

Oregon Arts Commission's Connecting Students to the World of Work Grants *Final Evaluation Report*

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Informing policy and improving programs to enrich people's lives

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oregon Arts Commission funded the Connecting Students to the World of Work (WoW) grants to support projects that draw connections for underserved students to the world of work by offering engagement in the professional elements of an artistic career field.

Through an emphasis on the practical application of knowledge in the workforce, WoW projects contribute to sequential learning for students to build creative and technical skills in the arts. WoW projects were designed to reach students who are underserved due to one or more factors: traditionally underrepresented minority background, lower socio-economic status, special education students, and English language learners.

WoW grants were included in an umbrella of State of Oregon education funding designed to further Oregon's 40-40-20 Education Goal: *By the year 2025, 40 percent of adult Oregonians will earn a bachelor's degree or higher, 40 percent will obtain an associate's degree or certificate in a skilled occupation, and the remaining 20 percent will earn a high school diploma or equivalent.*

WHAT CONSTITUTED THE WORLD OF WORK PILOT PROGRAM?

Between January 2014 and December 2016, the Arts Commission funded 11 pilot WoW projects. The funded arts organizations partnered with schools that had significant student populations that met the underserved criteria described above. Four projects worked with middle schools and seven worked with high schools. Organizations offered a diverse array of programming, ranging in:

- **Length**, from 6 weeks to 24 months;
- **Instructional ratio**, from low ratios with few students to artist (e.g., apprenticeships, one-on-one mentoring) to high ratios with many students to artist (e.g., classroom instruction);
- **Arts discipline** focus, including visual arts, theatre, music/sound, and digital arts.

In addition to the pilot projects, the Arts Commission also allocated resources to conduct an evaluation of the grant program, which included the development of a cross-site survey instrument and the collection of standardized data across the funded organizations.

WHO DID THE WORLD OF WORK PROGRAM SERVE?

During the grant period, 465 students applied for participation in a WoW project, and 364 were enrolled in a project. Whereas some projects were able to serve every student who expressed interest, a few projects had limited capacity to serve a smaller number of students and were unable to enroll all of the students who applied. In three projects, the number of student applicants was roughly double the number of enrollees, indicating a potential unmet need for arts education and career training in some areas in Oregon. All projects succeeded in maintaining participation. Of the 364 students who participated in WoW projects, 346 completed them—a 95% retention rate.

"This program has been an amazing experience for me. It has given me opportunities to form connections with people in the arts. I have learned so many job skills as well!"



WoW projects found moderate success reaching the target population. Of the project participants, 66% were underserved students. Of these, the large majority were from a traditionally underrepresented minority and/or a low socio-economic status background. Very few were in special education or were English language learners. At program entry, most students reported doing well in school: three out of four students received mostly A's/B's and two out of three had minimal absences in the past year.

WHAT IMPACT DID PROGRAM PARTICIPATION HAVE ON THE STUDENTS?

A total of 243 students completed a survey before and after their participation, and data were used to assess change toward the outcomes related to Oregon's 40-40-20 education goal.

Goal #1: Students will have a clearer sense of the relevance of their education.

In general, students entered the program with a solid perception that what they learned in school would be meaningful for their career and that their education was important for their quality of life, and this view did not change after participating in the WoW program.

After participation, most students agreed that what they learned in the WoW program was relevant to their educational and professional future. For example:

- 65% agreed that what they learned is useful for their future careers.
- 56% felt more prepared for college because of what they learned.
- 44% of students felt they had received "a lot" of support for doing well in school from staff in the WoW program.

Students' perceptions of the WoW program's relevance for their educational and professional futures were influenced by their age, the project length, and instructional ratio. Specifically:

- Older students perceived the program's relevance most strongly when they were in longer projects (12 weeks or more) and those with low instructional ratios.
- Younger students perceived the program's relevance most strongly when they were in shorter projects (less than 12 weeks).
- In general, shorter projects yielded better student perceptions when they involved lower ratios (few students per artist), and projects with higher ratios (many students per artist) tended to yield better perceptions when they lasted longer.

Goal #2: Students will have increased awareness of the opportunities available to them.

Roughly seven out of 10 students agreed that the program had expanded their awareness of and preparedness for future opportunities. For example, as a result of participation:

- 78% had a better understanding of possible arts-related careers.
- 74% acquired new job skills.
- 67% felt more prepared to enter the workforce.

Students' enhanced awareness of opportunities and development of skills were related to student age, project length, and instructional ratio. Specifically:

- Older students' awareness of opportunities and development of skills were strongest in longer projects and those with low instructional ratios.
- Younger students' awareness of opportunities was strongest in shorter projects.
- In general, low-ratio projects yielded better student awareness, regardless of length. High-ratio projects' outcomes were improved when they lasted 12 weeks or longer.

Goal #3: Students will have a plan for after high school graduation.

In general, students entered the WoW program with solid educational aspirations. Overall, at program entry, more than 95% of students planned to graduate from high school.

After participation, students reported considering their plans for after high school and discussing those plans with people close to them on a more frequent basis. For example:

- 85% often think about their future after high school.
- 85% often think about the kind of career they would like to have.
- 56% often talk with their parents or family about their future plans.

Project participation impacted college aspirations. Specifically, at post-program:

- Older students reported increased motivation to complete a bachelor's degree, and
- Underserved students showed a larger increase in college motivation, compared to not underserved students.

Goal #4: Students will develop arts-related skills and value their arts education.

In general, students reported strongly valuing their arts education, and these ratings were stable over time. After WoW program participation, for example:

- 82% felt their arts education gave them an avenue for self-expression.
- 79% thought their arts education afforded them skills that they use in other areas of life.
- 64% thought their arts education helped them cope with stress better.
- 62% thought their arts education helped them develop communication skills.
- 56% thought their arts education helped them develop analytical skills.

Project participation impacted students' appreciation of arts education. Specifically:

- Underserved students' perceptions showed a greater positive change after program participation than did those of not underserved students.
- Improvements in perceptions were most notable among older students in longer projects, and younger students in shorter projects.



STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PARTICIPATION

When asked how participating in the WoW program impacted them, students described multiple benefits of participation, including:

- 47% felt supported in making plans for a successful future, including career plans.
- 33% learned creative skills, such as painting or graphic design.
- 36% learned new skills or concepts and were exposed to new experiences and opportunities.
- 36% learned important life skills, such as confidence or time management.
- 33% decided to pursue a career in the arts.
- 20% made new friends and became part of a community.

"This program has helped me become a more creative person. With the environment here, I have definitely made new friendships and [become] a more focused thinker. I now have the confidence to strive for goals and am able to succeed in them. Thanks to this program, I know I will have a brighter future."

SUMMARY

Overall, the Arts Commission's WoW pilot grant program met with notable success. Through their participation in the WoW projects, students have developed skills, discovered opportunities, created connections, and made meaningful strides in planning for their futures. Program participants offered overwhelmingly positive feedback on their experiences. These pilot project evaluation findings also offer some preliminary insights into the relative effectiveness of different program structures with different participant populations, at least for the educationally relevant outcomes assessed for this initiative.

INTRODUCTION

Funded by the Oregon Arts Commission (OAC), *Connecting Students to the World of Work* (WoW) grants were intended to support projects that draw connections for underserved students to the world of work by offering engagement in the professional elements of an artistic/creative career field. Through an emphasis on the practical application of knowledge in the workforce, WoW program activities contribute to sequential learning for students to build creative and technical skills in the arts.

WoW grants were included in an umbrella of State of Oregon education funding designed to further Oregon's 40-40-20 Education Goal: *By the year 2025, 40 percent of adult Oregonians will earn bachelor's degree or higher, 40 percent will obtain an associate's degree or certificate in a skilled occupation, and the remaining 20 percent will earn a high school diploma or equivalent.* As such, the OAC's WoW programs aimed to connect students to the professional arts work, build their skills, and foster an awareness of and motivation for college and career aspirations.

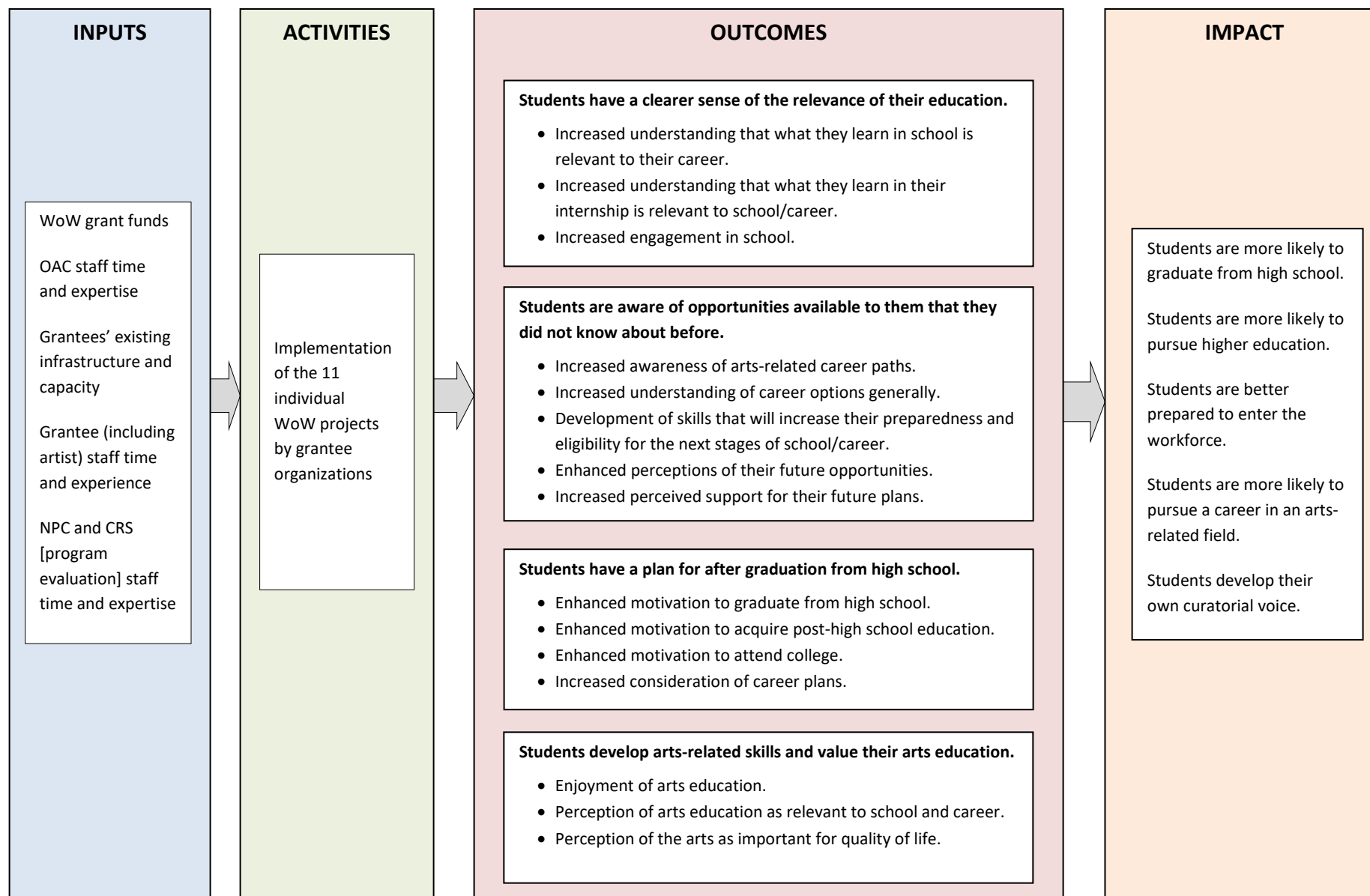
WoW grants differed from the OAC's typical funding strategies, in that the award amounts tended to be larger and the intended service populations smaller. That is, the WoW projects were more intensive, in terms of the resources per student, relative to many other OAC-funded projects. This difference, and the focus on longer-term education and employment goals, made the WoW grants unique within the OAC's funding portfolio. As a result, and due to the one-time biennial funding allocation from the Oregon legislature, the overall grant program was considered a pilot program.

