.

Seven out of ten (72%) of all arts alumni continue to make or publicly perform their art in their non-work time, consistent with other research showing a strong connection between arts training and arts participation

**Table 7: Percentage Indicating They Supported the Arts in the Past 12 Months, by Highest Arts Degree Earned**

WAY OF SUPPORTING THE ARTS	ARTS-RELATED BACHELOR'S IS HIGHEST DEGREE	ARTS-RELATED MASTER'S IS HIGHEST DEGREE
Support the Arts (General)	90%	95%
Volunteer at Arts Organization	23%	34%
Serve on Board of Arts Organization	9%	20%
Donate Money to Arts	38%	51%

**Table 8: Percentage of Alumni from Arts Disciplines<sup>a</sup> Who Make or Perform Art during Personal (Non-Work) Time**

ARTS MAJOR	PERCENT MAKING/PERFORMING ART IN NON-WORK TIME
Music history, composition, and theory	82%
Fine/Studio arts	81%
Music performance	81%
Creative and other writing	80%
Other arts major	78%
Arts education	77%
Design	68%
Media arts	67%
Theater	66%
Architecture	62%
Dance	61%
Arts administration	53%
Art history	51%

<sup>a</sup> Excludes double majors.



*I was uneducated and underexposed to all the resources my school had available to help me develop a career.*

2011 SNAAP Respondent

later in life (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). However, some alumni are more active in pursuing artistic activities outside of their work than others (Table 8).

- At least eight out of ten alumni from the following fields make or perform art during their personal (non-work) time (Table 8):
  - Music history, composition, and theory
  - Fine and studio arts
  - Music performance
  - Creative or other writing
- Theater and dance majors are much less likely to make or perform art during personal time, 66% and 61%, respectively.
- Arts administration majors (53%) and art history majors (51%) are the least likely to create art in their non-work time.



## What to Make of All This

Arts training institutions are an essential component of the creative economy, and they are preparing more graduates for the workforce than ever before. The 2011 SNAAP results point to six conclusions.

First, the arts alumni responding to the SNAAP survey are employed at rates equivalent to other Americans with similar levels of education. They are also quite positive about their arts school experiences and careers. These data from SNAAP support other research which indicates that artists are as satisfied with their jobs as individuals working in other fields. Approximately 53% of college graduates surveyed between 1988 and 2010 indicated that they were very satisfied with their jobs, according to data from the General Social Survey (GSS), a national survey of attitudes and demographics of U.S. residents conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago. The GSS data (1988 to 2010) indicate that 59% of artists (performing artists, designers, actors and directors, and musicians) are very satisfied with their work, compared to, for instance, 52% of lawyers, 54% of financial managers, and 53% of high school teachers (General Social Survey, 2011). Furthermore, the nature of their primary jobs notwithstanding, the majority of SNAAP respondents use their non-working time to create their own art and support the art-making of others.

Second, within this generally promising pattern of satisfaction and performance are variations by different academic majors. For instance, arts education majors are the most satisfied with their jobs, regardless of the field in which they are working. Music history, composition, and theory majors are the most likely to make or perform art in their time away from work, while those with arts administration degrees donate to the arts at the highest rates. Dance majors are most likely to teach arts at some point in their careers, while only one third of graduates in design and media do so. More art history majors than arts education majors report that they were satisfied with the advising opportunities they were offered while in school.



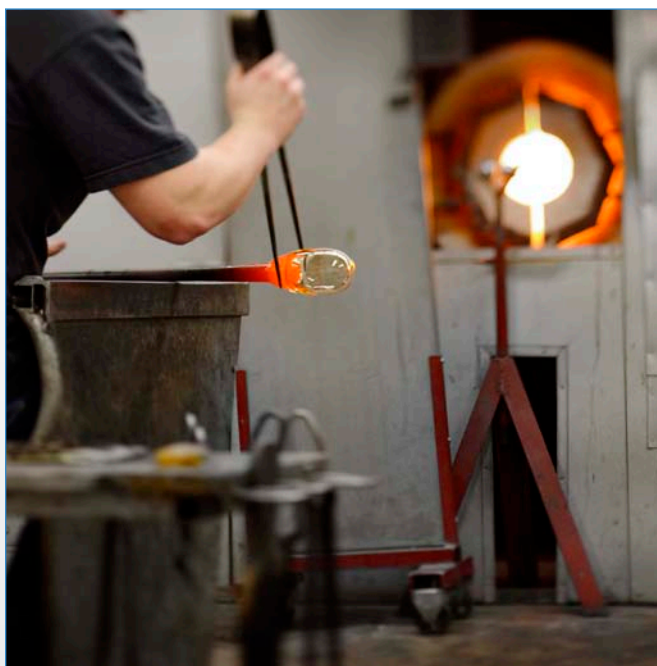
## Findings (continued)

