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>> LISA DAMICO: Hello everyone. I'm with the V.S.A. and Accessibility Office at the Kennedy Center. We're happy for you all to be joining us today. For those of you who this is the first time attending a webinar, I'm going to run through the technology with the Go To Webinar program, and then I'll turn it over to Celia and Damon.

So as you all should have received an e-mail, with the link to the real-time captioning. We've arranged for the webinar today. If you did not receive that, you can send me a private message, which I'll show you how to do that in just a moment, and I can send you that link.

So everyone should be seeing the attendee control panel, which looks like the image that I have in front of you, and if at any point you need to leave the webinar, you'll just click on that "X" up in the top corner or when the webinar has finished. That's how you'll sign out. Something important. If you're going to be speaking -- right now I everyone on mute so we're not distracted by background noise -- but you need to make sure however you are calling in, whether it's by your telephone or into your computer speakers, you need to make sure you have selected the appropriate button. Otherwise we won't hear you. And if you want to ask a question, you'll see the question and answer box, and you'll type your question, which I'll receive privately and I can pass that onto Damon or Celia to answer.

Or if you're having technology issues, that would be the place to let me know.

If you want to hide the control panel as you're watching the presentation, you'll click on that orange arrow up on the top. You can also mute and unmute you audio. For the most part I will be controlling your audio, so that won't be an issue. Then if you want to

view only the presentation, the GoTo webinar, you can click on that blue button with the white square, which will put it into the full view.

Or if you want to minimize that and look at the captioning, you click on that it and will minimize it.

Also, if you have a question, click on the blue button with the hand on it to raise your hand. That will show me that you indeed have a question, and I will unmute you at a good stopping point and let you ask your question.

Let's to practice, I would like to have you all click on the hand icon. I see the hands going up. Waiting on a few more. All right, it looks like we are good to go.

So our presenters for today.

We have Damon, who is the director of VSA Colorado. And Celia, who is the director of VSA Texas.

We're going to let Damon start things off for this afternoon. I'll turn it over to you Damon and pull up your slide show.

All right, Damon.

>> DAMON McLEESE: All right, hello everybody. I'm going to tell you a little bit about our ARTWORKS program. It's a program that we've developed over the last five or six years. Go ahead and go to the next slide Lisa.

>> LISA DAMICO: Okay.

>> DAMON McLEESE: We started out hosting a summer program for young people with disabilities to become advocates for themselves. We partnered with a local group here in Denver whose mission is to provide advocacy and legal services to people with disabilities and we worked with this group for about three years to develop a program where the kids would come in and hear speakers and visit different things.

We took them up to the state capital and learned about the legal processes and really informed them about what they might expect when they get out of high school and some of the offerings that they, some of the benefits that they might be entitled to. Some of the things that they were really, really, what they might be expecting when they get out.

Over the first year, we had 8 teens in this program. And we really picked up on the idea of giving them voice and letting them talk and tell the world what it's like to be a young person with a disability in this country. And what we did is we paired them each with a professional graphic designer, and they all designed a poster about what it was like to live as a young person with a disability.

The posters were shown here in our gallery. And since then the project has grown to be a national partnership between them and a group called A.I.G.A. Colorado. It's the Association of Inter-- what is it called? A.I.G.A. I forget. But they're the professional association of graphic designers here in Colorado.

We decided we were going to do this as a national partnership with the A.I.G.A. group out of New York.

Go ahead and go to the next slide.

Like I said, the poster project has become one of our most popular aspects of the summer program. And we've grown from 8 to 18 teens. And we had 18 teens for eight weeks during the summer. We finished last week. And the posters are becomes quite

collectible, oddly enough. Depending on the themes. Some of the themes are much more intriguing apparently than others.

But what has happened along the way that will we realized early on that a lot of our young people that were transitioning from high school that we had early on, they were not really interested as much in the some of the self-advocacy skills and work that we were doing, but they were much more interested in earning a paycheck and figuring out a way to earn some money.

So a program over the past few years has morphed from being a self-advocacy training program to more of a job training program.

The poster project, the first thing that we realized is that we could create, and the teens would be able to sell. So we've kept with that. Our most recent posters, we sold at least one copy each out of the 18. Several have sold several copies each.