Grant Program Goals

Through the WoW grant program, the OAC sought to support projects that would further goals in four main areas. These goals are depicted in the program logic model (Figure 1) on the next page. Specifically, the OAC intended that participation in a WoW project would result in:

- Students having a clearer sense of the relevance of their education;
- Students becoming newly aware of opportunities available to them;
- Students having a plan for after graduation from high school;
- Students developing arts-related skills and valuing their arts education.

Figure 1. OAC's Connecting Students to the World of Work Grant Program Logic Model



Grantee Projects

The OAC funded two cohorts of WoW projects. The first cohort was funded in January 2014 and included eight organizations. The second cohort was funded in July 2015 and included three organizations. Projects were implemented for 18 months.¹ Grantee organizations are listed below:

- **Arts Education in the Columbia Gorge (Hood River):** The WyEast Middle School's AVID program enabled students (grades 7-8) to work with professional artists to design, create, and install three public art pieces.
- **Caldera (Warm Springs):** The project supported year-round instruction in transmedia arts (storytelling across different mediums) for youth (grades 6-8) at the Warm Springs Academy.
- **Jordon Schnitzer Museum of Art (Eugene):** The ArtsWorks internship project (grades 9-12) connected students to arts education. Students had the opportunity to assist museum curators and helped teach art lessons for younger students.
- **Lane Arts Council (Eugene):** The Arts Apprentice Project (grades 6-8) connected students to the visual arts. Students were mentored by professional artists and created hands-on projects.
- **Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland):** The Professional Education and Experience Project (PEEPs, grades 9-12) focused on theatre production. Students had the opportunity to be mentored by OSF staff, as well as receive formal skills instruction.
- **Pacific Northwest College of Art (Portland):** The Creative Conservation Corps (grades 9-12) connected students to project-based design and craft activities. This project was offered at two high schools during the school day and connected students to design and craft concepts, some of which included publication design, fabrication of objects, and systems design for sustainable products and services.
- **PDX Pop Now! Beats Lyrics Leaders (Portland):** The Beats Lyrics Leaders project (grades 9-12) connected students to music. Native American youth received audio production training, gained production skills, and received year-round mentorship in a music studio environment.
- **Peter Britt Gardens Music & Arts Festival Association (Medford):** The internship project (grades 10-12) connected students to music. Students had the opportunity to connect with professional musicians, culminating in an annual performance.
- **TechStart Education Foundation, Pixel Arts (Portland):** The Pixel Arts after-school project at the SEI Academy (grades 6-8) connected students to visual arts. Students had the opportunity to gain graphic arts skills, develop original video games, and be mentored by video game designers.
- **The Center for Advanced Learning (Gresham):** The Historic Columbia Highway 100th anniversary campaign (grades 11-12) connected students to graphic art, digital media, and design. Students had the opportunity to develop an ad campaign and promotional website to celebrate this 100-year anniversary.
- **Young Audiences (Portland):** The project implemented a three-part Live Sound Engineering for Teens (Live SET; grades 9-12) program in partnership with Portland Public Schools, providing students with hands-on experience at professional concerts.

¹ Ten of the 11 grantees applied for, and were awarded, a 6-month extension with additional funding, so their service period was 24 months in total.



Evaluation

To support the program grants and assess the projects' progress toward the funding goals, the OAC contracted with NPC Research and CRSmith Consulting to perform evaluation-related activities relative to the WoW grant funding. Staff from NPC and CRS performed two fundamental evaluation tasks: (1) designed and implemented a cross-site (i.e., inclusive of all grantees) evaluation to assess the impact of the pilot projects, and (2) provided individualized evaluation-related technical assistance and consultation to each cohort 1 grantee organization.²

Performance of cross-site evaluation

The goal of the cross-site evaluation was to address three primary questions:

- (1) What types of projects were implemented with WoW grants?
- (2) Who was served by WoW projects?
- (3) How did WoW projects impact students? In what ways did the projects contribute to the achievement of Oregon's 40-40-20 education goals?

The evaluation investigated the impact of the pilot WoW grants on students across all funded organizations. The evaluation team identified outcomes and metrics applicable across the projects that aligned with the OAC's funding goals and the State's 40-40-20 education goals and then developed standardized measures to assess these metrics across organizations. These metrics were included in the grantee progress reports, in which organizations reported on their project's progress to the OAC. As well, a customized student survey instrument was developed for this evaluation, which was completed by individual students before and after their WoW program participation. Each grantee administered the surveys to the students in their project and submitted de-identified data to NPC Research for the duration of the grant period. Data were analyzed to assess the global impact of the WoW program toward the OAC's goals, which are depicted in the broader program logic model (Figure 1).

Provision of individualized technical assistance to WoW grant recipients (cohort 1)

WoW grantees were expected to perform their own local evaluation of their project. To support this endeavor, NPC Research and CRSmith Consulting provided each cohort 1 grantee organization with up to 10 hours of direct, customized technical assistance regarding their WoW project evaluation efforts. This professional development was intended to meet each organization's individual needs and to help build each grantee's internal evaluation capacity. This consultation addressed topics such as developing a program logic model, clarifying project outcomes and identifying appropriate means of measuring them, establishing data collection and management protocols, and planning for data usage.

² Evaluation technical assistance was provided to the cohort 1 grantees, but funding was not available to extend this service to the cohort 2 grantees.

This Report

This report presents the cross-evaluation evaluation findings for all 11 WoW projects. Cohort 1 and 2 grantees were combined for analyses because no substantive changes were made to the Grant Guidelines that would preclude aggregation, and the intention of the cross-site evaluation is to assess the impact of the WoW grant program overall.

EVALUATION METHODS

The cross-site evaluation employed a mixed-method approach, whereby both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in a standardized manner across all grantees and analyzed to assess overall program impact.

Data Sources

Data were gathered about the WoW projects and about the students participating in those projects. This information was collected via grantee progress reports (project-level data) and student surveys (student-level data).

GRANTEE PROGRESS REPORTS

Grantee organizations were required to submit progress reports to the OAC mid-way and at the end of their grant period (including the 6-month extension period). Grantee reports were administered online, and the OAC shared the data with the evaluation team for analysis. These reports collected project-level information, both quantitative and qualitative, regarding each grantee's implementation progress, including:

- Description of how the project addressed the OAC's goals and the State's 40-40-20 education goals;
- Description of the project's progress in meeting the priority objectives outlined in the original Grant Guidelines;
- Definition of their local project outcomes and progress toward achieving those outcomes;
- Numbers of student participants and the demographic and educational characteristics specific to the definition of "underserved" given in the Grant Guidelines.

STUDENT SURVEYS

Students were asked to complete a survey at the start and the end of their WoW program participation. This basic pre/post design enabled the examination of change over time in key outcomes related to the OAC's priorities and to the 40-40-20 education goals. The outcomes of interest, depicted in the program logic model (Figure 1), fall into four main areas. Specifically, as a result of participation in a WoW project:

- *Students have a clearer sense of the relevance of their education.* Students will have an augmented understanding that what they learn in school and what they learn during their WoW internship is relevant to their career. Thus, they may feel more engaged in school.
- *Students become aware of opportunities available to them that they did not know about before.* Students will have an increased awareness of arts-related career paths and of career options generally. They will develop skills that will increase their preparedness and eligibility for the next phases of education/career. They will be more likely to consider future plans and to experience support for their plans.



- *Students have a plan for after graduation from high school.* Students will be more motivated to graduate from high school and to acquire post-high school education. They will be more likely to consider college as a viable path, be more attuned to selecting a career (whether in or outside of the arts), and feel more confident about achieving their future education and career goals.
- *Students develop arts-related skills and value their arts education.* Students will acquire creative and technical skills that are relevant to an arts-related career and they will articulate how arts education supports their general education and development. Students will also provide feedback on their specific WoW project, including whether they found what they learned useful for college or for a career, whether it will help them find a job, whether they found the content interesting, whether they enjoyed participating, and what general impact it had on them.

As part of the survey, students also reported on their academic performance, such as grades and attendance, and on various demographic characteristics including their grade level, age, race/ethnicity, gender, and parental education level.

Completed Student Surveys

The number of students with completed pre-program and post-program surveys, by each grantee, is shown below. In total, across all 11 organizations, 312 students completed a pre-program survey, and 275 completed a post-program survey. Of these, 243 students completed both pre- and post-surveys (this is 70% of the 346 students who completed their project participation). These 243 students with matched data records constitute the analytic sample for most of this report.

Table 1. Number of Students with Completed Surveys by Organization

Organization	Pre-Surveys Completed	Post-Surveys Completed	Pre- and Post-Surveys Completed
Arts Education in the Columbia Gorge	18	19	12
Britt Arts Career Exploration (ACE) Program	23	21	20
Caldera	18	10	9
Center for Advanced Learning	44	36	34
Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art Artworks	17	19	15
Lane Arts Council Arts Apprentice Program	28	29	23
Oregon Shakespeare Festival Green Show (PEEP)	14	16	14
PDX Pop Now! Beat Lyrics Leaders	9	7	4
Pacific Northwest College of Art	61	52	52
TechStart Education Foundation, Pixel Arts	37	24	19
Young Audiences	43	42	41
Total	312	275	243

Evaluation Questions and Analytic Approaches

The cross-site evaluation analyzed data from the grantee reports and student surveys using different methods to address three primary lines of inquiry.

1. WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS WERE IMPLEMENTED WITH WOW GRANTS?

Descriptions of the WoW projects were derived from information submitted on the grantee progress reports and supplemented by information learned as part of the technical assistance provision. These data were aggregated to yield a description of each grantee project, paying particular attention to important project characteristics such as length (i.e., number of weeks), instructional ratio (i.e., ratio of students to artists), and focus artistic discipline. Qualitative data, such as the narrative responses, were summarized by main themes. Descriptive statistics show the distributions of these project characteristics across grantee organizations.

2. WHO WAS SERVED BY WOW PROJECTS?

To investigate the extent to which WoW projects were successful in reaching underserved students, in alignment with the OAC's goals, analyses examined the numbers of students served and the demographic and educational characteristics of those students as per the definition provided in the OAC Grant Guidelines—specifically, the percentages of English language learners, special education students, traditionally underrepresented minorities, and students from low socio-economic backgrounds. This question was examined using available data at both the project level (i.e., grantee progress reports on their service population) and the student level (i.e., student self-report on surveys).

3. HOW DID THE WOW PROGRAM IMPACT STUDENTS? IN WHAT WAYS DID THE PROJECTS CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OREGON'S 40-40-20 GOAL?

Analyses of program impact focused on outcomes related to the OAC's broader priorities and the State's 40-40-20 education goals, and relied primarily on data collected via the student survey. Because there is no available control group to which the WoW students' data can be compared (i.e., students who were demographically and educationally similar to WoW participants but who did not participate), the evaluation employed a pre/post design whereby students' perceptions before the program (as recorded on the pre-survey) were compared to their perceptions after program participation (as recorded on the post-survey). Inferential statistical tests (e.g., t-tests, analysis of variance/ANOVA, chi-square tests) allowed the comparison of pre- and post-survey scores to statistically support assertions about whether the program has impacted students' attitudes, intentions, and behaviors.

Analyses examined each of the four key outcome areas—specifically, that students (1) have a clearer sense of the relevance of their education, (2) become aware of opportunities available to them that they did not know about before, (3) have a plan for after graduation from high school, and (4) develop arts-related skills and value their arts education. For each area, a single indicator



was created by grouping a subset of survey items to form a scale. These groups of items were then assessed for their internal reliability as a psychometric scale.³

Analyses investigated whether the WoW projects, taken together, impacted students in each of the outcome areas. Given the variability across organizations in terms of the project length, instructional ratio, and ages of students served, additional analysis were conducted to examine whether there were differential effects by student and project characteristics. In particular, student underserved status and age were examined, as were project length ("short" referred to programs lasting less than 12 weeks and "long" referred to programs lasting 12 weeks or more) and instructional ratio ("low" referred to programs with a ratio of few students to artists [3:1 or lower] and "high" referred to programs with a ratio of many students to artists [4:1 or higher]).