At the same time, it is important to recognize that the precursors and dimensions of satisfaction are multifaceted. As noted earlier, arts-related bachelor's degree holders are more satisfied with job security than those whose highest degree is an arts-related master's degree. Perhaps master's degree recipients in higher-ranking positions may feel more pressure and less job security as a result. More research is needed to better understand why job satisfaction differs by degree type.

Third, the diverse interests, educational goals, and career aspirations of arts students as they begin and move through their educational programs have implications for how schools advise students, design and implement curricula, and provide services during and after their formal training. It is often thought that one attends an arts training institution for the purpose of becoming a full time artist, and yet a substantial number of students who attend arts training institutions, in every discipline, never intend to work as artists. By the same token, some go to an arts school to learn arts administration but still have at least some intention to work as professional artists. And there are many students who do not go to school to learn how to

teach but nonetheless end up spending considerable time teaching the arts in a variety of contexts. Schools should consider how to align both curricular and extracurricular experiences in light of these different motivations, aspirations, and work experiences.

With regard to meeting a broader set of student needs, some findings are cause for concern. Recall that between one third and one half of graduate program alumni were dissatisfied with their school's professional development efforts, suggesting that more attention be given to ways to prepare students for specific areas of work and better align the curriculum with workforce needs. Understanding the experiences of arts graduates who majored in different fields at the undergraduate and graduate levels is important in order to identify programmatic strengths and weaknesses and realistically prepare them for what they can expect later in their careers, whether doing art or something else. For example, arts programs can emphasize their strengths of outstanding instruction and performance or exhibition opportunities to recruit potential students, while also developing some more practical career-centered advising and experiences to aid graduating students in their transition to the workforce.



Fourth, again this year, SNAAP findings remind us of the crucial role teaching plays in the lives of many arts graduates as well the importance of arts education for supplying the nation with highly trained arts professionals. At some point in their careers, more than half teach art full or part time. As George Bernard Shaw famously wrote, "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches" (1903). This saying implies that people who study to be artists would largely prefer to pursue life as full time professional artists rather than teach. But this is a false dichotomy, as teaching seems to be a large part of the portfolio of being an artist and a prominent platform for professional practice and creativity. In fact, not only is teaching an important part of the arts graduate's career mix, it appears to be largely a positive experience; SNAAP respondents working as teachers are more satisfied with various aspects of their work than their counterparts. Those who spend the majority of their

## *All schools need to do a better job of explaining the impact of carrying a student loan.* 2011 SNAAP Respondent

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work time teaching are more likely than other graduates to express satisfaction with their ability to be creative in their jobs, with their opportunities to contribute to the greater good through their work, and with their work's reflection of their personalities, interests, and values. At the same time, those who teach art, especially those who teach in public K–12 schools where staffing cuts and curricular changes continue to marginalize the role of the arts, face considerable hurdles. Satisfaction may have more to do with the intrinsic value of the work itself rather than with the quality of work environment.

Fifth, many factors influence the outcomes that arts graduates report. The results reported here focus on differences across majors and degree levels. But, there are other important student differences that might influence outcomes and further research is necessary to investigate. Some of these issues are the ways in which arts degrees may offer different rewards for students of varying genders, races and ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographic origins; for students who attend various types of educational institutions; or for students who double major versus focusing their energies solely within a single arts discipline.

