

Artful Solutions:
Creativity, Self-Worth and the Path from Homelessness



by Mollie Lowery
A Report for the Los Angeles County Arts Commission

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, matched by the County's Productivity Investment Funds, to implement an 18-month pilot program, *Artful Solutions: Pathways from Homelessness* grant initiative. The Arts Commission awarded five grants to arts organizations partnering with social service agencies whose projects would 1) maximize the role of the arts in alleviating homelessness in Los Angeles County and 2) evaluate the results.

This was the nation's first regional effort to reach homeless populations by including the arts as an important component of supportive services and to provide data that can be used in the future to help solve the challenges of homelessness. Artful Solutions also reflected a wider effort by Los Angeles County to alleviate homelessness in the region. In April 2006, the County Board of Supervisors' made an unprecedented and compassionate investment toward ending and preventing homelessness by approving the \$100 million Homelessness Prevention Initiative, which funds a diverse range of projects aimed at increasing capacity Countywide to better serve our homeless neighbors and to develop much needed supportive housing.

The goals of the Artful Solutions Grant Program were that:

- Services provided to homeless people by arts organizations would be expanded;
- Existing collaborations between arts organizations and shelter, transitional housing and/or social service organizations serving homeless adults and families would deepen and new partnerships would be formed;
- New ways to measure qualitative and quantitative impact and outcomes of arts programs on alleviating homelessness would be developed and resulting data would contribute to the knowledge about successful alleviation strategies for homelessness;
- As a result of participation in the proposed arts programs, fully integrated with shelter and/or supportive services, homeless individuals and families would gain improved access to and/or obtain permanent housing.

The five grants of \$18,000 each were made to:

- Armory Center for the Arts in partnership with Union Station
- California Institute of the Arts in partnership with My Friend's Place
- Imagination Workshop in partnership with New Directions
- Los Angeles Poverty Department in partnership with Lamp Community
- Venice Arts: In Neighborhoods in partnership with Ocean Park Community Center

Projects took place from the fall of 2008 to early summer 2009 and varied in length.

The Arts Commission engaged Mollie Lowery as consultant on the project to develop methods to measure the quantitative and qualitative impact of these arts-based services. Mollie Lowery has worked with poor and homeless persons since 1975. As Executive Director of the Ocean Park Community Center (OPCC) in Santa Monica, she was a founder of Sojourn Battered Women's Shelter, Stepping Stone Youth Crisis Shelter and Turning Point Homeless Shelter in addition to organizing several Los Angeles city- and county-wide coalitions for the homeless.

Cover Photo: "Woman with Hand on Heart trying to Find Hope in Homelessness" by Susan Ekland (Santa Monica, CA 2009), a Venice Arts: In Neighborhoods/Ocean Park Community Center program participant.

In 1985, Mollie Lowery founded and developed Lamp Community on Skid Row, a drop-in center and 30-bed crisis shelter (safe haven) for adults diagnosed with serious mental illness and who are homeless. Eighty percent of participants served by Lamp are addicted to or abusing drugs and/or alcohol and 15% are diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

Pioneering the “harm reduction” model of intervention and building a strong, life-long, supportive community, Mollie guided the development of Lamp Community’s 48-bed Village Residence, four business enterprises and Lamp Lodge, a fifty-unit apartment building with over 75 additional units of permanent housing through partnership/master lease. By 2003, Lamp Community had grown into a fully contained, “non-linear” continuum of housing, recovery and employment services with a staff of 120, 50% of whom were prior or current members of Lamp Community.

In February 2005, after twenty years, Mollie left Lamp Community. Since then, she has worked as an independent consultant and trainer in the areas of mental health, addiction treatment, homelessness and housing. In 2007, she initiated the Home First and Mobile Integrated Service Team for Housing Works — providing street and shelter outreach to chronically homeless individuals and families, assisting them into permanent supportive housing and on-site services to help them sustain their housing and thrive in their new community.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

One of the challenges of arts programs that engage contemporary civic issues is the lack of effective evaluation methodology. There is anecdotal evidence that painting, writing and performing help people without housing achieve greater personal meaning and life satisfaction, connect to others and communicate needs and expectations in a way that de-stigmatizes their status. Yet the effects of these programs have not yet been documented.

It is exceedingly difficult to isolate the effect of one supportive service when there may be several — arts involvement, mental health counseling, alcohol and drug abuse treatment — simultaneously toward a positive outcome. Key components of the *Artful Solutions* initiative were to develop effective evaluation measures that could be utilized by each of the grantee organizations, and provide data that could be used in the future to help solve the inherent intractable problems of homelessness.

The participants of the Art Project have endured significant social psychological hardships that naturally put into question a person's own competency and ability to control life outcomes. A prolonged state of feeling incompetent and unable to control life outcomes often lowers the self-efficacy and self-esteem of the individual and can evolve into a state of learned helplessness. The arts projects are part of a larger intervention that used the *power of creative expression* to heighten self-efficacy and improve the perception of "self."