³ Cronbach's alpha and pairwise correlations were inspected for each group of items. The alpha for each scale was required to be at least 0.7, which is broadly considered in the literature to be an acceptable limit, and all of the pairwise item correlations needed to be positive. All of the final item groupings used for analyses met these criteria (many had alphas over 0.8).

PROJECT-LEVEL OUTCOMES

This section presents findings at the project level, based on data submitted by staff in the grantee progress reports.

Evaluation Question #1:

What types of projects were implemented with WoW grants?

The types of WoW projects are explained below, including descriptions of project structure and artistic discipline, implementation successes and challenges, and descriptions of the student populations served by each organization.

DESCRIPTION OF THE WoW PROJECTS

The Grant Guidelines for the WoW program emphasized projects providing students with in-depth, hands-on experience with an arts professional and building students' arts-based skills, knowledge, and abilities over time. Each of the 11 organizations succeeded in providing opportunities for students to actively engage with professionals in the selected art discipline, as well as supporting the development of arts-based and professional skills. In each project, students were guided and mentored by working professionals in the fields of visual arts, performing arts, and digital arts. A description of each WoW project follows.

Arts Education in the Columbia Gorge (AEICG)

Students: 7-8 grades

Program length: 18 months

Discipline: **Visual Arts**

Students worked closely with three sculptors and two visual artists to design, build, and install six sculptures in two locations. The project provided in-depth study in the elements and principles of design, with a focus on 3-D skill development. The visual artists worked with students to hone drawing skills, while the sculptors helped the students make the leap from 2-D to 3-D design by first creating wooden 3-D maquettes (small-scale sculpture) and, finally, working with metal to create the final designs. A deliberate scaling up from one step to the next allowed students to develop skills and build relationships with the artist team. Students expanded skills in:

- Drawing
- Small-scale wooden sculpture
- Engineering and design thinking
- Large-scale metal sculpture



Peter Britt Gardens Music & Arts Festival Association (Britt)

Students: 10-12 grades

Program length: 12 months

Discipline: **Performing Arts**

Participants in the Arts Career Exploration (ACE) project worked with artistic and executive leadership at Britt to gain knowledge and skills inherent to the process of creating and presenting art and music events. Students were taught fundamental knowledge and skills through job-shadowing, workshops, interviews, and performance critiques. They were able to apply what they learned by producing a concert featuring the Portland Cello Project in the Britt Performance Garden. With guidance from Britt staff, students performed all functions for a typical concert series and practiced skills acquired during the internship, including:

- Programming
- Marketing
- Lighting
- Contracting
- Box office
- Sound
- Development
- Stage craft

Beats Lyrics Leaders (BLL), PDX Pop Now!

Students: 9-12 grades

Program length: 18 months

Discipline: **Performing Arts**

Music industry professionals worked with Beats Lyrics Leaders to mentor, coach, and instruct, as well as provide use of studio space and professional recording equipment for the creation of collaborative and individual projects. This project's focus was on contemporary music that incorporates cultural and traditional elements. Students participated in smaller projects to build skills in the areas of:

- Audio engineering
- Video production
- Lyrics and song writing
- Music production
- Performance

Final student projects included audio tracks, music videos, music albums, BLL promotional films, and performances.

Caldera

Students: 6-8 grades

Program length: 9 months

Discipline: **Visual Arts**

A primary goal of the project was to offer hands-on learning opportunities and insights into creative careers for youth from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Youth were exposed to arts careers by working with artists across various media. Over the school year, students participated in weekly morning mentoring meetings (before school) and weekend workshops at the Museum at Warm Springs, Caldera's partner organization. Introducing youth to artists in their community, and creating works that benefitted the Warm Springs museum, helped to empower their creativity and pride in their culture. Students worked with artists to practice skills in:

- Bead and basket weaving
- Sketching
- Color theory
- Painting
- Filming and film editing (to create a welcome video for the Warm Springs Museum)

The Center for Advanced Learning (CAL)

Students: 11-12 grades

Program length: varied

Discipline: **Digital Arts**

The Center for Advanced Learning partnered with the Troutdale Historical Society (THS) and Lewis Creative to develop an advertising campaign for the 2015 exhibit King of the Roads: The 100th Anniversary of the Columbia Scenic Highway. Students gained valuable hands-on experience in visual arts, design, and digital media as they learned and applied both arts and business skills to produce a promotional campaign from inception to launch. They participated in all facets of the campaign development, including:

- Research
- Website creation
- Comparables
- Design
- Digital photography
- Pitch

Instruction, evaluation, and coaching throughout the project came from CAL teachers, THS members, and advertising professionals.

Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (JSMA)

Students served: 9-12 grades

Program length: 8-10 weeks

Discipline: **Visual Arts**

The ArtWorks High School Internship Project at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art provided students weekly sessions with professional artists, museum curatorial and preparation staff, and graduate students to learn techniques in:

- Print making
- Painting
- Ceramics
- Sculpture

Students worked toward mastery in each area and then learned to prepare works for display (curating) by matting and framing selected works of their own. The interns shared the knowledge and skills they gained by teaching art lessons to local elementary school students.

Lane Arts Council (LAC)

Students served: 6-8 grades

Program length: 8-10 weeks

Discipline: **Visual Arts**

The LAC internship project paired professional artists with small groups of students to teach students skills in an area of their arts career interest. Each pair or small group of students met at an artist's studio for a total of 40 hours of intensive learning to practice fundamental skills and create a project of their own choosing. Final student projects varied in terms of content and medium, and were presented in a showcase event during which students and mentors shared and discussed their projects and the creation process. Focus areas included:

- Leather working
- Landscape painting
- Anime drawing
- Photography
- Fashion and jewelry design
- Felting
- Performing arts



The Green Show, Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF)

Students: 9-12 grades

Program length: 8 weeks

Discipline: **Performing Arts**

The on-the-job work experience project at OSF involved high school students in the development of skills in technical theatre, videography, and event production. Students engaged in weekly career enhancement classes on various theatre arts topics taught by professional artists and members of the OSF company. The interns directly supported the Green Show Performance series by providing backstage technical assistance throughout the summer program with direction and mentoring from OSF staff. Students worked as deck hands and a video team to practice skills in:

- Sound engineering and videography
- Reading a sound plot
- Setting up sound for performance
- Filming
- Film editing

Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA)

Students: 9-12 grades

Program length: 4 weeks

Discipline: **Visual Arts**

The PNCA project involved a multi-week project for high school students that covered diverse visual arts topics, introducing students to fundamental design and visual communication processes, including prototyping, critique, and fabrication. In each of these programs, students collaborated to create different end products as they learned and practiced these skills:

- Design and fabrication of an apiary
- Research, design, and building of an on-campus woodshop
- Design and construction of a campus bioswale
- Conception, planning, writing, and publishing a series of children's books for third-graders
- Development of a series of small publications and zines

Mentors for each of these projects were instructors, students, and alumni from the bachelors and masters of fine arts programs at Pacific Northwest College of Art, and practicing professionals.

Pixel Arts, TechStart Education Foundation

Students: 6-8 grades

Program length: 8 weeks

Discipline: **Digital Arts**

Pixel Arts offered after-school classes and school-break camps to instruct students in video game design and development. The project promoted STEAM skills linked with their academic classroom work. Twenty-eight professionals in the industry sectors of game development, software development, and digital arts worked with students individually and in groups. In each class or camp, students collaborated with peers to complete a playable game or digital story. In doing so, they used these game development skills learned during the project:

- Coding
- Animation
- Music/sound production
- Story development
- Design

Young Audiences, Live SET (YA)

Students: 9-12 grades

Program length: 6 weeks

Discipline: **Performing Arts**

Live SET provided students with in-depth, hands-on, project-based experience in a professional context. Live SET sessions were taught by professional sound engineers, took place at a professional music venue, involved several 4- to 5-hour classes, and featured mainly hands-on activities. All sessions culminated in a public concert engineered entirely by students, from load-in to breakdown. Students who completed an introductory session were eligible to extend their experience by participating in the advanced session. Further, the program facilitated ongoing mentorship between instructors and students, with a number of Live SET graduates assisting instructors in their professional sound-engineering work. Students acquired skills in:

- Sound engineering
- Ability to set-up and run amplified sound for a small-to-mid-sized arts or music venue
- Basics of planning and managing shows in a professional setting including: budgeting, stage management, booking, marketing, and forecasting

Summary of WoW Projects

WoW projects encompassed emphases in various artistic disciplines, including visual arts, performing arts, and digital arts (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Artistic Discipline Focus Among WoW Projects

Visual Arts	Performing Arts		Digital Arts	
Arts Education in the Columbia Gorge (AEICG)	Music/Sound	PDX Pop Now! Beats Lyrics Leaders (BLL)	Digital Media & Design	The Center for Advanced Learning (CAL)
Caldera		Peter Britt Gardens Music and Arts Festival (Britt)		
Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (JSMA)		Young Audiences LiveSET (YA)	Video Game Design	TechStart Education Foundation (Pixel Arts)
Lane Arts Council (LAC)	Theatre	Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF)		
Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA)				



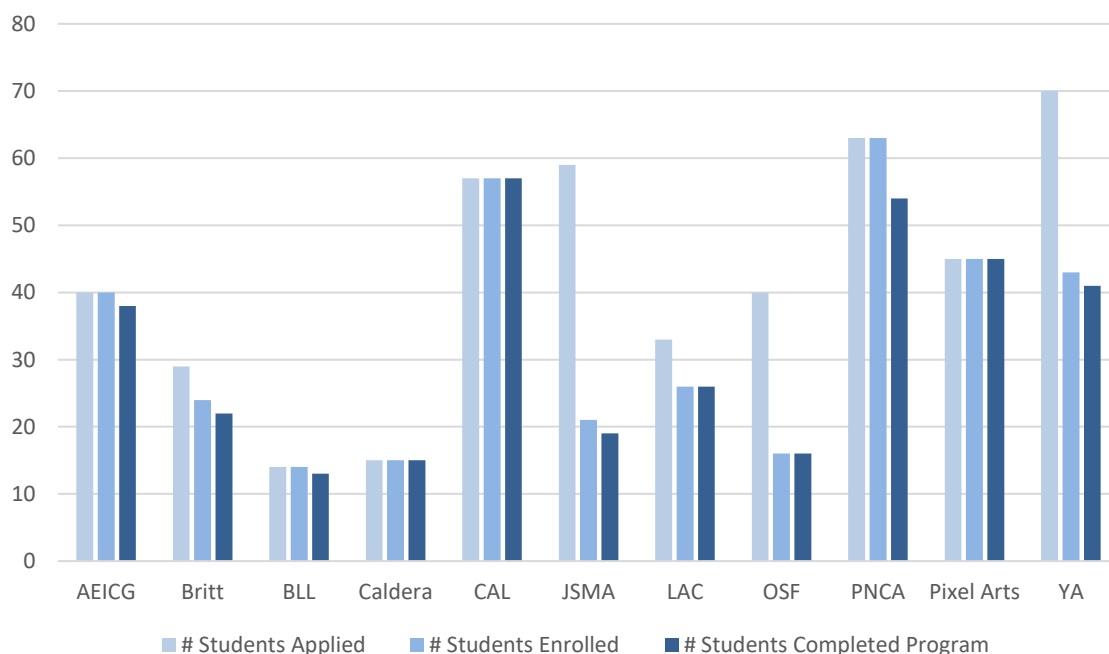
NUMBERS OF STUDENTS SERVED

WoW projects varied in size. As shown in Figure 3, the number of students served ranged from 16 (BLL) to 63 (PNCA). Across all organizations, 364 students participated.

