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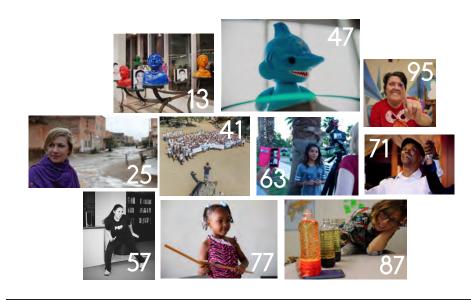
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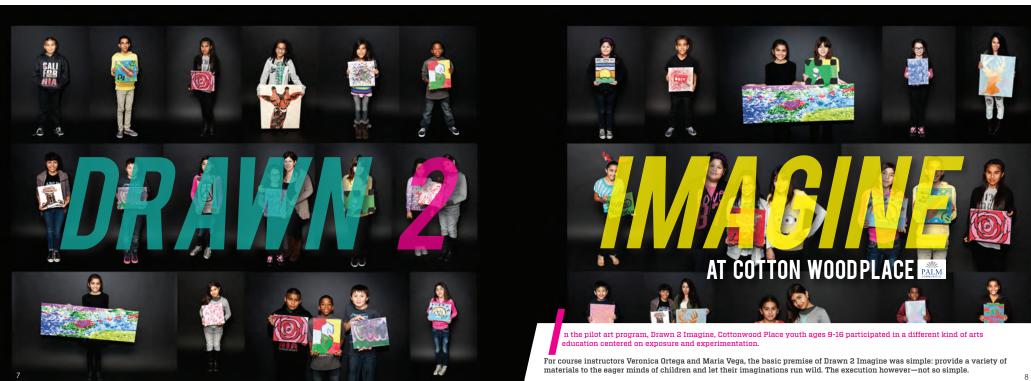
Written, edited and designed by Nuri Amanatullah, Corey Heimlich, Lauren Stevens & Kara Young Utah Offices: 2022 South 2100 East Suitte 101 • Salt Lake City, Utah 84108 • 801.819.7989 California Offices: 6265 Variel Avenue • Woodland Hills, CA 91367 • 818.789.5550



A WORD FROM RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Housing Corporation of America is a non-profit 501 (c)3 that is committed to providing quality affordable housing to the 80+ communities they serve.

HCA's Residential Service Department is dedicated to offering quality arts and educational programming to its communities that are both free of cost and accessible to residents. HCA's belief is that by making these programs within reach, residents can be actively involved and engaged within their community. This publication is an overview of just some of the individuals, organizations, and programs that help make this happen. This is Social Capital.





"Our goal was to bring the kids in and give them a safe space to be as creative as possible," states Ortega. "...To open their eyes and their hearts to what art can be. And to do that we really went to an abstract method."

Ortega is no stranger to the arts. She is a practicing artist in addition to a former instructor for Cottonwood's photography program in 2012. It was important to her that the students not only created art, but honed their conceptual skills as well.

"We introduced them to the themes, the movements and different styles of art, but also the creative process. How to go from thinking, sketching, mapping it out - not necessarily finishing projects in one day or making instant art. It was more about growing their skills as artists and developing their minds towards branching out into creative expression."

Co-instructor Maria, a UC Riverside graduate with a major in Art History and Administrative Studies, echoed this emphasis on the value of the process to expression. As she points out, this approach to artistic discovery is not without its challenges.

"WE INTRODUCED THEM TO THEMES, TO MOVEMENTS AND



DIFFERENT STYLES OF ART, BUT ALSO THE CREATIVE PROCESS."



As it turns out, Drawn 2 Imagine was as much about breaking down preconceived notions of art as it was about making art itself. Each day began with a question or a journal entry. Ortega and Vega would then expose the students to various artists, art movements and styles before tying the information into the day's project.

The end result culminated in a final exhibition showcasing a staggering number of finished pieces, both visually stunning and critically thorough.

While not as political or immense as Picasso's 'Guernica', and other famous works introduced throughout the program, the students' work similarly relied on color, shape, and form to represent emotions. They were not only finished works of art but symbols of budding artists.

By arming them with a multitude of mediums including pencils, markers, pastels, watercolors and acrylic paints, Ortega and Vega were able to inspire more thoughtful and critical work.

"If we had older students who finished early or were done with their own projects we would push them to think of something a little more advanced," states Vega. "We would ask them to do a little more with the background or to conceptualize a little bit more."

Motivating relatively mature and experienced artists to dig deeper into themes or ideas can be challenging. With younger students with shorter attention spans it's even harder. Yet, as Ortega mentions, this brand of hands-on arts immersion is just what communities like Cottonwood need.

"We have an under-served population and a very diverse community if you look at our group of students," Ortega states. "The Moreno Valley is diverse, but it doesn't offer a lot. It is very rewarding to work in my own community, have HCA support, and bring the chance to have this program in here with these students."



them feel intimidated by paper and feel like they have to do something figurative," explains Vega. "For a lot of them that's

what their conception of art was-figures and objects. We

tried to get them away from that."





hat do a dragon, Lebron James and an elephant seal have in common?

All have been the subject of HCA and InSite development's flagship sculpture program. In the past three installments, residents at two Antelope Valley communities have had their hand at sculpting pop-culture references, whimsical creatures and have even tackled the form of President Barack Obama

current events in the form of President Barack Obama.

The fourth installation of sculpture however,

looked inward for inspiration and drew its reference material from a different source—the artists themselves.

Simply titled SCULPT, the program gave Arbor at Palmdale and Village Pointe residents a chance to create self-portraits out of clay. Kicking off with a professional photo-shoot, the culmination of the program was an exhibition at the Museum of Art and History (MOAH) on the newly revamped Lancaster Blvd. It was an evening of bright lights & bold colors, ceramic doppelgangers set



Above. Affiliature building process. All affiliature is a support system on which the ceramic clay is placed to provide both stability and its

66 BEFORE THE GLITZ AND GLAM OF THE EXHIBITION THERE WAS THE GRIME AND GRIND OF THE SCULPTING PROCESS 77

to an artful backdrop of concurrent portrait exhibitions at MOAH. But before the glitz and glam of the event, there was the grime and grind of the sculpting process. As polished as the finished pieces look on display, make no mistake, this is THE quintessential hands-on program.

Whereas the theme and subject matter were straight forward, nothing else about this program was. While many cartoon characters and animals have an iconic likeness that can be easily recognized across many mediums, drawing something both figurative and definitively human can be tricky. Sculpting a human likeness is downright difficult and sculpting a likeness of yourself? Some would say, "No way." SCULPT proved the unimaginable.





Above: Display showing the process steps for creating a sculpture. Below: Sculpt Instructors Kelsey Brown and Nuri Amanatullah.



With each sculpture program that passes, the first idea is something along the lines of "What an amazing program...How can we top this?" And it's not just to turn heads. Having a recurrent class runs the risk of eventually wearing thin on participants, even with a medium as dynamic as ceramics. A consistent challenge is how to keep ideas and minds fresh so that the output is engaging for participants and viewers alike.

As the lead sculpture instructor of 4 previous sculpture programs, I was well accustomed to these challenges. Short attention spans, homework/scheduling conflicts and difficulty in execution can immediately derail a project, especially with the younger participants. But right from the start we knew the potential of the program.

"It allowed them to see themselves differently," states my co-instructor, Kelsey Brown. "So much of our adolescence is spent wanting to fit in. Dressing like everyone else, talking and acting like them. This program blew all of that up. From the details on the sculptures to each finished piece being a different color, we wanted the students to embrace those difference."

Kelsey, a Palmdale native with a B.S. in Biology from UC Santa Cruz, understands the value of programs like these.

"[Arbor at Palmdale] is right around the corner from where I grew up. I wish I had a chance to participate in something like this."

Because the daunting task of sculpting a subject as nuanced as the human face is at least collegiate level course work, we thought that the more visual references we had, the better. Rather than everyone trying to balance a mirror while sculpting, we arranged for our colleague, Nicole Weinstock, to come up for a

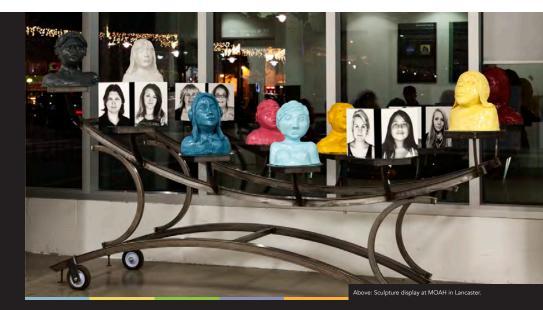


photo shoot at both properties. We captured five different angles for each participant which they used during their sculpting process.

"So many of the students thought their photos were silly or they were embarrassed of them," Kelsey continues. "It took them a while to start to see those images as visual references and subject matter rather than a picture that they would have in their yearbook. It took themselves out of their everyday context and allowed them to create more objectively, desensitizing them a bit to their imperfections."

After weeks of pulling, molding, scraping and smoothing, the pieces were on display at MOAH, a world-class forum for the arts. InSite and HCA's partnership with MOAH has given greater credence to an already robust program; and having Antelope Valley residents showcase their work along with contemporary greats is something none will soon forget.



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THIS PROGRAM BLEW ALL OF THAT UP. 7.7

Above: Sculpt participants and their ceramic counters.

Thomas Safran & Associates RESIDENT SERVICES

By Nuri Amanatullah

"Our goal is to enhance the world in which we live and enrich the lives of the people who reside in our buildings."

The above quote, Thomas Safran & Associates' credo, is a summation of the company philosophy as a developer, management company, and residential services. In fact, those are the first words spoken by Director of Residential Services, Analec Villalpando, during our interview on a sunny afternoon at Skyline Village in downtown Los Angeles. I sit down with Analec Villalpando and Janine Evans, Resident Services Coordinator to discuss their holistic approach to identify and serve the needs of their residents, and TSA's partnership with Housing Corporation of America.

Analee states, "TSA does an exceptional job of making these buildings; adding all of these amenities, landscaping all of these features that really make our residents feel like they are at home. What we do is take it to another level and provide our residents with the tools and resources that they may need to really empower themselves and fulfill their goals—to improve or live better lives."