Locus of control¹ and self-esteem² instruments were chosen to measure change in the participants belief toward "self" and the relationship of "self" to the social world. A self-care habits instrument³ was designed to measure change in personal health care behaviors of the participants. A demographic survey was designed to measure the severity of past and/or current challenges and behavioral changes in accessing entitlements and/or health care services (e.g., primary healthcare physician, recovery activities or mental health care). Finally, an exit narrative was designed to elicit a qualitative evaluation of the participants' experience of the arts project as it might relate to obtaining housing.

Belief systems and behavioral patterns are stable characteristics that do not easily change over a short time period. Consequently, this research project was looking for trend movement from pre-arts project baseline assessment to post-arts project exit assessment.

¹ A modified version of the Levenson Multidimensional Locus of Control Inventory was used, reduced from twenty-four items to twelve items to meet the needs of this project.

² The self-esteem scale combined questions from two surveys developed by Marilyn J. Sorenson, PhD, and Morris Rosenberg.

³ The self-care habits scale, demographic items and exit narrative were developed by John Best and Mollie Lowery.

The evaluation survey documents, found in the appendix at the end of this report, consist of baseline and exit surveys:

BASELINE SURVEYS	WHAT IT MEASURES	WHO COMPLETES	WHEN SURVEY IS COMPLETED
Demographic Survey	Homeless status; age, gender, race; health, healthcare use; employment, income	All homeless individuals who agree to participate in the arts project and evaluation	The survey is completed at enrollment before participation in the arts project
Participant Outlook	Self-esteem; self-care; locus of control: chance, powerful others, internal ability	All homeless individuals who agree to participate in the arts project and evaluation	The survey is completed at enrollment before participation in the arts project
Participant Weekly Roster	Frequency of participation in arts project	Arts organization or partner agency	During each arts project workshop

EXIT SURVEYS	WHAT IT MEASURES	WHO COMPLETES	WHEN SURVEY IS COMPLETED
Demographic Survey	Any change since baseline-- in homeless status; health, healthcare use; employment, income	All individuals who have participated regularly in the arts project	The survey is completed at the end of the arts project
Participant Outlook	Any change since baseline-- in self-esteem; self-care; locus of control: chance, powerful others, internal ability	All individuals who have participated regularly in the arts project	The survey is completed at the end of the arts project
Exit Narrative	Participant impressions of how the arts project impacted their ability to move toward accessing or sustaining housing	All individuals who have participated regularly in the arts project	The survey is completed at the end of the arts project

The grantee arts organizations and their social service partners were provided a full orientation and follow-up and on-site instruction regarding the evaluation process. Analysis of the evaluation data was compiled and completed utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software program.

SUMMARY DATA/FINDINGS

PROJECT	SELF ESTEEM	SELF CARE	BELIEF IN CHANGE	BELIEF IN POWERFUL OTHER	BELIEF IN INTERNAL ABILITY	PERSONS HOUSED	PRIMARY DOCTOR	ACTIVE IN RECOVERY	SEEING PSYCH.	AGREE PROJECT HELPED GET CLOSER TO HOUSING
AGGREGATE [27 participants]	INC	INC	NC	DC	DC	+4	INC	INC	INC	YES

INC= increase; DC= decrease; NC= no change; + in homeless status = number who are no longer homeless

The aggregated data shows an overall increase in self-esteem and self-care, participation in recovery activities, and use of health and mental health practitioners. Four out of the 27 participants who responded to the evaluation surveys did obtain permanent housing during the initiative. Most of the participants agreed that the art projects did help them move closer to obtaining housing. The belief in “chance” as a determinant of life outcomes was unchanged. There was a trend toward a decrease in the belief in “powerful others” as a determinant of life outcomes. Finally, there was a trend toward a decrease in the belief that one’s own “internal ability” is a determinant of life outcomes.

Almost all of the data trended in a positive direction. A decreased belief that powerful others determine life outcomes suggests that participants feel greater personal empowerment. However, locus of control is a stable construct that is *not easily shifted over a short time period*. Therefore, it is not surprising that participants continue to doubt that their internal ability determines life outcomes. Continued stable living environment and support services such as the art projects may ultimately help to shift locus of control and bring about healthier behaviors in participants who are homeless.

THE PROJECTS

Venice Arts: In Neighborhoods in partnership with Ocean Park Community Center

“This class has helped give me a great deal of self-confidence and strength of self. I feel I can once again go out into the world in a self-confident manner and reach the new goals I have defined as desirable to have in my life. It has helped me face, and heal from old wounds psychically [sic]. I am grateful to see and hear others stories and how their lives and stories coincided with mine. AND I HAVE LEARNED A NEW SKILL!!”