What we realized along the way, is that a lot of the kids we were attracting or a lot of the young people referred to our program were young people with autism and cognitive delays. Some of the advocacy pieces weren't really resonating or connecting with them. Go to the next slide.

About halfway through, we realized a lot of the kids didn't even recognize themselves as being disabled. They were really gun shy about the term. We wanted to work around that and go through. Stop trying to stick the round peg into the round hole. We started shifting it to the job training program. Most of them were below the poverty line and most of them were from a single-family home.

We're in a location here that is a very ethnically diverse neighborhood. We have a low socioeconomic community that we're pulling from. But over the last several years, we started pulling kids from eight different high schools.

But the biggest issue was none of these kids were getting out of high school with any chance, or very, very limited job opportunities.

Go ahead and go to the next slide.

We realized that with 70% of the people in this country living with a disability being underemployed or unemployed, there was really a job void.

As we were developing posters each year, a consistent theme that would come up is a lot of kids really just wanted a job. They wanted a paycheck and to help their families. We really shifted the focus from 2008-2009 to job training. Stressing things like being on time, dressing appropriately. Really basic stuff. They were creating yarn. But it secondary to some of the job training stuff. Be on time, keep your area neat. That kind of stuff.

Go to the next slide, please.

Two years ago we realized that while we were teaching these people good job skills, even in this economy they weren't getting good jobs. We felt like we were teaching people to climb in the middle of the desert. They still weren't getting what we were considering traditional jobs. Some were saying they couldn't even get hired at McDonalds. Some of the higher functioning kids were able to get paid jobs and paid internships, but some of the kids with autism and some of the kids with more severe or challenging learning disabilities weren't getting traditional jobs at all.

We put the cart before the horse and created a couple programs where we could create the work that was being sold in the gallery, we did a pet commission project. Eight weeks teach them how to paint pictures of people's pets. And the next eight weeks we put the work up in the back of the gallery and started taking commissions. The first year every single one of the kids had received a commission. Now we've been doing it about 4 years, it's a year-round program, we have about 18 kids who are trained to do commissions. We have examples up on the website. You can take a look at that. It's a very individualized type of thing. But it's been very successful.

Every fall we'll host another workshop or another residency to train some new young people how to do it, and each year we tend to pick up a couple more commissions. But even at that, we're not getting them enough money. They're not earning enough money to ever be self-sufficient. But a lot of times it's the first paycheck these people have ever had. We realized we were onto something.

We typically do the pet portraits in the gallery around the holidays. That's when people seem to want to buy those for gifts.

After the pet portrait project in 2011, we decided to push it a little bit and see if we could do a couple shows. What we did is we did an artist residency where we focused on, Denver has this big blue bear that looks into the convention center. Very iconic. People recognize it as Denver.

We studied with the teens. 14 young people with D.P.S. They were released early from school. We focused on the different pop artists. And the different styles. And then we had the teens paint the blue bear based on some of the pop artists that we studied, and the whole show was all about Denver's big blue bear, and we sold 60% of the work out of the gallery at that time during the worst of the economic crisis.

We put all the money into a pool. All the kids worked in teams. It was more of a co-op thing. All of their money went into a pool, and we cut them a stipend check after it was over, based on overall sales, not the individual sales.

They had the ability to paint the pet portraits as an individual. But if there is someone who is not quite as talented or not getting as many commissions, we have them work on these projects with the pop artists.

We're very fortunate to have a gallery right here in Denver. I think our prices for that show ran from \$50 to \$300-400. Very well received. We sold over half the show. That was unheard of at that time. There wasn't a lot of art being sold at that time. So we believed we were onto something.

Go to the next slide, please.

This is an example of a piece. This is based on Keith Herring. The big blue bear in the background. This piece sold for I think \$200 to a school principal. The piece was well received. We made little postcards based on some of the pieces. We had artists who created the big blue bear, who was a Denver artist. We had a couple of avenues for kids to earn the money. Both by selling the art and the postcards for a dollar each.

Each kid made a little over \$150 after that show.

Go ahead and go to the next slide.

