



# PUBLIC VALUE PARTNERSHIPS

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MONTANA ARTS COUNCIL

## FY15 Public Value Partnership 3R MODEL ANSWERS

### Relationships

#### **Alberta Bair Theater, Billings**

The Alberta Bair Theater's outreach and audience engagement activities have always been cornerstones of the theater's relationship building efforts. Over the past four years, Dr. William Mouat, as ABT's director of education outreach, has taken the program to a higher level by making authentic, substantive connections with residents in Billings and the surrounding area. He delivers ABT's cultural message through a variety of creative activities that humanize and broaden the artistic experience. Examples include:

- Artists meeting audiences before performances, in which the public can interact with artists through a brief presentation and a Q&A session;
- Bringing artists to new populations, such as scheduling internationally known urban dancers performing as dance instructors to 350 enthusiastic fourth and fifth graders at Title One elementary schools in Billings and Laurel that are part of the dance/fitness program -Project Hip Hop;
- Using new and unexpected venues for outreach, such as an Irish pub in Billings for a Celtic Immersion evening on the history of Irish music in conjunction with a public performance by the traditional Irish ensemble, Caladh Nua.

What the entire ABT staff and board learned from Dr. Mouat's outreach technique is how important it is to take the arts to where the people are.

#### **Alpine Theatre Project, Inc., Whitefish**

Alpine Theatre Project continues to see emerging technology as a way to deepen relationships with its constituents and enhance the patron experience. In 2013, ATP began the process of completely overhauling its digital infrastructure to better engage, assist, and understand its patrons and donors.

ATP overhauled its website, better integrated its social media accounts, and switched over to a new software system, PatronManager. This system is more robust, allowing ATP to better track interactions with donors and patrons. Through this system, we are able to reach out to patrons immediately after they attend a performance, get their feedback, and encourage them to spread the word. This allows ATP to immediately respond to patrons in small but important ways to issues like the temperature of the theatre, volume level, will-call procedures, etc., during the run of the show. Before, ATP would have to send out surveys after the season to get feedback. Now the feedback comes immediately and so does ATP's response, which creates a far more engaging dialog.

The new customer management system also allows ATP to now interact with each patron on an individual level based on the patron's interests, previous donations, and previous attendance. Patrons are now contacted according to interest, which makes the information they receive from ATP more relevant.

Also, ATP is better able to better understand each individual donor through looking at their attendance history. ATP staff can then tailor specific donation solicitations to the donor's taste and interest. Through this process, ATP has learned what most people have already seen as a trend: the need for customization. As audiences and donors become inundated with information, organizations need to "cut through the noise." This means sharing information that is relevant, timely, and encourages participation. ATP has found that by engaging constituents on a more individual level (through better data management), they feel more connected to the art-making process.

ATP is also finding great success connecting with visitors to the area through feedback garnered on sites like TripAdvisor, Yelp, and Google for Business.

### **Billings Symphony Society, Billings**

The Billings Symphony Orchestra and Chorale continues to work hard at building new relationships as well as strengthening old ones. Our music director, Anne Harrigan, meets with our Artistic Advisory Committee, comprised of members of the community, several times over the course of the year and listens to suggestions before programming the following season. For example, this past December was the first time in ten years that a holiday concert was performed by the Billings Symphony. Anne listened to the desires of several people on the committee to bring back a holiday show for the community to enjoy.

Engaging and retaining community partners is of utmost importance to our organization. We partnered with NOVA Center for the Performing Arts, Yellowstone Art Museum, Western Heritage Center, Kirk House of Music, Eckroth Music Store, Hansen Music, and MSU-B, this past season. Facebook, patron mail and other on-line media were used to connect with our patrons to further build our relationships. We believe that these interactions are very important for us to achieve our mission.

We hold our "Meet the Maestra" donor receptions four times a year as well as our after concert receptions to build relationships among our audience, supporters, staff, and musicians.

Our Explore Music! program provides Concert Cues at the beginning of each concert. It is comprised of a lively pre-concert interaction with the guest artist and audience, answering questions and talking about the upcoming performance. This past year, our musicians also performed at nursing homes,

schools, community centers, and Boys and Girls Clubs. We also performed a free children's concert of Peter and the Wolf in the Red Lodge High School gym and invited area schools to attend. We at the BSO&C realize how important these relationships are to us and strive to continue to build on them each year.

### **Bozeman Symphony Society, Bozeman**

The Bozeman Symphony continues to find that personal one on one contact and phone calls to existing patrons and new contacts in the community are most successful in building relationships with individuals and businesses. In almost every meeting, people are impressed with the outreach programs, the entertaining and educational programming of the Bozeman Symphony and Symphonic Choir, and our support of the Gallatin Valley Community. This outreach to new supporters is time consuming, but well worth the effort to make new friends for the Bozeman Symphony and Symphonic Choir.

We have continued our Dress Rehearsal evening with our Treats for Tickets program. Each concert, one elementary or middle school music class volunteers to bring a plate of treats for the musicians break time in exchange for tickets for one of the week-end performances for themselves and a parent. They also receive the opportunity to stay for the dress rehearsal. The most amazing aspect of the program is watching the young student musicians (who serve the treats) and their parents visiting with and learning from the musicians, guest artist and music conductor. Last seasons Treat for Ticket Volunteer Coordinator and the Bozeman Symphony believe that this program inspires and motivates students to work towards excelling on their instruments to one day be a part of a symphony orchestra or choir.

The Bozeman Symphony still holds after concert receptions at area restaurants where our patrons can meet and visit with internationally known guest artists, our musicians, Music Director and Symphony staff. Not only does educational learning take place but relationships are built with community individuals and businesses.

### **Butte Symphony Association, Butte**

Throughout our concert season I personally made an effort to greet everyone who attended our concerts. For the 1 hour prior to show time I would stand in the lobby of the Mother Lode Theatre and greet everyone who entered the door. I wanted to make the effort get to know our concert goers and to be able to answer any questions they may have about the symphony or the concert. Butte is a small community and it is important to provide a warm and welcoming reception to new and returning concert goers. Since we also do our own box office I have an opportunity to mail out tickets to each individual and insert notes and thank you for their patronage on each letter. I am also the only one in the office so I am able to answer each phone call personally whether it is for tickets or other questions. These techniques have really helped to build the community aspect of the Butte Symphony.

### **Carbon County Arts Guild and Depot Gallery, Red Lodge**

Locally, We have taken advantage of 2 Facebook Groups called Red Lodge Buzz and Red Lodge Classifieds. These groups allows us to get the word out to locals, many of whom do not take or read the newspaper. We have found we are getting significant response from the local community because of posting events, workshops and exhibits on these local Facebook Groups. In August we hosted the local Chamber of Commerce here for one of their meetings. Usually, this creates the opportunity for conversation and brain storming with other businesses in the area. Through these types of conversations we have talked about joint promotions targeted to other cities to give people more than one reason to visit our town. For example, "Come to the Labor Day Arts Fair and while you are in Red Lodge go visit the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary and experience their Animal Encounters."

Continuing our relationship with The Tipper Rise Center and the Sidney E. Frank Foundation we helped organizers locate and recruit kids, ages 9 - 14 years old, several of whom were Native American, to work with Installation artist Patrick Dougherty to build four stick work projects. They met here at the Gallery, and with our Executive Director spent the day at the Tippet Rise Center learning about the scope and execution of an Installation Art piece. Our collaboration with A Place for Our Arts here in Red Lodge is part of the effort to Revitalize Old Roosevelt School. Taken from their website this statement describes all of those involved in this effort. " WORKING TOGETHER TO TRANSFORM OLD ROOSEVELT is a diverse group of representatives from the arts community, the public schools, the city of Red Lodge, the public schools foundation and local businesses working together to strengthen and transform Old Roosevelt into a space with economic, educational, and social benefits for the whole community. Organizations driving this effort: Red Lodge Public Schools Foundation, Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, Carbon County Arts Guild and Depot Gallery, Beartooth Front Community Forum, Beartooth Resource, Conservation and Development Area, Inc." Organizational Supporters: The Clay Center, Red Lodge School of Dance, Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce, Red Lodge Festival of Nations, Red Lodge Music Festival, The Roman Theater, Red Lodge Area Food Partnership Council, Carbon County Historical Society and Museum, Red Lodge Public Schools."

### **Fort Peck Fine Arts Council, Inc., Fort Peck**

The production of Love Letters in mid-January was a huge success as we delivered quality performances across the state. Love Letters began at the Missoula Winery on January 14, then traveled to The Cottonwood Inn and Suites in Glasgow January 16, Soma Dis in downtown Glasgow January 17, and then at MSU Northern in Havre January 18. The Glasgow performances were received well by the public as the Cottonwood was presented as a gala with food and decadent desserts available, while Soma Dis provided an entirely different atmosphere in an eclectic downtown hot spot with a more relaxed and intimate atmosphere. The Glasgow High School Swing Choir opened each evening at the Cottonwood and Soma Dis bringing the arts into the community and local youth into the arts arena. The community was able to enjoy the high quality entertainment they have come to know from the Fort Peck Theatre while our historic building slumbered until it's next season.

### **Glacier Symphony and Chorale, Kalispell**

A program that was designed specifically to build relationships with both our existing audience and NEW audience was the Symphony Soloist Spotlight (S3) series where guest artists were brought in one day

earlier than usual on concert weekends and a Thursday night S3 event was held in an intimate setting with the goal of having 70-100 people in attendance. A short recital was programmed, but the focus of the S3 was for time to socialize and for those attending to have time to ask questions of the guest artist and have personal interaction with the artist prior to the concert weekend. While the S3 events were very popular with the core group that attended them, there were less new people interested than we anticipated. We learned that we need to take events out into the community in a creative way and build on personal relationships or networks in the community to build organizational relationships.

We are also looking at ways we can give the audience and the public more personal exposure to both the Maestro as well as the Executive Director and Board of the GSC. Board members are being asked to be at most events with their nametags on and to engage people, ask what their experience is like at the event or concert and report back their findings to the staff. Events are being planned where small groups of people can hear directly from the Maestro about programming choices and challenges faced by the GSC and so they can ask questions and have a more personal relationship with the GSC (for instance a series of "Lunch with the Maestro" events are planned with a free lunch and a presentation and Q&A by the Maestro).

### **Great Falls Symphony, Great Falls**

In recent years, the Great Falls Symphony has championed the importance in building strong relationships with schools, teachers and students in our service area. We have utilized various approaches to accomplish this goal. In the recent past for example the GFSA developed a relationship with Vision Net, a state wide video conferencing network to broadcast the orchestra's educational Youth Matinees to students in rural areas outside the concert hall to students beyond travel restrictions of Montana schools. This past year, the GFSA was honored to be chosen, through a joint application with the Great Falls Public Schools Music Department, (Music Is Core) as one of only 38 recipients in the United States to participate in the 5th biennial "Music In the Schools," symposium at The Yale School of Music recognizing outstanding music partnerships between public school music programs and professional music organizations. Music Supervisor, Dusty Molyneaux and Cascade Quartet violinist Megan Karls, represented Great Falls among such other respected representatives from the Portland Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Santa Fe Opera, Cleveland Orchestra, the National Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cliburn and more! All participants were recognized for outstanding relationships and programs with their public school partners and received the Yale Distinguished Music Educator Award. Participants spent 3-days, all expenses paid, networking and learning from each other. One particular liaison that was forged during the symposium has resulted in the Cascade Quartet being engaged by the University of Missouri, Kansas City in the spring of 2016 to premiere a composition by one of their Symposium participants and to present master classes and educational programs for students at the University and in local schools. Positive proof of the power of relationship building!

### **Hamilton Players, Inc., Hamilton**

The most effective technique we had for relationship building this year was our participation as an information vendor at our local farmer's market. Between the volunteers who manned the booth and the community members we talked to during the weekly event, we were able to grow our volunteer list

by 30+ people and increased our summer camp participation by over 60 percent. The farmer's market is 3.5 hours per week dedicated solely to talking to the public and finding out what they like, what they want to see, and nurturing a volunteer/patron/donor relationship. It was, on every level, a win-win for us and the community. Through these interactions we were able to pinpoint a few processes at the Playhouse that need improvement and we also were able to develop some new collaborations as well as create a much expanded list of titles and events that our community would like to see.

### **Helena Presents/Myrna Loy Center, Helena**

The Myrna Loy Center went through a leadership transition during this granting period, and worked hard to keep its community informed and included in that process. This communications effort included several tracks:

- Board members invited sponsors and supporters to a series of special "insider" receptions-- informal events to update the Myrna's supporters on changes in the organization, to celebrate milestones, and most importantly to give the new executive director a chance to meet and listen to the Myrna's community.
- The MLC revamped its website and now uses a ticketing system that allows the Myrna to email patrons to thank them for attending, ask about their preferences, and open more personal dialog.
- Staff reached out to new areas of the Helena community to engage teens, elders, returning veterans, and people with disabilities. We brought arts activities to these under-served groups, invited them to exhibit artwork or help paint sets, and followed up with free tickets to make sure they could attend events.
- To reach out to our film audiences, the MLC created its popular 2nd Story Film Club, a monthly special film event featuring talkbacks and special appearances, with a free wine or beer for club members. MLC staff also communicate with film club members by mail to learn more about their preferences and connection to the MLC.
- We also expanded our audience conversation through Facebook and Instagram, though we also learned that these tools are somewhat limited. (For example, any single Facebook post is only visible to about 16 percent of followers who 'like' your page.)

The most important thing the MLC staff learned is that an improved website and strengthened social media network are crucial, but they are only support for the primary relationship-building work, which happens face to face and person to person. Helena residents feel a strong sense of ownership toward the Myrna Loy Center. Audiences don't just want to support or attend; they also want to speak their minds about what is going well, or what could go better!

### **Hockaday Museum of Art, Kalispell**

The Hockaday Museum is recognized by the City of Kalispell, Kalispell Downtown Association and the Business Improvement District as a cornerstone of art and culture for the Flathead Valley and northwest Montana. In a 2002 report that still guides local development, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee noted "the emergence of arts and culture as a flagship for the Flathead Valley and a reflection of our community identity."

The Committee acknowledged the "importance of access to arts and culture events and activities," and declared "arts and culture essential for our existence as human beings and for the heartbeat of the community as a whole."