“I look forward in coming to Photo Sessions every Friday. This experience has really empowered me as an artist. These sessions have helped take my mind off of being homeless, and given me the strength to keep on pushing toward my goals of continuing with art classes, obtaining my masters- MFA, and permanent housing to stay in California.”

“My participation has helped me to learn new skills and aided in being more responsible both with handling equipment and showing up at set times and days. This program has helped with my self-esteem and mental health, and will go towards showing that I can handle my own housing.”

“The project has helped me keep my focus of getting housing. It’s helped me every week to have something to look forward to. I’ve been able to keep working my program and able to start to think about future plans and goals.”

“It’s been helpful in keeping me focused on where I’ve been these last 24 months and tells me positively that once I receive housing I don’t want to be homeless again.”

This project, which used documentary photography and a culminating exhibition in working with 9 to 15 homeless women diagnosed with mental illness, created the most effective Artful Solutions partnership between the arts organization and the shelter/service; fully engaged individual participants from beginning to end; and at completion provided an empowering, enduring sense of accomplishment. The participant comments and post-exhibit reports reflect the more enduring results⁴: four of the ten participants obtained permanent housing, two pursued college courses in photography at Santa Monica College, and one developed plans for sale of her photographic work by turning her photos into greeting cards to be sold at the Ocean Park Community Center (OPCC) member-run business, Daybreak Designs.

⁴Survey exit data, reflected in the table on page 7, was collected prior to the participant comments and a post-exhibit report.

Venice Arts is dedicated to igniting youth’s imagination, creativity and possibility through arts education programs and serving as a catalyst for people of all ages, living in low-income or underrepresented communities to create and share personal and community stories through photography, film, and multi-media. Venice Arts has a long history of collaborating with low-income housing developments, schools, parks and non-arts human services agencies and partnered with OPCC, a social service organization with a mission of empowering people to rebuild their lives and the largest provider of services to homeless people on Los Angeles’ Westside, to provide a 12-week photography project to engage homeless women with photography to tell stories of their lives.

Though the project length was brief, participants were involved several days each week and given individualized assistance. This was a new partnership formed for this project, but the service provider and arts organization were equally involved and invested in the project, providing cohesion, maximum benefit and facilitating a reliable evaluation process.

The evaluation data below were completed before the exhibition and publication of the catalogue of photographs. (Additional information and the catalogue are available at <http://venice-arts.org/stories/homelesswomen/index.html>). The gallery opening reception revealed a mutual base of support from those that knew both Venice Arts and OPCC. There was much crossover in the crowd with individuals from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and Venice Family Clinic present, among others, showing how integrated the clients are with the communities’ main social services and non-profit organizations.

The evaluation data indicate constructive behavioral changes in the areas of personal “self-care habits,” “active in recovery” and “seeing a psychiatrist.” With the exception of participants decreased belief in their “internal ability” the control life outcomes, the evaluation data below indicate no change in participants’ belief toward the conception of “self” and the relationship to “self” to the social world. In short, the participants’ belief system about the “self” remained stable while significant behavioral changes moved them closer to being able to obtain and maintain housing.

PROJECT	SELF ESTEEM	SELF CARE	BELIEF IN CHANCE	BELIEF IN POWERFUL OTHER	BELIEF IN INTERNAL ABILITY	PERSONS HOUSED	PRIMARY DOCTOR	ACTIVE IN RECOVERY	SEEING PSYCH.	AGREE PROJECT HELPED GET CLOSER TO HOUSING
VENICE ARTS [data from 8 participants]	NC	INC	NC	NC	DC	+1	NC	INC	INC	YES

INC= increase; DC= decrease; NC= no change; + in homeless status = number who are no longer homeless

Armory Center for the Arts in partnership with Union Station

“It gives me purpose. It uses my talents. It develops those talents. It encourages me to work consistently toward a goal. It helps me feel like I have something to offer that has value. It keeps me on a schedule that helps me have discipline. It introduces me to others who have value to give me. It teaches me new ideas and techniques in art. The program here appreciates the value I have as a human being. Without this program and Lillian’s enthusiasm, help and support, I would not be achieving what I am today nor feeling like I’m getting back on my feet, as I do today.”

“What this program has done is provided me a creative outlet of expression to which I look forward to each week. The staff has helped me to have faith, to learn and that I am okay to be a creative person, which in turn gives me hope, and strength to do the work necessary to get myself housing. In some way the Armory is a home to me because it is a place I can enjoy, learn, and be myself in loving company. Thank you Armory!”

The Armory Center for the Arts is a community arts center that builds on the power of visual art to transform lives and communities through creating, teaching and presenting. Continuing a partnership that began in 2007 the Armory paired with Union Station, a social service agency assisting homeless and very low-income men, women and children rebuild their lives and end homelessness.