Figure 3 also shows the number of students who applied for each project, relative to the number of students who were enrolled and the number who completed the project. Grantees varied in the extent to which they could meet the demand for arts education in their areas. Some projects—such as AEICG, Caldera, CAL, Pixel Arts, PNCA, and BLL—were able to enroll all or nearly all of the students who applied. In some cases, such as the Pixel Arts after-school project and PNCA during-school project, no application was necessary, and all interested students were accommodated. However, others—such as JSMA, LAC, OSF, and YA—had more limited capacity and were not able to serve all interested students. This result suggests there is unmet need for arts education and career mentorship in some areas. Overall, 465 students applied for participation and 364 were enrolled in a project.

In general, projects reported high retention rates among their participants. In each organization, all or nearly all of the students who began the program successfully completed it. Across all organizations, of the 364 students who were enrolled, 346 completed their participation—a cross-site program completion rate of 95%.

Figure 3. Number of Students that Applied for, Enrolled in, and Completed Each Project



Data source: Grantee Progress Reports

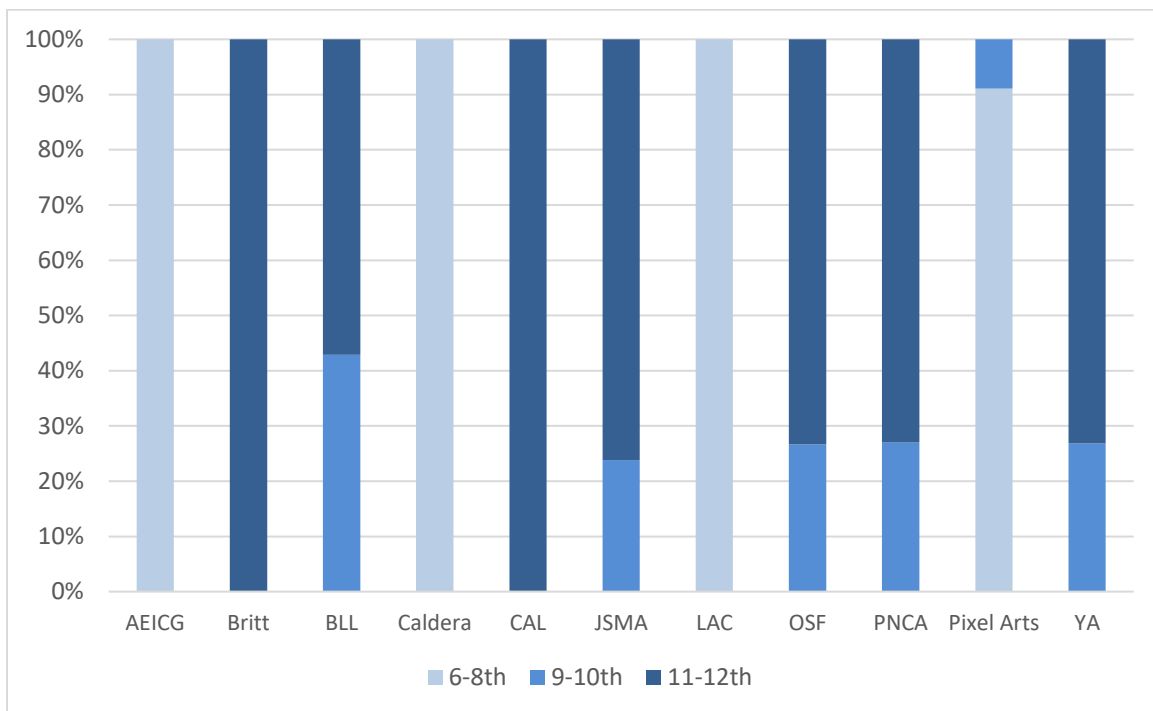
SUMMARY OF POPULATION SERVED

This section describes the student populations served by WoW projects, as reported by project staff. On the grantee progress report, staff reported aggregated figures (e.g., 20% of project participants were Hispanic/Latino), not characteristics individually for each student.

Grade Level

Figure 4 shows the percentages of students served by each organization that were in each grade level, specifically the percentage of participants in 6-8th grades, 9-10th grades, and 11-12th grades (including recent graduates). As described above, four projects (AEICG, Caldera, LAC, and Pixel Arts) served middle school students, and seven served high school students. Overall, across organizations, more than half of the participating students were in high school, and most were in 11th or 12th grade. In particular, across organizations: 53% of student participants were in 11th or 12th grades; 13% in 9th or 10th grades; and 34% in 6th, 7th, or 8th grades.

Figure 4. Percentage of Students Served in Each Grade Level, by Organization



Data source: Grantee Progress Reports

Underserved Students

The WoW initiative intended to fund projects that would engage underserved students. The Grant Guidelines, as issued by the OAC, defined “underserved” to include four characteristics:

- (1) English language learners
- (2) Special education students
- (3) Traditionally underrepresented minorities
- (4) Students with low socio-economic status

WoW projects involved arts organizations that partnered with schools to recruit students for participation. Schools were often identified for these collaborations because of the demographic and socio-economic composition of their student populations. Thus, the arts organization was able to conduct recruitment efforts among a diverse student population. However, the projects were not broadly implemented at schools and, in most cases, were reliant on students expressing interest or applying for participation; therefore, it was possible for the demographics of the WoW project participants to differ from the broader demographics of the schools.

The percentages of student participants who met the criteria for each category of underserved status delineated in the Grant Guidelines are shown in Table 2. Across projects, just over half of the participants were from a traditionally underrepresented minority, and 57% had indication of low socio-economic status (determined by the student's receipt of free/reduced price lunch). Very few were special education students or English Language Learners. Some grantees were effective at engaging underserved students. Often, this success was because the project was originally designed to reach culturally specific or underrepresented populations—for example, Beats Lyrics Leaders and Caldera serve Native American youth, and Pixel Arts teamed with Self Enhancement, Inc., which primarily serves African American students. In other cases, the project's partnership with the school served to link the arts organization with underserved students—for example, AEICG, Lane Arts Council, and PNCA effectively partnered with schools in low-income areas.

Table 2. Percentage of WoW Participants in Each Underserved Category

Project	# of Students enrolled	Racial/Ethnic Minority ^a	Low SES Status ^b	Special Education ^c	English Language Learner ^d
AEICG	40	30 (75%)	30 (75%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Britt	24	9 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)
BLL	14	14 (100%)	14 (100%)	5 (36%)	0 (0%)
Caldera	15	15 (100%)	15 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
CAL	57	9 (16%)	13 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
JSMA	21	10 (48%)	12 (57%)	4 (19%)	5 (24%)
LAC	26	12 (46%)	19 (73%)	3 (12%)	0 (0%)
OSF	16	4 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
PNCA	63	32 (51%)	45 (71%)	3 (5%)	2 (3%)
Pixel Arts	45	40 (89%)	45 (100%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)
YA	43	20 (47%)	15 (35%)	0 (0%)	10 (23%)
Total	364	195 (54%)	208 (57%)	17 (5%)	20 (5%)

Data source: Grantee progress reports.

Note. Students categorized if they ^awere non-White, ^breceived free/reduced price lunch, ^cwere special education students, and ^dwere an English Language Learner.

As shown above, across projects, roughly half of the participants were from underrepresented minorities. However, the actual distributions of students across the racial/ethnic categories varied across organizations, and the percentage of participants from underrepresented minorities varied by project (range = 16% to 100%). These distributions for each site, as reported by the project staff, are further illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of Students' Racial/Ethnic Background

Project	# of Students enrolled	White	African American/ Black	Asian/ East Indian	Native American/ Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic/ Latino
AEICG ^a	40	8 (20%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	30 (75%)
Britt	24	15 (63%)	1 (4%)	3 (13%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)
BLL	14	4 (29%)	2 (14%)	0 (0%)	14 (100%)	2 (14%)	4 (29%)
Caldera	15	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
CAL	57	48 (84%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	8 (14%)
JSMA	21	11 (52%)	1 (5%)	3 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (29%)
LAC	26	14 (54%)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)	2 (8%)	0 (0%)	7 (27%)
OSF	16	12 (75%)	4 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
PNCA	63	31 (49%)	10 (16%)	7 (11%)	2 (3%)	4 (6%)	7 (11%)
Pixel Arts	45	5 (11%)	30 (67%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	4 (9%)
YA ^a	43	21 (49%)	5 (12%)	4 (9%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	8 (19%)
Total	364	169 (46%)	55 (15%)	19 (6%)	36 (10%)	8 (2%)	76 (21%)

Data source: Grantee progress reports.

Note. More than one race can be indicated for a student. Thus, the total number of students across categories may sum to more than the total number of participants.

^a Race/ethnicity was unknown for two AEICG students who did not complete the program and three YA students.

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS NOTED BY PROJECT STAFF

Implementation Successes and Challenges

Across projects, the most frequently cited success was the positive experiences of students. Students were engaged in active learning environments and they were vocal about the benefits they found in their WoW participation. *"This is the first time that I've been asked what I think,"* stated a PNCA student participant, as quoted by a PNCA staff member as evidence of the impact of self-directed learning. *"In so many other situations, you are just looking over your teacher's shoulder and watching and hoping you learn a bit. Here you really got to be hands-on. You learn more that way,"* stated a YA participant, as quoted by a YA staff member as evidence of the impact of the hands-on learning approach. Some staff noted how participation in the WoW program had benefitted students after completion. Some examples of how the project contributed to students gaining employment, winning awards, and achieving other accomplishments include:



- A student interested in sound and lighting design reported that participation in the WoW program gave her the skills and confidence to secure a position with a Portland music venue. (Britt)
- Four students won the “2015 Epic Potential Award” in the Mythos Challenge and received \$1,000 each to continue working toward their aspirations. (Pixel Arts)
- The WoW project at CAL established a working relationship between the students and the City of Gresham. After graduation, the City of Gresham extended an offer of employment to a student on the project. (CAL)
- Students created a music video called Rez Life, which was submitted for a NAMMY (Native American Music Awards) nomination and won the award for 2016 best music video. A student was offered a record deal on Ibori Records. (BLL)
- The WoW project facilitated ongoing mentorship between instructors and students, with a number of Live SET graduates assisting instructors in their professional sound-engineering work, including prominent events such as Pickathon and a Live Wire Radio show. (YA)

Some staff members commented that the creation of working partnerships with local schools and other agencies was a notable success of the project. For example, LAC's project strengthened relationships with the Springfield Public Schools, Hamlin Middle School, Emerald Art Center, and Springfield Education Foundation. Caldera established a strong collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. CAL, AEICG, and YA developed good working relationships with local professionals.

However, some projects found the partner relationships to present implementation challenges. In some cases, staff turnover with partner schools and agencies made project coordination more difficult, as was experienced by both Pixel Arts and PNCA. This challenge was generally overcome by consistent communication and a steadfast commitment to ensure project completion. For example, PNCA partner Alpha High School was closed in Spring 2015. In response, PNCA recruited Roosevelt High School to participate so the project could continue.

Organizational capacity also presented some implementation challenges. For example, CAL partnered with three businesses and the City, but lacked a staff person to coordinate these partnerships. These responsibilities fell to the course instructor and school director, which was difficult on top of their existing duties. OSF staff described their project as “necessarily personnel-intensive,” as the students are interning in fast-paced, real-life theatre production. Due to the high level of skill and attention demanded by the production, and “high level of supervision” necessary for high school students who are just learning, running the WoW project requires a very high level of commitment by OSF staff. In some cases, the WoW projects were able to adapt to meet the implementation challenges. For example, Pixel Arts staff initially struggled with student conflict and poor attendance. In response, they adapted their approach and reported, “The success of those adaptations showed clear results in fewer classroom disruptions, higher consistency in attendance, and improvement in conflict negotiation results.”

In contrast to challenges with capacity, in some cases, WoW funding enabled grantee organizations to expand their internal capacity in sustainable ways. For example, staff from Young Audiences described that the WoW project successfully extended YA's reach into several new areas, including career readiness and the technical arts. It expanded their internal capacity (i.e., their staff, who were sound engineers, developed skills in teaching and training), created new partnership opportunities with other agencies and venues, and broadened the community's perception of their organization, which attracted new support from donors and funders.

Local Evaluation Efforts and Evidence

Organizations established their own local outcomes in line with their individual project's theory of action (which often differed from the OAC grant outcomes and 40-40-20 education goals). Several grantees conducted their own local evaluations, which varied in scope and sophistication, to monitor whether they were achieving these outcomes. Various methodologies were used, including surveys, observations, and video interviews. Projects that collected data systematically used that information to report evidence of progress toward fulfilling their targeted outcomes in their progress reports.

STUDENT-LEVEL OUTCOMES

Evaluation Question #2: Who was served by WoW projects?

Grantee reports indicated that 364 students participated across projects. Pre-program surveys were completed by 312 students, of whom 243 also completed a post-program survey. Table 4 displays the demographic information for these students, across all projects.

Table 4. Student Demographics

Demographic Characteristic	Pre-survey completed N (%)	Both surveys completed N (%)
Number of surveys complete	312 (100%)	243 (100%)
<i>Race/ethnicity</i>		
American Indian/Alaska Native	26 (8%)	14 (6%)
Asian	10 (3%)	10 (4%)
Black/African American	30 (10%)	20 (8%)
Hispanic/Latino	36 (12%)	26 (11%)
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	13 (4%)	9 (4%)
White	121 (39%)	108 (44%)
Multiracial	48 (15%)	39 (16%)
Missing/unknown/other/declined to answer	28 (9%)	17 (7%)
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	146 (47%)	113 (47%)
Male	135 (43%)	110 (45%)
Transgender/gender neutral/androgynous	11 (4%)	9 (4%)
Missing/unknown/declined to answer	20 (6%)	11 (5%)
<i>Grade level (currently in or entering in fall)</i>		
6 th grade	9 (3%)	1 (< 1%)
7 th grade	33 (11%)	20 (8%)
8 th grade	44 (14%)	34 (14%)
9 th grade	17 (5%)	15 (6%)
10 th grade	26 (8%)	22 (9%)
11 th grade	56 (18%)	47 (19%)
12 th grade	92 (29%)	78 (32%)
Graduated from high school	16 (5%)	15 (6%)
Getting GED	1 (< 1%)	1 (< 1%)
Missing/unknown/declined to answer	18 (6%)	10 (4%)
<i>Highest level of parent education</i>		
High school diploma or less	69 (22%)	52 (21%)
Vocational school, associate's degree or some college (no degree)	80 (26%)	63 (26%)
Bachelor's degree	71 (23%)	59 (24%)
Master's degree or higher	39 (13%)	34 (14%)
Missing/unknown/declined to answer	53 (17%)	35 (14%)

Data Source: Student surveys.

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.



Because analyses focus on change over time and post-program perceptions, the 243 students with matched pre- and post-program surveys comprise the analytical sample for much of this report. As seen in Table 4, the 243 students with matched surveys appear demographically similar to the 312 students with pre-program surveys. The racial characteristics of students with surveys (Table 4) appear to vary slightly from the grantee progress report data (Table 3). These differences are likely due to the difference in data collection. On the survey, students self-reported race/ethnicity and could indicate more than one race (roughly 15% identified as multiracial), whereas progress report data was entered by project staff and a multi-racial category was not available.

DID WoW PROJECTS REACH THE INTENDED POPULATION?

Analyses examined the extent to which WoW participants met the Grant Guidelines definition of underserved. Of students with survey data, roughly half were from traditionally underrepresented minorities, one third were of low socio-economic status (had free/reduced price lunch), 3% were in special education, and 3% were English language learners. A composite variable for underserved status was created and 65% of students met this definition (Table 5).

Table 5. Percentage of Underserved Students among WoW Participants

Demographic Characteristic	Pre-survey completed N (%)	Both surveys completed N (%)
Number of surveys complete	312 (100%)	243 (100%)
<i>Traditionally underrepresented minority^a</i>		
Yes ^a	166 (53%)	120 (49%)
No	121 (39%)	108 (44%)
Missing/unknown	25 (8%)	15 (6%)
<i>Low socio-economic status</i>		
Yes	118 (38%)	89 (37%)
No	85 (27%)	67 (28%)
Missing/unknown	109 (35%)	87 (36%)
<i>Special education student</i>		
Yes	9 (3%)	7 (3%)
No	156 (50%)	129 (53%)
Missing/unknown	147 (47%)	107 (44%)
<i>English Language Learner</i>		
Yes	10 (3%)	7 (3%)
No	155 (50%)	130 (53%)
Missing/unknown	147 (47%)	106 (44%)
<i>"Underserved" (any of the above characteristics)</i>		
Yes	207 (66%)	159 (65%)
No	36 (12%)	33 (14%)
Missing/unknown	69 (22%)	51 (21%)

Data Source: (1) Student surveys for traditionally underrepresented minority. ^a Students were considered an underrepresented minority if they identified as any race other than White. (2) Project staff reported receipt of free/reduced price lunch, placement in special education classes, and status as an English language learner for each student with a survey. This data was distinct from the aggregated estimates in the progress reports, and some values were unknown for individual students.

On the pre-program surveys, students reported on their academic achievement, in particular their grades and school attendance. Roughly three quarters of students reported receiving mostly A's and B's, and about two thirds reported minimal school absence (see Table 6). This finding suggests that a sizable proportion of WoW participants were well engaged in school when they began the WoW program. On the post-program survey, students reported on their WoW project attendance. Nearly three quarters reported having attended most or all of the WoW activities and events (see Table 6). Thus, the survey responses represent the perspectives of students who were actively engaged in their respective projects.

Table 6. Academic Achievement among WoW Participants

	Pre-survey completed N (%)	Both surveys completed N (%)
Number of students with survey completed	312 (100%)	243 (100%)
<i>In the most recent school year, were your grades...</i>		
Mostly A's	121 (39%)	105 (43%)
Mostly B's	120 (38%)	91 (37%)
Mostly C's	40 (13%)	28 (12%)
Mostly D's	8 (3%)	7 (3%)
Mostly F's	7 (2%)	4 (2%)
Missing/unknown	16 (5%)	8 (3%)
<i>In the most recent school year, about how many days of school did you miss for any reason?</i>		
No days	42 (13%)	34 (14%)
1-5 days	159 (51%)	125 (51%)
6-10 days	46 (15%)	39 (16%)
11-15 days	21 (7%)	14 (6%)
16-20 days	12 (4%)	11 (5%)
More than 20 days	16 (5%)	12 (5%)
Missing/unknown	16 (5%)	8 (3%)
<i>About how many of the events/sessions of this WoW program did you attend?</i>		
I attended <u>all</u> of the events and sessions.		85 (35%)
I attended <u>most</u> of the events and sessions.		89 (37%)
I attended <u>some</u> of the events and sessions.		14 (6%)
I attended <u>few</u> of the events and sessions.		7 (3%)
Missing/unknown		48 (20%)

Data Source: Student surveys.



Evaluation Question #3: How did the WoW program impact students? In what ways did the projects contribute to Oregon's 40-40-20 goal?

WoW program impacts were examined in the four areas described earlier and shown in the logic model (Figure 1). Specifically, as a result of WoW participation:

1. Students will have a clearer sense of the relevance of their education;
2. Students will become newly aware of opportunities available to them;
3. Students will have a plan for after graduation from high school; and
4. Students will develop arts-related skills and value their arts education.

Analyses explored any change in student perceptions from before to after program participation and examined whether student- or project-level factors contributed to the observed change.⁴ In particular, this examination looked at the influence of student factors such as underserved status and age, and of project factors such as length and instructional ratio. Projects were classified as “short” when they lasted less than 12 weeks and “long” when they lasted 12 weeks or more. Instructional ratio pertained to the ratio of students to artists.⁵ Projects were considered to have “high” ratios when there were more than four students to artist (4:1 ratio or higher, including very high ratios like classroom settings). Projects were considered to have “low” ratios when there were three or fewer students to each artist (3:1 ratio or lower, including one-on-one apprenticeships). These analyses examined which project formats were most effective for which students.

This section presents analyses for the available data. For those outcomes assessed before and after program participation (e.g., perceived relevance of education), the pre-post difference was calculated for all students who completed both pre- and post-program surveys ($N = 243$). For those outcomes assessed only after program participation (e.g., perceived relevance of WoW project), analysis are based on students who completed a post-program survey ($N = 275$).

OUTCOME 1: STUDENTS HAVE A CLEARER SENSE OF THE RELEVANCE OF THEIR EDUCATION.

The WoW program sought to help students gain an increased understanding that what they learn in school is relevant to their career and a strong belief that what they learned in their WoW internship is relevant to school/career. This outcome was analyzed in two ways. The first involved a subset of survey items, asked before and after the program, that reflected students' perceptions of the relevance of their school-based education, generally. The second involved a subset of survey items, asked only after the program, that inquired about the relevance of what they learned in the WoW project, specifically.

⁴ In most cases, change from the pre-program survey to the post-program survey was estimated using a difference score. Specifically, a scale score for each outcome was created by averaging each student's responses across the subset of survey items identified as the scale. A difference score was then calculated for each student by subtracting the pre-program scale score from the post-program scale score. A positive difference score indicates an increase from before to after the program, a negative difference score indicates a decrease, and a difference score of zero indicates no change over time. Once difference scores were calculated, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to assess which factors contributed to the change.

⁵ “Artists” included professionals who instructed classes or mentored students, but did not include other administrative or support staff.

Perceived Relevance of General Education

Four survey items were combined to form a scale of perceived education relevance. Table 7 shows the percentages of students endorsing each item. The overall scale scores ranged from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating stronger perceptions of their school-based education being relevant and meaningful for their career and quality of life. The average student rating was 3.9 on the pre-program surveys, suggesting that students entered the WoW program with a fairly solid belief in the relevance of their schooling. The average post-program rating of 3.8 indicated the student perceptions did not change statistically over the course of the program.⁶

**Table 7. Student Perceptions of the Relevance of their Education
Before and After the WoW Program**

Please tell us how much you agree with each statement below:	Before Program (%)					After Program (%)				
	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neither	4-Agree	5-Strongly Agree	1-Strongly Disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neither	4-Agree	5-Strongly Agree
What I learn in school will be meaningful for my career.	1%	7%	21%	47%	24%	1%	7%	27%	44%	21%
I like school.	1%	9%	34%	38%	18%	4%	9%	31%	39%	17%
My education is important for my quality of life.	< 1%	2%	10%	39%	49%	0%	< 1%	13%	42%	44%
What I learn in school now will help me get the kind of job I want in the future.	2%	9%	26%	37%	26%	1%	12%	28%	36%	22%
Overall Mean Score (std. dev.)	3.9 (0.7)					3.8 (0.7)				

Data Source: Student surveys.

Note. Statistics based on the students with completed pre- and post-program surveys ($N = 243$).

An ANOVA was conducted to examine whether other student characteristics (e.g., age, underserved status) or project characteristics (e.g., length, instructional ratio) contributed to any change in participants' perceived relevance of their education. The ANOVA model was not statistically significant,⁷ suggesting that these other factors did not moderate the extent to which the WoW program impacted students' perceptions of the relevance of their education. It is possible that the relatively high ratings at program entry—that is, students were already invested in their schooling—made it more difficult to find change over time.

"This program has pushed me toward my career goals along with encouraging me in my high school career!"

⁶ $t(239) = -1.844, p = 0.066$.

⁷ $F(10, 176) = 1.024, p = 0.425$.

Perceived Relevance of the WoW Program

On the post-program survey, students rated the relevance of what they learned in the WoW program for their professional future (e.g., “*What I learned in this program is useful for my career*”) and the program’s impact on their engagement in their education (e.g., “*Because of this program, I am more motivated to graduate high school*”). Eight items were combined for this scale, and overall scores ranged from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating stronger perceptions of the WoW program being relevant for their educational and employment futures. Overall, students’ average score was 3.7, suggesting decent agreement. Table 8 shows the agreement with each item.