Part of what makes TSA so impressive is that very commitment to excellence on all levels. Beautiful buildings are nice to look at, but they don't make happy homes on their own. On the other side of the coin, engaging programming can not impact lives if they are lived in run down units.

Analee has been with TSA for 5 years and before that worked with the Youth Policy Institute in after-school programming with high school students. At one point the UCLA graduate had her sights on another career path:

"I thought that I was going to join the Peace Corps and eventually work at the UN and just save the world. What I got out of my studies was how do you empower a group of people? How do you make people independent and give them the tools to empower themselves? So right after college I joined Youth Policy Institute. Which primarily offers after school programming to inner city high schools. I was in downtown (LA) and I oversaw the afterschool program at a high school of about 400 students—similar to what I do at TSA, but at micro-level."

While not exactly the Peace Corps, Analee knew she could affect change and make a difference in lives, at least locally. As she would soon find out, her time at the Youth Policy Institute would be preparing her for something bigger.

"A lot of what we focused on was how do we provide a comprehensive program to our students so the have plenty of opportunities after school to help build their resume', look good for scholarship applications or just have a safe environment to be themselves and explore their interests? I was there for a year when the rare opportunity to get involved with TSA came available to be in the ResidentServices Department. When I learned about what TSA was doing I thought, "I can do what I'm doing now, but on a bigger scale."

And Analee cites the broader scale as a major component for her joining TSA.

"We don't have to go through red tape, all of the barriers that prevent people from implementing several of the programs that they want to do. We have a lot of potential. It's a rare and unique opportunity to come up with the programs that you think are really cool based off of what the residents are asking for."

Analee also continues with the added logistics of

planning for such programs and keeping them

"How do I come up with a program in a creative way that addresses that need? And then I have the budget for it. Then see it on the ground level. Implementing it. Seeing what the resident responses are like. It's so cool to be able to see that from start to finish. Now we are just thinking about expanding—what more can we do? That's the cool thing about what we do: there is no ceiling. There's so much that we can do and we can make an impact right here, in IA count."

From a residential services perspective the ability to provide quality programming without fear of limited resources or wading through grant applications, is a huge boon and enables TSA to maintain a high standard of living for residents

"There's a lot of other management companies out there that deliver resident services their own way." continues Analee. "We found what our bread and butter is. We realize that we have this model that we've been running at all of our properties. We always make sure we have monthly birthday parties. That's a huge thing for Tom. He believes everybody should have an opportunity to blow out a candle on their birthday. Between what we saw with Tom's vision, what was already happening on the properties and some of the things that we have to do as part of compliance, we realized what we want at all of our buildings: To offer a birthday party once a month. We want all of our buildings to have exercise classes. Educational classes. And all of these depending on what the needs are of the residents and what they are asking for. Recreational activities are things that either the residents volunteer and want to do themselves or hey, we have a billiards table already. Let's take advantage of this resource we have and

community activity around it. Then we have our scholarship, camp programs, tickets to the theatre. That's our standard model that we like to have running across all of our buildings. At a minimum that's what we aim to do and then of course all of the different programs we have done with HCA. Together it makes a comprehensive approach to activities."

TSA and HCA's partnership elevates programming beyond what many would think possible to be offered at affordable-income housing. By splitting the cost, both organizations are able to service communities of all ages throughout the Southern California area.

"In the past couple of years, TSA and HCA's partnership has really developed so that we can really bring in those flagship programs into our buildings," states Analee. "That partnership really helps take our programming above and beyond what we already provide for our residents. Two programs that come to mind is the Stagebridge theatre program that we brought to Montecito. It probably took about two years of behind the scenes to get that going. We found this amazing organization that focuses on how seniors age healthfully through theatre and performance. It was a 10-week program and Cheryl, the manager there, said she saw residents who would not normally hang out with each other before, now hang out in the community room before and after class while practicing with each other and saying hi. There was this whole new sense of camaraderie because of this program. And of course they are all actors there at Montecito so this was their time to shine! We did 2 back-to-back performances in one night and it



TSA Director of Residential Services, Analee Villalpando

"I've always believed in the society and the individual and how your environment can set you up for success or for failure.

I think we create an environment that sets people up for success."

was just incredible. These residents still hang out with each other to this day. It also sparked resident engagement without having the manager getting too involved. Now there's a resident council there that helps plan and coordinate all of the fancy monthly parties. That one program created a whole bunch of ripple effects that we didn't anticipate."

Analee continues to describe a unique entrepreneurial program at another property.

"At Jefferson Square we brought our own type of STEM program with Vivy Chao's program. It was geared towards the youth and entrepreneurship and how they can use problem solving to reach their goals. They were supposed to come up with an innovative idea or concept. It's great to see these programs spark some momentum, some enthusiasm with the residents so they are asking, "Okay, what's next for use."

Our partnership is really great bringing in those cornerstone programs that I don't think we would be able to do alone."

Analee's point about the residents taking more ownership over the programming at certain properties is an example of the ideal outcome for residential services. Not so there is less to do or remove some responsibility from ownership, but rather to build an even stronger foundation for community interaction and participation. If residents feel safe and encouraged to take initiative, communities with robust and meaningful programs will effectively be creating tomorrow's leaders simply by connecting the dots and giving the residents the outlets they need to be successful.

Janine Evans, the new Residential Services Coordinator working with Analee on programming, chimes in:

"It's independent living. The goal is to not create a dependency on something. It is to empower the individuals to seek out solutions and problem solve independently or as a group with their peers. Programs like that focus and bring attention to what the residents are looking for, what their needs are and give them the tools towards self-empowerment. It's a powerful thing that I haven't ever seen before."

Before TSA, Janine worked as a community outreach coordinator for a non-profit that provides mental health and case management services to older adults, adults with disabilities, and informal caregivers. Janine received a MSW from UCLA with an emphasis on Organizations, Communities, and Policies. Janine also carned a BA. in Sociology from California State University, Northridge.

"I've always been interested in the aging process," Janine explains. "My focus during undergrad was on hospice and end of life, people with cognitive impairments. When I went to graduate school, I focused more on the macro end of things. Policy and groups and community-based organizing, and advocacy. I felt like I could do more good in a larger scale than I could in a clinical, one-on-one scale. Before I came to TSA, I was excited to be a part of it and hearing about all of the work that TSA and HCA has done together is really icing on the cake as far as the quality of resources and services provided. It's really amazing. I don't know if anyone provides programming like that."

"Especially the fact that we offer it for free," adds

break down for residents. It shows that TSA is really progressive as far as access to social services—moving towards more social resources. What's available in the community and making sure residents have access to those resources. Having someone on staff, someone who can help sort what's applicable to [residents'] well being is something that a lot of other property management companies haven't done yet. But I anticipate that TSA will blaze that trail."

Analee, "That's a whole barrier that we try to

Janine's background certainly helps in making those connections as she states that resident services does not just provide programming, but also assists in making sure residents are aware of other organizations and services that can provide even more.

"You can only do so much based on where you reside if you don't have access to things like transportation and money, so what's available in the community and how we can enhance the residents' knowledge of that and knowledge of things maybe within their reach that they don't even realize. I've always believed in the society and the individual and how your environment can set you up for success or for failure. I think we create an environment that sets people up for success."



TSA Residential Services Coordinator, Janine Evan





Stevenson Manor, Hollywood, C

HOLLYWOOD, CA

t all started with an email.

"Maybe one month into my new position, there was an email circulating about a program done in Brazil that connected senior citizens with kids learning English in Rio De Janeiro, via Skype," says Kara Young the Creative Coordinator for HCA. "I had just started working at HCA and I remember thinking that it would be a great first project to prove myself on."

Young, a returned Peace Corps Volunteer, had previously spent time working at summer camps and with after school programming for youth in a small Moroccan village in Northern Africa. "It felt a bit kismet, because here was this program everyone wanted to do, I had quite a few contacts still in Morocco, and I still felt connected with other volunteers currently working there," says Young. "So I pitched the idea of teaching English with Morocco, which most can't even locate on a map, and everything seemed like it would be fairly simple."

was selected to be the property for the pilot program.

"Stevenson was ideal because up. For example, the kids in it has this beautiful community Morocco are practicing room that is perfect for a class, Muslims while many of the active seniors if you promote seniors at Stevenson are hard enough, and also the Jewish. Suddenly we aren't manager Paola was excited for only bridging language it and that is the biggest barriers and age gaps, but indicator of success with a we're trying to leap over very program usually," says Young. delicate religious and cultural "Initially when selecting the issues". property, we failed to notice that the property had a very high Russian speaking came to the Stevenson contingency-a few not able to speak English- so we thought 'oh two birds one stone! Both sides can learn English together'!"

Months of preparation and community meetings with the catered to two different generations.

About a month before the start "We spent many months with of the program, Stevenson this mantra of 'Plan out every Manor, a senior apartment single step and cover all community in Hollywood, CA, contingencies,' says Young. Once we actually started the class, suddenly little issues here and there started popping

> For three months, 5 seniors community room every Friday morning to practice their English via Skype.

"On the first morning we finally had a decent online connection with Morocco, the research went into the first ESL energy in the room (English as a Second immediately shifted. I felt like Language) Abroad pilot everyone's ears perked up and program with HCA. There were suddenly one of the seniors went over over to the laptop seniors, multiple test runs with and started asking a girl what the wifi connection in both classes she took in school," areas, and curriculum that says Young. "Ten minutes later another senior went over and chatted with a boy about his

day and started telling him about her own childhood growing up in Ukraine. After that class, a fire was lit in all of us. Most of the hurdles had been cleared and I think everyone felt-even the seniors-that we had just started something amazing".

However, the road to that morning was often bumpy.

Especially in Morocco.

"SUDDENLY WE AREN'T ONLY BRIDGING LANGUAGE BARRIERS AND AGE GAPS, BUT WE'RE TRYING TO LEAP OVER VERY DELICATE RELIGIOUS AND CULTURALISSUES".



A Stevenson Manor resident talking online to a Morrocan youth



Peace Corns volunteer, Samantha Wood

TINEJDAD, MOROCCO

On the eastern side of Morocco, towards Algeria, is a hot desert "oasis" called Tinejdad. It's here that Peace Corps volunteer Samantha Wood and her husband Dan Wood were sent to serve as volunteers. The pair helped with youth and entrepreneurship development in a country where 30% of the population is made up of youth, and 49% of them are neither employed or enrolled fulltime in a school

When an opportunity for an international ESL program arose, Sam was an ideal fit to teach the class. She had already been teaching English to students-mostly teen girls-and working to build a traveling library in her community.

"ESL Abroad was a great opportunity for the kids to learn the difference between generations. Teaching them polite aspects of what to say to



seniors and how to address different cultural differences", says Wood, "I've always had the desire to help people and build capacity with people--especially women".

In fact, for the ESL program Wood spent countless hours speaking Arabic to the parents of young girls trying to convince them to allow their daughters to come to class in the evenings. Educational opportunities are somewhat rare for the girls since most are required to help around the house after school. Also, due to the time difference between both cities, many girls could not attend the class because of safety issues with walking home alone at night. Something that Wood refused to accept as an excuse.

"I can walk the girls home!" suggested Wood, as she answered another potential problem thrown at her during a late night planning session.

Alongside the time difference complications, there were also the issues of not having consistent working Wi-Fi, and on the initial start date, a rare flash flood struck most of Morocco's eastern side making it difficult for students to leave their homes.

"First off, one of the many road blocks have been the elements. like things outside our control,"

says Wood. "In America we're taught that everything is in our control. There's always an IT solution somewhere. In Morocco the technology doesn't work 100% so redefining your objectives becomes the solution".

The objectives certainly morphed as the class progressed, and for every problem presented in Morocco there was an equal one at Stevenson Manor. The ever-evolving nature of the program is in fact what makes it so unique. The program took many turns throughout its conception, and influenced and built upon new aspects and skills that weren't initially intended.

"Aside from the English lessons, and connecting two different cultures, this program has also encouraged a sustainable direction for education in Tineidad", says Wood, "Through this program I was able to do additional trainings for students on using Skype for educational purposes. Something they can continue after I return home from serving".

> Samantha Wood and her husband completed their 27 months of service and returned back to the states in February 2015. They currently both live and work in St. Louis.



"WOOD SPENT COUNTLESS HOURS SPEAKING ARABIC TO THE PARENTS OF YOUNG GIRLS TRYING TO CONVINCE THEM TO ALLOW THEIR DAUGHTERS TO COME TO CLASS IN THE EVENINGS."



FOUND & ASSEMBLED ART AT STEVENSON MANOR ...



annah Cassell, the stalwart art instructor at Stevenson Manor, has been facilitating programs and classes at the property for the better part of five years. Focusing primarily on painting, residents of the Hollywood property have also dabbled in drawing, sculpture, mixed-media, cooking, and various other art forms using recycling and repurposing materials as underpinnings for much of the work. In fact, Social Capital's first interview with Cassell focused on her recycled art project at

Magnolia in North Hollywood.

When teaching art there are any number of ways an instructor can approach the wide and subjective discipline. More often than not, the approach is to familiarize students with the tools of the trade, give a prompt or two and see what they come up with. A spiritual successor to much of what Hannah offers at Stevenson, guest artist, Phillip Munson, brought a different, experiential approach to facilitating arts at Stevenson.

"Art schools give the instruction in painting and drawing and in sculpture. These are the tools you use, here's your list. Go off to the art store. But honestly I don't think it's that simple. There's a wider approach. It also suits my way of looking at the world," Munson states

For Munson, his way of seeing the world is about reading between the lines and in the margins of what many would consider everyday life: documenting the spontaneous with the mundane, gathering materials to "re-contextualize" rather than buying them. Just before our interview, Munson was out collecting old posters from the streets to repurpose for α new art "exploration."

Munson traces his approach back to directing theater and later to photography. In addition to many portrait-based projects, Munson has documented the Burning Man festival, which has had a profound impact on him and his personal, professional, and philosophical life.

"My approach was seeing things already in the world as opposed to pulling from imagination. So I guess it's a different







Taking castoffs from contemporary culture breathed new life and vitality not just into the materials, but the ideas behind them. Munson explores themes of sustainability and social justice, which fit with Munson's projects. . To so many art is defined by executing an aesthetically pleasing image. However, there is stark difference between instructional pedagogy and the more experiential documentation of the world,



which Munson leans towards. And the latter can often be more beneficial for those still searching for their artistic voice.

"Overall getting to know what worked with each participant was the most valuable aspect to me. I want everyone to have success and be successful," says Munson.

Amassing a wide variety of materials outside of paint and canvas enabled Phillip to bring his up-cycled and repurposed explorations to the art patrons at Stevenson. Including materials such as textiles, worn posters, cardboard and old photographs to name a few, Munson's approach builds not just on the histories of the materials, but the narratives of the artists

"It began by bringing in different materials. We started with photographs, then I brought in fabric and tissue paper, and that started to resonate with people a lot more. It's kind of like an additive process. They get to put part of themselves into the

A blank canvas can be a daunting proposition, especially when painting is perhaps a new interest. But by bringing in older materials to work with and work on, the thought is that art becomes more approachable. You are meeting the object at a certain point in its life and adding to the narrative. The process then becomes personal narrative. It's as much about the interaction between individual and object to create something new as it is the novelty of painting on something aside from







"I 'm on a quest to prove that its still a valid, viable piece of art and a process.





CLAY MOTION ANIMATION IN THE ANTELOPE VALLEY





In the Spring of 2015, residents at two Antelope Valley communities, the Arbor at Palmdale & Village Pointe in Lancaster, embarked on HCA's inaugural animation program. During the program titled 'Clay Motion Studio', students worked to create a stop-motion film using a variety of art techniques and recycled materials to bring a story of their choosing to life. Participants learned the basics of filmmaking including narrative, storyboarding, set & prop design, photography & editing. The subject matter of each film was collaboratively sourced from the participants' own thoughts and perceptions focusing on issues important to them and their communities. The culminating result were two short films that uniquely express the thoughts and art of budding local artists.

PREVISUALIZATION & DEVELOPMENT

In order to bring their two completely unique concepts and worlds to life, students were tasked with building their films from the ground up. Starting with a brainstorming session on the first day of class, students then collaborated to come up with a premise for their film through a lengthy pre-production process:

THEME:

To start, students were asked to think of thematic elements that were important to them. Ideas such as family, friends, belonging, acceptance and bullying were just a few concepts that came up consistently at both properties.

NARRATIVE AND BUILDING STORY:

After several different ideas had been explored, students applied their themes to a narrative structure, making sure to include a beginning, middle, and end as well as conflict within the characters.

STORYBOARDING:

When a story complete with thematic elements had been nailed down, students went to work planning the aesthetic of the film and pacing the on-screen action. After each participants' storyboards were complete, a master storyboard was created to thread the different versions together.



Above: Clay Motion program logo Below: Storyboards from Antelope Valley youths' animated shorts



THE PAND

Village Pointe, Lancaster, CA

When a tranquil pond and its sole inhabitant meet a well-meaning, but disruptive neighbor, both must learn how to co-exist.

"The Pond" is a story of an unlikely friendship, the beauty of nature, and ultimately, their fragility. Shining a light on both the nuances of friendship and the importance of conservation, "The Pond" was developed partly as a cautionary tale for viewers to be respectful of their loved ones & their surroundings. The film focuses on a pristine natural setting where the pond itself functions as a character

Village Pointe constructed two sets; one smaller set for long/wide-angle shots and a large set with more details for close-ups and character actions. The characters for the film were made from polymer clay which was posed, captured, and then moved for the next shot.



Right and below right: The Pond set







Arbor at Palmdale, Palmdale, CA

All is not well in the crayon-inhabited city of Colortown! The burgeoning burb has been plagued by a bad case of the greys until one crayon takes on the challenge of remedying the problem all by itself much to the chagrin of the other townsfolk.

A primer in both tolerance and acceptance, "Colortown's" seemingly simple concept serves as an allegory for any number of the more complex issues facing society today. When developing concepts for the film, participants cited friendship and a sense of belonging as main themes to be represented. To bring color town to life, participants actually created three different versions of the same setting, each representing a different change that the town undergoes.



Above: Arbor at Palmdale residents posing next to the black and white Colortown set





Above Left: A resident shortly after wrapping Colortown Above Right: Detail photo of on set piece

CLAY MOTION FACTS & TRIVIA: • It took over two months to complete the sets at Arbor at Palmdale and Village Pointe • A mix of clear and blue hair gel was used for the water special effects in "The Pond." It took roughly ten 16oz jars of hair gel to fill in the large pond • Each shingle on the house in The Pond was hand cut and painted by residents at Village Pointe • One of Village Pointe's pond sets was just under 8 feet long • There is no definite protagonist or antagonist in either short. Conflict was not about good versus evil. Characters in both films serve as both protagonist and antagonist.

• Filming took course over just a few days towards the end of the program • Fishing line was used to suspend clouds, ducks, crayons and other fun & funky things • IStopMotion was used to capture photos using a Logitech c920 HD webcam • Editing and post-production was done in iMovie 10 • Arbor at Palmdale created three different versions of the same set to create "Colorlown." • Official class participants' ages range from 7 and up including parent participation



"The tremendous fundraising efforts of staff, residents and partners reached over \$106,000 and donation drives raised over \$50,000 worth of in-kind donations."



In 2008, TSA was inspired by the hit reality TV series, Oprah's Big Give. The contestants on the show were given a sum of money each week, and competed to come up with the most creative ways to make a difference in their community. TSA decided to come up with their own version of the show and transformed it into an annual charitable event called "TSA's Big Give."

In 2015, TSA supported Camp Bob Waldorf on the Max Straus Campus and the YMCA's Camp Whittle in a "Kids to Camp" fundraising campaign. Both camps provide memorable, life-changing experiences to thousands of underserved and low-income youth in Los Angeles County and will never turn a child away from attending camp because of their family's inability to now

The tremendous fundraising efforts of staff, residents and partners reached over \$106,000 while donation drives raised over \$50,000 worth of in-kind donations including camping equipment, art supplies, sports equipment, games, and toys for both camps.



"We wanted to join what a lot of other organizations are doing in turning it into a day of service. It was tragic event, but how can we, as a community, still rise together and make a huge positive impact?"

On Friday, September 11, 2015, 175 TSA employees and volunteers from other organizations joined together to improve the campus by renovating an outdoor amphitheater, installing a shade structure, painting murals, planting fruit orchards and gardens, and restoring hiking trails. The results of

TSA's fundraising campaign will help maintain the camps' decades-long promise to provide summer camp programs, weekend retreats,

outdoor backpacking trips, scholarship programs, and mentoring activities for thousands of children annually.

Analee Villalpando, who plays a large role in the planning and follow through of the explains further.

"We ask our managers together with our residents to go out in their communities and fundraise for the cause that we have

selected that year. From Thomas Safran matching dollar for dollar what all of our residents and staff contribute—it's a huge overall approach to fundraising. We decided to switch it up each year so that we can help support an organization in every type of sector. We did Habitat for Humanity - the sector that year was housing. Last vear we did Hillsides that was foster youth, this year we didn't realize we had two great organizations under our nose with Camp Whittle and Camp Waldorf on the Max Strauss Campus. They are two organizations we partner with every year to send

our kids to camp. For years they both have been a huge help in subsidizing the cost of what it would normally cost for kids to go to summer camp. Typically we help one organization, but we split what we fundraised to both camps."

To go a step further, the day of service associated with the event has significance as well.

"We've been doing it on September 11th on September 11th just because we wanted to join what a lot of other organizations are doing in turning it into a day of service. It was tragic event, but how can we as a

community still rise together and make a huge positive impact?"

And while fundraising and offering a full day of service to an organization seems like a selflessly generous deed, there are logistical challenges that, believe it or not, make trying to lend a helping hand a bit tricky.

"Do you know how difficult it is to find an organization that can accommodate 175 people in one day," Analee exclaims only half laughing. "You'd think people would be knocking down the door





Volunteers constructing amphitheater seating and painting a mural

to get this level of support, but there's a lot of logistical pieces that go into planning such an event."

Analee states that it's about a 4-5 month process that includes finalizing a site, assigning staff, getting materials, and fundraising money.

It is a big undertaking. In addition to organizing the actual services to

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benefit the organization, Analee and her team must organize nearly hundreds of volunteers and split them into teams to execute a number of separate jobs.

"We have highly skilled maintenance guys on our feam who can build a house in a day, so really the sky is the limit in terms of what we can do for a service project."

Though the Big Give originated in 2008, a chain of

2008, a chain of events resulting from an even earlier encounter would eventually unfold to impact 2015's Big Give in a strange and wonderful way.

Back in 1995, Jose Tabor's family purchased a house through Habitat for

Humanity (HFH). It left a huge impact on Jose's life. Big enough for him to remain in contact with HFH and occasionally volunteer. Fast-forward to 2010, TSA's day of service for the Big Give was with HFH and Jose just so happened to be a volunteer guest speaker. He caught the attention of Thomas Safran and in due time, Jose got a job at TSA as a property manager.

That in and of itself is a great story. In fact, we featured it in a previous issue of Social Capital; however, the story doesn't end there. Fast forward again, this time to 2015. As mentioned earlier, each year TSA motivates its staff to participate in a month-long fundraising project to help contribute funds towards the Big Give. Property managers have the opportunity to rally their respective communities to raise the most money. In an interesting twist of fate, Jose Tabor's property raised the most money in 2015 to benefit the Big Give. An event back in 1995 had a ripple effect leading to a collective day of service that would impact countless lives for years to come.

"It doesn't get any more rich than that, does it?" adds Analee.

The Big Give is a shining example of communities working together to affect lives, demonstrating the sheer power of social capital at its finest





thing). Go to the toy aisle in your local department or specialty store and

you'll undoubtedly see any number of

dolls and action figures hanging on pegs, enshrined in

plastic, blister packaging anxiously waiting for a new home. Amidst rows of die-cast cars, Nerf guns and the

synonymous with the brand. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

are still highly popular though they too have undergone many incarnations in order to stay relevant to millennials.

There's a lot to choose from. A lot. Your nephew loves

Spiderman? There are plenty of sizes, shapes and colors

of the web-slinger to choose from and one can do so without really giving much thought to how that particular Spiderman got there. More often than not these toys, usually based off of US or Japanese intellectual properties, are mass-produced half a world away and shipped back to their respective countries of origin to be purchased, played with, collected, lost and maybe ultimately given awau.

But there is a secret world of toys that extends far beyond the reaches of the toy aisle or even the toy store. Designer toys and art toys are an exploding sub-genre of the art world that blends together a variety of traditional mediums into a singular object or toy. Though they may share the bright colors and stylized curves shared by mass-produced toys, these pieces are the antithesis to their store-bought counterparts. They are produced in small, limited edition batches often by renowned artists and generally have been characterized as low-brow



Left: Sculpted Munnys ready to be painted

Below: An Arbor at Palmdale resident poses next to his Munny
at MOAH

art, much like comic books once were. Yet, that's all changing.

These sculptural pieces of art, depending on the artist and numbers produced, can end up being worth hundreds if not thousands of dollars. Mark Parker, Nike CEO, extensive toy art collection that adorns his office. John Lasseter, Chief Creative Officer of Walt Disney and Pixar Animation, does his work from a modest desk while rows of shelves, every inch of them covered in toys, watches over him (he did create Toy Story after all).



"Drawing and painting can be challenging enough for beginners—even for professionals, but when you try to do that on a three-dimensional surface, it ups the ante."



When MOAH announced its Play.Create.Collect show in the summer of 2015, HCA kept pace with the museum's slate of programming by bringing the world of designer toys to Antelope Valley properties Village Pointe and Arbor at Palmdale. Instructor Kelsey Brown, who is a fan of designer toys herself, pounced on the opportunity to bring

"At first glance I think this could have come off as a bit of a weird program maybe even superficial, especially for people not familiar to the art form," admits Kelseu, "Sure, we are going to be 'playing' with toys, but it's so much more than that!"

this program to life.

Kelsey's feelings towards the program were in earnest-for collectors and those familiar with designer toys, the program had inherent merits based off of the necessary skills required to bring a designer toy to life. It was and still exists as a one of her hobbies and passions, and bringing that exuberance to Antelope Valley youth, was a really exciting proposition.

"It's relatable. It's fun. It's hands on and maybe, most of all, it's just something a little different, off-kilter and funky."

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Above all this would be a departure from HCA's more mainstream programs, usually







rooted in more traditional art mediums. After wrapping a stop-motion animation program, the world of designer loys seemed like unfamiliar territory, but it too had its origins in the more foundational approaches to art.

'After starting it dawned on [us] how challenging this was really going to be. Drawing and painting can be challenging enough for beginners-even for professionals", says Brown. "But when you try to do that on a three dimensional surface, it ups

"The truest thing about art, good or to work within its own context."



and problems keep popping up. It was a matter of us addressing those

questions and problems kept popping up. It was a matter of us addressing those problems and troubleshooting when needed

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need be.

Kelsey explains further:

throughout, questions

"It wasn't a matter of us just wanting

valuable lessons in every step of the

cover: Coming up with a design and

was also a painting component and sculpting component. It was like

combining 3 programs into 1, And all

helping them sketch it out. There

to do toys and then doing it. I saw

process. There was so much to

To more easily incorporate toy art into programming, Kelsey opted to focus on another facet of designer toys—customization. Imagine a sub-genre within a sub-genre. Due to rapidly increasing popularity of the medium, many companies now produce "blank" toys for professional and amateur artists alike to customize.

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Enter Kidrobot.



"I had to let him know that even with the best concepts there will be issues to hammer out... For them to work that process out is invaluable."

bad, beautiful or ugly, is that it has





From their website: "Kidrobot is acknowledged worldwide as the premier creator and dealer of limited edition art toys, signature apparel and lifestyle accessories. An innovative cross between sculpture and conceptual art, Kidrobot offers not only a powerful medium for today's international fashion designers, illustrators and graffiti artists, but also the creative canvas for emerging street trends and pop art... Kidrobot toys retail anywhere from \$5 to \$25,000, and many appreciate in value over time. Kidrobot showcases and sells its unique take on

contemporary culture at Kidrobot stores in San Francisco and Las Vegas with temporary pop-up stores appearing cities worldwide.

One of Kidrobot's line of toys is the now famous Munny—a veritable 3-D canvas, affordably priced for anyone to custom ze and make their own toy art.

With 25 of them ordered, the program Munny on my Mind was born.

"It was really exciting, but we knew we were in for a really big challenge. The students] came to us with so many ideas and we had to scale back some ambition for the sake of practicality," explains Brown. "I know, practicality when talking about toys, are we? We're talking about art. And the truest thing about art, good or bad, beautiful or ugly, is that it has to work within its context."

Kid Robot provides Munny templates free to download on their website and that's where the program started. Students had to come up with an original concept, so no Batman or Spiderman, which proved to be a contentious topic.



"So many customs out there are based on people's favorite characters. We chose to eliminate that as an option, not to stifle creativity, but hopefully to drive it further. There are hundreds of Spiderman Munnys out there. We wanted them to come away with their very own creation that no one else would have."

customized Munny by a Village Pointe resident

After the initial sketch was approved, students began exploring color options and what sculptural elements, if any, they would be adding to their pieces.

"Only after they had gone through the creative process of brainstorming and working out all of the kinks were they allowed to proceed to working on the actual Munny itself. As a result, it instilled a sense of ownership over the project. Everyone wrote their names on the bottom of their Munny's foot and it became this very endearing thing. We also stressed that while there was a lot of room for error, they had to treat their Munny with respect, because they would only be receiving one."

Kelsey remembers an impressive squid-like concept where the student had successfully rendered his concept, but when it came time to sculpt on additional pieces, his Munny didn't stand up.

"It was too top heavy. It had a gigantic head, almost twice the size of the original Munny's head and only tiny tentacles holding it. When you let go, it would just topple over. It was a perfect example of problem solving. I had to let him know that even with the best concepts there will be issues to hammer out. We had to figure out an alternative way for his figure to stand. For them to work that process out is invaluable."

Using acrylic paints and polymer clays to sculpt additional parts or even accessories, students ranging from ages 4 to 15 created their toys to



to be displayed at MOAH alongside the museums impressive showing of West Coast toy designers, many of whom were in attendance.

"That was one of the coolest parts to see, many professional artists interacting with what the local youth were doing. It was also great for the students to see what professionals were doing and the current state of the designer toys. And it was in a museum setting which elevates not only what we do, but the art form as well."

A few weeks of creative energy mixed with some paint and toys yielded a rewarding experience for many of the participants. Each participant got to keep their creation and after the program a couple even purchased additional Munnys to continuing customizing. When asked what she thought about having the opportunity to run such a colorfully eclectic program, Kelsey had this to say:



"I think it says a lot about our organization that we can have this autonomy to explore uncharted areas. Freedom is one of the most important things in art. You can never dismiss an idea or concept based on face value because you never know where creativity will come from."







Raquel Delgado has been licensed for nearly a decade, but Zumba came to her almost as a whim. What started as a favor for a friend turned into a hobby, then a career and then a passion. Raquel approaches her position with a light, but intense energy and an almost dutiful responsibility as the residents' Sherpa as they strive to reach new athletic heights. Just talking to Raquel makes you want to jump out of your seat and start moving, an essential quality when it is your job to make people want to move to the beat and ultimately live healthier

"I've been a licensed Zumba instructor since August of 2007. I was going to the gym at Bally's fitness in Norwalk where I was born and raised. Zumba was starting at my gym, but I don't know, I was into more high-intensity. I actually thought Zumba wasn't like that. I thought it was low-impact and actually my gym buddy and I met in cardio-kickboxing so that was more my forte. I wanted really high intensity activities, like aerobics and stuff like that."

"My friend got into the whole Zumba craze and she loved the class. My friend has really great rhythm, I think she had some sort of dance background. The instructor noticed that she was catching on to the routines of the class very well and



encouraged her to become a Zumba instructor. So everything that we do at the gym, we always do together. She's the one that convinced me. 'Come on Raquel, let's go to the training. It'll be fun. We can do it together.'"

Being a good friend, Raquel agreed to try it out. She and her friend attended an all-day Zumba training on a Saturday, which she described as non-stop dancing. Then starting on the following Tuesday, Raquel met her friend at her apartment every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday—4 days a week---for 2 months to train daily and create their own routines.

At the time, Raquel was working at the YMCA in Long Beach as the membership director and remembers thinking that the YMCA would be a great place to start their Zumba class. "[My friend] and I, we didn't have an aerobics background so we had a lot of stage fright. We started teaching the class together," said Delgado.

"It was immediately a hit. I think what really drew people in is that it was a perfect fit for the clientele of the Y where we were. It was predominantly African-American and Latino based. My friend is African-American, I'm a Latina so I think that was also a nice little pull for people to come to our class. She



the really cool dancer and I was the dorky friend with her."

From there Raquel focused on the expanding Zumba scene in LA. She went to the Los Angeles YMCA and started teaching there as well as aqua Zumba at Los Angeles City College, which she describes pretty much as Zumba in the water. What encouraged Raquel to continue even after she and her friend took

their own Zumba paths (Raquel's partner in crime lived in Orange County and focused on Zumba there), was the reaction Raquel would get from people doing it, which motivated her and encouraged her to invest more time and money into Zumba

"The music helps a lot. Anybody can be a good dancer if they really enjoy the music they are listening medications and now she was down to 1 because she had been consistently coming to my class. It was amazing to me. So I thought this is my ministry, this is my calling—to do this. And I enjoy it. I can't imagine doing anything else."

lady told me she was on 5 diabetes

Zumba is a Latin-infused, aerobic exercise program. It combines

aerobics with Latin music

"You don't need to have any dancing experience. It's a lot of following steps and there's different types of music from mamba, merengue, Reggaeton and salsa. Zumba has even evolved into incorporating samba and hip-hop, electronic and pop music."

"When I started with Zumba it was very closed with just the Latin music. As a company, Zumba realized they need to broaden their horizons and that's really where they have excelled. Now it's Zumba in the pool, Zumba for seniors, Zumba for kids, Zumba for toddlers, Zumba sitting on a chair, on steps. It's re-inventing itself and I feel like it's going to be around for a really long time."

During this time, Analee from TSA resident services was looking for aerobic programming for Skyline Village, a property in downtown Los Angeles. She went online to Zumba.com to find a local instructor and saw that Raquel was literally 3 blocks from Skyline. So Analee reached out.

"We had an hour and a half interview, but it was really more like a conversation with a friend," said Delgado. "I try to be very encouraging and invite everyone, especially those who have not tried it before Death knock it until worker.

tried it is the approach that I use. I think she liked that."

Raquel's class is attended by residents of all ages who have forged a bond through their evenings busting moves.

"Even though they all live together, Zumba ironically is the only time they actually see each other. They look forward to it. It's so much more than a Zumba class. It's not you come, sweat for an hour, and 'thanks, have a nice day'. They have the utmost respect for each other."

Raquel gives an example of Skyline seniors, two of which are Korean and do not speak English, that came to class and started partaking in after class activities regardless of the language barrier.

"That to me shows how music is a universal language. It can't be because of what I'm saying. It's more the atmosphere of what everyone creates when they come to class.

"Music unites all walks of life. It doesn't matter if you can't communicate with the same language. You come and have a good time."

They are doing this thing where the residents will bring some sort of healthy-dish,like fruit salad. And then the Korean residents started bringing apples or something. Nobody told them to, but they caught on that this is what we do after class. It's more than a exercise class. They're breaking bread. They're sweating it out and breaking bread together. That just warms the heart. Music unites all walks of life. It doesn't matter if you can't communicate with the same language. You come and have a good time."

With such a varied demographic it

With such a varied demographic it can be difficult to build such a unified front. Raquel offset the range of age and skill level by coupling instruction with encouragement and light-hearted goofiness.

"There has to be a fun-factor to it. Every song I holler or scream, "How are you doing?" Or I make a funny face, tell them they're professionals. I give them a lot of encouragement. The thing is to keep their feet moving. If they don't know what I'm doing or they don't know the move, I tell them to do their version of the move. There's so much pressure to be part of something. A lot of people who have been doing this for a long time can do it with their eyes closed and by just listening for the movement. It's very intimidating for somebody who has never participated. I have a responsibility as an instructor to keep an eye on [newcomers] to see how they are doing and make sure they don't get discouraged."

Raquel's voice is full of enthusiasm as she describes the class. That type of exuberance is infectious and just what is needed to lead a high-energy workout, especially when potentially instructing novices who may need to rally. Raquel is having a good time and it's clear that her students have a good time too. It's a reciprocal relationship.

"I have no problem making a fool of myself," Raquel admits. "I think it's very therapeutic to laugh at myself and people laugh at me when I do something silly in class. If people are coming from a more conservative class to my class I would like to think it's like a breath of fresh air. It's different and it makes me remember me and therefore they come back." While there are a multitude of benefits from an engaging. fitness program like Raquel's, she too has her fair share of Fluctuating challenges. attendance for one can take some of the energy out of a class. An evening class means people are coming home from work, making dinner, helping kids with homework and they may not be up to fast-paced aerobics. Battling lethargy is another challenge that Raguel mentions.

"Despite them being honest with me and saying, 'Hey, I don't feel like doing anything today,' it's my job as an instructor to still put on the most kick-a* class possible. When you don't feel like doing anything that's when you get the most results. You have to push yourself. You want to remember the feeling you get when you are done with class. That's what will keep bringing you back."



Zumba instructor Raquel Delgado

Despite the challenges she mentions, Raquel is bubbly throughout. She understands that pushing people can sometimes be an uphill battle so coaxing residents out of their daily routines can be a feat. Yet, that's part of why she does what she does.

"I anticipate going to every class. I tell [Skyline] they are my favorite class. I do teach other places, but Skyline is very special to me. With the friendships that I've made with these ladies I feel that I'll still have them in my life even if I'm not at Skyline in the future. I've learned a lot from them. As much as I've taught them, they've taught me to be better person. It's a special group of ladies."



ART AT COTTONWOOD PLACE



s a follow up to Veronica Ortega and Maria Vega's Drawn 2 Imagine class, Summer of Art was the follow-up program, one that allowed the duo to focus on the strength of the students at Cottonwood, many of them returning to the program. There are certain advantages to having serial programs at the same property. For instance, there is built-in attendance, so

instructors don't have to spend as much time drumming up interest in the program. Also, returning students are able to build upon their existing skillset while being familiar with the instructors and their teaching methods.

Summer of Art was a logical progression for Cottonwood. Whereas Drawn 2 Imagine introduced the foundational concepts of art by paralleling projects with Art History movements, Summer of Art would expand on the vernacular of this world trying out new mediums while continually using previously taught techniques.





Social Capital sat down with Veronica and Maria to discuss in their own words what their art programs-specifically their Summer program-have done for the kids in the Moreno Valley.

Social Captial: What did you cover in Summer of Art and how did it differ from your last program?

Veronica: Summer of Art included mixed media this time. We worked with various forms of art. This is the first time we have operated in the summer as opposed to the fall and the second program we were able to offer at Cottonwood in a Calendar year. People jumped onboard quicker than before. We had a lot of the same students. We were able to introduce them to different art forms and build skills for the students who had grown back."

SC: What was the gap between programs?

V: Six months.

Maria: We ended in December and started back up in June.

SC: And the response was positive? Did you have trouble getting people involved?

V: No, because we had just been there recently we had a good turnout. But we did have a few students drop out because it was summer time. Funny how we thought that because they would have more time they would participate more, but it didn't work out that way with all of them.

 \mathbf{M} : But our classes were a lot earlier. 9:30-11:00am. So it was hard to get them out of bed.

SC: Earlier you mentioned mixed-media. Can you explain that a bit more?

"Acting like artists—there's a whole creative process that you have to put time into and enjoy it."

V: The first program was painting and drawing. We did a lot of sketching, inks, watercolor and acrylic. With mixed media we did some string art, sculpture, printmaking, we did painting and then we even had them paint on wood. They used different materials. Some of it wassuccessful, some of it wasn't, but it was really exposing them to all these different types. More so than say the first time around which really focused on the different movements and styles and more of an art appreciation. This was more hands on

SC: What are some challenges you encountered?