This project provided weekly visual art classes for 15 families in transition over eight months. The project culminated in an exhibition that included direct sales of the artworks created by participants, of which 100% of the proceeds were paid to the participants. The Armory staff members were reliable and enthusiastic, providing classes and instruction in the visual arts. The service/shelter partner, however, was inconsistent with follow-through and participation. Without an effective partnership, the arts project was not integrated into the participants’ service and housing goals and the evaluation process captured data on only three participants. In the case of this service provider, there was a need to build in additional incentives and/or methods for nurturing their role and the value of the arts in people’s lives.

The evaluation data indicate constructive behavioral changes in the areas of personal “self-care habits,” “active in recovery” and “seeing a psychiatrist.” The participants’ belief system trended toward an increase in self-esteem. The decrease in “chance” and “powerful others” as a determinant of life outcomes also reflect a positive trend toward participants’ relationship with the social world. Finally, there was a trend toward a decrease in the belief that one’s own “internal ability” is a determinant of life outcomes. In short, these participants’ belief systems about “self” have improved while they continue to doubt their own internal abilities to improve life outcomes. However, the participants’ significant constructive behavioral changes demonstrate a desire to improve the quality of their lives.

For the participants who were engaged throughout, the project had a strong impact. Three participants have enrolled in the Armory’s regular adult programs and one participant has been hired by the Armory as an assistant for studio programs.

PROJECT	SELF ESTEEM	SELF CARE	BELIEF IN CHANGE	BELIEF IN POWERFUL OTHER	BELIEF IN INTERNAL ABILITY	PERSONS HOUSED	PRIMARY DOCTOR	ACTIVE IN RECOVERY	SEEING PSYCH.	AGREE PROJECT HELPED GET CLOSER TO HOUSING
ARMORY [3 participants]	INC	INC	DC	DC	DC	0	NC	INC	INC	YES

INC= increase; DC= decrease; NC= no change; + in homeless status = number who are no longer homeless

California Institute of the Arts in partnership with My Friend's Place

"Participating in this helped me to understand me better... and helped me to communicate with others. I still live in shelter and since now there has been no problems to stay there. But, for me it's not just about housing alone. I like to be a part the project and do my small part like others."

"The Art Project has helped me open my mind to new ideas and situations. My Friends Place has also given me the resources to put it into effect."

"I am still homeless. It's not like they didn't help me at all. I got to write down my thoughts and my daily struggles down on paper. It was a great release of frustration for me!"

California Institute of the Arts' (CalArts') Community Arts Partnership program provides high-quality, imaginative, in-depth youth arts education to connect high school students to opportunities for higher education and arts careers. My Friend's Place is a nonprofit resource center that assists and inspires homeless youth to build self-sufficient lives. The partnership began in 1996 and serves approximately 185 homeless youth annually.

This project demonstrates a strong, well-established partnership with equal investment and passion for the arts and their significance in people's lives. The partners' biggest challenge in implementing the *Artful Solutions* project was the participant population. My Friend's Place is a drop-in center for homeless youth who are living on the streets of Hollywood. Unlike the populations of the other four arts projects, these participants are not sheltered or part of a structured program. In addition, most of these young people are not coming to My Friend's Place with a goal of obtaining permanent housing, so they did not see any connection between their arts efforts and moving closer to a home. This is a lesson learned for the future projects with similar goals to *Artful Solutions*.

In order to meet the challenges of the participant population, CalArts implemented a time-specific, scheduled series of creative writing workshops/sessions over an eight-month period, though evaluative data was completed over a three- to five-month period. The arts project culminated with the publication "Riding the Circle," an anthology of poems, writings and visual art created by 52 youth participants. The partners succeeded in engaging at least eight participants throughout and completing their evaluation surveys.

The evaluation data indicate constructive behavioral changes in the areas of personal "self-care habits" and "seeing a psychiatrist." The participants' belief system trended toward and increase in self-esteem. The decrease in "chance" and "powerful others" as a determinant of life outcomes also reflect a positive trend toward participants' relationship with the social world. In addition, there was an increase in the belief that one's own "internal ability" is a determinant of life outcomes. This indicates changes in participants' belief toward the conception of "self" and relationship of "self" to the social world. In short, the participants' belief system about "self" has constructively changes and they are making behavioral changes to improve the quality of their lives.

PROJECT	SELF ESTEEM	SELF CARE	BELIEF IN CHANGE	BELIEF IN POWERFUL OTHER	BELIEF IN INTERNAL ABILITY	PERSONS HOUSED	PRIMARY DOCTOR	ACTIVE IN RECOVERY	SEEING PSYCH.	AGREE PROJECT HELPED GET CLOSER TO HOUSING
CAL ARTS [8 participants]	INC	INC	DC	DC	INC	0	NC	NC	INC	NO

INC= increase; DC= decrease; NC= no change; + in homeless status = number who are no longer homeless

Los Angeles Poverty Department in partnership with Lamp Community

“It has helped me to function in a group; to overcome my shyness. I was really afraid to speak in public after the police beat me up. This has helped me to engage with other people again and go out to look for housing.”