Table 8. Student Perceptions of the Relevance of the WoW Program for their Future Plans and their Education

	After Program (%)				
	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
<i>What I learned in this program...</i>					
...is useful for my career.	2%	4%	27%	32%	34%
...will help me find a job in an arts-related field.	2%	2%	22%	34%	40%
...will help me find a job outside of the arts.	3%	8%	37%	34%	18%
...will be useful in college.	2%	3%	28%	33%	34%
<i>Because of this program...</i>					
...I am more engaged and/or doing better in school.	3%	8%	43%	31%	14%
...I am more motivated to graduate high school.	2%	9%	34%	31%	24%
...I am more strongly considering going to college.	2%	8%	34%	30%	26%
...I feel more prepared for college.	2%	9%	33%	36%	20%
<i>Overall Mean Score (std. dev.)</i>	<i>3.7 (0.7)</i>				

Data Source: Student surveys.

Note. Statistics based on the students with completed post-program surveys ($N = 275$).

An ANOVA was conducted to examine whether student or project factors differentially impacted students’ perceived relevance of what they learned in the WoW program for their future. The ANOVA model was statistically significant⁸ and found that perceptions of the WoW program’s relevance were related to student age, project length, and instructional ratio. Three interactions were significant in the model—a significant interaction indicates that the relationship between two variables has a unique impact on the outcome. They are described below.

⁸ $F(7, 176) = 5.377, p < 0.001$.

First, the interaction between student age and project instructional ratio significantly predicted students' perceived relevance of the program for their education and employment futures. Specifically, students in low-ratio projects (i.e., few students to artist, apprenticeships) tended to more strongly perceive the WoW project as relevant to their future, and this effect increased with age. In short, **perceptions of relevance were strongest for older students in projects with a low instructional ratio.**

"I've learned so much through this program that will prepare me for my future at the Portland Art Institute. I feel well prepared, and ready to start in the workforce relating to the arts."

It may be that older students, whose educational engagement is already fairly determined, can more easily see that what they are learning is relevant to their career when they are in one-on-one mentorships. Younger students' considerations of their futures may be affected less by the ratio.

Secondly, the interaction between student age and project length (i.e., less than 12 weeks, 12 weeks or longer) impacted students' perceptions of the program relevance for their education and employment futures. Specifically, **perceptions of relevance were strongest for older students in longer projects and younger students in short projects.** It may be that longer duration helped older students to more fully connect with instructors and grasp the relevance of learning to their career, whereas younger students could appreciate a shorter program that remained fun without feeling like a requirement.

Lastly, the interaction between project length and instructional ratio also influenced students' perceptions of the program's relevance for their futures. Specifically, **shorter projects yielded better outcomes when they involved lower ratios (apprenticeship-style instruction), and projects with higher ratios (many students to artist, such as classroom instruction) tended to yield better outcomes when they lasted longer.** It seems that individual interaction is particularly helpful when the project duration is relatively brief, and that longer projects may not require the increased individual attention for students to perceive their relevance.

Support for School

Students were asked how much support for doing well in school they received from various people in their lives, including parents, friends, school staff, and others. At the end of the program, they were also asked how much support they received from WoW project staff for their academic efforts (Table 9). At program entry, most students reported receiving fairly strong support from family, friends, and school staff, and at program exit, this level of support had not changed.⁹ Notably, students reported feeling highly supported by WoW project staff to do well in school, suggesting that WoW staff and artists effectively conveyed messages about the importance of education.

"The program has adjusted my life style to push myself beyond limits and to be fully prepared for college and the work force."

⁹ $t(239) = 1.102, p = 0.272$.

Table 9. Student Perceptions of the Support they Receive for their Education Before and After the WoW Program

How much support for doing well in school do you receive from:	Before Program (%)					After Program (%)				
	None	A little	Some	A lot	N/A	None	A little	Some	A lot	N/A
Your family?	1%	8%	23%	68%	0%	1%	11%	22%	65%	< 1%
Your friends?	6%	23%	39%	30%	< 1%	5%	21%	45%	29%	1%
Your school's staff (e.g., teachers, counselors)?	3%	8%	36%	53%	1%	5%	11%	30%	53%	< 1%
Other groups (e.g., church, clubs, sport teams)?	21%	14%	18%	25%	22%	19%	15%	24%	22%	19%
Staff in this WoW program?						13%	8%	35%	44%	0%

Data Source: Student surveys.

Note. Statistics based on the students with completed pre- and post-program surveys ($N = 243$).

OUTCOME 2: STUDENTS BECOME AWARE OF OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO THEM THAT THEY DID NOT KNOW ABOUT BEFORE.

WoW projects sought to expand students' awareness of opportunities, by increasing their knowledge of career options generally and arts-related career paths specifically, and by developing skills that will increase their preparedness and eligibility for the next stages of education and employment. A 5-item scale was used to reflect students' awareness of opportunities available to them and preparedness to pursue them, as a result of WoW program participation. Students' average scale rating was 3.96, indicating high agreement that the program has enhanced their awareness of and preparedness for future opportunities. The percentages of students agreeing with each item are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Student Perceptions of WoW Program's Impact on their Opportunities

Because of this program...	After Program (%)				
	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
...I feel more prepared to enter the workforce.	2%	6%	26%	41%	26%
...I know more about what career options in the arts are available to me.	1%	4%	17%	44%	34%
...I am considering pursuing a career in the arts.	4%	8%	25%	32%	32%
...I have a better understanding of possible arts-related careers.	2%	5%	16%	42%	36%
...I have job skills that I did not have before.	2%	6%	19%	33%	40%
Overall Mean Score (std. dev.)	3.96 (0.8)				

Data Source: Student surveys.

Note. Statistics based on the students who completed a post-program survey ($N = 275$).

An ANOVA was conducted to explore whether student or project characteristics were related to students' perceptions of the WoW program's impact on their awareness of opportunities and development of new skills. The model was significant,¹⁰ and found that student age, project length, and instructional ratio were related to students' perceptions. Three interactions were significant, similar to outcome 1.

"I really enjoyed this program - it gave me better insight into the career I was interested in beforehand. I realize that there is an actual chance of me becoming a sound engineer."

First, there was an interaction between student age and instructional ratio. Specifically, students in low-ratio (apprentice-type) projects reported more awareness of opportunities, compared to students in high-ratio (classroom-style) projects, and the attribution of this awareness to the WoW program tended to increase with age. In short, **awareness of opportunities was highest among older students in low-ratio projects.**

Secondly, the interaction between student age and project length influenced students' reported awareness of opportunities and skill development. Specifically, in longer projects (12 weeks or more), students' awareness increased as they got older. In short, **awareness of opportunities was strongest for older students in longer projects and for younger students in shorter projects.** As suggested for outcome 1, older students may benefit from the longer duration and nearer-term application of the career-oriented project activities and relationship building.

Lastly, there was an interaction between project length and instructional ratio. Specifically, **students in projects with low ratios reported higher perceptions of the program's impact on their opportunities,** regardless of the length of the project. However, length mattered for students in projects with high instructional ratios—that is, **among students in high-ratio projects (many students-to-artist), the awareness of their opportunities grew when the program was longer.**

OUTCOME 3: STUDENTS HAVE A PLAN FOR AFTER GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL.

Oregon's 40-40-20 education goal pertains to students completing high school and formulating a plan for afterward. This goal includes, for example, students having enhanced motivation to graduate high school, to acquire some post-secondary education or training, to attend college, and to consider their career plans.

"I feel I can now do an artist profile in full, have the means and understand what to do in order to be efficient in college. I also feel it gives me a better understanding of college courses and just how to prepare for them."

Consideration of Life after High School

To gauge students' consideration of their future after high school and whether they shared these ideas with the people closest to them, a 5-item scale was constructed to assess students' perceptions before and after the program. Table 11 shows students' agreement with individual items. On the 5-point scale, the average score was 3.92 at program entry, suggesting students

¹⁰ $F(7, 176) = 16.466, p < 0.001$.

were actively considering their future plans before they participated in the WoW project, and the average score was 3.98 at program exit, indicating no significant change during the program.¹¹

Table 11. Students' Consideration of their Future Before and After the WoW Program

How often do you...	Before Program (%)					After Program (%)				
	1-Never	2-Rarely	3-Sometimes	4-Often	5-All the Time	1-Never	2-Rarely	3-Sometimes	4-Often	5-All the Time
Think about your future after high school?	0%	2%	14%	40%	44%	0%	1%	14%	35%	50%
Think about the kind of career you would like to have?	0%	2%	10%	38%	50%	< 1%	< 1%	14%	32%	53%
Make decisions about things in your life based on the career you want in the future?	0%	6%	29%	36%	29%	0%	5%	30%	32%	33%
Talk with your friends about your future plans?	6%	14%	30%	23%	27%	3%	13%	26%	31%	27%
Talk with your parents/family about your future plans?	2%	15%	29%	25%	29%	3%	14%	27%	30%	26%
Overall Mean Score (std dev)	3.92 (0.7)					3.98 (0.7)				

Data Source: Student surveys.

Note. Statistics based on the students with completed pre- and post-program surveys ($N = 243$).

An ANOVA was conducted to examine whether specific student or project characteristics influenced any change in students' consideration of their plans after high school, and the model was not significant.¹² This result suggests that any change in students' consideration of future plans did not vary by underserved status, age, project length, or instructional ratio.

Educational and Career Plans

Students reported on their certainty about their paths after high school graduation. On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), students rated their agreement with statements pertaining to future plans. In response to the statement "*I can see myself attending college,*" the average rating was 4.4 at program entry, indicating that the students served by the WoW projects were generally considering themselves college-bound before participation. After the program, the average score remained flat at 4.4. This finding may represent a statistical "ceiling effect," whereby the baseline score was high enough to leave little room for increase. In response to the statement, "*I know what*

"This program has greatly expanded my skills in the arts and helped me figure out what career I want in the future."

¹¹ $t(239) = 0.688, p = 0.388$.

¹² $F(10, 142) = 0.630, p = 0.786$.

kind of job I want after I finish school,” students’ average rating was 3.90 before the program, and 3.99 afterward, a small (though not statistically significant) increase.

Students were asked about their motivations for specific educational and career choices. In particular, they were asked how likely they were to graduate from high school, graduate from college, and pursue an arts-related career. Students answered these questions, on a scale from 1 (*definitely won’t*) to 5 (*definitely will*), before and after the program. Table 12 shows the responses separately for underserved students and for not underserved students.

Education. When asked about their motivation to graduate from high school, more than 95% of both groups said they *probably* or *definitely* would graduate. The percentage of underserved students that said they would *definitely* graduate stayed relatively flat over time (about 80%), whereas the percentage of not underserved students decreased from 97% to 90%. When asked about their motivation to complete a bachelor’s degree, at both pre- and post-program, a little more than one third of underserved students planned to *definitely* graduate from college. By contrast, the percentage of not underserved students decreased after program participation. At program entry, 48% said they would *definitely* obtain a bachelor’s degree, but just 27% reported so at program exit. It is possible that some students learned about career paths that did not require a college degree, and thus their motivations for future educational plans changed accordingly.

An ANOVA was conducted to examine whether specific student or project characteristics influenced any change in students’ motivation to complete a bachelor’s degree. The model was statistically significant¹³ and found that increased motivation for college was related to student age and underserved status. In particular, older students reported greater motivation to complete a bachelor’s degree than younger students did, and underserved students showed more consistent college motivation relative to not underserved students. In particular, while not underserved students’ college motivation ratings tended to decline post-program, underserved students’ motivation ratings remained steady.

Career. When asked about their motivation to pursue a career in the arts, students reported very little change from before to after program participation. Roughly half of underserved students reported that they *probably* or *definitely* will pursue a career in the arts at both time points (49% at program entry and 51% at program exit). This result contrasts with more than two thirds of not underserved students saying they *probably* or *definitely* will pursue a career in the arts (74% at program entry and 69% at exit). Table 12 shows these percentages.

¹³ $F(2, 181) = 8.533, p < 0.001$.

Table 12. Students' Education and Career Plans Before and After the WoW Program

	Before Program (%)					After Program (%)				
	1-Definitely won't	2-Probably won't	3-Unsure	4-Probably will	5-Definitely will	1-Definitely won't	2-Probably won't	3-Unsure	4-Probably will	5-Definitely will
Education										
<i>Underserved Students</i>										
I plan to graduate from high school.	1%	0%	3%	15%	82%	0%	0%	2%	19%	79%
I plan to complete a bachelor's degree.	3%	4%	21%	34%	38%	3%	3%	23%	35%	36%
<i>Not Underserved Students</i>										
I plan to graduate from high school.	0%	0%	0%	3%	97%	0%	0%	3%	6%	90%
I plan to complete a bachelor's degree.	0%	3%	10%	39%	48%	9%	0%	21%	42%	27%
Career										
<i>Underserved Students</i>										
I plan to pursue a career in the arts.	6%	9%	35%	22%	27%	3%	8%	38%	22%	29%
I plan to pursue a career <u>not</u> in the arts.	17%	18%	41%	14%	10%	19%	19%	35%	22%	6%
<i>Not Underserved Students</i>										
I plan to pursue a career in the arts.	0%	6%	19%	29%	45%	0%	6%	24%	27%	42%
I plan to pursue a career <u>not</u> in the arts.	16%	42%	26%	16%	0%	31%	25%	22%	19%	3%

Data Source: Student surveys.

Note. Statistics based on the students with completed pre- and post-program surveys who also had underserved status indicated (N = 190).

OUTCOME 4: STUDENTS DEVELOP ARTS-RELATED SKILLS AND VALUE ARTS EDUCATION.

The WoW program is based in the belief that arts education is valuable, meaningful, and enjoyable for various aspects of life. Student perceptions in this regard were assessed before and after program participation using a modified psychometric scale. This scale included 17 items, and scores ranged from 1 to 5, with higher scores reflecting a stronger belief that arts education is valuable, enjoyable, and meaningful for other areas of life.

"This program has shown me a side to life I never even heard of. I was exposed to many new things. I loved this program and I learned things that will help me on my way. Art has more meaning to me and I can understand its importance much better than before."

At the start of the program, students rated their arts education as important, valuable, and enjoyable; the pre-program mean score was 3.8 on a 5-point scale. This result is unsurprising, as many of these students sought out and applied for the opportunity to participate in the WoW program, suggesting that they would value the experience. Their perceptions did not change over time; the post-program mean score was also 3.8.

Table 13. Student Perceptions of Arts Education Before and After the WoW Program

Arts Education Scale Score	Before the Program	After the Program
Mean	3.8	3.8
Median	3.9	3.9
Standard deviation	0.6	0.6
Range	2-5	2-5

Data Source: Student surveys.

Note. Statistics based on the students with completed pre- and post-program surveys who answered these items ($N = 143$). Response range 1 to 5.

An ANOVA was conducted to examine whether specific student or project characteristics predicted participants' perceptions of their arts education. The model was significant,¹⁴ and found that underserved status, age, and project length were related to changes in students' perceptions of their arts education. Although the change was relatively small in magnitude, underserved students' perceptions showed a greater positive change than did those of not underserved students. This result suggests that the WoW program had a comparatively stronger impact on the perceptions of arts education among underserved students.¹⁵

Further, a significant interaction between student age and project length was also related to the change in students' perceptions of their arts education. As with earlier findings, older students' perceptions of the value of their arts education increased more among those in longer projects

¹⁴ $F(4, 138) = 3.550, p = 0.009$.

¹⁵ On average, scores from before to after the program for an underserved youth increased by 0.2 points more (on a 5-point scale) than for a not underserved youth.



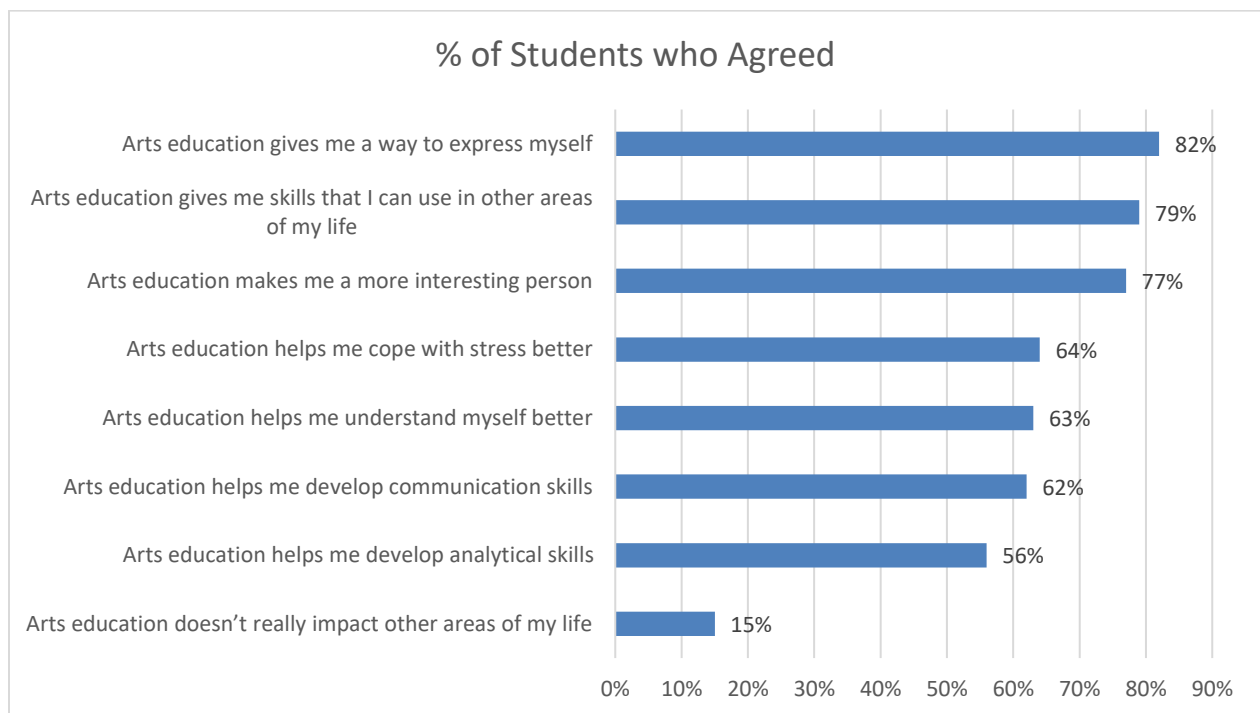
than those in shorter projects. Specifically, **improvements were most notable among older students in longer projects and younger students in shorter projects.**

Opinions of Arts Education after Program Participation

Students were asked about the role of art in their lives and the rest of the world. Overall, students felt that arts education was very valuable for them in terms of personal expression, skill development, coping with stress, communication, and analytic skills. Figure 5 shows the percentages of students who agreed with each statement.

"I have learned a lot from this program and want to try to be an artist."

Figure 5. Student Perceptions of Arts Education After the WoW Program



Data Source: Student survey. (N = 275).

Student Perceptions of WoW Program Impact: Qualitative Analysis

On the post-program survey, students were asked “How has the WoW program impacted you?” Almost two thirds (62%) of participants responded to the question and nearly all (96%) of these comments were positive. Qualitative analysis was used to synthesize these open-ended responses. In particular, responses were reviewed and coded for main emergent themes.

Six themes emerged. Students reported that the WoW program helped them to (1) learn creative skills such as painting or graphic design, (2) learn new skills or concepts and be exposed to new things, (3) learn life skills such as confidence or time management, (4) decide to pursue a career in the arts, (5) make new friends and feel part of a community, and (6) build for a successful future. A few exemplary quotes for each domain follow:

LEARNING CREATIVE SKILLS, SUCH AS PAINTING OR GRAPHIC DESIGN

When asked about the impact of the WoW program, many students reported having learned new creative skills. Overall, 33% of the comments listed specific arts-related skills. A sampling of these comments:

“This program had a huge impact on me. I feel much more confident as a musician because I won't have to rely on sound engineers at shows as heavily and if I'm at a venue w/a 'communal PA' I'll actually know how to work it. The program leaders have inspired me hugely to pursue a sound related career.” – age 17

“I know that I need to keep working in music. I was pretty sure before this but now I know I won't be happy unless I'm mixing sound for bands every day. I also know that I could work in theater. 5/5 stars would recommend.” – age 18

“It builds my confidence of mixing a band during an event. It gives me more knowledge that I need to pursue my dreams. It gives me joy of being part of this program and I love so much. I love the people in it and they are so kind and joyful to be around.” – age 17

“It has given me hope in furthering my musical capabilities, and wanting to learn more about how the stage works, whether behind, or on the spotlight. It does excite me that I'm able to take such a grand opportunity and I can't wait to go back in come spring time. I really loved how they go about teaching, as well as what to teach, and efficiently. Overall, I'm really glad I took this music engineering class. I couldn't possibly describe how it makes me feel.” – age 18

“The WoW program has impacted me by not only teaching me so many amazing things about art and a modern job setting, the biggest thing that I have taken away from this internship is having found my 'niche' in art. I have found true talent in drawing figures (humans). I have had the opportunity to practice this.” – age 16

“The variety, we got to learn about sound equipment and technology along with video and visual work AND learning from professionals about what they do as well as learning balance and dealing with patrons.” – age 16

“It was cool to design things for an event. Because everybody is going to look at it. It opened up the possibility of becoming a graphic designer.” – age 17



"It helped me understand some of what it takes to be a fashion designer." – age 13

"It definitely gave me some experience on how game makers work together. I learned more game making techniques." – age 13

"I now know more about each stage of a commercial shoot." – age 17

"I learned how to make a website and decided I wanted to be an animator." – age 13

"I can work with clay more easily. I feel like I can do better when/if I have my own shop for art."
– age 13

LEARNING NEW SKILLS OR CONCEPTS, EXPOSURE TO NEW THINGS

About one third (36%) of the comments indicated that students appreciated learning new skills and enjoyed trying something new. A sampling of these comments:

"It's broadened my mind by showing me that there's more to life than doing something I may consider boring. It helped provide a sense of responsibility." – age 19

"It impacted me for all the knowledge that I need to know for my dream career. Having this much passion about music, this WOW program helps a lot for the experience of some parts of the industry. I soaked all the knowledge that I needed and it was a great experience!!!" – age 16

"Going through this program I have learned a lot of skills that are useful for everyday life: communication, as well as things directly related to theater, or even outside of theater such as sound path of travel one sound equipment if I decide to major in sound operations. This has opened my eyes to a lot of opportunities for my immediate and future job opportunities. Thank you." – age 15

"It has helped me be able to manage my time with the work just being there and not being treated like a kid when at school. It teaches responsibility and what it would be like to work at an adult job." – age 18

"I didn't know how to code before and now I do! I can show my friends." – age 13

"I can do more things with the camera and Adobe than before. I would not have had any idea how to use it. Now I am able to use what I learned in the real world." – age 18

"It really opened my possibilities. I had only drawn before, so I was nervous with a paintbrush in hands but now it's on the list of hobbies." – age 13

"I have been given access to software and gear I otherwise couldn't use. I have been able to practice my art skills." – age 18

LEARNING LIFE SKILLS, SUCH AS CONFIDENCE OR TIME MANAGEMENT

One third (36%) of the comments specifically mentioned life skill attainment. A sampling of these comments:

"I feel extremely motivated and inspired every day, especially after weekends (when the class took place). I'm encouraged to just do what makes me happy despite the pressures/money/inexperience." – age 16

"I take the skills I've learned and apply them to every work have and this motivates me to work harder to pursue my career." – age 16

"It has impacted me a lot because it made me want to go to college and realize what I want to do and knowing that art can do many things to influence others." – age unknown