We are fortunate to have strong partnerships with Glacier National Park (GNP), The GNP Conservancy, Glacier Institute, Flathead Valley Community College, Rotary, Glacier Symphony, Montana Human Resources, Youth Restorative Justice, Flathead County Libraries, area School Districts and local Senior Centers, and many others

### **MCT, Inc., Missoula**

Last year, we reported that interacting and socializing with constituents was the best way to build relationships, and this continues to be true. The context of the interactions is always strategic and related to a specific MCT program, which provides us with a natural opportunity/starting point for in-depth conversations about the nuances and significance of our work. This narrative includes examples of new ways in which we interact with constituents.

LOCAL PARENTS AND KIDS – We started a new tradition of having an outdoor summer block party for kids and families. We invite families that have previously been involved in MCT, and we encourage people who are interested in getting involved to attend. At the block party, we had face-painting, free ice cream and tee shirts, and live music.

WHAT WE LEARNED: Everyone loves ice cream and freebies, and parents enjoy experiencing MCT fun with their kids. Parents are relaxed and receptive to conversations about donating, volunteering, and signing their kids up for camps and classes.

PAC (Performing Arts Camp) PARENTS AND TEEN CAMPERS – We have had social events during “PAC weekend” for many years. However, we started a couple of new PAC traditions: one is an outdoor barbeque for families (including campers) between shows on Saturday, and the second is combining the Saturday night parents’ reception with the cast party.

WHAT WE LEARNED: MCT is a family-friendly company, and families enjoy being together at a wonderful moment of achievement for the young performers. Everyone is happy, which makes it easy to start conversations about doing more to fulfill the company mission.

NEWSLETTER – MCT has a new weekly electronic newsletter, called MCT Ink. The newsletter highlights fundraising efforts, upcoming productions, new and ongoing programs, employees, etc.

WHAT WE LEARNED: The newsletter is a great way to stay in touch with constituents on a regular basis. It presents information in an attractive, easy-to-read format, and it helps us avoid bombarding our constituents with multiple emails from different MCT staff.

## **Missoula Art Museum, Missoula**

MAM has a long history with cross-disciplinary partnerships and last year was a fruitful year for them. In the autumn of 2014 MAM conducted the 28th Fifth Grade Art Experience (FGAE) and one of the exhibitions on view was a series intricate drawings of pathogens by Hamilton artist Pamela Caughey. In partnership with the Community Medical Foundation we offered an addendum to the FGAE program and classes traveled from MAM to Community Medical for a lesson on melanoma, which included viewing cancer cells under the microscope. The students were all given a gift bag with sunscreen, etc. The project deepened MAM's relationship with the schools and the hospital and the hospital's relationship with its neighborhood schools.

In building programming for the photographic exhibition "Andy Warhol Collection: Museum of Art/Washington State University" MAM concentrated on Warhol's impact on photography and to explore his influence on film making, we created a partnership with the Roxy Theater and presented a series of films on and by Warhol. A packed member's exhibition preview featured a gallery talk on photography and the members were bused to the Roxy for a documentary on Warhol, which was presented free and open to the public. The program expanded and deepened MAM's viewers educational experience and cross-marketed the two organizations to our respective audience and supporters.

MAM partnered with the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (BSDFF) to present their first ever installation of interactive documentary films; films that allow the viewer to explore the subject and navigate their way through the artwork. The project broadened perceptions about the nature of documentary film, giving both MAM and BSDFF's audiences a new experience and cross-promoted the venues. MAM has consistently partnered with the Festival of the Book (FOB) and has partnered twice with the Missoula Public Librarys on the NEA funded Big Read project. Last fall the Big Read and FOB were produced in conjunction. The author in focus was Tim O'Brien, whose books are about Vietnam War. MAM created two relevant exhibitions drawing from MAM's collection; "The Art of Conflict", which brought together artworks by six different artists that each deal with different human conflicts, and "Crossing the River: Hmong Story Cloths", pulling together a concentration of story cloths depicting the Hmong diaspora at the close of the Vietnam War. MAM also borrowed from Montana State University's collection the little-seen paintings by Helen McCauslan, depicting the Kent State shootings. A rich array of educational programs were presented in conjunction with each of these exhibitions. The project brought diverse audiences, artists and presenters to MAM and offered a valuable and at times emotional look-back into American history. The project gave parents and grandparents an opportunity to teach their children about an era in our country's history, of which they know relatively nothing.

## **Missoula Cultural Council, Missoula**

In the past year the Missoula Cultural Council has reaped the benefits of years of relationship building, as we are now the fiscal agency for the Montana Book Festival and SPARK! – Arts Ignite Learning, and the city of Missoula has asked our office to help administer the city's Public Art program. Each of these new partnerships came from a different direction, and are the result of years of community relationship building, as well as consistent and reliable programming by this organization.

SPARK! is a collaboration of Missoula County Public Schools, the University of Montana, the city of Missoula, and the numerous arts organizations in town. This project is an initiative of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts nationally called Any Given Child. Missoula was chosen two years ago as one of 14 cities in the nation to participate in this program to enhance and improve arts education in grades k-8. Because of the arts integration educational programming at UM's College of Visual and Performing Arts, Missoula is quickly becoming a national leader for this initiative. The Missoula Cultural Council is administering this program, which has just completed its first year of implementation. We hired a full-time executive director in December.

After Humanities Montana decided that it could no longer produce the Montana Festival of the Book, local organizers approached MCC to be the fiscal sponsor of the newly renamed Montana Book Festival, scheduled for September 10-12, 2015. As of this date the planning is going well, with a part time paid administrator.

Missoula's Public Art Committee has existed for 30 years as a volunteer citizen board. Because the city cannot give the administrative time required, the mayor asked MCC to assume administration. MCC has begun the process, and with sufficient future funding will be able to develop this into another paid position.

These three examples reflect the growing respect of this organization throughout Missoula, which in very large part has been the result of continuous relationship building on many levels.

### **Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, Bozeman**

Relationships with communities and individual constituents are very important to the continued success of Montana Shakespeare in the Parks (MSIP). Each of the 62 communities that brings an MSIP performance to its citizens has a strong relationship with the company. Several phone conversations are required to settle on a viable performance date for each community that also fits in with the tour schedule as a whole. Other details such as whether or not a town will host the actors in community members' homes or in hotels or which restaurant will be open late enough for the actors to get dinner after the performance are also discussed. While the simple logistical details of these conversations are begun through electronic communication: surveys and emails, they are solidified through one on one conversations between someone on the MSIP staff and the community tour coordinator. In 2015, Kevin Asselin, MSIP's Executive Artistic Director, personally took on this responsibility in order to be directly connected with the towns and coordinators without whom MSIP would not exist.

A prime example of relationship building with community tour coordinators can be told by example of 19-year old Kelsey Walton, MSIP's youngest and newest tour coordinator. Kelsey worked with MSIP staff and artists to keep MSIP in Birney, MT, population 17. Kelsey's grandmother, Laurel Fjell, had performed the huge job of coordinating MSIP's annual performance on Poker Jim Butte near Birney since 1974. In 2014, Laurel warned the staff that the job of coordination was getting to be more than she could handle as she got older. She looked for someone (of the 16 other Birney residents) to take on the role of coordinator, but could not find one. Although Kelsey, Laurel's 19-year old granddaughter, did not live in Birney, she grew up seeing MSIP on the butte every summer. When she heard that there was a possibility that MSIP would not return in the summer of 2015, she took action. Through an online crowdsourcing website, Kelsey, a freshman at Sheridan College in Sheridan, WY, raised the \$2000

sponsorship fee in just about three weeks. She was in constant contact with the office and budgeted and planned for three full meals for the 10 actors (as is required in Birney where the nearest restaurant is over an hour away). Kelsey's story inspired the Children's Shakespeare Society of Bozeman to throw a fundraiser for MSIP to remain in Birney. In August of 2015, the CSS raised \$500 to support Kelsey's efforts. Without a constant lifeline to the MSIP office and without the good fortune of having built this relationship with Kelsey from the time she was born, MSIP would not have been able to return to Poker Jim Butte.

### **Southwest Montana Arts Council, Dillon**

The Southwest Montana Arts Council is always looking to bring diverse talents to Beaverhead County and we strive to find performances that appeal to as wide a range of our community as we can. Most of our Showcase Series season ticket buyers are middle-aged to elderly and the number of season tickets we've sold has not increased in some time. Last year, we attempted to increase our younger season ticket buyers by including more acts that appeal to young people. Or, as one longtime season ticket buyer would describe them, "long-haired rockers." This particular season ticket buyer, who we'll call George, left two of our shows before intermission and sent me an email voicing his disappointment in our choice of musicians, expressing his annoyance that we were pandering to the college students who attend our shows for free and not providing quality entertainment for the paying audience members. I have only lived in Dillon since 2011, so I am still considered a newcomer and he also let me know that in his email. After reading his complaints, I felt terrible, particularly since the band he most disliked is a band I really enjoy and worked hard to bring to Dillon. (The band, incidentally, sold more CDs after the show than any band in recent history, so they were enjoyed by at least a few of our audience members.) I called George immediately and we got together for coffee to talk about his expectations. We had a wonderful chat about past SMAC performances and live entertainment in general. While he declined my invitation to join our board to help us choose what artists we bring to Southwest Montana, the conversation did give me a better idea of who our audience is and what they might enjoy. I wouldn't change an entire season lineup to please one season ticket buyer, but I do think it's important to do what I can to retain our core audience and make sure they feel that SMAC is their arts council and their opinions matter to me, even as we try to expand our offerings to increase our younger ticket buyers.

I received George's season ticket purchase and donation in the mail this week with a note letting me know he's willing to give this season a try and he might not have if I hadn't have taken the time to listen to what he had to say.

### **Stumptown Art Studio, Whitefish**

Our most effective technique that we use to build and maintain relationships come in the form of one on one communication. Donors are acknowledged with handwritten notes, and for larger donations, with a follow up phone call . Donors appreciate being recognized. Volunteers and donors who contributed to the Windows on Whitefish Project have been honored with a hand made clay tile bearing their names, on display near the murals for all to see. This form of "permanent acknowledgement" has prompted many local businesses to contribute to the project. In reference to our customers and students (let's refer to them as our consumers), they respond favorably to opportunities to offer

feedback, in the form of written surveys, online Trip Advisor entries, facebook posts, face to face conversation, phone calls and emails. Our staff has the mantra "customers first--always" ingrained in their minds. Any negative feedback, while rare, is addressed by our administrative staff immediately. People like to know that their opinions and efforts are valued.

### **Verge Theater, Bozeman**

Last year we instituted a new production called "Tales From The Verge". This production involves our Dramaturgy Committee creating a general theme and then a Director soliciting 7 members of the community to tell a true story, from their lives, based on the theme. So far we have had 21 community members tell their stories. The themes have ranged from "Exposed" to "Holiday Horror Stories". We have had an amazing response from audiences! Each time we announce a new "Tales From The Verge", we receive dozens of requests from people who want to tell a story. And every one of the productions has been sold out. Our theater is a small Black Box that hold 85 audience members who come to be engaged and involved with what is happening on stage. Each year we attempt to find new ways to make that happen: interactive shows where actors break the fourth wall, Improvisation shows where we invite people on stage to participate, children's shows where the cast encourages children to come up on stage and be involved in the action. We're always encouraged and inspired by our audiences, and we will keep giving them a reflection of themselves as we seek to entertain them.

### **Whitefish Theatre Co, Whitefish**

Over the past 2 years, WTC has made it a priority to engage young adults in our programming. Due to the fact that they are the next generation to support the arts and typically not well represented as an age group in our audiences, WTC aimed to offer events that would engage them with our programs and perhaps introduce them to the rest of our theatre and music season. The specific technique we used to build relationships with this audience involved having small group meetings with several younger members of our community and implementing their suggestion to offer music concerts and a venue where people could dance. In the past, all music concerts offered at the O'Shaughnessy Center had seats only with no room to dance.

Over the past year, WTC presented 2 music concerts aimed at the 25-40 year old age group, including Hoots and Hellmouth and the Lil' Smokies. Both bands offer a blend of music genres, resulting in sounds called "roots-rock" or "newgrass", and have loyal followings of younger fans. WTC then transformed our mainstage theatre space into a dance floor for each show, pushing all first-floor seats back to create open space. Seats were still available upstairs in the mezzanine for those patrons who wanted to sit. As a result of these changes, both shows were nearly sold out and nearly 40 percent of both audiences were comprised of the 20-40 year-old age group, almost all who bought dance floor tickets. Nearly 70 percent of this younger age group had not attended a WTC event in the past. WTC received several anecdotal reviews about how wonderful it was to be able to dance at concerts at the O'Shaughnessy Center. We also heard these shows offered a positive alternative to seeing live music compared to other venues, as our events were earlier in the evening, clean, smoke-free, and family friendly.

Over the next several years, WTC aims to track some of these new patrons to see if they are attending other music and theatre events that we are programming. Our hope is to continue communication with this age-group in small group settings.

### **Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings**

FY14-15 was the second of two fiscal years during which we celebrated the Yellowstone Art Museum's (YAM's) 50th anniversary. We continued as we had in year one, centering messaging on the core idea of success through relationships built over time, often one-on-one. We expressed gratitude in many ways, not least being gifts to the community (more free days, high profile exhibitions, additional special events, a commemorative book). It is a labor-intensive process, but we know of no more effective method of building relationships than to be sincere and honest in our communications (including transparency in our operations), thank often, choose the right level and frequency of communication, develop many personal relationships, and articulate a unified message about the YAM's ongoing positive impacts. We work to be responsive to audience demands regarding programming while remaining mindful of the dictates of our mission. In FY14-15, this manifested in an exhibition chosen purely for its fun, family-oriented character. "The Art of the Brick®," the LEGO® sculptures that have been touring worldwide, turned out to be the most well-attended exhibition in our 50-year history. While far afield from our mission to promote and celebrate Montana-based contemporary artists, "The Art of the Brick®" brought new audiences to the YAM who in turn enjoyed the other exhibitions and gained a level of comfort with the site and with the idea that art exhibitions are indeed for everyone. It was a way to introduce them to Montana's artists.

### **RELEVANCE**

#### **Alpine Theatre Project, Inc., Whitefish**

Alpine Theatre Project believes that theatre has the power to transform people's lives, giving them a better understanding of themselves and the world around them. This transformation can happen to an audience member sitting in a seat while watching a performance, or it can happen to the people involved in creating the art itself. This year, ATP reached out to various social service nonprofits in the Flathead Valley to share the transformative power of theatre, including the Center for Restorative Youth Justice (CRYJ). The Center for Restorative Youth Justice's mission is to actively engage youth, victims, families, communities in restorative programming that interrupts cycles of harm. Its programs create opportunities for at-risk youth to deepen community connections and to find access to important support and reflection that results in powerful change. In short, CRYJ works with young adults who are at-risk or currently in the criminal justice system, and provides them with lasting rehabilitation.