“Going to a workshop on a weekly basis help me to git [sic] out of self, and become a part of whats [sic] going on around me, at the time.”

“Participating in the art program has helped lift my moods. This helps me to be hopeful that housing can be a reality not just a dream. There is a structure to art as there is to life. Relearning this helps me lay out a plan for me that might work. I got a lot out of LAPD that has been enjoyable and I hope it continues. It has been a positive adventure for me.”

This project was structured under the *Artful Solutions* grant to create a new theatre piece from start to finish in four months, finishing with a performance staged at Lamp Village. Several of the participants were not homeless and could not be included in the evaluation component. Six homeless participants consistently participated and completed evaluation surveys.

LAPD’s mission is “to create high-quality performance work that connects lived experience to the social forces that shape the lives of those living in poverty.” LAPD was founded in 1985 and has demonstrated success in meeting its mission through creating theatre that empowers and gives a voice to the most marginalized people. This is particularly true when members engage in the LAPD theatre activities over several months or years. Committed to building community, LAPD is a stabilizing force for its members, and is committed to their artistic and personal development. Lamp Community, LAPD’s service/shelter partner, focuses on permanently ending homelessness for homeless men and women living with mental illness.

The evaluation data indicate constructive behavioral changes in the areas of personal “self-care habits” “active in recovery,” “seeing a primary care doctor” and “seeing a psychiatrist.” The participants’ belief system trended toward an increase in self-esteem and there was also an increase in “chance” and “powerful others” as a determinant of life outcomes. There was not change in the belief that one’s own “internal ability” is a determinant of life outcomes. In short, the self-esteem of these participants has improved while their belief in “chance” and “powerful others” has increased influence over the outcome of their lives. However, the participants’ significant constructive behavioral changes demonstrate a desire to improve the quality of their lives. Furthermore, two participants obtained housing during the project.

PROJECT	SELF ESTEEM	SELF CARE	BELIEF IN CHANGE	BELIEF IN POWERFUL OTHER	BELIEF IN INTERNAL ABILITY	PERSONS HOUSED	PRIMARY DOCTOR	ACTIVE IN RECOVERY	SEEING PSYCH.	AGREE PROJECT HELPED GET CLOSER TO HOUSING
LAPD [6 participants]	INC	INC	INC	INC	NC	+2	INC	INC	INC	YES

INC= increase; DC= decrease; NC= no change; + in homeless status = number who are no longer homeless

Imagination Workshop in partnership with New Directions

“It has done tremendous things for my inner happiness and sense of well being. It has been such a rewarding experience that I will never forget it. Because it is something creative and different that I have a sense of empowerment to live again and go out in the world and be a productive member of society. I have more confidence in myself to go out and do anything I set my mind out to do.”

“The art project was extremely therapeutic in that it allowed me to step outside my comfort zone and try new things and to just “go for it” instead of being hesitant and half-hearted towards my endeavors.”

In this project, the participants were military veterans living in a highly structured, two-year transitional, drug recovery program. Imagination Workshop conducted weekly, one-hour workshops that culminated in the creation and performance of an original full-length play performed by veterans over two nights in a Los Angeles theater. The partnership with New Directions had been developed over several years. There was a solid investment and enthusiasm from both the service provider and arts organization, making the challenge of engaging the vets in “imagination” theatre something possible and successful. The finale theatre event was open to the public and both nights were sold out.

Imagination Workshop, located at the Jane & Terry Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA, is a theatre arts program in which mentally ill and at-risk individuals write, direct and act in plays under the guidance of trained actors and theater artists. Imagination Workshop artists are specially trained to guide participants toward creating and playing characters that have possibilities for optimistic outcomes — characters drawn not from their daily lives but, rather, from literature, folklore, myth and the imagination itself. New Directions’ mission is “to empower veterans and facilitate their successful return to families and society.”

As noted in the data analysis, however, data was captured for only two participants and there was no particular impact demonstrated. This is not a reflection of the efficacy of Imagination Workshop or its partnership with New Directions. The evaluation process and outcome measures met with some barriers:

- The New Directions staff person responsible for implementing the evaluation surveys became ill and his replacement was not able to catch up;
- The veteran participants are in a structured, two year program of recovery which is not immediately focused on obtaining a permanent home.

This structured program did not allow this evaluation process to tease out how Imagination Workshop, on its own, impacted individual lives.

PROJECT	SELF ESTEEM	SELF CARE	BELIEF IN CHANGE	BELIEF IN POWERFUL OTHER	BELIEF IN INTERNAL ABILITY	PERSONS HOUSED	PRIMARY DOCTOR	ACTIVE IN RECOVERY	SEEING PSYCH.	AGREE PROJECT HELPED GET CLOSER TO HOUSING
IMAGINATION WORKSHOP [2 participants]	DC	NC	NC	NC	NC	+1	NC	NC	NC	Yes

INC= increase; DC= decrease; NC= no change; + in homeless status = number who are no longer homeless

WERE THE GOALS OF THE INITIATIVE ACHIEVED?