Finally, the worth of an arts degree must be measured by both pecuniary and non-pecuniary benefits. Much has been made of recent reports using national income data showing that arts graduates have lower than average earnings (Carnevale et al., 2011; “13 Most Useless Majors,” 2012). Tangible economic benefits are unquestionably important, but calibrating the success of arts graduates only by how much they make does a disservice not only to those who practice their art and apparently derive great satisfaction from doing so, but also to the communities they enrich with artistic contributions through sharing their artistic creations, teaching, and supporting other artists. As the results from SNAAP suggest, how much arts graduates earn in a given year has little relationship to how satisfied they are with their work. Moreover, for many arts graduates, satisfaction is more a function of whether they can express creativity in their work, their opportunities to contribute

to their communities, and the extent to which their work is congruent with their personalities and interests. In fact, as noted earlier, arts graduates with the highest incomes are not necessarily the most satisfied in their jobs. Those who may not be as satisfied with their jobs might still contribute to their artistic communities, in the form of donations and time, at higher rates. Arts alumni, on average, earn less than their peers with equivalent degrees in other fields yet, when asked if they would go back to their degree-granting institutions and do it all over again, most (77%) answered in the affirmative.<sup>xi</sup> For many of these graduates, going to an arts training institution was “worth it”; they gained invaluable skills that they continue to draw upon whether or not they work as professional artists—both at work and in their non-work time.

To a non-trivial degree, the way in which the Census and many other data collection efforts measure employment and income distorts the reality of the professional artist. Many professional artists, such as dancers, actors, and even design specialists, are employed intermittently or do contract work. For example, recent reports using the American Community Survey find that graduates with arts degrees have higher rates of unemployment than similar degree holders from other disciplines (Carnevale et al., 2011). But, within the parameters of these other surveys, many professional artists who worked the month prior or may work the month afterwards are categorized as unemployed if they report—as many who are self-employed will—that they are “looking for work.” SNAAP data not only provides a richer look at the value of an educational experience, but they also provide a more complex picture of the work context in which many graduates of arts training institutions find themselves.

Single-dimension measures cannot adequately or accurately capture the diverse palette of arts graduates' educational experiences and their post-graduation lives and careers. This annual report from SNAAP is a much-needed window into the role and relevance of arts training and the power that arts schools have to enrich the lives of graduates and the creativity of our communities.



## Looking Forward

**S**NAAP was founded to pursue two goals critical to supporting high quality arts education. The first is to provide arts education institutions with reliable, actionable data they can use to improve their programs and services. The second is to create a national resource to which arts leaders, researchers, policy makers, and families of future arts students can turn to better understand the value of arts education. These two goals continue to drive all that SNAAP is and does.

SNAAP represents what we understand is the largest data set ever compiled on arts education outcomes. This information promises to serve a wide variety of stakeholders, including arts school leaders and faculty, researchers, policy makers, and those who want to pursue a career in the arts. A self-sustaining enterprise, SNAAP findings are being used by arts training institutions for accreditation self-studies and program review, curricular reform, and communications with their graduates and future students. We will continue to periodically convene participating schools to understand the implications of what their alumni are saying as well as find ways to make

SNAAP data available to other researchers who share our interest in enhancing the vitality of arts education. And we look forward to discussions with arts alumni, arts leaders, policy makers, and scholars about the pressing issues and challenges facing the field of arts education and artists and how SNAAP can be of service.

Toward this end, next year, March 7–9, 2013, the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy at Vanderbilt University will host a national conference, *Three Million Stories: Understanding the Lives and Careers of America's Arts Graduates*. This convening will bring together individuals who have a stake in understanding and supporting artists and their careers. Participants will consider the state of arts education and today's market for creative labor with an eye toward providing arts education programs and arts students with the resources necessary to help them move forward in their careers. For more information, contact [snaap@indiana.edu](mailto:snaap@indiana.edu).

The SNAAP team looks forward to working with our colleagues at the National Endowment for the Arts and with other funders to develop sets of questions that focus on issues that arts schools and policy makers want to learn more about, such as educational debt, workplace skills, internship experiences, and artist migration patterns. In fall 2013, SNAAP will release the first in what is to be a series of national reports that draws upon a wide range of research to describe the landscape of efforts to prepare people for creative work in the 21st century.