V: A lot of them were expecting an incentive program. But we've gotten over that I think. We've gotten to where they understand what they are getting out of the program. They're enjoying what it is. There is a trust factor as well. They come in and they have an expectation. They're involved and participating. And they get to see the results as well and enjoy the process. Acting like artists—there's a whole creative process that you have to put time into and enjoy it. Also keeping your interest and coming up with different projects. As I said, some of them were successful, some of them weren't. Oh, also just the summertime. They have a different energy in the summertime. Sometimes they're focused.

other times not. It was hot as well. But it was still a lot of fun. I thought it was more spontaneous. The students got more involved with using materials and knowing what to expect.

M: I thought it was actually easier, maybe because they had already been with us before they already knew the setup, but as soon as they came in they pretty much knew what they needed to work on.

SC: Maybe they see the end game? They know what the goal is?

M: They would always ask about the exhibition they knew that their work was going to be displayed.

SC: How do you encourage them to be experimental and coax them a bit more into working more freely?

V: Sometimes its taking steps and one of the things we did this time around was doing warm ups. Getting them to use the materials in a very simple, easy-flowing, kind-of freestyle way just to get them used to using them and it gave them the confidence to now move to the next step or or just use it now.



M: A lot of them ended up sketching to see whether or not they would like it or not.

V: They started applying the creative process.

SC: Is that something you had introduced in the previous program?

V: Yes and we were trying to reinforce that this time. And that kind of breaks downs some of those barriers and gives them capabilities, skills 47 and techniques to apply. And yes! I found that they were doing it even when we didn't mention it. They were starting to sketch and create little ideas."

M: Asking for the printer paper instead of the good paper.

V: You could hear them, "Oh, I don't like how it's coming out. I'm going to do it different now." The whole creative process was there. We had some moments where we would have them do a painting by copying an image that was already done. To them they thought, "okay, I can just copy it." And then they realized just how difficult that sometimes is. So then we took them step-by-step in creating the angles, the lines the space, blocking it out. Helping them along. We could see that they were very into it and they wouldn't shy way from it. They were very accepting of the entire process, like, 'I'm doing this and you're leading me. And I want to do this.' We would step back and point out what they had accomplished and by the end of the piece they were exhausted! But they stuck with it and they were so please, so pleased. They realized I could have never drawn that. It was hardcore practice. Even giving them that opportunity to work through it, that helps a lot.

M: That was good just helping guide them through it. One student wanted to draw a motorcycle. He drew it really quickly. I told him, "No, no, don't draw what

you think it's supposed to look like." I had him draw in pencil next to the computer screen just so he could see how the lines go." That's when he was really quiet. It was cool to show him a different way of viewing art. Not just from the mind, but what you are actually seeing. That can be hard.

V: Yeah, the dreaded left brain, right brain challenge.

M: That was fun to see.



V: And that was pretty successful. I think its challenging sometimes too because they have this sense of curiosity and they want to participate. Especially there's a challenge for those who finish right away. So to keep them interested giving them another project. The biggest help for me is being as prepared as possible with as much information because they can use up whatever we've prepared in the first 15-20 minutes. Slow it down and re-create it step by step. We also saw the opportunity to work with those students, like the one that bragged about how fast he could get it dome. I then told him, 'Well let's take it to the next level, okay? If you can do that let's see what you can do next.' It was a challenge for him to sit down and focus and do more, and also the dynamics of the whole group. Socially participating with one-another and their interactions. That's just always a lot of fun. How they bounce off of each other. Somebody would os something and the rest are ready to follow them in that direction.

M: We had to guide them back away from following everyone else.

V: Otherwise I feel like they've lost the opportunity to grow for themselves.

SC: One thing that stands out about both of your programs is how it is iterative: it's about the process. Problem-solving through the process.

V: I come from the attitude that art can be taught, because you can have a gift or a talent, but you learn techniques and structure that makes your life easier. [Technique] gives you the space for the inspiration and creativity once you know there's ways of doing it. You can branch out from that. Reject it or apply it or whatever, but have the resources and methods available to you and that's what we try to give the kids. That attitude, that idea. I remember going into a watercolor class and being very resistant. Saying I don't want to do watercolor, I don't like watercolor. And then oh, my gosh, it opens up so much to you. All that resistance just drops away after awhile.

SC: Are there any memorable stories or individuals who stand out from the Summer of Art program?

Mt: One student was always trying to challenge us. He would always finish really fast and had to think of more for him to do. Change the color here or do something here. We gave him something more challenging to do so

he would have to sit down and work though it. And then we used that as a challenge, "so you're so fast, let's have you work on this and see how fast you can get it done."

V: I remember, sculpting class, when we experimented with clay. It was a failure as far as an artistic outcome. Most of them got too eager so we had this big mess. It was frustrating. But they really wanted to keep going so we just worked with it. It was a failure in terms of creating a piece, but what we did there to encourage them was just have fun with it and told them, sometimes this is what happens. Sometimes when were are doing art it doesn't come out, but that doesn't mean we give up. We must learn from what we've tried for the next time.' They actually accepted that. It was a learning lesson and a good experience to have as failure.

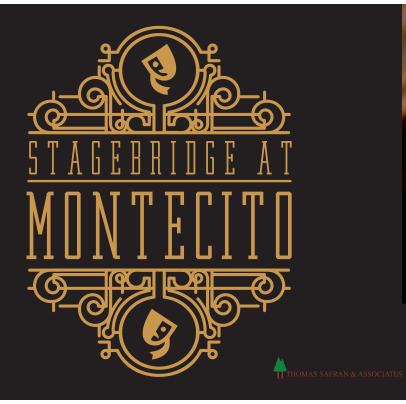
SC: How was the exhibition?

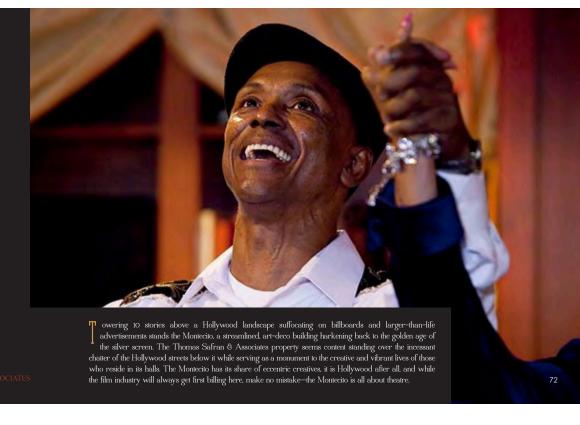
V: We included a lot of different pieces because of the variety of work we did. We were able to showcase not just the original canvases, but some of the prints, printmaking, watercolor on wood and string art. For the string art we got Styrofoam balls, and then we watered down glue and the whole goal is to cover the ball with the strings to make a bowl. But these little creations came out so it was actually better. It was one of those simpler easier projects and I thought something is going to come out of this that's for sure. Few of them did a whole piece and said I don't like it. I'm going to do it again. So they scrapped it and started over. It was coming out, but they didn't like it.

M: We saw that a lot more, they were more critical of their work. They wanted to change more then last time. They had an idea and a goal.

'Summer of Art' provided an outlet for students of Cottonwood Place to continue exploring means of personal expression to building upon past lessons and trial and error. While these trials were not always successful, the youth of Cottonwood got a taste of the age-old adage that practice, perhaps with a little bit of patience, makes perfect.







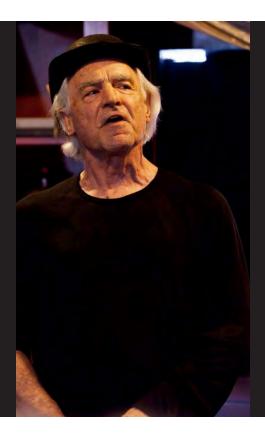
As was the case when Montecito residents collaborated with Stagebridge, a theatre company that specializes in providing performance art classes to seniors. Founded in 1978. the Oakland-based company has become the leader in offering high-quality performance-based programming in the form of public showcases, theatrical productions, and outreach programs usually in community venues. The organization has been louded by ABC News, CNN, National Public Radio, The Wall Street Journal, The Huffington Post, The Washington Post, Modern Maturity, Oakland Magazine, Storytelling Magazine and numerous other broadcast and print media for their groundbreaking approach to rethinking wellness in seniors.

"I love the idea that Stagebridge has re-invented the way our culture looks at aging," says Mark Salyer, the instructor for Stagebridge's program at the Montectio.

"Looking at the process, it is its own sort of discovery. As I told Analee and Nicole [Resident Services], this is not arts and crafts time. This is not to take up your quiet, elderly existence. This is actually to explore something artistic. In our case, the performing arts."

Stagebridge, while expanding has the core of its programming in Northern California. Branching out to the cultural hub of Hollywood took some planning, but locations like the Montecito are a perfect fit for the program.

"The Montecito seemed like a great first step. Mostly because so many of the people here are creative people. It's an interesting, funky, cool, old, creative building that's probably housed a lot of creative people. The energies of all of them are all still here. And the people who live here are probably here because they are interesting and funky and cool and energetic."



Sayler attended the University of Virginia and was always interested in the live arts. Before coming to California, he worked for a Broadway-producing organization. Roundabout Theatre, taught private lessons, and also instructed at the college level. In addition to teaching, Sayler has also acted quite a bit and usually plays "crazy" characters.

"It's always a little bit of the Avant Garde," Sayler says. I did Hedwig and the Angry Inch in the Southeast premier in Atlanta which was

happen, whatever level your student is at. Seeing that creative process, seeing that spark, seeing the thing that becomes a realized performance. I'll teach until I fall over dead. Literally, I wouldn't be surprised."

The class that Sayler taught at Montecito is the same that he taught for Stagebridge—a 13-week program that explored vocal development, song and song interpretations. Montecito residents personalized and adapted the work of prolific composer. Steven Schwartz, who wrote and composed Godspell, Pippin, and Wicked, to name a few. At the end



"THE PEOPLE HERE ARE CREATIVE PEOPLE. IT'S AN INTERESTING, FUNKY, COOL, OLD, CREATIVE BUILDING THAT'S PROBABLY HOUSED A LOT OF CREATIVE PEOPLE."



very exciting. Then Delphi, for the 2500th anniversary of Sophocles' birth. A lot of gender-bending roles."

As a director Sayler has worked a lot in colleges, but also with major productions as well. And while Sayler has a very storied resume, it seems teaching is where his heart is.

"Teaching is great for me. I love it. I find it just as rewarding as performing or directing. It really is seeing the creative process

of the program, the Montecito residents put together a showcase at the Montecito and everybody got involved.

"A lot of the process is learning the music, but we did a lot of vocal work and that's a big thing particularly for me." says Sayler. "It was great for this community. It's pretty much a proven fact that when you do voice work and sing you are helping your body in many ways outside of just making a pretty tone. It's fantastic for the breath, it helps your sinuses. More so than anything else, it's just about creating

something beautiful and sharing it with everybody."

"We feel strongly that the end showcase is part of the process," Sayler explains. "It's good because it gives everybody something to focus on and work towards. Team building. That kind of collaboration becomes that much more intensive".

What is striking about the Montecito and Stagebridge's partnership is that even several weeks removed from the performances, the energy can still be felt. In fact, during our interview we are interrupted a number of times by Montecito residents, some participants asking about when the program will start again and some residents who did not participate actively, but attended the showcase. It is a buzzing, thriving atmosphere.





I ask Mark about resident participation and even he was blown away with othe average class size around ten residents.

"It was inspiring to me. They really took it seriously. They rehearsed outside of the time period that we had together every week. Certainly, my college students I teach aren't so motivated in terms of their process," he says laughing.

Part of the success of this program is that Stagebridge holds the same synergistic philosophy held by both TSA and HCA: activities and $\,$ programming is not simply to keep residents busy, but rather enhance the quality of living and enrich the lives of the entire community. It is not an instructor, posing as a drama teacher. It is organizations working together to provide the most authentic experience possible. When like-minded individuals and organizations rally under the same banner amazing results are sure to follow. While the backing and support of,



the organization is needed, the participants of the program are the most important component. As Mark puts it,

collaborative art form. We came together, we created something. I about doing it again". thought it was very moving at times and absolutely stunning at other

times in terms of the musical and technical part of it. And more than anything for me, it's just really inspiring. These are people who said to me they wanted to explore a real performing arts musical theatre I think what I love about theatre in general is that it's always a workshop. And they did. And I think they are pretty eager and excited





David's approach to teaching music is democratic with an emphasis placed on the explorative relationship between music and the maker. He holds the belief that anyone can make music. It is not reserved solely for the hallowed halls of the Juilliard School or exclusive to those who have been formally trained. In fact, David maintains that the tapping of a foot, the beating of a heart or even rainfall have rhythm and can constitute music.

His approach has been inspired by his many travels and honed by his teachers. While not always explicitly related to music, his experiences very much inform his teaching style, which, in turn, very much makes David who he is. As with anyone who lives with this much passion, separating the man from the ideas can get blurry. For many, we have a job and go to work. While David has had many jobs, the fabric of who he is, what he does, is intertwined into his very being. There's not a lot of separation from what he does for work and how he lives his life. In David's case, art imitates life.

Most important however is that David's method of teaching comes from a very honest place that uses music to connect spiritually and emotionally with others. At this point it becomes not just music or about learning, but about sharing something with your community.

To understand this David and I discuss his past experiences, how they shaped his approach and why at a property that has previously struggled with attendance, his class sported a regular and robust turnout of old and young alike.

His journey is one of self-discovery and searching. Travelling across thousands of miles to learn what it is to play music, heal and how the two are informed by each other.

Native to the Antelope Valley, David left at 18 and studied Jazz Piano Performance, Political Science, and Anthropology at CSU Northridge. A general unhappiness with his life, with education, and with

world as he saw it led David to seek a different purpose and meaning for his life.

He's brought food, water, and medical supplies to migrants dying in the Arizona desert, worked as an executive chef in New York City, lived in a 100-year-old cabin in buffalo country, Montana, and hitchhiked or drove to every corner of the United States, and everywhere in between. Then, he did the same for two years in all of Southeast Asia, first exploring his grandfather's roots in the Philippines, and ending in south Vietnam.

He's lived completely off the grid for most of this time, and simplicity formed the foundation of his lifestyle. Over time, he realized that all of his life experiences coalesced in the role of a healer.

For David healing takes many forms: music, food and just balance though existing in harmony.

When asked about music specifically, David, who is very candid about his inability to connect with others growing up, found a very real emotional connection with music. "There was so much power there," he states. "But also so much there to learn."

David describes his desire to learn jazz, this fascinating new language—as a new way to communicate with people. He needed not just to play it, but to understand it, really deep down. And then he says something that arrests our

conversation.

"And jazz saved my life."

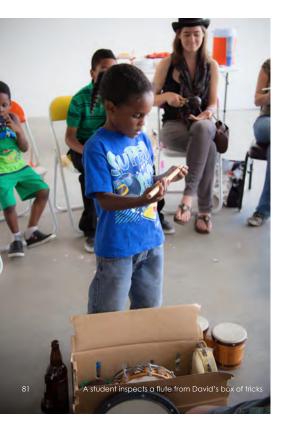
He paused for a moment and then continued.

"It saved me in every respect—emotionally, physically. It saved me from suicide a couple of times during some really hard times in college. It taught me how to communicate to people. I was bullied a lot as a kid, and I really didn't know how to relate to people. I didn't know empathy. I didn't know how to relate to people socially or emotionally...I learned how to communicate to people through the art medium of jazz rather than through normal speech as most people learn. If only for that very reason, music then took on this whole other meaning in my life where it became the essential. I saw the world through music rather than seeing music through the eye of the world."

David has come to understand how music has affected his life. It has helped him grow and heal his relationship with people. He has now tasked himself with trying to use music to help people the same way it has helped him.

"I start to see how it can function as a means for healing and supporting other people. So if I can help someone appreciate musicas not only something that is just in the background like





elevator music, but something that their ears open up to and something that they have been a part of even for a fleeting moment. Or [if they] have this deeper emotional experience, then it's already doing a large amount of healing work with that person and their sphere of influence."

The type of support and healing that David mentions plays an integral role in his day-to-day teachings and it becomes an even bigger part of his teachings. It's about breaking down the fear of performance within our culture and allowing it to be more community-oriented, supportive and fun.

Once again, David's travels play a large role in his teaching philosophy.

"In the Philippines they have a totally different relationship to music. Here it's very high pressure, ego-centric, performance-based relationship. Whereas in the Philippines it doesn't matter how good you are, how much training you have or who you're trying to impress. They want to hear anyone who is willing to play or sing music. They love every kind of music that's ever been produced from the west and from the Philippines. There's some really complex, really deep musical roots and music culture coming from the Philippines. They taught me to listen with a bigger ear and I was able to get rid of that fear of ego and that fear of performance."

He came back from his travels with a newfound appreciation and ear for all music and had the opportunity to apply his philosophy at Sagebrush in Lancaster.



"JUST BEING ABLE TO PLAY AND HAVE FUN PLAYING. THAT'S ALL MUSIC HAS TO BE AND THAT'S ALL THAT IT EVER HAS BEEN."

"This class was experimenting with some different teaching styles in terms of working with some younger children." David explains. "I've taught people who have already had some familiarity with music, could already read. Being able to start with kids here who have never really branched into the arts at all and seeing music more from the perspective of the possibility it has for healing. it's just 10x the motivation to bring music into any situation or art. If not inspire someone, then to help them have a better day, have a better afternoon as that exposure is already really powerful."

Being an AV native, David also understood the particular challenges and needs associated with this

type of educational model.

"These units are designed for people looking for a place that is more feasible and more creative. I realized that I would probably get a mix of the people that were really craving community and a creative space who were already searching for it and preparing for it. Looking for a change."

And he did. The ages ranged from very young youth (4 years old) to seniors looking to branch out and try something new. Also, the program not only serviced Sagebrush apartments, but the Artist Lofts, Arbor on Date and Arbor Gardens—all properties in close proximity just across the street.

"I knew I would get a mix of both and trying to captivate both in addition to the variety of ages." Was expecting. How am I going to approach this? The best way I had found before in bringing people in to love music has been to show them that it doesn't need to be this codified formal thing. You don't need to know all of the fingerings on the western flute to be able to play music. You can just hum along and clap your hands and snap your fingers and stomp your feet. And you don't even need an instrument. Showing them how to play the spoons or how to use a stick and chair or how many different sounds you make on a percussion instrument.

You can make instruments and make music without having to know all that complicated, really intimidating body of knowledge that creates the vocabulary of a language that is music."



You can make instruments and make music without having to know all that complicated, really intimidating body of knowledge that creates the vocabulary of a language that is music."

And it seemed to have worked really well. Despite the previous attendance challenges and some clangy acoustics thanks to a brand new community space at Sagebrush, David's class enabled residents in the immediate downtown Lancaster area to have fun regardless of failures they had ever experienced trying to play or sing music, and independent of age and skill level—a truly democratic and inclusive curriculum.

"I wanted to just be able to make a space where people could just come and at the very least have fun making music with a bunch of new people and learning something new. I tried to space out some of the more basic elements of music, for instance the importance of rhythm to make a curriculum of sorts. People really responded to this—I call it a box of tricks, it's really just a box full of different instruments."

Once on a visit to David's class I had a chance to sift though this box of tricks. It was filled with flutes and pipes from his travels, percussion instruments, bells, Tibetan singing bowls, harmonicas, and some things I honestly had never seen before. In addition to having variety there was a very tactile quality to it. Students could peruse the box and feel the instruments, most of them hand held, with no room for excuses like "I don't know how to play this."



Many students I imagine could hardly identify the instruments let alone know how to play them. It put everyone on the same level. Everyone was learning and they were doing so together.

"People responded to it because this thing is silly. It's not this professional, scary looking thing so I don't have to worry bout the fear of performing for people. Coming back to that community space that the Filipinos' had taught me — just being able to play and have fun playing. That's all music has to be and that's all that it ever has been. The culture of music has evolved to broaden into all sorts of different genres but its' all really just the essential emotive and empathetic experience of sitting down with another person or a group of people and just having this shared moment where it's like "oh, my gosh, that sounded so cool." And then the fun and the healing happens. The inspiration happens. And then the release of that negative emption and energy happens and then it's replaced simply by potential."

At the time of our interview David was gearing up for his next adventure—headed north to Portland, Oregon to pursue a doctorate in occupational therapy.







As we forge further towards an increasingly technologically-driven society, there is an undeniable need for engineers and scientists who will invent and shape the world of tomorrow. Not to mention the seemingly disparate numbers of women and minorities in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics) related fields. How can we encourage young talent to take an interest in STEAM and make it relevant to them?

Surely, getting a 2nd grader excited about painting is much easier than getting the same student to care about photosynthesis.

Or is it?

One can make the argument that in terms of gaining interest and retention of learned materials, what is being taught is less important than how it is being taught. Reading about chemical reactions in a chemistry book can be a dry read, but actually implementing those same reactions in a hands-on experiment is a completely different practice.

Enter, Ellen Lambert. HCA's first foray into the realm of science was spurred on by Ellen, a San Fernando Valley native who has lived near the very communities she teaches her whole life. And from what she says, she's always been interested in science.

"It's a bummer when an experiment doesn't work out. It's trial and error and you have to explain why it went wrong and what you can change for next time. Not an ideal lesson perhaps, but a very real one."

"I always wanted to be a teacher, so I majored in environmental Biology," Ellen says. "I first wanted to go into research, but still had a love of education and worked with kids during college, so I decided to pursue a teaching credential."

Her love of science is rooted in the teachers she had growing up and although she has only positive things to say about her educators, she also realizes there is much work to be done in the way of passing on a love for science.

"I was always the one asking questions after class," Ellen states. "It made me hungry for science. There should be better science teachers in general—

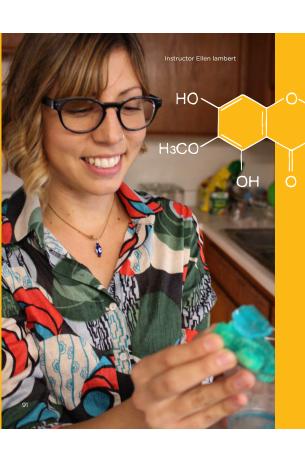
people should be interested in doing that."

The Cal State Northridge graduate found an opportunity to work with HCA at properties in the San Fernando Valley during the summer. When tasked with what to focus programming around, of course she said science.

"I tried to have weekly topics," she explains. "We started off with biodiversity. I like plants and animals—anything nature. We did a whole week on biodiversity.

discussing different vocabulary words. Nobody knew what that was so we went outside and although there wasn't a lot of biodiversity, I asked them how many different plants do you see? And they counted. That's a plant. That's a tree and they found biodiversity on their playground. That's something they never would have thought, 'Oh, my playground is so diverse."

Ellen's "Science Club" served the communities of Hazeltine and Magnolia and was the first exposure many of the residents had in the areas of science. It enabled students to see science working in everyday terms. Even if they couldn't quite understand



how or why it was working, they could see it and that could be big enough to spark their interest. "It was interesting to attempt to teach chemistry and real experiments. It was cool to do these experiments that everyone wishes they did in elementary school. Most of their curriculum has follow state standards so I was glad that I wasn't regulated in that regard. I tried to do things I thought were cool and that the kids would like," she continues.

Science, in any form, has its root in discovery and curiosity. However, sometimes experiments don't work or findings don't pan out. Ellen took those opportunities to weave perceived "failure" into the lessons

When teaching a week on electricity and magnetism. Ellen describes the time her students experiment tried to make a battery out of a pickle.

"It didn't work," she says laughing.
"We tried it several times and we were producing some kind of voltage with our pickle battery, but we didn't produce enough to light up the little light we had. It's a lot of trial and error sometimes. The scientific process for a 7-year old to understand it can be difficult. It's a bummer when an experiment doesn't work out. It's trial and error and you have to explain why it went wrong and what you can change for

next time. Not an ideal lesson perhaps, but a very real one."

Ellen then points to one of the standout experiments, her favorite—a segment on acids and bases.

"[We] talked about different foods we eat that are acidic. We then tried different household products like lemon juice, vinegar, peroxide, salt water, sugar. We had various cups of clear liquids and then I brought in a natural pH made from cabbage juice. It turns acidic, liquid red, and basic, liquid blue, so a lot like litmus strips, but with actual liquid. So each kid got to drop an indicator on each of the solutions and we were able to see a gradient of acidity. Then we had water that was supposed to be neutral. That was my favorite lab because it works instantly and you immediately see the color change...We didn't have to use harmful chemicals since there were some really young kids trying it. Then we made our own litmus papers that they could take home to try with different products or food at home." $\,$

Even with hands-on experiments like these, Ellen acknowledges that instilling a sense of wonder and curiosity for the way things work has its inherent challenges.

"It's more of a challenge to get someone interested in the sciences. It's very easy to lose their attention quickly. If they see the supplies on the table, they just want to get to the experiment. It's more of a challenge because I want them to understand. If they don't, I feel the need to explain it better to make it more interesting. When they are at home, most kids aren't going to think, 'Hey, I'm going to do some science.' They are more likely to do art or something like that."





Which is not to say there is not beauty in the scientific process.

"I try to tell them something we are going to do to get them interested, like we are going to make lava lamps today and sometimes it is artistic. If the end product involves a color-changing show or you will have art work at the end it gets them more excited. At least one or two of these days I like there to be an end product that they can take home, not just an experiment and it's over and put everything away. I like there to be an end product."

Ellen mentions an example learning about fats and oils. The students had trays of milk with food coloring added. Participants then dropped liquid dish soap into the milk to observe the immediate separation of fat from the milk.

"The food coloring let us see that," Ellen says. "The colors just started blending in."

Residents then dipped watercolor paper into the milk and oil producing a colorful image each student got to take home. Ellen also mentions a "Lava Lamp" experiment in the same week of instruction that functioned on the same principles using just an empty water bottle.

The idea of using low-cost materials helps as well. It proves that a laboratory can have humble roots using materials on a shoe-string budget.

"I try to mention for them not to throw away their water bottles. I try to give them the ecological impact. We had a entire week on recycle, reduce, and reuse."

The indelible impact of Ellen's program continues to change the landscape of HCA's programming. Many art classes that HCA now provides are emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and problem solving when making creative-based decisions. Ellen's program, if anything, proves that home-grown experiments, science or arts related, can help inform and inspire the curious minds of tomorrow.

"It's more of a challenge to get someone interested in the sciences. It's very easy to lose their attention quickly. If they see the supplies on the table, they just want to get to the experiment."







THE ANNUAL HCA SCHOLARSHIP

The Annual HCA scholarship has awarded over \$135,490 towards the arts and higher education across more than 70 HCA communities in Southern California. HCA believes that regardless of age, the pursuit of higher education should always be attainable. The scholarship is divided into two categories: Academic and Senior Scholarships.

The Senior Scholarship funds the cost of classes for senior citizens pursuing both formal college education and informal learning opportunities. The senior scholarship is tailored to those seeking to earn a degree, certification, or informal classes to hone in on a skill or hobby. Past scholarships have supported a variety of classes ranging from tai chi, acting or dance—to psychology, art therapy, and screenwriting. Two arbor court seniors, Mary Sherman and Manuel de Armas, are active participants in HCA programming at their place of residence and beyond. Their dedication to the arts and furthering their education make them not only talented residents, but assets to their community.

Mary Sherman HCA Senior Scholarship Recipient 2013, 2014, 2015 Written by: Nuri Amanatullah, Arbor Court Studio Art Director

It wouldn't be fair to say that Mary Sherman wasn't an artist before joining the art studio at Arbor Court-Mary is a true artisan in every sense of the word. Her veracity to keep learning at the age of 69 and the tenacity to never quit is an art form in and of itself and definitely helps when navigating the often vast stretches of the creative mind. Let's face it, those who are willing to learn and continue to do so, usually find themselves in positions of success in a variety of disciplines or at the very least, more productive. And Mary is both. She paints, draws, sculpts, knits, crochets, and plays a variety of musical instruments. While I have full confidence she would have followed all of these pursuits on her own accord, HCA's robust program offerings have allowed her to flourish in each of them. If there is a new class or program being offered, she will give it a shot. In short, she makes the most of HCA's wide array of programming, which is exactly what makes her a perennial candidate for HCA's Senior Scholarship. In fact, she has been awarded funding 3 times in a row and running. Which isn't to say it's automatic at this point. Mary still has to re-apply every year with a written essay, recommendation letter, and a filled out application.

"It's a very special gift and a wonderful surprise," Mary responds when I ask her how she feels about winning. "Especially getting it that many times. It helps me get one-on-one teaching and more supplies when I need it."

Mary; who often continues painting, crocheting, and writing outside of class (sometimes into the early hours of the morning). can use all of the supplies she can get. Starting off as a novice, Mary has exhibited her work in Lancaster' Museum of Art & History as well as a local coffee shop. While the scope of what she does is expanding, her focus remains on the art room.

"The atmosphere in the art room is awesome. It's like one big family here. It relieves my stress." Mary who has been diagnosed with Parkinson's doesn't let the disease stand in her way. Quite the contrary. She tells me she paints to spite the disease

"I have good days and bad days when I cant paint. But sometimes when it acts up it helps my brush strokes, like with [painting] weeping willow leaves," she says with a chuckle.

Mary's first scholarship earnings were used to purchase supplies and hire her art room instructor for 10 private lessons During those lessons Mary fused together her love for painting and another one of her hobbies, genealogy to paint a 24" x 36" family tree. An ambitious project, but Mary wouldn't have it any other way.

She is currently learning how to play the ukulele, attends knitting & crochet class at nearby Arbor Grove, and is writing and illustrating a children's book with her 2015 scholarship award.

Manuel De Armas HCA Senior Scholarship Recipient 2014, 2015



A Gallery of Manuel De Armas paintings on display at Arbor Court

De Armas posing next to his recreation of Van Gogh's Starry Night

Cuban born Manuel De Armas has been a painter all of his life. His passion for the medium has made him a fixture in the Arbor Court art room where De Armas not only continues his craft, but helps fellow artists hone their skills. For Social Capital, Manuel wanted to share his experience in his own words as Arbor Court's resident master painter.

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