- Services provided to homeless people by arts organizations would be expanded.

Imagination Workshop expanded its theatre program to include female veterans. CalArts expanded its writing program for homeless youth in Hollywood from 24 to 31 weeks although the evaluation process only captured approximately 16 to 20 weeks.

Though Armory Center for the Arts' service/shelter partner was not initially invested in the project, their interest grew as they saw the impact of the project on their clients. Prior to the grant, programs were episodic. As a result of the grant, the partnership grew and the project has continued to be delivered on a weekly basis. The culminating exhibition, in which all of the proceeds from direct sales of the art go directly to the participants, has been continued as well.

Venice Arts expanded their work by specifically targeting the homeless population, as previously the organization had served only homeless children integrated into their existing youth programs. LAPD, a 25-year-old arts organization, has always focused its work with homeless persons though this project renewed a previous partnership with Lamp Community.

- Existing collaborations between arts organizations and shelter, transitional housing, and/or social service organizations serving homeless adults and families would deepen and new partnerships would be formed.

Universally, this goal was achieved. A new partnership targeting homeless populations was formed between Venice Arts and OPCC and a previous partnership between LAPD and Lamp Community was revived. Deepened collaborations were created between Imagination Workshop and New Directions, CalArts and My Friend's Place, and the Armory and Union Station.

- New ways to measure qualitative and quantitative impact and outcomes of arts programs on alleviating homelessness would be developed and resulting data would contribute to the knowledge about successful alleviation strategies for homelessness.

The *Artful Solutions* grant program did succeed in developing new tools for measuring qualitative and quantitative outcomes on alleviating homelessness. However, we cannot isolate what the specific impact the arts projects had as stand alone interventions. There are specific factors in this evaluation outcome that made it impossible to pull out this information:

- 1) The participant pool was significantly smaller than proposed in the Armory and CalArts projects and half that proposed in the LAPD and Imagination Workshop projects. Therefore, the evaluation respondent pool was very small (27 participants).
- 2) All but one of the projects was limited to three to four-months duration, a time period that is not typically long enough to lead to significant change in participant lives.

- As a result of participation in the proposed arts programs, fully integrated with shelter and/or supportive services, homeless individuals and families would gain improved access to and/or obtain permanent housing

Based on the evaluation data and anecdotal narratives, the *Artful Solutions* initiative did achieve this goal. However, note that this goal describes the outcome as resulting from participation in the **arts program, fully integrated with shelter and/or supportive services**. As stated previously, this evaluation could not separate out how the arts project alone influenced movement toward permanent housing.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

- The arts are a vital component of supportive services in homeless shelters and housing programs. The arts make a difference in people's lives, health and mental health.
- For evaluation outcome purposes, the arts projects should be at least six months in duration and have consistent participation;
- Given the size of the grants (\$18,000), project partners need to be realistic about the numbers of homeless participants they can consistently serve, engage and evaluate;
- The evaluation process depended on the social service/shelter partners' full participation, facilitation and follow-through. In most cases, this did not happen. Note that these partners did not receive grant funds. We learned that the social service/shelter partners need more incentives to gain better interest and participation. Appreciation for art and its impact on their clients has to be nurtured.

APPENDIX

- Description and Instructions for Implementing Evaluation Components
- Baseline Surveys and Instructions: Demographic, Participant Outlook, Participant Roster
- Exit Surveys and Instructions: Demographic, Participant Outlook, Exit Narrative

Description & Instructions for Implementing Evaluation Components

To the Arts Organizations and their Service/Shelter Partners:

THANK YOU!! For your participation in Artful Solutions, and particularly for your assistance in evaluating the impact of the arts programs on bringing homeless individuals and families closer to having a home. The County Arts Commission is already seeking additional and on-going funding to sustain these partnerships. The successful implementation of the evaluation component is critical to helping us understand the role the arts can play in reducing or resolving the complex problems associated with or resulting from homelessness.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION COMPONENT

The evaluation will begin once you have identified the individuals who will participate in the arts program. This first part of the evaluation includes four instruments. The table below describes each instrument and which agency/person is responsible for its completion:

EVALUATION INSTRUMENT	AGENCY RESPONSIBLE	WHEN
<p>Participant Weekly Roster: This instrument will maintain a weekly record of individual participation. This is essential for the evaluation, as we will be able to know the people that have been consistent and invested in the arts program.</p>	Arts Organization	WEEKLY! (Sun. – Sat.)
<p>Demographic Survey: This instrument will give us baseline data on each individual's status as to housing, health care, income, etc. BEFORE they begin participating in the art program.</p> <p>Demographic Survey- ages 5-11: As these children will be part of a family unit, we need minimal information- this instrument asks only three questions.</p>	Service/Shelter Organization	Once the individual has decided to participate and <u>before s/he starts the arts program</u>
<p>Participant Outlook: This instrument asks each participant to identify their feelings in areas of self-esteem, self-care, and empowerment. We will start with this baseline and at the end of the art program; ask the same- measuring change in these areas.</p>	Arts Organization With assistance of Arts Commission *contact the Consultant to schedule	Once the individual has decided to participate & <u>before s/he starts program</u>

Each of these documents will be provided to the Arts Organization on a CD so that you can print copies for completion. Please put the completed surveys in the large envelope provided. The Consultant or her staff will collect the completed surveys within one week of the start of the arts program.

The Service/Shelter partner is responsible for inserting the names of the enrolled participants on the Participant Weekly Roster (PWR). E-mail the PWR with participant names to the Consultant. She will check that all persons listed have completed surveys and then e-mail it to the Arts Organization. The “instructor” of the arts program/class is responsible for “taking role”- completing the daily roster. The Consultant or her staff will collect the completed Rosters at the end of each month.

At the end of the Arts Program, there will be exit surveys to complete. They are listed below. We will provide these and instructions for them prior to your completion date.

1. Participant Outlook- exit
2. Participant Evaluation- Arts Program
3. Participant Evaluation- Service/Shelter Program
4. Arts Program & Service/Shelter Evaluation of Impact on Individual Participants

CONTACT NAME, E-MAIL, AND PHONE NUMBER

For any questions, concerns, or needs regarding the evaluation component, please contact the Consultant.

PLEASE! Provide the Consultant with the name and contact information of the person at the Arts Organization and Service/Shelter Organization who will be the primary individual responsible for implementing the evaluation process.

FINAL WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

We really do know that implementing this evaluation is adding to your work load and responsibilities.... And we really do appreciate your doing it! We have high hopes that our collective efforts will result in more funding and longevity of the projects!

Your enthusiasm (or lack thereof) will have an impact on the participant’s willingness to participate in the evaluation process (which is voluntary). The participants will respond constructively to the positive energy you bring to the role the Arts can play in reducing or resolving the complex problems associated with or resulting from homelessness. Please exude enthusiasm!

THANK YOU!!!

Demographic – Baseline Survey

Arts Organization _____ Date _____

Service/Shelter Provider _____ Date _____

Participant Name _____

Please provide the name of the parent if the participant is a minor and a member of a family that is homeless (only for homeless family units): _____

	Yes	No
1. Is the participant currently homeless? (a person is homeless if s/he is living on the streets, in a shelter, or transitional program)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. During the <i>past year</i> how many months has the participant been homeless?		
3. During the <i>past five years</i> , how many separate times has the participant been homeless?		
4. During the <i>past five years</i> , what was the longest length of time the participant spent being homeless?		
5. What is the age of the participant?		
6. What is the gender of the participant? ___ male ___ female ___ transgender	X	
7. How does the participant identify his/her race? Asian ___ Black/African Amer. ___ Hispanic/Latino ___ White ___ Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native ___ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ___ Other _____	X	
8. Does the participant have any chronic physical health problems (i.e. diabetes, asthma, seizures, Hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, heart condition)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Is the participant under the care of a primary healthcare physician?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. During the <i>past year</i> how many times has the participant been treated by a primary healthcare physician?		
11. Does the participant have a <i>past</i> problem related to alcohol or drug use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Does the participant have a <i>current</i> problem related to alcohol or drug use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Is the participant currently participating in recovery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Does the participant have a diagnosis of mental illness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Demographic – Baseline Survey (Cont.)

	Yes	No
15. Is the participant under the care of a psychiatrist or psychologist?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. During the past year how many times has the participant been treated by a psychiatrist or psychologist?		
17. Has the participant ever been an inpatient at a hospital for mental health problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. What is the total amount of the individual or family monthly income?		
19. What are the sources of the individual or family income (<i>circle all that apply</i>)? GR SSI SSDI SSD CalWorks Employment Unemployment No Income Other _____		
20. If a participant is a member of a family that is homeless, how many persons are in the family?		
21. What is the participant's current employment status? ___ Minor/Youth not employed ___ Not currently employed ___ Employed part-time ___ Employed full-time		
22. During the past year how many months has the participant been employed?		
23. During the past 5 years how many months has the participant been employed?		
24. What is the total number of times the participant has been incarcerated?		
25. What is the longest amount of time the participant has spent incarcerated?		
26. What was the highest level of education achieved by the participant? 7th grade or less ___ 8th grade ___ 9th grade ___ 10th grade ___ 11th grade ___ 12th grade ___ some college ___ college graduate ___ post graduate degree ___		

Demographic Child – Baseline Survey
Ages 5-11

Arts Organization _____ Date _____

Service/Shelter Provider _____ Date _____

Participant Name _____

Please provide the name of the parent if the participant is a minor and a member of a family that is homeless (only for homeless family units): _____

1. What is the age of the participant? _____

2. What is the gender of the participant?

Male____ Female____

3. Does the participant have any chronic physical or mental health conditions that contributed to the family becoming homeless?