"It gave me something to wake up and be excited about. I love this place." – age 15

"It forced me to be more creative and taught me how to move pass mental barriers when I got stuck." – age 18

"It has opened me up to a new work ethic to me that I didn't have before, and helped me to work hard to reach important deadlines." – age 17

"The internship has inspired me to be more responsible and more committed as an intern. I learned to keep track of tasks and prioritize. I also learned to time manage and to communicate more clearly and efficiently." – age 17

"Being shy, I believe this program has taught me to open up to others and communicate. Teamwork was also a big thing I learned about. As a growing young adult, this program has given me the experience to move into the workforce prepared and confident." – age 17

"I've developed patience and understanding of imperfection and that it's okay for something to look 'sloppy.' That even though you see your work as sloppy or imperfect, there's always someone else who will like it and encourage you to continue it." – age 16

"This program has really impacted me by making me more outgoing and have more social skills, I learned things that I can use later in life." – age 18

"It has made me feel more confident in my ability to finish a project." – age 16

DECIDING TO PURSUE A CAREER IN THE ARTS

One third (33%) of the comments indicated that the student had decided on a career in the arts. A sampling of these comments:

"It has given me an eye opener to a career I can pursuit after high school. This program has motivated me to do better and achieve great things." – age 16

"It definitely has opened my eyes to a career I would like to pursue, and made me hopeful for a music related job. I am really thankful for this opportunity and it's been a great experience for me, I wish it was longer." – age unknown



"I think overall this class opened my eyes to the possibility of a career in the arts. Seeing all the people who have been so successful in doing what they love has inspired me to sink more into what I love. I didn't come into this class thinking that I would be an artist of some sort, I came in thinking this could be fun, which it was. Now, however, I may look more closely at the possibilities for design internships, classes etc. Maybe this was the start of my artistic career." – age 14

"This program has created countless opportunities for me and helped me realize that I would most likely thrive in an artistic environment." – age 16

"Not only do I know see a career in arts as possible, but I also have a valuable job/internship to put on my resume." – age 16

"It has broadened my understanding of arts career and made me more passionate about pursuing an arts career." – age 17

"The WoW program has taught me more about theatre related careers and how to successfully attain a job in each. I strongly agree that this program has made a big impact on my life, and directed me more surely toward my goals." – age 15

"I've learned about more careers related to art and how to go about it. Bringing in the different diverse artists gave me a taste of careers related to art. Gaining insight into the processes and practices helped me make mental notes to myself about how I can further my artistic career. Overall, it was helpful to learn about different artists. It will help me in the future when I apply this new knowledge to my work." – age 17

MAKING NEW FRIENDS AND FEELING PART OF A COMMUNITY

One fifth (20%) of the comments mentioned some aspect of community development for the youth. A sampling of these comments:

"I've made so many new friends, learned so many new things and have had so many good laughs. I have smiled so much more since this internship. The people I have met have helped me out so much." – age 16

"First of all, I want to thank you all for this opportunity. I have learned so much from all of you. I have gained such a big interest in all of this art-related work. I have made a lot of great memories and met a great amount of unbelievably supportive people. I enjoy spending time with you all." – age 16

"With the environment here I have definitely made new friendships and [become] a more focused thinker." – age 17

"It has made me be more aware of the world around me and to connect with people." – age 18

"I have made more friends and understand how to produce, write and compose music." – high school student

CONTRIBUTING TO A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE, INCLUDING CAREER PLANS

Nearly half (47%) of the comments talked about the program having impacts on the students' future. A sampling of these comments:

"It has given me some good background knowledge for my future. It also gives me something to put on job applications. Thank you!" – age 15

"This program has helped me become a more creative person. With the environment here I have definitely made new friendships and (become) a more focused thinker. I know have the confidence to strive for goals and able to succeed them. Thanks to this program, I know I will have a brighter future." – age 17

"It has been a terrific learning experience. It really has shed a light on the advertising world, both the good and the bad. It really felt like a true work experience, more than anything I've done." – age 17

"This program has shown me what the professional workspace in my career is going to be." – age 17

"I have learned to be more active and creative, it also keeps me motivated for my future career." – age 13

"This WoW program has impacted me a lot to become a better person in life especially in school. It has taught me to never give up on my hopes for the future and always stick to my choice. I look more towards the positive than the negative." – age 16

SUMMARY

The OAC's Connecting Students to the World of Work (WoW) projects were funded with a one-time allocation from the Oregon legislature included in an umbrella of State education funding designed to further Oregon's 40-40-20 Goal: *By the year 2025, 40 percent of adult Oregonians will earn bachelor's degree or higher, 40 percent will obtain an associate's degree or certificate in a skilled occupation, and the remaining 20 percent will earn a high school diploma or equivalent.* As such, the OAC's WoW program aimed to connect underserved students—those most at-risk for lower levels of educational support and attainment—to the professional arts world, to build their skills, and to foster an awareness of and motivation for college and career aspirations.

Eight arts organizations were funded in the first cohort of grantees, and three more were funded in the second cohort. These projects varied in terms of the ages of students served, the length and format of the projects, the ratio of students to artists, and the focus artistic discipline. Each organization partnered with a school and sought to recruit underserved students for participation. In many cases, the projects were able to serve all of the interested students. However, in a few areas, student interest surpassed project capacity, indicating an unmet need for arts education and career internships in some areas. Overall, of the students served by the WoW projects, roughly 60% met the grant criteria for underserved, and 95% successfully completed their project.

"I have enjoyed the WOW Program so much! Everything that I have learned and been involved in through this program has been so helpful and prepared me for many more experiences in my life. This is a great program that I would suggest anyone and everyone should be involved in!"

Given the broader OAC priorities and the State's 40-40-20 goal, on which the funding was based, WoW projects embraced four key outcome areas. As a result of WoW program participation, it was expected that students would: (1) have a clearer sense of the relevance of their education, (2) have a broadened awareness of the opportunities available to them, (3) have a plan for after high school, and (4) develop arts-related skills and value their arts education.

PERCEIVED RELEVANCE OF EDUCATION AND WoW PROGRAM TRAINING

Most students who participated in the WoW program reported decent school engagement at program entry, as indicated by high grades (A's/B's) and good attendance. When asked about the relevance of their school-based education for their career and quality of life, most students perceived their schooling as relevant when they started the program, and their perceptions did not change after participation. Notably, students reported feeling highly supported by WoW program staff to do well in school, suggesting that WoW staff and artists effectively conveyed the importance of education.

The majority of students agreed that what they learned in the WoW program was useful for their educational and employment futures, and most felt more prepared for college because of what



they learned. Students' perceptions of the WoW program's relevance for their educational and professional futures were influenced by their age, the project length, and instructional ratio. Specifically, older students perceived the program's relevance most strongly when they were in longer projects (12 weeks or more) and in those with low instructional ratios. This reason for this finding may be that older students, whose educational engagement is already fairly determined, can more easily see that what they are learning is relevant to their career when they are in apprenticeship-style dynamics. In contrast, younger students perceived the program's relevance more strongly when they were in shorter projects (less than 12 weeks). In general, students in shorter projects perceived the program as more relevant when there was a lower instructional ratio—that is, more personal attention helped shorter-term projects convey content relevance. Projects with higher instructional ratios more positively impacted student perceptions when they lasted longer—that is, when close personal attention was not part of the project design, a longer duration of interaction helped increase project impact.

AWARENESS OF OPPORTUNITIES

Overall, students agreed that the WoW program enhanced their awareness of and preparedness for future opportunities. As a result of their WoW participation, students generally reported an increased awareness of career options, including arts-related paths, and new skills that increase their preparedness and eligibility for the next stages of education and employment.

Similar to perceptions of the WoW program's relevance for their futures, students' enhanced awareness of opportunities and development of skills were related to their age, project length, and instructional ratio. In particular, older students' awareness of opportunities and development of skills were strongest in longer projects and in those with low instructional ratios, whereas younger students' awareness of opportunities was strongest in shorter projects. In general, projects with a low instructional ratio tended to yield better student awareness, regardless of length, and projects with a high ratio had a stronger impact on student awareness when they were longer.

PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

WoW projects supported students to consider their educational and employment futures. The majority of students had considered such plans before starting the program and discussed those plans with someone close to them. When asked about their plans to graduate from high school, the large majority of students intended to graduate, and this intention did not change significantly over time. When asked about whether they planned to graduate from college, there were significant changes in students' motivation over time. In particular, older students reported more motivation to complete college. And, while not underserved students reported decreased motivation to attend college after the program, underserved students' motivation did not decrease. It is possible that some students learned about career paths that did not require a college degree, and thus their motivations for future educational plans changed accordingly; although this experience seemed not to deter the educational plans of underserved students.

When asked about their motivation to pursue a career in the arts, a substantial proportion of students indicated this plan, and this intent did not change from before to after program

participation. Overall, roughly half of underserved students reported that they *probably* or *definitely* will pursue a careers in the arts, compared to more than two thirds of not underserved students.

ARTS SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ARTS EDUCATION APPRECIATION

Overall, students highly valued their arts education. Students rated their appreciation of their arts education before and after WoW program participation. Underserved students' perceptions showed a greater positive change than did those of not underserved students. This result suggests that the WoW program had a comparatively stronger impact on the perceptions of arts education among underserved students. Further, as with earlier findings, improvements were most notable among older students in longer projects and younger students in shorter projects.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRAM IMPACT

Students were forthcoming with positive feedback about their experiences in the WoW program, and this result was true for all eleven projects. Of those who provided feedback, nearly half emphasized that the program had positively contributed to their success in their education and employment plans in the future. Students referred to their WoW participation as “a terrific learning experience” that “has made [me] more prepared for life.” Many responses lauded the WoW program for teaching creative skills and effectively enhancing the artistic abilities of the participants. Other comments referred to the WoW program having taught the participants important life skills such as time management, communication, responsibility, and confidence. Students recognized that these skills will be useful as they develop in their careers. Many responses credited the WoW program with supporting the students' decisions to pursue a career in the arts, both by enhancing their artistic skills and by connecting them to opportunities within the professional arts fields that would otherwise be inaccessible. Yet other responses expressed gratitude to the WoW program for exposing the students to new experiences and concepts that would have otherwise been unknown to them. Lastly, many comments mentioned students' appreciation for having made new friends and having been part of a community.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The OAC's pilot program of WoW grants has met with notable success. Through their participation in the WoW projects, students have developed skills, discovered opportunities, created connections, and made meaningful strides in planning for their futures. Program participants offered overwhelmingly positive feedback on their experiences.

The study findings suggest that, for future programs, the OAC may want to consider:

- *Alignment between the grant's intended service population and the practicality of the recruitment strategies to be employed by grantee organizations.* The WoW initiative was designed to provide programming to underserved students. To reach these populations, the grantee arts agencies partnered with schools with high proportions of underserved students. However, if projects were reliant on students applying for participation, then it could be possible that few or no underserved students would ultimately enroll. If *offering*

programs in low-income and low-resource areas is sufficient to meet the OAC's goals of broadened service reach, then this strategy may be sufficient. However, if the goal pertains to *serving* underserved students, then additional consideration may be needed to ensure that underserved students are actively reached, recruited, and engaged.

- *Fit between the project structure and the participant population.* The variation in program structure and format, and the variation in students served, among WoW projects enabled the analysis of different constellations of factors. In general, for the outcomes studied, projects with lower instructional ratios (i.e., fewer students to artists) tended to have stronger impacts. Student age also mattered, in that older students showed greater improvements and more positive perceptions when they participated in longer-term and low-ratio projects; in contrast, younger students tended to appreciate shorter-term participation.
- *Areas of unmet need.* Projects vary widely in their service capacity and their program structure. Some have low capacity, generally, and some espouse a model that offers few openings for intensive experiences (e.g., one-on-one mentoring with a few staff artists). The OAC may want to consider these limitations and the context in which the project will operate (e.g., existing need, expressed interest, size of population) and consider the impact these constraints may have on access and engagement.