ATP reached out to CRYJ to see if any of the youth in their system would be interested in attending a theatre performance and even volunteering to help with the production. Students from the Center came and volunteered with ATP's production staff on scenery construction for the musical, Tommy. They were then invited to attend a performance of the production so they could see first-hand what they helped create. In the process, the CRYJ students learned more about the process of making theatre and found a new appreciation for the artform.

At the end of the summer season, Kate Berry, CRYJ's Program Coordinator, sent the following note: "We cannot thank you enough for providing the youth we work with the opportunity to enjoy local theatre and another way of being invited into the community. We have so much appreciation for what you do, and hope we can do this again!"

### **Archie Bray Foundation, Helena**

The Bray is continuing to deepen the connection between donors and the residents through a greater understanding of the artists' creative processes. Through a series of studio visits, groups of donors have had a first look at the life in the studio, introducing them to different techniques and practices. The first studio visit in the series featured Resident Artist Director Steven Young Lee. Steve invited the donors to his studio and talked about his technique of carving into his pots, and how he creates the designs. The audience had different backgrounds and knowledge of ceramics and were able to ask a range of questions from basic terms to advanced technique. The event was a big success, with the donors feeling excited and engaged, both with Steve and with the process. Since then, there have been two additional studio visits, featuring two artists each. In the second, the donors were able to see potter Tom Jaszczak form bowl shapes from molds, learning the pitfalls and benefits of a production process. Contrasting Tom was Chris Dufala, with his precise use of press molds to create the illusion of metal rebar and bolts. The last session had the treat of engaging with visiting artist Shoji Satake, who talked of the numerous opportunities with which he is involved, from an exchange partnership with the pottery town Jingdezhen in China and West Virginia University where he teaches to his many other projects. In addition to Shoji, the donors were able to visit with Resident Artist John Souter whose passionate approach to conceptual sculpture energized and intrigued the audience.

These events are working to bring donors closer to the Bray's mission and community, both by creating an intimate interaction with the artists, and by familiarizing them with the process. Attendees have expressed gratefulness for the opportunity to see this side of the Bray. Although the studios are open and visitors can meet and talk with the residents at any time, it can be intimidating, even for those that are already invested in the Bray. These events are getting donors past that barrier, and encouraging them to form a personal relationship with the artists. In this way, the connection is beneficial for both the donors and the artists.

### **Big Sky Film Institute, Missoula**

Every year we conduct audience surveys that help us greatly to keep our programming relevant, and to ensure that we are providing the best audience experience possible. For years, this has been our most effective technique to create relevance between our organization and our participants. In addition to gaining feedback on what the audience thinks of our films and overall festival experience, we learn valuable information about our audience demographics from the surveys. For example, we learned that in 2015 82 percent of our audience members have a college education, and 28.5 percent have a graduate degree. Knowing that our audience is highly educated pushes us to find challenging and thought-provoking films.

We also use surveys in our Filmmaker in the Schools program, in which we bring filmmakers into Missoula County public schools to screen their films and do a Q&A during school hours. Our surveys are designed to help us collect information on the demographics we have reached, and to help us understand how teachers view the impact of our programs on their students. Hearing directly yet anonymously from educators allows us to receive honest feedback and make the changes necessary the following year to meet the needs of our school system. Some examples of questions from our 2015 survey are: “Do you feel that the films you saw gave you and your students a better understanding of diversity?” and “Were the screenings a good fit for the current curriculum?” The qualitative answers to questions such as this, together with the quantitative statistics of how many students and teachers attend our programs, help us to measure the impact of our youth programs.

### **Billings Symphony Society, Billings**

This past season we made connections with our audience in many ways. Our season opening concert in September of “Up Close and Personal” began with a tribute to Montana photographer Michael Sample, who died tragically last year. Mr. Sample’s beautiful Montana photos were shown above the orchestra as they played George Frederic Handel’s Allegro Deciso from Water Music. This was a poignant memory for our patrons because his photography was used in two of our concerts in previous years. We continued our concert using I-Mag cameras throughout the theater so that our patrons could get an “up close and personal” view of our musicians as well as guest cello artist, Marc Copepy. The concert was recorded so that our audience could purchase an individual copy of our DVD. Our concert was also broadcast on Community Access 7 TV at various times throughout the year.

Our March concert of “Gone Country” brought in many ticket buyers who had never purchased a symphony ticket in their life. This concert of classic country music from such singers as Patsy Cline, Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, and Charlie Pride was a first for our orchestra. In June of 2014, we held a “Country Idol” vocal contest at our Symphony in the Park free outdoor concert. We put the videos on YouTube for people to vote on their favorite singer. The winner of that contest was promised a spot in our March concert along with guest artists from Nashville and New York. We added advertising in Miles City, Sheridan, and Lewistown and brought in many new patrons who love country music.

Over the course of the season, we provided four “Meet the Maestra” donor events. This is offered as part of our donor fulfillment and subscriber benefit program to provide our audience with a more up close and personal view of our orchestra, music, and music director. These events were a casual reception where guests could visit about the upcoming concert with our music director, Anne Harrigan. We also opened two of our dress rehearsals. The first was a politico reception and we invited city, state, and US Government officials. The second was a behind the scenes event for our donors and subscribers to be able to see the inner workings of what occurs during a rehearsal. They were given the chance to sit on stage with the orchestra during the rehearsal for a total immersion in what occurs on stage. We feel that these events keep our audience more connected to our mission of enriching lives through music.

We also conducted an audience survey last October. We distributed paper copies at the concert and also sent it via email. The feedback we received has influenced our planning. For example, we asked the audience to rate which periods of classical music they preferred, and this will help inform our future

concert planning. Also, we learned that public radio is a much more common way for our audience to learn about our concerts than commercial radio, so this has impacted our advertising plan.

### **Clay Studio of Missoula, Missoula**

We have continued to provide surveys to members and students to help keep us informed on the effectiveness our programs. Our surveys are integral in answering a number of questions and helping us make decisions on current and future programming needs. In our surveys, we first ask participants how they have heard of us and what made them decide to take a class. In this, we are able to discern what the most effective means are for educating our community about what the Clay Studio of Missoula has to offer. For example, we have actually learned that a number of people come to take classes because a friend has recommended the studio, so word of mouth, as opposed to advertising in print, currently appears to be our most effective way to reach new audiences.

The instructor feedback section of the survey asks for students to rate their instructor and gives a chance for them to provide an explanation for the rating and give anonymous positive or constructive feedback for that individual. We provide the entire survey contents to each instructor so they can review the feedback. Generally, the feedback is very positive, and any comments made are rewarding for our instructors or positively constructive so that our instructors can improve their lesson plans.

We also ask for feedback on our facility and ways in which we can improve the experience for our patrons. This helps us troubleshoot any problems that occur- if a particular part of the studio has not been kept clean, if the need for more classroom buckets and sponges arises, or if a class prior to another has been adhering to cleanup procedures. This has been extremely helpful in informing us if there are issues that need immediate attention or if there are any overall facility improvements or cleanliness issues that need to be addressed.

We also ask students if they plan to take a class in the future, and are pleased that most all survey participants have answered "yes." We also give our students the opportunity to become more involved if they wish in asking permission to contact them if they are interested in volunteering by providing their best contact information.

### **Fort Peck Fine Arts Council, Inc., Fort Peck**

We held the first week of Performing Arts Camp at the Evangelical Church in Glasgow. This allowed the Camp Director and counselors to increase collaboration and more effectively direct youth prior to entering the theatre in the second week of camp. By having adequate space and resources for approximately 100 children we were better able to prepare them for their final showcase. Campers were still a part of the theatre experience but the utilization of the church facilities prior to entering the theatre better prepared both counselors and youth in developing an exceptional Camp Showcase that counselors, campers, and guests have said was the "best Camp Showcase we've ever had."

### **Glacier Symphony and Chorale, Kalispell**

Access to guest artists, musicians and the artistic staff of the GSC are being highlighted in many of our events and activities.

We have over 150 musicians that perform year round and are community members. We are featuring them more prominently in our printed materials, our social media and our spoken announcements as we have found that this personal connection with people in the community that we know of already makes stronger connections that are relevant and lasting. If you know your doctor or dentist sings in the chorale, you remember it and tell people about it is relevant to YOU personally. We are trying to feature Maestro Zoltek as often as possible in live radio interviews, community speaking engagements and in house events such as "Lunch with the Maestro" to provide a forum so that people can ask questions personally and live to really see and understand what the GSC is doing and why.

This year we featured our guest artists and orchestra musicians in a more visible and personal way at the Summer Outdoor opening picnic for Festival Amadeus. Guest artists were required to attend and asked to circulate and meet the public. Musicians from the orchestra were invited and asked to wear name tags to identify themselves and kids were given hand made "autograph books" they could use to get autographs from artists and musicians. We will build on this idea in future years and it connects families with our artists and musicians and works to build future audience and makes the performers more relevant to the audience.

### **Grandstreet Broadwater Productions, Inc., Helena**

We have recently changed the corporate sponsorship structure. With a main stage corporate sponsorship, our sponsors receive 100 tickets to a special sneak peek/dress rehearsal performance. We encourage our sponsors to offer some of the tickets to different groups like Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Florence Crittenton Home and Shodair. This has brought new patrons to Grandstreet that would not have otherwise attended a performance.

### **Great Falls Symphony, Great Falls**

One of the most effective ways that the GFSA utilizes to create connections with our constituents and "potential" constituents is by personalizing the concert experience to reach different segments of the community. In the past year, a new organization, Connect Great Falls was formed geared to meet the needs of young adults, ages 20+ to 35 (or so) to educate themselves about the community, network, and experience opportunities offered for personal and professional growth. Since this is a demographic identified locally and nationally as one with which Symphonies need to become more engaged, the GFSA staff worked with the Connect GF leadership to design an evening of pre-concert socializing, paired with an educational component and discussion with Music Director Gordon Johnson and the guest artist Chris Brubeck followed by the experience of the concert. The project was a great success and the Symphony and Connect Great Falls are planning to repeat a similar event at a "Date Night" concert in January with 2013 Cliburn Crystal award winning pianist Sean Chen. In the interim, we have seen members of Connect returning to the Symphony for other concerts and fundraising events.

### **Irwin & Florence Rosten Foundation, Darby**

After 12 years, MAPS has a well-established set of guidelines and procedures to insure continued relevance with our students and our constituency. Regular guest lectures, field trips, professional client driven assignments, new curriculum etc. keep our students engaged and on their toes.

A key tool for continued relevance is soliciting/monitoring/surveying students' likes and dislikes about the MAPS experience. Questions like: How can we improve? What have you learned? Is there something we're not teaching that you'd like to learn are regularly asked and answered.

As stated, our annual Media Festival is always 'sold out' and well-received. A popular event is our parent/teacher/student events whereby the entire family can share the MAPS experience.

This year, we inaugurated our first summer session. This has proven hugely popular with a new group of students who have not previously attended MAPS. We also recently collaborated with Keystone to Discovery and guided them through their own MAPS week. This youngsters will be future MAPSTERS.

For the 3rd year in a row, via GEAR UP Mt, MAPS held a week long intensive seminar for St. Ignatius/Thompson Falls students at their site. Currently we are discussing a multi-year agreement with GEAR UP to continue these seminars at locations throughout the state.

Relevance to our students is a key and ongoing goal. MAPS instruction follows a master-apprentice approach and this long standing artistic tradition enables our students to learn by doing. Students arrive after school and are immediately engaged in problem solving exercises and creation. They don't sit in chairs, listen to a long lecture, retrieve hefty textbooks or begin tasks designed to raise their scores on a standardized test. Instead, MAPS students spend their time creating, exploring and innovating before presenting their work.

At each step, students critique each other's work and collaborate. This is an arduous process but students learn that creating art is work. Whether our students are designing a video game or writing a script, we strive to teach all students how to persist, persevere and keep working until the creative process has become a final product. Thus the outcomes have personal relevance and supported by the dynamic of group interaction.

### **MCT, Inc., Missoula**

Two things immediately come to mind:

Right before the "Shrek" adapted performance, the show's director got on stage and talked to the audience. He talked about the play and described the large, colorful dragon that would be on stage. He also introduced the instruments in the orchestra one-by-one, and each musician played a note or two. After the show, the cast members, still in costume, came to the lobby and mingled with patrons. These were very easy things to do. Yet, their impact was great. As we heard later from caregivers and family members of those on the autism spectrum, patrons saw the musicians and actors in a new way: they became more real and relevant rather than just remote figures in the orchestra pit and on the stage.

As we also did the previous year, we collected letters and photos from Montana presenters after their residency week. We also requested that children in the casts send us thank you letters. We put everything together in a book that we presented to a donor. The photos and letters actually show the donor in a concrete way that the project is significant and makes a difference in children's lives. Because the material is in the portable form of a book, it is easy for the donor to show others that MCT's work with kids is relevant and meaningful. The following excerpt from a letter written by a second grader in Dillon illustrates the power of these first-hand testimonials: "In late winter, I get excited because I know that you are coming to town with a new play. When I audition, I usually feel nervous and excited but I always try my best. In that week of play practice, I get to work with kids of all ages and have fun. I learned my part makes a difference and every play is unique. I feel proud of our group when I hear the audience clapping and laughing. Being in the play helps me learn that I can do things that seem impossible at first." It is impossible not to feel warm and fuzzy after reading this letter, especially the original, which is in the handwriting of a second grader!

### **Missoula Art Museum, Missoula**

MAM has made a new rule. All formal educational programs are based on art viewing and then art making. All educational programs begin with an in-depth tour of the current exhibition, utilizing Visual Thinking Strategies, and then proceed to art making. This ensures the relevance of the artists being presented in the exhibitions on view is amplified in all MAM's educational offerings. This practice expands the exposure and maximizes the investment in the exhibitions. The practice is extended to patron cultivation. It all begins at MAM, with the art and the artists.

### **Missoula Writing Collaborative, Missoula**

We are working to have readings at community spots so that more of the community can see and hear what we are involved in. Also, having our end-of-the-year reading outside of the schools makes it more special and easier for the community to be involved. For example, at Lowell School, for the past three years, we have had our end-of-the-year reading at the Northside Community Center housed in the Burns Street Bistro, a bright comfortable spot for kids and families. In Arlee, we conduct our end-of-the-year reading at the Hanging Art Gallery in Arlee, where community members enjoy gathering in the beautiful space to hear the young poets reading work about the river, the wind, and the towering Mission Mountains.