Yes____ No____

Participant Outlook – Baseline Survey

Arts Organization _____ Date _____

Service/Shelter Provider _____ Date _____

Participant Name _____

Following are a series of attitude statements. Each represents a commonly held opinion. There are no right or wrong answers. You will probably agree with some items and disagree with others. We are interested in the extent to which you agree or disagree with such matters of opinion. Read each statement carefully. Then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree using the following responses:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
2. At times I think I am no good at all.				
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
6. I certainly feel useless at times.				
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
11. When I use alcohol or drugs, I use them in a healthy way.				
12. I feel that I have good eating habits.				
13. I do a good job managing my money.				
14. I am taking good care of my physical health.				
15. I have <u>quality</u> interactions with the people I see socially.				
16. I have a good <u>number</u> of people with whom I see socially.				
17. I am taking good care of my mental health.				

Participant Outlook – Baseline Survey (Cont.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. To a great extent my life is controlled by accidental happenings.				
19. I feel like what happens in my life is mostly determined by powerful people.				
20. Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on how good a driver I am.				
21. When I get what I want, it is usually because I'm lucky.				
22. How many friends I have depends on how nice a person I am.				
23. Whether or not I get into a car accident is mostly a matter of luck.				
24. It's not always wise for me to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad luck.				
25. Getting what I want requires pleasing those people above me.				
26. I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.				
27. Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on the other driver.				
28. When I get what I want, it's usually because I worked hard for it.				
29. In order to have my plans work, I make sure that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over me.				

Demographic - Exit Survey

Arts Organization _____ Date _____

Service/Shelter Provider _____ Date _____

Participant Name _____

Please provide the name of the parent if the participant is a minor and a member of a family that is homeless (only for homeless family units): _____

	Yes	No
1. Is the participant currently homeless? (a person is homeless if s/he is living on the streets, in a shelter, or transitional program)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. What is the age of the participant?	<input type="text"/>	
3. What is the gender of the participant? ___ male ___ female ___ transgender	X	
4. Is the participant under the care of a primary healthcare physician?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is the participant currently participating in recovery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is the participant under the care of a psychiatrist or psychologist?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. What is the total amount of the individual or family monthly income?	<input type="text"/>	
8. What are the sources of the individual or family income (<i>circle all that apply</i>)? GR SSI SSDI SSD CalWorks Employment Unemployment No Income Other _____	X	
9. What is the participant's current employment status? ___ Minor/Youth not employed ___ Not currently employed ___ Employed part-time ___ Employed full-time	X	

Participant Outlook – Exit Survey

Arts Organization _____ Date _____

Service/Shelter Provider _____ Date _____

Participant Name _____

Following are a series of attitude statements. Each represents a commonly held opinion. There are no right or wrong answers. You will probably agree with some items and disagree with others. We are interested in the extent to which you agree or disagree with such matters of opinion. Read each statement carefully. Then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree using the following responses:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
2. At times I think I am no good at all.				
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
6. I certainly feel useless at times.				
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
11. When I use alcohol or drugs, I use them in a healthy way.				
12. I feel that I have good eating habits.				
13. I do a good job managing my money.				
14. I am taking good care of my physical health.				
15. I have <u>quality</u> interactions with the people I see socially.				
16. I have a good <u>number</u> of people with whom I see socially.				
17. I am taking good care of my mental health.				
18. To a great extent my life is controlled by accidental happenings.				

Participant Outlook – Exit Survey (Cont.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19. I feel like what happens in my life is mostly determined by powerful people.				
20. Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on how good a driver I am.				
21. When I get what I want, it is usually because I'm lucky.				
22. How many friends I have depends on how nice a person I am.				
23. Whether or not I get into a car accident is mostly a matter of luck.				
24. It's not always wise for me to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad luck.				
25. Getting what I want requires pleasing those people above me.				
26. I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.				
27. Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on the other driver.				
28. When I get what I want, it's usually because I worked hard for it.				
29. In order to have my plans work, I make sure that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over me.				

Narrative - Exit Survey

Arts Organization _____ Date _____

Service/Shelter Provider _____ Date _____

Participant Name _____

This art project has been one of the activities you have invested in as you worked toward obtaining and sustaining permanent housing- a home. Could you take a few moments to respond to the following statement, and write your thoughts on how the art project has helped you.

My participation in the Art Project has really helped me progress toward obtaining permanent housing. (Circle one.)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Could you give us some specific reasons for your answer:
