

Careers in Music History and Timeline

History:

In 2006, VSA Tennessee began a partnership with the Tennessee Arts Commission in looking at Careers in the Arts for artists with disabilities. The result of this partnership was a 2 day conference held at Middle Tennessee State University. As a result of that conference, several issues and needs were brought to light, which led to various workshops and residencies over the past 6 years.

Although several workshops and professional development opportunities have arisen for visual artists, VSA Tennessee began to focus more of its attention on careers that are related to the music industry. In 2010, a one day workshop was held at Middle Tennessee State University in conjunction with their mass communication and recording industry program to help young people with disabilities learn more about the business aspects of becoming a professional musician. This was followed by a more specific set of workshops and studio opportunities in 2011 that partnered with the Nashville Jazz Workshop in looking at jazz as a career option. In addition to these specific workshops, numerous performance opportunities were being offered for young musicians with disabilities.

In November 2011, VSA Tennessee was contacted by its national office with an invitation to apply for funding for a transition program for high school students. The Board of Directors of VSA Tennessee discussed this opportunity and decided that the time was right to pursue a more intensive educational experience that would look at the careers that support the music industry, with the idea that it was more likely that these young people would find jobs and internships in these career fields than in becoming a “professional musician”.

Metro Schools immediately began working on Chaperones by asking teachers and transition specialists to assist at the various venues. At the same time, VSA Tennessee has a connection with Middle Tennessee State University and college students were recruited to represent VSA Tennessee. The role of these students would be to take notes of the activities and observe the interest level of the participants as well as to take photos. Therefore, every location had at least one educator associated with Metro Schools and at least one volunteer associated with VSA Tennessee to assist with the students and to monitor the activities. Metro Nashville Public Schools also came through with paying the parking fees for their chaperones and in making the name badges for all participants and all volunteers. Each of the schools decided to create a sack meal for the students to have as they traveled to each of the locations. However, each of the partner locations also decided to have some sort of food/refreshments for the kids during the evening.

Timeline/Project Set Up:

- November 11, 2011

The invitation to apply and submit a Transition Project idea takes place.

- November 17, 2011

VSA Tennessee Board meets and makes decisions related to the project and divides contacts for the project. The Board sets a date for all partners and descriptions of what

they would bring to the table to be submitted by Nov. 23rd (the day before Thanksgiving) or the project would not be considered.

- November 23, 2011

All partners have agreed to participate and the request for funds is written and submitted.

- Mid December 2011

Project funding approval is received. Connection begins to be made with the Partners regarding scheduling and with Metro, but due to Christmas Break not much can be accomplished until after the first of the year. A teleconference is held with Partners and information begins to be distributed and considered.

- Mid January 2012

Metro Nashville Public Schools selects the 4 schools and appoints Julia Parker to coordinate all logistics on the end of the schools. A Funding request is made to the Dept. of Ed for transportation; Schedules are being made with the Partners; Volunteers from Middle Tennessee State University are set up; a registration form and flyer are completed.

- End of January 2012

Julia goes to all of the schools recruiting participants and chaperones. She visits the schools several times to work out logistics and answer questions from teachers, students and parents. She requests that name tags be made for participants and volunteers and discusses options for food for the participants. VSA Tennessee creates various schedules for the schools, the partners and a general time related schedule. Also, information is gathered from partners on where the students should arrive and be picked up. The bus company contract is completed as well as a transportation schedule.

- February 11, 2012

Transition Program begins with Tennessee Performing Arts Center all day Saturday program.

- Feb-April 2012

Transition Program running every Thursday with the exception of Spring Break.

- Mid February 2012

Transition Program is running and location is finally secured for the ending Reception/graduation as well as the food decision is made.

- March 5, 2012

A decision is made to do the Creative Competitions and information is distributed.

- April 19, 2012

Last night for the Transition activities.

- May 10, 2012

Graduation/reception.

- May 2012

Completion and testing of the guidebook.