### **Montana Repertory Theatre, Missoula**

Maintaining meaningful relationships with the Rep's audience and supporters is entrenched in the heart of its mission and values.

First and foremost, all productions of the Rep include talkbacks and Q and As, which are well attended and beloved by the artists and the participants. During the Missoula Colony, the Rep utilizes in depth

interaction between audience and artist as an integral part of the overall theater experience. The Rep prioritizes projects of immediate social relevance. For example, they co-produced a series of staged readings of plays dealing with issues of death and dying for St. Patrick's Hospital. They had tremendous turnout and response to these readings. They undertook a similar project for the nonprofit, Forward Montana's, voter registration initiative. The Rep was also been asked to stage readings of plays for the Tectonic Theatre Project. These readings took place simultaneously in all fifty states, and the Rep was the theater in Montana asked to participate. Each of these collaborative endeavors was a success, earned significant media, and each of them brought new audience and supporters into the fold.

When it comes to bringing the National Tour to Montana communities, in order for many venues to find this economically feasible, the Rep offers these communities significant discounts and creative income distribution ideas. For example, thanks to a long friendship with the Alberta Bair Theatre in Billings, the Rep devised a profit sharing model that works well for the presenter and enables the Rep to continue their presence in this important regional market.

The Rep also has formed a partnership with the Alumni Association at the University of Montana to enhance the audience participation in Butte and Billings.

The Rep is dedicated to balancing relevance and being entertaining and appealing to a broad audience. The Rep's national tour in 2012 was DOUBT, 2013 was BILOXI BLUES, 2014 was THE GREAT GATSBY, 2015 is ALL MY SONS, by Arthur Miller. DOUBT is one of the most lauded and heavily discussed scripts in recent decades. BILOXI BLUES premiered almost thirty years ago and its exploration of prejudice still carries a powerful resonance. The GREAT GATSBY is still the beloved and cautionary tale of the American dream.

The Rep has also launched what they call the "Tipping Point" project, creating an internal committee of artists, stakeholders, UM faculty, and opinion leaders to meet periodically, with the guidance of an outside facilitator, discussing the growth and future of the Rep. The Tipping Point advisors cover a very wide range of topics from basic office efficiency to grand artistic vision. The intensive dialogues have produced great results in growing an ever-better Rep!

Engaging 48 middle and high schools around the state and nearly 200 communities nationwide ensures that relevant connections between the Rep and their audience is their highest priority.

### **Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, Great Falls**

The Square built quality partnerships that deserve highlighting this year including our home school art program, Arts on Fire, Sony PlayStaion and our artist dinners.

The Square's Education Director worked this last year to build an ongoing education curriculum for the local home school association. Parents and students come to the Square, typically monthly, and are involved in art classes that are designed to compliment the current exhibits. This opportunity came out of our annual Arts on Fire weekend festival where the community is invited to attend hands on demonstrations that are free to sample a variety of arts and mediums.

Another successful event that created relevance and connection was last August when Sony Play Station came to Great Falls, Montana. For the year prior, the Square had partnered with Josh and Trevor Hughes to offer a game design class to elementary and middle school students. These kiddos entered a contest online to win a visit from the Sony team who would bring a 24 foot trailer equipped with the latest technology and games to the greatest city in America. Our kiddos won this competition and Sony came to Great Falls. The event, and the class was featured in all of the local media. Sony additionally produced a YouTube video titled "Our Road to Greatness". This video has been viewed, repeated and even shown at a national conference on a big screen in Las Vegas. It currently has been viewed more than 32,000 times promoting Paris Gibson Square and the students in our education program.

Last, but not least, has been the artist dinners that the Square has hosted in conjunction with exhibits. The Square pairs a complimentary dinner with an artist and their exhibit. Tickets are sold and a lecture is presented by the artist. This is in addition to the public and free of charge receptions.

### **Southwest Montana Arts Council, Dillon**

For the past two years, the Southwest Montana Arts Council has worked hard to be involved with events put on by other organizations. We had art-making booths at United Way of Beaverhead County's Halloween party and Beaverhead Business Builders' Octoberfest. We have also had a concert on the Friday before Labor Day Weekend to add to "Montana's Biggest Weekend," which includes the Dillon Jaycees' rodeo and concert and the Beaverhead County Fair. These efforts have helped SMAC become more linked into our community.

This year we also added Thursday Night Live, a series of free concerts at our recently opened Beaverhead Brewing Co. every Thursday in April. The first four were professional musicians and each one packed the brewery. The last one was a showcase of local non-professionals that had the brewery and sidewalk outside full of people enjoying a nice evening of music with friends. Bringing music to a place where people want to spend time and including their neighbors in that music-making seems to be the best way to be relevant in the lives of our community members.

### **Stumptown Art Studio, Whitefish**

2015 marks Stumptown Art Studio's 20th anniversary. This past June, we held a retrospective art opening, in which we invited artists that have been involved with the Studio since our inception to showcase their artwork for the month. Honoring and reconnecting with artists that were involved with the Studio in the late 1990's had a strong impact on all of us.

Our instructors regularly promote the artwork created by our students in various contests and with media sources including the local newspapers and online. Last year the Whitefish Review chose to publish illustrations created by our after school art students of the famous Winter Carnival "Yeti's" on the back cover of their Winter edition book. Another young student (age 10) won the Glacier National Park Pass art competition with a painting he created in our Art with Masters class. His artwork will be displayed on the 2016 GNP Park Season Passes. Just imagine the pride these young people feel when they are put in the spotlight!

For the second year in a row we have assisted the National Down Syndrome Society with their fundraiser "Buddy Walk". The Society made a 2014 donation to Stumptown Art Studio, which we used to provide art classes for a group of youth living with Down's. We believe that these efforts, while small, create a strong connection with our consumers.

### **Sunburst Foundation, Eureka**

This past spring, Sunburst partnered with Humanities Montana to bring in Lowell Jaeger to do a facilitated community conversation. As this area of Montana has experienced a growing influx of Canadian tourists and also Canadians owning second homes in the valley, there has been a range of strong feelings - both positive and negative - about this among locals. The facilitated conversation invited anyone from the community (locals as well as Canadians) to talk about what makes 'good neighbors'. The event proved to be very successful. As Sunburst works towards appreciation of diversity and tolerance with the types of performances we bring in and the other events (talks, films, etc) we sponsor, this facilitated conversation forged a greater connection with our participants and developed a deeper relevance to our mission and for the community as a whole.

### **Whitefish Theatre Co, Whitefish**

This past year, WTC offered two special events to strengthen the connection between elementary and middle school students and music and theatre programs. In December 2014, WTC hosted a special backstage event for 2 rural elementary schools who typically do not have access to a theatre arts program. 40 students from Kila and Olney-Bissell Elementary Schools attended a unique pre-show tour of our backstage areas, including WTC's rehearsal room, shop, costume room, dressing rooms, and sound/light booth. They experienced several hands-on demonstrations, including one from our Technical Director on lights and sound, our Artistic Director on voice projection and stage presence, and our Costume Designer on what goes into designing and creating costumes for a show. Several students were able to practice using a spot light and all students practiced saying a line onstage with a strong, clear voice. Several pieces of costuming were available for the students to try on. All students then stayed at the O'Shaughnessy Center for an outreach production of "The King & I" with a clearer understanding of the components that go into creating a theatre performance.

In April, 2015, WTC invited over 100 choral students from Whitefish Middle School and West Glacier Elementary School to attend a curriculum-driven, interactive, pre-performance lecture/workshop with Moira Smiley & VOCO. Moira and her band are an award-winning, all-female a cappella group who incorporates instruments, four-part harmonies, and body percussion into their visionary folk singing. All master teachers, Moira & VOCO have created an accessible, dynamic, and fun workshop model to engage students in music theory and performance. In attendance with their choral teachers, Moira & VOCO taught students how to sing with major and minor notes, create harmonies based on colors and emotions, and use body percussion to add depth to the songs. The last song of the workshop had students singing 3-part harmonies with band members and using 3 different body percussion sounds. Choral teachers highly praised this workshop for its professionalism and relevance to their existing programs. WTC received one email from a participating choral director that said, "The traditional and

freeform exercises that Moira Smiley & VOCO taught my students was truly inspiring to me and my class. It is so important to see quality artists like this in a live setting to appreciate the true beauty of the voice. On top of that, Moira's lessons on music theory could not have been a better complement to what we are learning in the choir room."

### **Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings**

The YAM's specifics center on fostering personal creativity and interdisciplinary awareness. We return often to interdisciplinary concepts to articulate the value of art and the role that art plays (and can increasingly play) in training leaders, defusing tension, articulating points of view, celebrating triumphs, and exercising the brain. Life itself is an interdisciplinary pursuit, and the YAM works with teachers and civic groups to break down the walls that develop early on as children are educated in a series of separate subjects presented as unrelated to each other. Connections between engagement in the arts and excellence and achievement in other walks of life are copiously documented, but have not been well articulated to the general population. We work to spread and restate this message. An example might be local and specific, such as our own direct experience with entrepreneurs in town who credit their childhood art experiences at the YAM with facilitating their success (as does a member of our board who is a very successful real estate developer and another who owns an expanding group of successful retail operations). The message can also place local, individual experience within a national and international context when the connection between great scientists, medical innovators, engineers, and Nobel Prize-winners and the artistic pursuits of these kinds of people is revealed. The studies mount with remarkably consistent results ... the arts are pivotal to developing creative thinkers, problem-solvers, and engaged citizens. In FY14-15, we continued to develop new strategies and programmatic ideas to connect people to creativity and recognize that most people are more creative than they imagine themselves to be. Further, we are developing a parallel focus on tapping into pride in the state. Providing a customized and thoughtful way to create onsite (a hands-on station) for every visitor has become a priority in exhibition development; an actively engaging component tailored to at least one of the exhibitions on view is integrated into planning. We introduced two in FY14-15. The YAM's artist-in-residence program also places visitors in direct contact with working artists in situations unmediated by staff; artist and visitor set the terms of engagement and consistently learn from each other. In FY14-15, three very different artists occupied the YAM's studio. We cannot overstate the importance of our efforts to invite personal creative participation. The casual visitor's few-second engagement with a hands-on station can lead to small epiphanies, and the no-experience-required weekend workshop can lead to an entire life becoming more fulfilling. We conceived a new exhibition series, Montana Masters, which will launch in FY15-16. It is through this series that we will use a small group of mature Montana artists to demonstrate a diversity of human experience that will ring true with many Montanans and will shake free of persistent stereotypes about who Montanans are.

### **Return on Investment**

#### **Alpine Theatre Project, Inc., Whitefish**

Answer 1: We have long known that theatre has the power to change lives. Nowhere is this more evident than in an educational setting when working with local students. The Alpine Kids! Theatre Project, an after-school theatre education program, is aimed to giving all local students access to quality, professional theatre instruction. Through this, students build confidence, creativity, self-discipline, and camaraderie. The hallmark of the KTP program is that all students are accepted into the program, thereby creating a truly inclusive environment.

We have found particular success with students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, as theatre allows those students to blend their inner lives with the outer, social environment. After our recent AKTP session ending in a production of Peter Pan, we received the following note from a parent of two students. The names in this note have been omitted to protect their privacy.

“My name is \_\_\_\_\_, my children are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ from the Tigerlily cast. I just wanted to first all say that this experience has been nothing but positive for my kids. They both struggle socially as they each suffer from autism spectrum disorder and as I am sure you know children at this age range can be vicious. They struggle to find confidence and a sense of self. My husband \_\_\_\_\_ is a Veteran and due to events that took place in Iraq suffers from PTSD as well as a Traumatic brain injury. I now have to stay home with him as he has a disability that can and has put his well being in grave jeopardy and at times a danger to himself in the past. We now live on less than 2,500 a month, which leaves no room for us to expose our kids to any activities outside the home and school as everything costs so much. Your program allowed for my sweet babies to participate in this production, waiving the fee I wish with all my heart I could have afforded because they have learned to push through a lack of self esteem, finding courage they didn't know they had! What a joy it's been to see them being a part of something that while great fun, requires a work ethic and courage. I just hope you know that the skills, as well as the qualities they were able to discover in themselves will undoubtedly be carried with them throughout all their days.”

Answer 2: This year, as part of ATP's new business plan, the decision was made to change its summer schedule to a rotating repertory format wherein the same company of artists would perform 3 different productions (Guys and Dolls, Big River, and The Who's Tommy) that would rotate on a nightly basis. ATP decided to change to this format after it had done market research and realized that: (1) only 30 percent of its audience were non-residents and (2) most visitors to the Flathead Valley stay between 4-7 nights on average. By running in a rotating repertory model, or “running in rep,” ATP would be able to offer multiple production options to residents and non-residents within any given week.

The result was tremendous. The per-night attendance average increased by 30 percent over the previous format, with several performances selling out completely. Thanks to ATP's new information infrastructure as previously explained, patrons were able to provide immediate feedback on how they enjoyed having the option to see different productions within the week. They also mentioned how they enjoyed seeing the same company of actors perform such a variety of different roles. These same patrons used local restaurants and businesses more frequently because of the increased attendance.

In return, the artists employed by ATP for this new format became more embedded in the community. Local business owners got to know the artists more since they were out and about in the community all summer patronizing their businesses. These artists have become ambassadors for Whitefish and the Flathead Valley, returning to their points of origin and extolling the virtues of our community.

Alpine Theatre Project has always seen the professional performing arts as a vital economic engine for the communities served. National studies have shown that professional theatre has a 6 to 1 return on investment, due to the additional spending made by patrons. According to the Americans for the Arts Economic Prosperity IV Calculator, Alpine Theatre Project has had an overall economic impact of \$1,597,155.

Alpine Theatre Project spends close to 70 percent of its annual budget locally. This includes artist expenses, since the spending habits of its visiting artists are similar to an out-of-state visitor. Visiting artists spend money locally at restaurants, stores, and attractions. Additional expenses surrounding the visiting artists like housing and transportation are all spent locally. The majority of local spending aside from artist expenses are production supplies for scenery, props, and costumes. Local stores are used to procure these items. ATP also partners with large local suppliers, like Plum Creek Timber Company and Pacific Steel and Recycling, to receive supplies pro bono.

### **Archie Bray Foundation, Helena**

Answer 1: Starting in 2014, the Bray launched a new educational outreach project designed to improve and expand experience in and awareness of ceramic art within the Helena school district. The initial effort was to directly improve programming opportunities for the two local high school programs at Helena High and Capital High by (1) establishing two annual ceramic workshop sessions in each of the high schools; with a combination of demonstration and hands-on activities, (2) providing one field trip for each high school to tour the Bray facilities annually; (3) creating six scholarships (three per high school) for promising ceramics students to attend the Bray's week-long summer high school program, and (4) creating a scholarship that awards the top high school student in Helena per quarter with enrollment into the Bray's adult education program.

The students who have received scholarships to the classes have all enjoyed their time and have been enthusiastic about participating in class. One of the students that participated in the adult community class commented on the how she enjoyed the freedom to create whatever she wanted without the constraints of her high school classroom's curriculum, and the exposure to other artists' techniques and styles.

Another student, Landen Beckner, found the experience transformative. He wrote, "My first class flew by as the walls of everything I knew, or thought I knew of ceramics were wickedly decimated at their foundation. My instructor (Sensei) John Souter, was as artist as it gets. He showed me new horizons I never knew existed. We had entered a parallel universe, a fifth dimension where I was encouraged to think out every action I took to the clay, instead of simply mass producing arts and crafts for mom and dad. I was expected to find meaning in the patternless random which was accepted at school. Every week which followed that first class was something I could look forward to and anticipate with anxiety that only comes from having one's mind blown repeatedly. Not only did I learn new techniques, I learned a new way of thinking about the arts. I learned that to find something you love unconditionally and irrevocably is special. It's a feeling you shouldn't let go of, but instead treat it as a light guiding a path. I'd learned in school how to follow steps and accept results; at the Archie Bray I learned how to break rules and create personalities."

Through his experience at the Bray, Beckner came to the realization he has the love and interest to pursue ceramics as a career.

Answer 2: The Archie Bray Foundation plays an important economic role locally. First, the majority of the ABF Pottery annual budget is spent in Helena or Montana. Second, workshops and special events draw hundreds of people to Helena who stay in hotels, eat in restaurants, and patronize other local businesses. Further, the ABF Clay Business manufactures and distributes clay and other ceramics equipment to regional schools and institutions. Finally, the Bray draws creative individuals to Helena, many of whom make their home here, thereby strengthening both the local economy and art community. Bray resident artists have been making their homes and studios in Helena and Montana since the 1970's. Robert Harrison, Sarah Jaeger, George McCauley and Eric Van Eimeren -- to name a few, and before them Richard and Penny Swanson. Recently many others have joined them, such as Tara Wilson, Mel Griffin and David Peters.

In 2014, former Bray resident artists Beth Cavener, Alessandro Gallo and Chris Riccardo returned to Helena to create their own studio. All three wanted to return to Helena because the Bray was such a profound turning point in their careers. A resident artist at the Bray from 2002 to 2004, Cavener said, "it was an absolutely pivotal time of my career. This place and history has a deep personal meaning for me. This is the place I want to come home to."

Riccardo previously worked 20 years at the nonprofit the Armory Art Center in West Palm Beach, Florida before his summer residency at the Bray in 2012. Being at the Bray changed his view on ceramics and it gave him a huge boost in confidence, leading him to quit his job and move his entire family to Helena for the opportunity to start the studio with Cavener.

### **Art Mobile of Montana, Dillon**

Answer 2: Cultural Tourism story - how Art Mobile connects cultures across the state

TA Jo Nasvik: "After visiting Miller Colony in Bynum, I had to contact our exhibiting artist Jill Brody. Her photograph in the Art Mobile exhibit, 'Kids in a Machine Shop' [3 Hutterite girls in a machine shop] was a huge hit with the children at Miller Colony School. Before I had a chance to unpack the exhibit, the students had spotted the book Jill Brody had given us, with portraits of people from the Chester Colony area in northern Montana. The students were all huddled together studying each page of the book." Note about the book "Hidden in Plain Sight": They were looking at the book 'Hidden in Plain Sight' by artist Jill Brody, pointing at photos of other Hutterites. For 4 years Jill Brody was hosted by Liberty County Hutterite colonies as she made a photographic study of their culture. Brody's photographs are un-staged, unaltered vignettes of life in these colonies, part of a traveling art exhibit: Children Hidden in Plain Sight, shown in art galleries in Montana and in the US. Brody visited and photographed rural life in Montana for over 20 years; has worked on a number of projects dealing with ranch life, beginning her trips to the colonies in 2010. She discovered a new sense of Montana's cultural diversity that could be observed and photographed. The Hutterites are a unique community that seeks a certain degree of isolation, she explains. Yet they need to interact and engage in commerce with the outside world. Being an outsider in the colonies presented a number of challenges. For one, they live their entire lives in a community of 100 to 150 people, Brody said. They are pacifists and they have a very different understanding of how to get along. [from The Missoulian]

Jo: "When I took the photo out ['Kids in a Machine Shop'] and hung it on display in the exhibit, their attention changed and they all pointed and with wide eyes examined the photograph. I took a picture of a student staring at the portrait and sent it to Jill Brody. I thanked her for donating her piece to the exhibit because it was so impactful that day for the students at Miller Colony. Out of every piece in the exhibit, this was their favorite because they could really relate to it. Jill Brody was thrilled and said that she would be honored to donate another image to next year's exhibit. She invited me to the showing of her photograph series in Chester, MT. She will give a talk about the work and display it there for the first time. She said, I do hope that you come to Chester in September, partly to see what the whole thing looks like, and partly so that we can meet."

AMM will be in Chester this September, where we will schedule a Hutterite Colony and Jill will come to present as one of our artists. See image of Jill's photograph of Hutterite children: "Stairway to Heaven" Archival Pigment Print 26" X 30" 2010 - on our website [artmobilemontana.org](http://artmobilemontana.org) under Exhibits Tab for 2015-16 Under the Big Sky

### **Big Sky Film Institute, Missoula**

Answer 1: Perhaps the most touching feedback we received from the 2015 festival was a review of our youth programs from Scott Mathews, the Youth Development Coordinator for the Flagship program at Big Sky High School:

"What I appreciate about these workshops beyond their skill building is they are available to students of all economic status. The BSDFF has kept the cost affordable so that students from low income families can participate in this amazing opportunity. Forming a partnership with the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival is one of the smartest moves I've ever made as a Youth Development Coordinator. Not only has it created an opportunity for Big Sky students to learn about issues we face, but also about people very different than us. The visits from BSDFF filmmakers have been a cornerstone of Big Sky's Diversity Week for the last nine years; thousands of students have benefitted from this partnership. I have had numerous students pursue journalism and filmmaking after high school and many give credit to their experiences with the BSDFF an inspiration for choosing this path."

This feedback is extremely significant to us, as we try our best to inspire the next generation of media makers. To know that we have inspired even a few students to pursue film professionally is very moving, and we hope that we can continue to touch more students in years to come.

Answer 2: The Big Sky Documentary Film Festival has an economic impact of \$3 million to Missoula over the course of 10 days. During the festival, we host events at local businesses throughout the town that promote spending within our local economy. For example, we host parties in the evenings at a number of bars throughout downtown, we held a photography exhibition at a local art gallery, and set up an interactive exhibit at the Missoula Art Museum. We spend about half our annual budget locally on hotels, caterers, local venues, entertainers and artists, and local advertising/marketing vendors. And this spending is not confined to the ten days of the festival. Our monthly film series is hosted at the TopHat, a popular local bar. Additionally, over 30 percent of our festival audience comes from outside of Missoula to attend, we are attracting tourists from all over the country and the world to support our local economy.

## **Billings Symphony**

The money we receive from the state of Montana goes directly to our local economy. We help provide employment for many Montanans which include our orchestra musicians, Chorale director, and staff at the Billings Symphony. Paying these Montanans is the single largest expenditure in our budget. The general operations support from the Montana Arts Council helps us pay these salaries, which goes directly into the local economy.

Our Explore Music! Education and Outreach programs provide a well-rounded education with access to the arts to students in a free or low cost way. One of these programs is Adventures in Music Day, when parents and children of all ages are invited downtown to try out instruments, ask questions to the musicians, and attend an open dress rehearsal all free of charge. We collaborate with other organizations, such as the Western Heritage Center and the Yellowstone Art Museum, who will allow our participants and families free access to their museums on that day. We also take this program on the road to a rural school so that their children will be able to learn about the instruments of the orchestra as well. This is just one example of our programs that we offer, thanks to your support.

During the 2014-15, we received a tourism grant to be used to expand our advertising into other areas of Montana and Wyoming. The concert was titled "Gone Country" and included guest vocal artists along with our "Country Idol" winner from our June 2014 Symphony in the Park contest. We were able to advertise into Sheridan, Wyoming and smaller communities in northeastern Montana. We know that this made a huge impact because this was our top selling concert of the season. We can reasonably expect that many of these people spent the night, dined and shopped in Billings before they went home. We know that investing in our programs has an impact on our local economy.

Easily 80 percent of our budget is spent locally on good and services right in our area. Last year our musicians received approximately \$160,000 for concerts and outreaches. \$30,000 was spent on ads, design work, and marketing from local businesses. \$120,000 was spent for production, which includes, sound, stage and light crew, theater rental, and equipment.

## **Bozeman Symphony Society, Bozeman**

Answer 1: Bozeman Symphony patrons and supporters Walter and Regina Wunsch sent the following thank you note describing how the Bozeman Symphony and Symphonic Choir made a difference in a family's life. The note sent after the concert stated the following:

Thanks to all for this outstanding event!

The way choir and orchestra was dynamically choreographed made it for me a 3D, even more so a "Fourth-Dimensional" experience.

But what touched my heart the most was when I learned today about the ecstatic response from the Thomas Moore School parents, whose paraplegic child, unable to speak and move, but being so deeply touched by the Music that she shed tears of joy during the most of the concert.

We gladly will sponsor a like event any time!  
Thanks again!

Kind Regards to all,  
Walter, Regina and Family

Answer 2: Estimated support this year for the Bozeman Symphony is 35 percent by admissions charges, 7 percent from earned income, 4 percent from grants and foundations and 54 percent from private support. Every dollar that we spend is spent locally with the exception of about 5 percent spent on music acquisition. We provide employment opportunities for nearly 100 people. One of our largest expenses is the conservative stipends paid to our musicians, both community members and college students for our regular concert Season Concerts and Far Afield programs. \$211,350 was budgeted last year for musicians and guest artists. Rental of our performing space is another of our largest expenses. \$34,000 went to this line item last year. We provide services to support other community organizations.

Relationships that require a dollar commitment to assist include the non-profit Montana Ballet, Gallatin Empire Lions Service Club, Montana State University School of Music and Bozeman Public Schools. Each year the Bozeman Symphony gives thousands of dollars' worth of tickets to local non-profits to use for their fundraisers and parent-child partner programs.

### **Butte Symphony**

St. James Hospital and Montana Tech are the largest employers in this area. I have learned from recruiting and personnel directors that they are often asked if the community has a symphony. "Why yes, as a matter of fact we do". The Butte Symphony is a drawing point for people who may be leaving a larger cultural community and coming into a smaller, western community. We deal with a stigma of superfund cleanups and large open pit mines yet we can provide a wonderful experience of music and class to those who join our community.

The second story comes from our work in promoting our concerts into the SW Montana rural communities. We have seen a significant increase in attendees from outside of Butte who come into the city for a concert and will spend an evening at dinner before attending the concert. I have been told by restaurant owners in the uptown area that they see an increase in diners on a concert night. This symphony is an economic help for our community.

### **Carbon County Arts Guild and Depot Gallery, Red Lodge**

Answer 1: Because of the Andy Andersen and Sidney E. Frank Art Education Outreach Program I was given the opportunity to work with the students at the Belfry Montana School last year. I worked with both the teachers and the students developing an arts program that would meet the requirements for Art Education. I have many delightful stories but the one I choose to share is difficult. Belfry is a small school where the main income for families is either agriculture or oil field related. Many students are often relocating. They started sharing their home life with me when they were working on an art project because I would encourage them to draw and paint things familiar to them. It was not always easy to hear about their rough and tumble lives. The weekly art visits continued into the cold winter months,

but I could feel the positive energy move into each class room as I packed my art supplies up and down the halls. Children in the beginning who were reserved came rushing up to help me unload, anxious to see what new adventures we would be working on. Teachers started telling me how more and more students were getting their work done. How even the most troubled students were staying on task better just so they could do their Art Day. One little girl, maybe ten or eleven years old, seemed beyond her maturity level. She could put real depth and meaning into her artwork. The only problem was she was extremely self-conscious. Although very aloof from the other students she seemed to be enjoying the art classes. She started to socialize more with the other children during art. On one of those days she was smiling and the whole class was just having a “Happy Moment” when a well-dressed young man entered the room. The atmosphere changed instantly. All was quiet. He said to the little girl, “It is time to go.” She slowly picked up her picture and left with him. The classroom fell silent and remained gloomy the rest of the lesson. Her teacher told me later that day that her father had fallen in the river and died of Hypothermia a few days before. It was important to her to go to school on the day of his funeral because it was Art Day. She wanted to have a small glimpse of happiness on one of the most difficult days she will experience in her lifetime. As the weeks continued Art Day became one of her favorite days. The whole class started to embrace her and help her through her grief. Thank you, Dolly Frerichs Stuber

Answer 2: I have been a member of the Carbon County Arts Guild and Depot Gallery since 2000. As a professional picture framer I feel like they have contributed considerably to my business. Seven years ago I decided to work full time in my business, The Strawberry Patch Frame Shop and Studio, here in Red Lodge Montana. About one-third of my customer base is a direct result of referrals from the Carbon County Arts Guild and Depot Gallery. I work with several local and national artists and photographers who I would have never met had it not been for these referrals. Not only do I work with the people doing the art, but I have also developed a good rapport with art collectors because the guild has supported me. I have work as an artist myself and the Carbon County Arts Guild and Depot Gallery has not only sold my work, but have sent me customers who wanted commissioned paintings done. Because I am not located on the main street of Red Lodge I do not draw from the tourists for my business. My business is more specialized and I need the kind of support the people at the Carbon County Arts Guild and Depot Gallery can give me; people who know the art world. Thanks, Dolly Frerichs Stuber, Strawberry Patch Frame Shop

We spent approx. \$22,755.00 locally for services. These include printing, catering, plumbing (Old building!), hardware and supplies, snowplowing, garden maintenance, new gutters, web design and support and art framing. This does not include costs for staffing of the Guild by people who live in town and support the local economy.