Finally, as Ken Fischer noted in the foreword, SNAAP aims to increase the number and diversity of participating institutions and alumni and to continually improve the survey process and the utility of the results so that they are even more meaningful to all stakeholders. In the meantime, we are grateful for the opportunity to work with so many dedicated, forward-thinking people around the country who are committed to improving the quality of arts education and informing cultural policy. We invite you to join us in this timely, much-needed endeavor.





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*SNAAP provides quantifiable proof that a background in the arts contributes to satisfaction with one's chosen profession and important skills and competencies in the areas of critical thinking, creativity, communication, teamwork, and leadership.*

Carlos Martinez, Principal, Gensler

## Notes

<sup>i</sup> From 1996 to 2010, more than 1.5 million degrees were awarded in the visual and performing arts, with annual graduations growing steadily from 75,000 to 129,000—an increase of 73 percent (Americans for the Arts, 2012).

<sup>ii</sup> The SNAAP report can only draw conclusions about SNAAP participants. Even though its total sample size is quite large—more than 36,000—it represents only a portion of alumni from schools that chose to participate. In other words, it is not a random sample of all arts graduates.

<sup>iii</sup> Because this section evaluates institutional experiences, it compares alumni who were enrolled in graduate-level programs to alumni who were enrolled in undergraduate-level programs within their SNAAP reporting institutions. It does not encompass any arts degree an individual has received in her lifetime.

<sup>iv</sup> Comparisons with national employment figures should be made with caution. SNAAP employment numbers are based on different measures than those used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). SNAAP directly asks respondents whether they are “currently unemployed and looking for work.” The BLS asks whether respondents earned money last week from a job; if they did not, they follow up and ask them if they were looking for work. If a respondent did not earn money last week and was looking for work, he or she is counted as unemployed. National figures may underreport artist employment because many artists are self-employed and earn money intermittently based on job flow. Many self-employed artists are continuously looking for work (their next gig) and may not have earned money last week because they are between jobs. The BLS would count them as unemployed, whereas SNAAP would count them as employed unless they specifically indicate “unemployed.”

<sup>v</sup> In comparing those with bachelor's and master's degrees in the arts, this report analyzes two groups of SNAAP respondents: (1) those who have earned a bachelor's in the arts (B Arch, BFA, BM, B Mus, or BA in an arts major), but no higher degree; and (2) those who have earned a master's degree in the arts (MFA, M Arch, MM, or M Mus) but no higher degree or non-arts master's. Those in the second group may have received bachelor's degrees in either arts-

related or non-arts majors. Alumni indicate their degrees received at their SNAAP reporting institutions as well as any additional institutions.

<sup>vi</sup> Respondents are asked “Have you ever worked, either full or part time, in an occupation as an artist (where you create or perform your art)? Remember, we consider a broad array of arts including designers, architects, writers, media producers, fine artists, filmmakers, performers, musicians, and others.”

<sup>vii</sup> “SNAAP defines “artist” and “the arts” broadly, and includes the field of architecture. See “Quick SNAAP Facts” in this report for more information.

<sup>viii</sup> Three percent of respondents with four or more years of college in a national survey (General Social Survey) indicated they were very dissatisfied with their primary job.

<sup>ix</sup> “Currently work as professional artists” includes SNAAP respondents who indicate that they currently work, either full or part time, in an occupation as an artist (creating or performing their own art). “Working primarily as professional artist” includes those who say they are currently working as professional artists and indicate that they are spending the majority of their time working in any occupation which involves producing art (excludes arts-related occupations of arts administration, museum/gallery work, and arts educators). “Working primarily outside of the arts” includes individuals who say they are currently working as professional artists but indicate that they are spending the majority of their time working in an occupation outside of the arts.

<sup>x</sup> The average income nationally for those with a bachelor's degree in 2010 was \$57,621 (United States Census Bureau, 2011).

<sup>xi</sup> “Probably yes” or “definitely yes,” versus “definitely no,” “probably no,” or “uncertain.” 14% responded “uncertain.”