### **Clay Studio of Missoula, Missoula**

Answer 1: Jon Green first came to the Clay Studio of Missoula in Fall 2014 as a community student in the Woodfire class. He quickly became an involved and enthusiastic participant in events outside of the class. He applied for a studio internship and started his internship in late 2014, while continuing to take community classes. He is currently a very dedicated and productive intern at the studio, and has also decided to return to school and pursue a BFA in ceramics at the University of Montana.

Jon wrote the following about his experience at the Clay Studio:

"One year ago I found myself unfulfilled and unhappy with my career path. In a full-on early life crisis I found the Clay Studio of Missoula. The Clay Studio of Missoula has given me the opportunity and resources I needed to find both my career path, and my passion. The Clay Studio gave me a community that is inclusive and caring, where I could share thoughts and ideas with people of all ages and backgrounds. The Clay Studio gave me access to facilities where I can work on my craft and express myself. But most importantly it gave me happiness and the motivation to pursue my bachelor's degree. Without the Clay Studio of Missoula, I would no doubt still be in a dead-end job, unsure of my career goals."

Answer 2: In our community, each venue mutually benefits from one another. The Clay Studio of Missoula continues to attract a number of artists-in-residence that stay for period amounting up to two years, with of some of these individuals opting on staying on in the area to make a home and establish a studio practice in Missoula.

Our residents have exhibited and sold work at venues locally and throughout the state, and many have participated in other residencies at either the Archie Bray Foundation or Red Lodge Clay Center. A number of residents and Clay Studio affiliated artists have contributed work to Missoula Art Museum's annual auction, which helps sustain MAM's mission to continue to offer free admission to the general public. There is tremendous support for the arts in the area and this exchange with artists and venues is what contributes to the vivacious success of the arts throughout Missoula and Montana. Through this growth of venues and art appreciation, independent artists are given more opportunities to exhibit and sell their works.

Being primarily focused on ceramic education and outreach, our primary mission is to provide an educational venue for the creation of ceramic art. However, part of our mission continues to be to increase the awareness of quality ceramic work that is being created locally and nationally. We are an active part of the Missoula First Friday Art Night. Our expenditures to maintain our sales and exhibit gallery benefits not only our organization, but more importantly, increases the awareness of the number of artists we represent locally and statewide. Increased visibility means more potential sales for our artists. In 2014, we paid out \$18,477 in artist commissions. The majority of those payments were to Montana based artists and our artists in residence.

Not only do we maintain a large core audience to our first Friday receptions, we attract a number of out-of-town visitors that are interested in anything from buying a mug to viewing a contemporary exhibit by regional artists. Some of our exhibits and artists are featured in national publications such as Ceramics Monthly. For gallery operations, advertising and upkeep is not a small expense. For example, 2014 gallery mailing to local and national addresses was \$2634, which is processed through a small local business mail presort outsource service, Towne Mailer, which exhausts our PVP funds for the fiscal year. We continue to reach out to a broader public by collaborations with local businesses to display ceramic art and organizational information such as class schedules, show postcards, and maps in other accessible locations. Our satellite galleries are at 4 Ravens Gallery, the Missoula Food Co-op, and the Catalyst Cafe. In many cases, these businesses in exchange for promoting the Clay Studio keep a portion of the gallery commission fee. This expands the types of products that these businesses offer, while giving us increased visibility.

## **CoMotion Dance Project, Missoula**

Answer 1: There were so many conversations, and delightful things written on evaluations.

“It is the best wildfire education effort for children that I have seen...a very unique and creative way to get a good, and not often conveyed, message across to kids.”

Mitchell R. Burgard, Wildland Fire Management RD&A  
Rocky Mountain Research Station, Hungry Horse, MT

On behalf of myself and the children of Lapwai Elementary, we are truly grateful for you sharing your group's talent with us. It was great to see something fresh and interactive spark the kid's learning and imaginations throughout the performance. With wildfires becoming larger and more destructive I hope to see this program offered in the future to aid wildfire awareness. Thanks again!

Kip Kemak, Fire Prevention and Mitigation Specialist, Nez Perce Tribe, Lapwai, ID

I have been working in schools for 28 years. This is one of the best school assemblies that I have ever seen. The presentation was informative and entertaining. I heard lots of gasps of amazement from the kids. The presenter did an outstanding job of controlling the crowd. Often presenters don't know how easy it is to lose a crowd. This presenter had the kids in the palm of her hand every minute. . . .I can't say enough about how much I enjoyed this assembly.”

Alicia Holthaus, Grangeville Elementary ID principal

“They learned why fire is a useful, but powerful tool in managing our lands in a unique and interesting way.”

Deary Elementary teacher

Outstanding. This was very entertaining and interactive. It was appropriate for the audience, and met the needs of diverse learning styles.

Hellgate Elementary, grade 2 teacher

“The students were amazed at how strong the dancers were. They loved when the teachers got up and performed. They loved the lights and the ribbons.”

Grade 6 teacher, Troy, Elementary, Idaho

Answer 2: Children are natural movers and they readily learn through activities that encourage them to use their whole bodies in pursuit of information and knowledge. Developed as an alternative to keeping students in their seats throughout the school day, The CoMotion Dance Project creates opportunities for professional dancers to visit classrooms, push the desks aside, and physically engage students in their curriculum.

We are dancing states of water, plant life cycles and magnets (science), fractions, place value, and decimals (math), grammar and poetry (language arts). After being presented with new curricular content in the traditional manner, our specially designed dance units are used to support and deepen student knowledge, leading to greater retention and long-term understanding.

**Emerson Center for the Arts and Culture, Bozeman**

Answer 1: Gabrielle, a 17 year old from Bozeman, and her mother Sonya have participated as students and volunteers in our ceramics programs here at the Emerson for multiple seasons. Sonya recently contacted me with much dismay to tell me they were unable to take classes this fall due to financial difficulty. I told Sonya about our scholarship program which offers 50 percent off tuition fees. Sonya was delighted, and immediately completed the application for her daughter so she could enroll her in another session of pottery. On the application form we ask why the student applying is interested in the class and how a scholarship would benefit them. Her response was one of the most powerful I have read. "Under Shaila Sorenson's instruction, Gabrielle has found a real love for sculpting in clay. The nurturing environment at the Emerson has also proven to be a safe haven for Gabrielle, who is recovering from PTSD and depression. This scholarship gives Gabrielle the opportunity to continue to grow her skills with clay in what has proven to be a very healing environment." - Sonya Burrows.

Answer 2: The Emerson Center is located in the heart of Downtown Bozeman, and thus is a hub for residents and tourists alike looking for new experiences and connections to our community. Our Lunch on the Lawn summer concert series is a free, weekly event that encourages people of all ages to join us on our west lawn and listen to local musicians and purchase lunch from one of several local food vendors. We provide family- friendly activities and encourage patrons to shop within tenant galleries and studios during their visit.

Food vendors and food truck owners pay a very minimal fee to serve lunch to the public during this popular event, and keep all profits. Food vending has become a competitive endeavor for entrepreneurs in Bozeman and the Lunch on the Lawn event has allowed many new vendors to get a footing in our community.

The same goes for musicians. We pay local bands to play a two hour set during this event, which often times introduces them to a new demographic and increases their following.

Other non-profits such as the Bozeman Recreation Department and local businesses such as Montana Parent Magazine have also joined us at no cost, to spread the word about what they do and share information about different activities and events they offer.

The Emerson strives to offer free, family-friendly, community events such as Lunch on the Lawn, that benefit local food vendors, musicians, non-profits, businesses and Emerson tenants.

### **Fort Peck Fine Arts Council, Inc., Fort Peck**

Answer 1: A 15 year old male moved here last year from Washington. Since the move, his parents are now going through a divorce that has been very difficult on him emotionally and on the entire family financially. His grandmother was able to help pay his tuition to camp last year, but this year was unable due to having to help with other strains on the family budget, including a recent car accident. She applied for a scholarship for her grandson and was most humbled and apologetic but did not want him to miss the opportunity of camp. He attended camp and was so appreciative. Not only was the camp a positive experience but a healing and powerful calling for this young man. He has since said that he hopes to continue each and every year and that he hopes to become a Camp Counselor some day. Stories like this remind us how important the arts are in every day life and if making sure all are able to experience the magic of theatre!

Answer 2: Support and funding from the Montana Arts Council is especially important for rural areas like Fort Peck and crucial to the continued existence of the performing and visual arts, the health of the local economy and the availability and accessibility of the arts to all of the citizens of the state.

The arts have a significant economic impact in Montana. The Fort Peck Summer Theatre experienced a successful 46th season in bringing visual arts to Northeastern Montana and we look forward to even more growth in 2016. The arts drive tourism and stimulate business development in cities and rural areas. Montana's strong cultural community attracts good business people and serves as a recruiting draw. Fort Peck Lake was ranked the 3rd most traveled to recreation destination in the state and the theatre is a main catalyst for increased tourism within the region.

Government support of the arts stabilizes the arts community and ensures that the arts are accessible for all income levels and segments of the population. Continuing to support the arts in Montana is crucial to cultural and economic gains. The Montana Arts Council's Public Value Grant is one such important funding source that has continued to impact arts and culture in Northeastern Montana as well as the entire state.

The Fort Peck Summer Theatre was able to build an entirely new additional space for a Rehearsal and Costume Shop due to the PVG as we applied the entirety of the funds towards this project as a portion of the match for larger grants including: Murdock Trust - \$124,000, Treacy Foundation - \$50,000, Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) - \$5,000, and Valley County Community Foundation (VCCF) - \$1,000. This new structure provides increased opportunities to our company members as well as camp counselors and participants season after season. With adequate facilities we are better able to focus on our mission of providing exceptional and professional theatre to locals and visitors. We rely on and appreciate the ongoing support of the MAC as this new building was a \$250,000 project that would not have been possible without matching funds being provided. All dollars spent on this project were spent locally ensuring economic prosperity for local contractors and building supply companies as we are committed to supporting local business.

### **Glacier Symphony and Chorale, Kalispell**

Answer 1: Our organization was particularly touched by the very personal note from a woman who dedicated her two week vacation to take Amtrak from her home in New Jersey all the way to Whitefish, MT to attend part of Festival Amadeus. She writes: "Dear Mr. Satterlee, I wish to thank you and so many others who made my visit to Whitefish so enjoyable. Your wife was most kind to offer her chair to me at the concert. The concert was total enjoyment. I will sing its praises for the entire year! I do wish to thank Alice for her gracious attention to me. The concert alone was an unforgettable experience. Truly I was expecting to hear only Mozarts music but was thoroughly pleased with the music of other composers. I truly enjoyed the two chamber music nights. Maestro Zoltek is exceptional! And the concert under the tent was outstanding! My thanks to the Chamber of Commerce for the book that advertised the concert. The Whitefish Library is outstanding! I enjoyed much time there. I bought a used book for 50 cents and read it on the way home. Having a seat next to Nanda was a delightful experience and we enjoyed much time together. The interview with Marti was an exciting experience and a delightful encounter also. I thank you and those others who helped make my visit one of the most memorable ever and I will consider next year. Gratefully, Eva D. Madison"

We found it interesting and extremely relevant that this visitor from out of the area recognized the value of not only the GSC and Festival Amadeus, but also the Chamber, the Library and many other local institutions and non-profits that work to make our area a worthy investment in tourism visits as well as economic investment.

Answer 2: This past year, the GSC had two activities or programs that had significant economic impact and cultural tourism impact to the local area. 1) The Summer Symphony Pops concert featuring "The Hit Men" who are former stars of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons drew large crowds with many visitors from outside the area who either camped or stayed in hotels and visited with the purpose of attending the concert. Having larger signature events with unique themes helps bring in visitors from outside the area. 2) Festival Amadeus is the only week long (11 concerts in 8-days) classical music festival in a multi-state area. No other symphony with the budget size of the GSC in the nation takes on such a large endeavor. The festival draws many visitors from outside the local area and outside the state. Many are already planning trips, visiting relatives, etc. but we are finding that they are increasing their length of stay as a result of Festival Amadeus, thus spending more money and adding to the economic growth for local businesses. The one week festival is estimated to have an economic impact of over \$200,000 to the local economy.

We estimate that \$585,000 was spent locally from our annual budget.

\$376,058 spent on local salaries, wages, contract employees, stipends to local artists, and benefits to locals

\$51,476 spent on venue, office, equipment and other local rentals for production of events and operations.

\$30,083 spent on local advertising and design of print materials.

### **Great Falls Symphony, Great Falls**

Answer 1: One of the programs supported by the association of which we are most proud, is the Youth Orchestra program. The mission is to provide an experience which will enrich, educate and provide leadership opportunities within the membership. The goal is to prepare young people, as they become adults, to support the arts. We have told this story before, but it is from a letter received this past year from one of the musicians enrolled in the YO program.

"...the Youth Orchestra is like my second family. I am an oboist in the orchestra and I know that every Sunday when I walk onto the Mansfield theater stage, I will be welcomed by everybody. It is one of the few places or organizations where I am not judged by the way I might dress, or act, and that my beliefs and values are accepted. I love that everyone is respectful to each other, and the competition is friendly. The Youth Orchestra teaches me many musical skills, but it also teaches me important life skills that I can use outside of Youth Orchestra. If each musician just did what they wanted instead of working together, our concerts would be a mess! I have learned so much about how to cooperate with my peers for success. From Youth Orchestra I have learned how to fix my own problems, and how to help others do the same, without being bossy. The adults who help with Youth Orchestra have taught me good

work ethics so I can practice effectively. These positive work habits have carried on to my school work and sports as well. All in all, Youth Orchestra is a great place to be, and something I plan to continue until I graduate high school. Youth Orchestra opens up so many opportunities that shouldn't be passed up. My weekdays are spent looking forward to Youth Orchestra... on Sunday there is no other place I would rather be!"

--- a CMR 9th grader

The Youth Orchestra program serves over 100 talented young musicians in two ensembles in grades 6 - 12. I think we would agree from a letter such as this, that not only the Symphony's support in the program, but that of corporations and foundations is well worth the investment.

Answer 2: As a community, Great Falls continually strives to attract new people and to diversify the local economy. Businesses and corporations with whom we associate tell us that the very existence of a full scale, artistically excellent Symphony within a relatively small population provides an economic stimulus for the economy. The GFSA works in cooperation with a number of entities who support such growth and diversity such as the Great Falls Development Authority, the public and private education systems, medical community and other businesses and individuals to foster a sense of pride within the community. It is equally important that the GFSA support the local economy. Through musicians, employees and the purchase of goods and services, we invest approximately 83 percent of the annual budget directly back into the economy and surrounding marketing region. Over the past two years approximately one-million dollars was returned to the community in this way. Categories of spending include administrative and artistic salaries of 16 employees, local musician honorarium, rental of performance venues, concert production, office rental and supplies, Youth Orchestra scholarships, fee waivers, etc.

### **Hamilton Players, Inc, Hamilton**

Answer 1: I recently received a letter from a graduating senior thanking me for all I had done for her. As a younger teenager, she had auditioned for a couple of shows and I had cast her in very small, supporting roles. Her schedule was very difficult to work around and several times I had to wait around very late after rehearsals for her ride to arrive to pick her up. In this letter, she told me that unbeknownst to anyone she had been struggling with bullying and depression and suicidal thoughts. Even though she hadn't participated in theater in several years, she wanted me to know that participating in Hamilton Players' shows was the one thing she was most proud of and it was that pride and recognition that enabled her to get thru some of the toughest years of her life. As she was preparing to head off to college, she just wanted me to know what a difference the Hamilton Players had made in her life: it gave her hope, it gave her pride and self-esteem, and it showed her that she was capable of success no matter what everyone else around her was saying.

If we can touch even one person's life thru the magic of theater, then I would be more than satisfied. But I know that for every one person who shares their story with me, there are a dozen more with the same tale. The Hamilton Players effect positive change thru every level of participation and the end result is a stronger, healthier community one person at a time.

Answer 2: The Hamilton Players make a board mandated effort to spend as much of our budget locally as is possible. We hire primarily local educators and directors. One of the largest expenses we have for

all of our programming is the set budget; 90 percent of which is spent locally at a combination of 3 stores: Massa Home Center (lumber and building materials), Evans' Ace Hardware (paint, building supplies, hardware), and Don's Home Center (lumber and building supplies). Between these 3 stores we spent an average of \$707.75 per month. A second local store, UPS (a locally owned franchise shop), is where we have our programs and copies printed to the average tune of \$692.81 per month.

During this grant period, the Hamilton Players have also made a concerted effort to collaborate more within the community to improve our economic development thru the enhancement of the community as a whole. To this end, we have donated more tickets to other non-profit fundraisers and included other non-profit organizations in our fundraising efforts. We also assist other organizations in planning and executing events with costume and technical assistance. Collaboration within the non-profit sector raises awareness and hence economically benefits all involved.

Each show we produce creates 1-5 temporary, paid positions (director, music director, musicians, choreographer) that are filled by members of the community. Theater School creates 3-8 temporary paid positions that are also filled by members of the community. Every dollar of the Public Value Partnership grant is spent in Ravalli County, supporting artistic services to Ravalli County as payroll, program support, or local goods used for programs.

### **Myrna Loy Center, Helena**

"I'm visiting from Chicago, where we'd be lucky to ever see Marc Cohn in person, and here you have him performing in the Myrna Loy Center!" "What is a small Montana town doing hosting a world jazz great like Billy Child?" The MLC hears these comments frequently. The Myrna brings world-class performances and arts education experiences to Helena that otherwise would never come here. Sometimes these experiences can be tremendously moving, even life-changing (see next question).

Of the MLC's \$530,000 FY14-15 budget, 76.2 percent was spent in-state, including \$226,000 in payrolls to support local families and help students pay tuition fees. (Our out-of-state expenditures are only in artist fees, film rentals, and a percentage of equipment purchases.) The Myrna contributes year-round to the local economy through salaries, food and supply purchases, local advertising, hotel rooms, office supplies, utilities, and also by generating popular activities that draw commerce to the downtown area every evening of the year.

In addition, MLC brought in nearly \$176,000 in grant funds from out-of-state foundations and agencies over the 2-year granting period.

### **Hockaday Museum of Art, Kalispell**

Arts in the Park is our annual art festival that attracts up to 10,000 people in July. A large number of the visitors to the festival are tourists who are drawn to the downtown Kalispell business district by our festival. 2015 was the 47th year for the festival - one of the longest running art fairs in the west. Through surveys of the more than 100 artists, who came from 13 different states and Canada to sell their artwork, we estimate that more than \$300,000 worth of premium art is sold at the festival.

In addition, the Hockaday itself is a well known institution and we receive visitors from all over the world. The presence of the Hockaday in downtown Kalispell has long been a reason for visitors to come to the area. Of the Hockaday's total expense budget of \$311000, virtually all of it is spent locally - through salaries for employees, or local purchases, etc. We use almost exclusively local vendors for everything that we do.

Our gift shop features art work exclusively from Montana artists, helping to promote these artists and further contributing to local economics.

### **Holter Museum of Art, Helena**

The museum purchases 90 percent of our goods and services through local vendors. The education department recruits local artists to teach our classes and our museum shop carries the works of more than 150 regional artists. In FY 13/14 our artist payments were over \$125,000. We currently employ 4 full time and 4 part time staff with a payroll of \$252, 625.

Beyond the economic value that the Holter brings to our community, there is the relationship that we have with the Helena schools. We help the district meet its arts standards for learning by providing enriching and educational experiences for students in grade K-12 and beyond. We provide enriching opportunities for adults to expand their knowledge of art and art related subjects through our public programs and classes that allow them to explore art making activities.

### **Intermountain Opera, Bozeman**

Results of an Economic Impact Analysis conducted by the Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District (NRMEDD) in the summer of 2014 showed Intermountain Opera Bozeman (IOB) provides over \$800 thousand in total economic impact. This information in a documented report gives our board and advocates vital information that helps when dealing with businesses and other organizations in the area.

Over the past year of this grant IOB paid \$130,412 in wages to local individuals and \$62,718 directly to local businesses. This total of \$193,130 is money IOB put directly back into the hands of local individuals and businesses. An additional \$10,000 was spent on airline tickets to bring guest artists to Bozeman. These 18 artists spent a minimum of 17 days in Bozeman for the rehearsal and performance duration of the production. Three of the artists extended their stay to vacation in Montana after the production. IOB is truly a statewide asset drawing audience members from 49 different Montana communities from Sidney to Kalispell. Not only is IOB for Montanans. In the 2014-2015 season there were ticket holders from 20 other states representing 49 communities.

### **MCT, Missoula**

Story from Wisconsin

I just had to take a minute to tell you about the positive experience my daughter had through your Little Red Truck program. My 13-year old daughter LOVES drama. In past experiences, she's struggled to find her place, fit in, and just relax and have fun. Through Ryan and Marie and Wiz of the West, something AMAZING happened. My daughter has autism. She's on the "high" functioning end of the spectrum, but struggles so much with groups and noise. She always pushes herself outside of her comfort zone. And this experience was no different. Aside from the 3 or 4 people who knew her prior to auditioning, she wanted NO ONE to know. She didn't want "special" treatment. She wanted to feel like she belonged. She felt safe and comfortable and came out of her shell.

The joy from the experience was unprecedented for her for being with such a large group of people. They made her feel so much love as a group and respected that, on her own, Friday she stood up in front of everyone and owned it. She told EVERYONE how they made this the best week of her life, that she loved them all, and she felt safe to tell them: "I have autism, but you didn't know it and treated me like one of you."

Performance day came and went and she was all smiles. And something else happened. For the first time in her life, she had not one friend or two, the usual MO. She walked away with NINETEEN phone numbers and friends. She felt like a typical girl her age. Thank you for having directors who can facilitate that and who not only believe and embrace your mission statement but live it.

## **MCT, Missoula**

Story from Centerville, MT

One girl in fifth grade would never speak in class, but through MCT she was able to speak in front of her entire community.

### **ECONOMIC IMPACT IN MISSOULA**

MCT's economic impact in Missoula is large: MCT earns approximately 70 percent of its income outside the state, and spends more than 70 percent of its income in Montana, especially Missoula. The following are three large categories of expenses:

Employees: MCT has 46-50 full time, permanent employees (the number shifts slightly from year to year) who work year-round in the home office of Missoula. According to the FY14 audit (the FY15 audit has not yet been finalized), Missoula-based employees received \$2,201,345 in wages and benefits, most of which was spent locally.

Printing: In FY14, MCT paid \$99,300 to Missoula-area companies for printing and advertising.

Utilities: In FY14, MCT paid \$82,998 to Missoula-area companies for garbage and utilities.

### **ECONOMIC IMPACT IN MONTANA**

A residency week has an economic footprint in each Montana community on the touring schedule. In every location, MCT touring artists buy gas, launder 55-65 costumes, and otherwise spend money (eating out, buying souvenirs, etc.). If a presenter decides to charge for tickets, they keep all proceeds, thus, in some cases, raising money for their organization. The residency is a catalyst for local fundraising in other ways. Here are two examples:

From Gildford, MT: We have families/community members that help in various ways ... [paying] for housing, meals, and piano playing. At the show, we always have a donation box and everyone that comes donates so we can keep MCT in our community.

From Charlo, MT: In Charlo, we collaborate with another school district and combine our resources to bring MCT to Charlo School. Dixon Schools sends their students to Charlo after classes for rehearsals, and ultimately the performance. The two school districts work together to provide snacks, transportation and supervision to the students during the week. The performance at the end of the residency brings together both communities in one location, that otherwise would not happen. Members of Ninepipe Arts Group that no longer have children (or grandchildren) in the schools, still attend the performance, take tickets at the door and work to fund raise throughout the year to make the residency possible.

### **Missoula Cultural Council**

Three years ago Americans for the Arts released the most recent Arts and Economic Prosperity: The Economic Impact of Arts Organizations and their Audiences, a nationwide look 180 communities of all sizes and representing every state. Missoula's numbers were quite impressive, showing an overall economic impact by local arts nonprofit organizations to be \$39.9 million. This figure is comparable to regional centers much larger and with more visible assets, such as Boise (\$48 million), Eugene (\$45 million) and Tacoma (\$54 million). The Missoula Cultural Council took the organizing role for Missoula, as it has done in the past. The result of the study, and the subsequent publicity it generated, continues to have an impact two years later. A major reason for Missoula being chosen as a Kennedy Center Any Given Child site is the strength of our local arts community, as evidenced by this study. This month we are preparing for a major day-long conference of arts presenters with the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP). APAP sought out Missoula after a recommendation from the Kennedy Center, who referred to Missoula as the "rising star" of the Any Given Child initiative.

MCC is also in the midst of a strategic planning effort led by Cinda Holt of MAC. With this national recognition of Missoula as a model for a healthy arts community, the MCC board of directors has designated a committee to form an Arts Alliance with other local nonprofit arts organizations, as well as entertainment, tourism and business leaders to develop plans to leverage this economic power. Missoula will participate again in the next round of Arts and Economic Prosperity, with the data collection process beginning in January 2016.

### **Montana Museum of Art and Culture, Missoula**

MMAC has long held cultural tourism development as a strong priority. MMAC's Director Barbara Koostra just finished a 3-year term as the cultural representative on the Destination Missoula Board of Directors. It was an important platform for advocating for the arts as a vital component of tourism and economic development. She was the sole representative of arts/cultural organization on the Board during this period. During strategic planning for the organization and as decisions were made regarding marketing, she served as a voice for the arts in the group, reminding business members of the Board

that the cultural and arts life of the community is part and parcel of economic development. Good news was the arts and culture were a central theme within the marketing efforts and materials of Destination Missoula for the past couple of years.

As a result of many efforts from the arts community, the arts and culture of Missoula is front and center in Destination Missoula's efforts to bring visitors to the community. Through the Tourism Improvement Business District, new grant funds are now available to cultural organizations considered travel destinations. Festivals in particular fall into this category.

Koostra was pleased to serve while on that Board as Chair of the Arts Committee. A small group of representatives from several arts organizations came together to assist in further arts advocacy in the context of tourism. One particular initiative was that of gathering promotional images from the broader arts community to encourage more "shots" of the arts to populate the annual Missoula Travel Guide. The more arts and culture in these kinds of materials the better.

All Montana's arts organizations spend money locally and business owners need to be reminded of this fact. The Missoula Cultural Council has importantly led economic impact studies that spell out specifics which serve as an important tool for this type of messaging.

At MMAC, our expenditures fuel frame shops, sign makers, hardware stores, office supply stores, designers, carpenters, photographers, and of course, artists themselves. We invariably pay honoraria for guest speakers and presenters including locals. Businesses and business people boost their bottom line through our programming-related purchases or through our efforts to bring viewers and audience members to town to partake of exhibition viewing and programming.

### **Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, Bozeman**

Although the year-round staff for MSIP amounts to a total of 4 FTEs, each summer, MSIP brings in over 30 artists for the month of May, 10 of whom (the actors) remain on tour from July 1 to September 9. The 30+ artists live in Bozeman between May 25 and July 1. Props and costume and set materials are purchased locally, amounting to about \$20,000 spent at local hardware, fabric, and antique stores. The 10 touring actors are the equivalent of a huge family on vacation through Montana and beyond for over two months. They travel 7,700 miles each summer, spending \$4,200 to fill the two touring vehicles. Sixty-five out of the 77 nights of tour, they spend in hotel rooms around the state. This amounts to nearly \$20,000 to local hotel owners. The \$13,850 the actors receive in per diem is spent in local restaurants and tourist attractions. MSIP is a vital economic driver for the state of Montana.

### **North Valley Music School, Whitefish**

Answer 1: North Valley Music School's student membership includes Abi K. a quiet, 16 year old Down Syndrome student. Abi loves to sing. NVMS voice and piano teacher, Emily Hackethorn, has experience working with Down Syndrome students and came to NVMS highly recommended in such capacity. Abi and Emily have formed an exceptional teacher/student relationship and Emily's winter studio recital included Abi's rendition of Frozen's Let It Go. After performing at the studio recital, Abi gained the

confidence to audition for and perform at the Whitefish High School's Annual Talent Show. Emily graciously agreed to accompany Abi on the piano. Emily led Abi out on stage, by the hand, to a packed auditorium. After their performance, the audience of over 400 were on their feet applauding. The skills learned and confidence gained by attending voice lessons at NVMS with our highly qualified instructor gave Abi and her family the courage and opportunity to grow and participate in positive, new life experiences.

Answer 2: North Valley Music School spends 98 percent of our expense budget locally. Of that, 50 percent goes towards payroll of 11 employees who live and shop in our local area. NVMS also retains the services of local small businesses such as piano tuners and yard maintenance. NVMS supports other non profit businesses in our area in such ways as venue rentals.

### **Nova, Billings**

NOVA employs twenty-eight to thirty professional orchestra members for each main-stage opera. These professional musicians come from local (Billings) and regional (outside Yellowstone county) locations. We utilize more than ten other local and regional specialists for technical duties including lighting designer, sound, videography, choreography, costume design and alterations, stage manager, orchestra manager, set design, set builders, wig and makeup specialists and supertitle operators. The budget for musicians is over \$12,000 for a main-stage opera; the budget for other local and regional specialists for LaTraviata is more than \$10,700. We employ a Professional Director who stays in Billings for three weeks as well as four to ten professional singers from various regions of the United States. These singers as well as the Director often return with their families and friends to vacation and spend additional time and money in Montana.

Dovetail design in Billings built over eighteen platforms that were used in La Traviata and can be utilized at NOVA for sets and seating configurations. The automobiles that our cast uses during production month are used as mobile advertising for Mercedes - Benz of Billings. Cars have been bought after "being seen at the opera." NOVA utilizes over ten local restaurants and catering firms for food during productions, opening night celebrations and for special events. NOVA refers singers as patients to Ear Nose and Throat Associates. This specialty group employs four Medical Doctors –Otolaryngologists, a Registered Nurse Practitioner and fifteen other office staff. There is also a voice clinic with speech pathologists and therapists that see our singers and actors. The fact that Billings and Yellowstone county have main-stage opera productions at our local theater has been a continuous help in recruiting professionals to this region. One of the physicians (as noted above) decided to move to Billings to practice medicine due to the fact that there is "live opera" in our region. Not only is the physician interested in operatic productions, but the physician's spouse has the ability to help with foreign language coaching for the singers. Another example of this ability to recruit professionals is the recent employment by a large Billings legal firm of a lawyer with an undergraduate degree in vocal performance. This individual will be part of the cast in the next main-stage opera. Other physicians, Dr. Patrick Cobb, Dr. Ben Marchello, Dr. David Lehnherr, Dr. Joan Sorenson, Dr. Jeff Lindenbaum, Dr. Julia Hicks, Dr. Tom Thigpen, have told our Board of Directors that having the opera in Billings makes their lives much more enjoyable and expands their options for free time from a very demanding schedule. All have been loyal supporters, hosted fundraising events and attended nearly every performance.

## **Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, Great Falls**

Answer 1: In fall of 2014, the Square had an unexpected opening in one of our smaller galleries. Kristi Scott, the Square's Curator of Art happened to see a recent Facebook post from her friend and artist John Pepion that he recently had a show contract not work out. Kristi and John immediately began to collaborate on an exhibit.

John Isaiah Pepion, an enrolled member of the Blackfeet Nation, was born in Kalispell, Montana. As a child he produced pencil drawings of mountains and tipis. His grandfather Daniel "Webb" Pepion, Sr. was the first person to help mentor his drawing techniques and inspire his art. While he was in 7th grade at Browning Middle School in Browning, Montana, he was chosen to work with highly regarded Blackfeet artist Ernie Pepion, who became a major influence throughout his life. During this time, John learned to incorporate humor in his art work with acrylic paint. John was later selected to work with nationally recognized Blackfeet artist Terrance Guardipee. During this time he learned to mix acrylic paint, stretch his own canvas, and increase his commitment to art.

As the public's interest in John's art grew, so did his interest in following his family's footsteps. His uncle Daniel Pepion, Jr., two aunts, and several other family members, had attended the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico. While a freshman at Two Eagle River High School in Pablo, Montana, he was a member of a small group of talented students that were selected to visit the IAIA. That same year the Oscar Howe Art Institute, Brookings, South Dakota, offered to enroll him in their program.

While John's education path initially took a different turn, in 2002 he earned his GED from the Kicking Horse Job Corps in Ronan, Montana. Thereafter, he attended United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, North Dakota, where he received his Associate of Arts degree in Art Marketing in 2004. John started painting with watercolors in the Plains Indian ledger style in 2005. John went on to graduate from the IAIA with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Museum Studies. The following year, he acquired 1800's ledger paper and began applying the ledger style he developed with ink and color pencils. Today John is an up and coming contemporary ledger artist. He begins each piece by illustrating ideas stemming from his personal life and cultural history. He also likes to incorporate the colorful designs of the Blackfeet. John is pursuing his artistic dream of becoming a professional artist.

The successful partnership between the Square and Pepion resulted in an exhibit where 15 out of 17 pieces sold. John received more than \$8000 in commission and elevated his career as a working Montana artist. Overall, The Square paid more than \$90,000 in commissions back to artist in FY 2104-2015.

## **Stumptown Art Studio, Whitefish**

Answer 1: Charlie is a special needs adult living in a group home that we serve. When we first began our classes, Charlie refused to participate, primarily because he does not like to get anything messy on his

hands. After gentle coaxing and numerous visits, Charlie began to join the other residents in class. Today, our instructors find Charlie waiting at the table when they arrive to teach class. When he gets glue on his fingers, he stops and stares at them for a moment, then smiles and continues to create.

Claire is an autistic young adult who began private weekly art lessons at the Studio 5 months ago. With a severe speech impairment, she refused eye contact and would not communicate at all except through her aide, who never left her side. According to the aide, Claire treated the art lessons like a task that she was forced to perform. Flash forward to today: Claire now comes in every week confident, making eye contact, often singing, and has begun to speak and laugh during her lessons. She carries her ever growing pile of art with her wherever she goes. This is a perfect example of how art fosters communication.

Michelle is a friend of the Studio who, sadly, recently lost her battle with breast cancer at the all too young age of 47. During Michelle's last year, her pain was excruciating, she turned to skin and bones, and her depression was severe. A group of her closest friends began bringing Michelle to the Art Studio once a month during "Wild Women Wednesday", which is a facilitated art night. Each month, she would quietly paint pottery. Her creations revealed the hand of an extremely creative and talented artist. Her friends and family told us that she refused to leave her basement apartment except for doctor's appointments and her monthly trip to the Studio with her friends. Painting was the one activity that provided her with a blessed distraction from her physical condition. Just the other day we found a piece of pottery on our hold shelf belonging to Michelle. It is covered with sets of eyes, and the words "STOP STARING" printed in a shaky hand. Her obituary contains a request that memorial contributions be made to Stumptown Art Studio to provide art scholarships for youth.

Answer 2: There are several ways in which Stumptown Art Studio provides value to our community and our state. Why are we worthy of state investment?

a) We are training tomorrow's workforce today. Our staff includes former students who are college bound and undergraduates with art education degrees who are using the Studio as a "stepping stone" to a teaching career. Many of our volunteers are high school students with an interest in the arts. They learn important job skills that will be life long. Our art education programs are designed to promote higher level thinking skills, observation, open ended thinking, and self expression. These are all integral tools in an ever changing economy.

b) We have become a tourist destination. A great number of repeat visitors to Whitefish and the surrounding area have added Stumptown Art Studio to their "must do" list. These consumers ultimately wander around downtown, shopping and dining. Thus, we have a positive economic impact on our community. In 2014 our gross income was \$289,000. Of that, \$154,000 is proceeds from our "drop in" art offerings. \$13,750 comprises local artist's sales. Labor is by far our largest expense, totaling \$135,200 in 2014. Our workforce are all local residents.

### **WaterWorks Art Museum, Miles City**

Answer 1: The Veterans hospital here in town bring some of the residents through the museum a few times a year. When a veteran was wheeled to the permanent collection of photographs of the early

settlements in this area, he got very emotional. He started talking about his family's homestead and the fact that it was in the same area as one of the photos that were displayed. He shared many of his childhood memories as many of the other gentlemen were listening intently. He said he hadn't thought about his old homestead in many many years. If we can stir memories with our senior visitors and make memories with our younger ones then we are doing exactly what we set out to do. Our goal as always is to educate, mold, encourage and engage both youth and adults.

Answer 2: Our local Hospital invites potential Doctors, Nurses, and other medical professionals to Miles City to check out the area. We are part of the tour that they are taken on through town. We offer a unique setting as we are not only an art center but also a nationally known gallery. We host 7 exhibits throughout the year which includes many local artists, and also artists from many other states. We offer an assortment of classes for adults as well as children. It has been passed on to us that on occasion our facility helped determine whether or not the medical professional chose to relocate here.

### **Whitefish Theatre Co, Whitefish**

Answer 1: For the past 21 years, the involvement of children in our programming has been an integral part of our mission. Each year, WTC reaches thousands of youth who attend our shows, perform in our plays, attend our hands-on outreach activities, or participate in our summer theatre camps. This year, we heard 3 touching stories about how activities at WTC positively impacted the lives of young people:

1) This summer, a young woman named Abi Kurtz joined our "Broadway Songbook" theatre camp. A student at Whitefish High School, Abi has Down's Syndrome and is often looking for activities she can join with others. Abi's mother, Mamie Flinn, recently wrote an email to WTC: "From the bottom of my heart, thank you for working beyond and over the moon to create a meaningful experience for Abi. You will probably never know how your gifts of sparkle, authenticity, and hard work have impacted us. Our shine factor can become a little dull because of what life has presented us, but it is experiences like this camp and people like you that make Abi truly happy and give us all our smiles back." Abi's older sister Grace, her best friend and navigator, is headed to college this fall. As Mamie added, "During this time when Abi is going to need to stand on her own two feet a bit more, this camp was a game changer for her in terms of how she experiences herself as powerful." Abi performed a rendition of "Tomorrow" in front of a live audience at the end of the camp to a standing ovation. Mamie wrote WTC a second letter which is attached to this grant report.

Our children's winter productions over the past 2 years have been life-changing activities for 2 young actors.

2) Dash Schindler, a now 6th grader who is on the autism spectrum, was cast in both "The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe" in 2014 and "The Hobbit" in 2015. As his mother, Scarlett Schindler, wrote: "Dash has absolutely loved his experiences working with WTC. With a gentle hand from Director Rebecca Spear and support from all the staff, Dash has clearly gained focus on stage, realizing he is part of a team that is counting on him. He learned the 'give and take' of theatre and made such progress in understanding the unpredictability of a show. The best part for me was seeing him find confidence with his peers and in front of an audience. There are so many new things that Dash is willing to try after participating in these wonderful WTC shows."

3) Similarly, JonPaul KochFord, a now 7th grader with ADHD, found success on the stage in "The Hobbit". As his Dad, Matt Ford, described: "JP has always loved the theatre but we weren't sure how his distractability would lend to participating in a show. Our fears were completely vanquished watching him in WTC's 'The Hobbit' this year. The theatre is such a perfect outlet for him - allows movement, gets reaction, allowed him to play someone else, and had excitement. He was so motivated as a team member of the cast and we really saw his focus abilities improve."

Answer 2: Due to other theatre companies in our area that offer summer productions, WTC has not typically offered a theatre production during the months of July and August. This summer, however, WTC decided to present "Always...Patsy Cline" for a two-week run in late July and early August. WTC has done this show once in the past and received many requests from locals and tourists alike to return it the stage. This seven night production ended up selling out 5 of the 7 nights we offered the show, attracting nearly 2,500 patrons. Several patrons saw the show more than once and our ticket sales indicate that 45 percent of our audience was comprised of out-of-state guests. WTC heard directly from local restaurants and businesses that the town of Whitefish was busier than ever on the nights of each show.

In addition, WTC just began an expansion to the O'Shaughnessy Center, providing work for an architecture firm, building company, and several construction subcontractors. The expansion estimate cost, including architectural design and building fees, is \$800,000. 100 percent of these funds will be spent locally.

Approximately 79 percent of our budget is spent locally. This amount totals \$333,388 and is generally spent on payroll for local employees, publicity, contractor fees, production materials, repairs and maintenance, utilities, fundraising, and concessions. The remaining 21 percent of WTC's budget is spent primarily on paying visiting artists, credit card charges, performance fees, and equipment. WTC is a major client for Sherpa Designs, a local graphic design company, and of Western Building Center, a local hardware company.

### **Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings**

Like other art museums, most of the YAM's \$1.63 million budget, net of depreciation, is personnel. Payroll supports 17.6 FTEs, all of whom live and spend money locally. Over 90 percent of the non-personnel budget is spent locally. The next largest expense category is our exhibitions. Other major categories include building occupancy, the cost of delivering art education programs, and care of the permanent collection. Guided by both conviction and policy, we spend locally whenever possible; only when we cannot locate MT-based providers (f. ex., specialized services such as art conservation or art shipping) do we look out-of-state. In selecting providers, we favor businesses that sponsor cultural programming. As the only major art museum in the eastern half of MT, the YAM is at the heart of cultural tourism for our region, both as an attraction and in shaping the dialogue about what makes Billings and Yellowstone County an exciting destination. The past two major marketing surveys conducted to learn why people come to the area (funded by the Chamber of Commerce) identified cultural amenities—including specifically the YAM—as leading draws to the area, translating into rooms booked, meals purchased, and retail sales. Both independently and as members of Billings Cultural Partners, we employ all methods within our means to market outside the county and the state. This past year's exhibition "The Art of the Brick®" earned grant (local tourism board) and sponsor support that

permitted us to market intensively in central MT and northern WY. The quality and ambitious scope of our 50th anniversary programs attracted out-of-state funding exceeding 10 percent of our revenues. The YAM is a resource to area businesses through its demonstration of the quality of life in Billings, and it is often introduced to businesses and their employees through our facility rental program. A steady stream of businesses uses the site for meetings, receptions, and employee recruitment and recognition. We are a regular stop on the tour that Billings Clinic, MSU-Billings, the County provides to prospective new personnel to Billings, and several realtors give museum memberships to new homebuyers. We agree with the many businesses that believe that it is good for their businesses to be seen to support local nonprofits; they recognize it as good “corporate citizenship” and can point to the goodwill (plus increased market share) generated by their sponsorships. We respond by ensuring a consistently high quality of programming and enhanced marketing opportunities for them. Businesses as diverse as First Interstate Bank (FIB), Stillwater Mining, Wendy’s of Montana, American Title and Escrow, and local hotels are just a few that fall in this category. The president of the Billings FIB branches has shared that he considers the YAM’s annual Art Auction to be one of the best social events of the year, and through this event, FIB branches are graced by original art by Montana’s artists, contributing to the distinctive character of the banks.