## Participating Institutions 2008-2011

### Alabama

Judson College  
University of Alabama  
University of Mobile  
University of Montevallo

### Alaska

University of Alaska Anchorage\*

### Arkansas

Arkansas State University

### California

American Academy of Dramatic Arts  
Art Center College of Design  
California Baptist University\*  
California College of the Arts  
California Institute of the Arts\*  
California Lutheran University\*  
California State University–Dominguez Hills  
Chapman University  
Idyllwild Arts Academy\*\*  
Los Angeles County High School for the Arts\*\*  
Oakland School for the Arts†  
Orange County High School for the Arts†  
Otis College of Art and Design  
San Francisco Art Institute  
San Francisco Conservatory of Music  
San Francisco State University  
University of California–Berkeley\*  
University of California–Davis\*  
University of California–Irvine\*  
University of California–Los Angeles\*  
University of California–Merced\*  
University of California–Riverside\*  
University of California–San Diego\*  
University of California–Santa Barbara\*  
University of California–Santa Cruz\*  
University of Southern California

### Colorado

Colorado State University  
Colorado State University–Pueblo  
University of Colorado at Boulder\*  
University of Denver

### Connecticut

Central Connecticut State University  
Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts  
Western Connecticut State University

### Delaware

University of Delaware

### District of Columbia

Corcoran College of Art + Design  
Duke Ellington School of the Arts†

### Florida

Douglas Anderson School of the Arts\*\*  
Florida International University  
Florida State University  
New World School of the Arts‡  
Palm Beach Atlantic University  
Ringling College of Art and Design  
University of Miami  
University of South Florida

### Georgia

Berry College  
Columbus State University  
Georgia College & State University  
Georgia Southern University\*  
Kennesaw State University  
Shorter University  
Wesleyan College

### Hawaii

University of Hawaii at Manoa

### Idaho

University of Idaho

### Illinois

Chicago Academy for the Arts†  
Chicago State University  
Columbia College Chicago\*  
DePaul University\*  
Loyola Chicago University  
Millikin University  
Roosevelt University  
School of the Art Institute of Chicago\*

### Indiana

Herron School of Art and Design, Indiana  
University–Purdue University  
Indianapolis\*  
Indiana University\*  
Purdue University\*  
Saint Mary's College

### Iowa

Drake University  
Iowa State University  
Morningside College  
University of Northern Iowa

### Kansas

Kansas State University

### Kentucky

Morehead State University  
Northern Kentucky University  
University of Kentucky

### Louisiana

Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts\*\*  
Louisiana State University\*  
New Orleans Center for Creative Arts†

### Maine

Maine College of Art



## Participating Institutions 2008-2011 (continued)

### Maryland

*Baltimore School of the Arts*\*†  
*Maryland Institute College of Art*\*  
*Peabody Institute, Johns Hopkins University*

### Massachusetts

*Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University*  
*Boston Arts Academy*†  
*Boston Conservatory*  
*Boston University*  
*Massachusetts College of Art and Design*  
*New England Conservatory*  
*New England School of Art & Design, Suffolk University*  
*School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*  
*University of Massachusetts, Amherst*\*  
*Walnut Hill School*†

### Michigan

*Albion College*\*  
*Alma College*  
*College for Creative Studies*  
*Hope College*  
*Interlochen Arts Academy*\*†  
*Kendall College of Art and Design at Ferris State University*\*  
*University of Michigan*\*  
*Western Michigan University*\*

### Minnesota

*College of Visual Arts*\*  
*Minneapolis College of Art and Design*  
*St. Cloud State University*\*  
*St. Olaf College*  
*University of Minnesota Duluth*  
*Winona State University*

### Mississippi

*Delta State University*

### Missouri

*Columbia College*  
*Culver-Stockton College*  
*Kansas City Art Institute*  
*University of Missouri–Saint Louis*  
*Webster University*

### Montana

*University of Montana–Missoula*

### Nebraska

*University of Nebraska at Omaha*  
*University of Nebraska–Lincoln*

### New Jersey

*College of New Jersey*  
*Montclair State University*  
*Rowan University*  
*Seton Hall University*\*  
*William Paterson University of New Jersey*

### New York

*Alfred University*\*  
*Barnard College*  
*The City College of New York*\*  
*The Cooper Union School of Art*  
*Hamilton College*\*  
*The Juilliard School*  
*LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts*†  
*Manhattan School of Music*\*  
*New York School of Interior Design*  
*New York University*\*  
*Parsons The New School for Design*  
*Pratt Institute*  
*Purchase College*  
*School of Visual Arts*  
*Skidmore College*  
*State University of New York at Fredonia*  
*State University of New York at New Paltz*\*  
*Syracuse University*\*  
*University of Rochester Eastman School of Music*

### North Carolina

*East Carolina University*  
*Greensboro College*  
*University of North Carolina at Charlotte*\*  
*University of North Carolina at Greensboro*  
*University of North Carolina School of the Arts*‡  
*Western Carolina University*

### North Dakota

*North Dakota State University*\*  
*University of North Dakota*

### Ohio

*Baldwin-Wallace College*  
*Bluffton University*  
*Bowling Green State University*  
*Capital University Conservatory*  
*Cleveland Institute of Art*  
*Cleveland Institute of Music*  
*Cleveland School of the Arts*†  
*Cleveland State University*  
*Columbus College of Art and Design*  
*Hiram College*  
*Kent State University*\*  
*Miami University*\*  
*The Ohio State University*\*  
*Ohio Wesleyan University*  
*Otterbein University*  
*University of Akron, Main Campus*  
*Wittenberg University*

### Oregon

*Oregon College of Art and Craft Pacific*  
*Northwest College of Art*  
*Portland State University*

### Pennsylvania

*Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania*\*  
*Bucknell University*  
*Curtis Institute of Music*  
*Marywood University*  
*Moore College of Art and Design*\*



*Although I do not make a living as an artist, I treasure the skills, aesthetics, and worldview I obtained as part of my education.*

2011 SNAAP Respondent

*Penn State University Park  
Pennsylvania College of Art & Design  
University of the Arts*

#### **Rhode Island**

*Rhode Island School of Design\*  
University of Rhode Island*

#### **South Carolina**

*Clemson University  
Coker College\*  
College of Charleston  
Converse College  
Fine Arts Center†  
South Carolina Governor's School for  
the Arts and Humanities\*\*†  
University of South Carolina Columbia\*  
Winthrop University*

#### **South Dakota**

*Northern State University\**

#### **Tennessee**

*Belmont University  
Maryville College  
Memphis College of Art  
Vanderbilt University*

#### **Texas**

*High School for the Performing and  
Visual Arts\*\*†  
Lamar University  
North East School of the Arts†  
Rice University  
Southern Methodist University\*  
Texas Christian University  
University of Houston  
University of Mary Hardin–Baylor  
University of North Texas  
The University of Texas at Austin\*  
University of Texas at El Paso  
University of the Incarnate Word*

#### **Utah**

*Brigham Young University  
University of Utah  
Weber State University*

#### **Virginia**

*George Mason University  
James Madison University\*  
Old Dominion University  
Shenandoah University Conservatory  
Virginia Commonwealth University\**

#### **Washington**

*Cornish College of the Arts  
Pacific Lutheran University\*  
Washington State University  
Whitworth University*

#### **West Virginia**

*Davis & Elkins College  
Marshall University  
West Virginia Wesleyan College*

#### **Wisconsin**

*Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design\*  
University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire  
University of Wisconsin–Green Bay  
University of Wisconsin–Whitewater\**

#### **Wyoming**

*University of Wyoming*

#### **Canada**

*Alberta College of Art + Design\*  
Nova Scotia College of Art & Design  
OCAD University\**

\* Participated in SNAAP 2011

† Arts high school

‡ Both secondary and postsecondary alumni

#### **Photo Credits**

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of Music  
Interlochen Arts Academy  
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the Arts  
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## SnaapShot



### STRATEGIC NATIONAL ARTS ALUMNI PROJECT

TRACKING THE LIVES AND CAREERS OF ARTS GRADUATES

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The SnaapShot interactive Web site is a window into the lives and careers of arts alumni in America. SnaapShot pages feature key findings from each year's survey administration, including degrees earned, skills learned, occupations, and debt and earnings, providing valuable information for the next generation of arts students.

Find the SnaapShot here: [snaap.indiana.edu/snaapshot/](http://snaap.indiana.edu/snaapshot/)



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