Sort of building on the success from the pet portraits and the review from the Artomat

machine, we got a small grant from our state art council to purchase or lease Colorado's first Artomat machine. It's an old cigarette machine that dispenses \$5 art. We buy it from the artists, and we put it in the top row of the Artomat machine, and when people come into the gallery, the young people are in charge of selling it. They're now being paid through Artomat. It's based out of North Carolina. There's 90 of these machines throughout the country. The pieces sell for \$5 each. The artist gets \$2.50. We get \$1.50 for each piece sold out of our machine. And Artomat in North Carolina gets \$1 for the administration of the program.

Next slide.

Here's an addition from the first year of our Artomat. This was 25 pieces that Joplin Roy who created in our program. She has a pretty severe learning disability, pretty low-functioning I.Q. She picked up on these circles. She earned a paycheck. We had the young people be the salesman for the Artomat. It's not really enough to pay the rent, but it's enough to keep people interested. People come in to see what's new in the Artomat and get to talking with the young artists.

We turn over 100 pieces, 150 pieces of art each month through the Artomat machine.

Next slide?

So this year, emboldened by our success with the Artomat and gallery show, we expanded our offerings into corporate commission. We had the opportunity to work with professional artists here last year, and we created a piece of artwork basically based on the work of Mark Bradford. He's a Los Angeles artist. He takes things on the street and turns them into collages.

We took material from around the gallery. We had someone buy that from us, and we're starting to take commissions for this work. We realized we could do a lot of corporate commissions. It's a huge leap forward. To take that leap. Not only could we make dog portraits, but people would pay us to do commissions for them. We do the big collage thing for any population, and we've also done work with people will give us words from their mission statement, or we had a couple that gave us work for their anniversary, and we created artwork just based on the words that they're giving us.

Next slide?

So here's the different types of work that we can do. We do photo mosaics. We've had a couple commissions for buildings and things. It seems to work best with architectural-type of projects.

We do the large scale paintings for adults with developmental disabilities. We've had three or four commissions in the past year. We've done the contemporary materials.

This is the blurb directly from the brochure from this program.

Please go to the next slide.

This was the first corporate commission that we received. It had to do with water. And this the group of teens we brought over from West High school. And you can see all the words in the piece have to do with water.

I forgot who actually commissioned this. It was a corporation that had to do with water conservation. These are the actual artists that created the piece. It doesn't really represent very well in this photograph. We put on about seven layers of paint, different

layers of words. It was a stunning, stunning piece. I think we did it in four sessions with this particular group.

Next slide?

Since 2008, we've had more than 300 young people participate in our program. Either in the summer program or one of our residency program. We placed 72 students into different internships and the creative industry. We would like to take credit for all of those. A lot of those have been our placements. We average selling at least half of the work in the show when we do gallery shows.

We have one that's not quite up to the halfway mark, but we have two more events. And the corporate commission is really starting to take off. We could have some of our young interns, some of our young apprentice artists working here 10-12 hours a week and hopefully build that up.

I think that's it. Next slide?

And this was one of the first corporate murals that we did from the collateral materials Letter heads in the background, and brochures. This piece doesn't represent quite as well either. It was four feet by four feet. It was a beautiful piece that fit in beautifully to their lobby. We're going to have a photographer take a picture of this.

I think that's it.

>> LISA DAMICO: We can open it up to questions. If anyone would like to ask Damon about the programs that he's just presented, you can raise your hand and I will give you the microphone.

It doesn't look like we have any questions at this point. Celia, are you good to go?

>> CELIA HUGHES: I am.

>> LISA DAMICO: Is there any way you could turn the volume up a little bit louder?

>> CELIA HUGHES: How is that?

>> LISA DAMICO: It's better.

>> CELIA HUGHES: Okay. Maybe a little bit higher. Is that better?

>> LISA DAMICO: Yes.

>> CELIA HUGHES: Okay.

>> LISA DAMICO: Well I've got your PowerPoint up, so I'll turn it over to you.

>> CELIA HUGHES: Okay. Well that was a really tough act to follow. Congratulations Damon. That's a wonderful program.

Our program, the new media arts sort of started out in the same vain, but since we don't have our gallery anymore, we have moved off into the direction of working with photography and video making and a mixture of that with the traditional art. I've taken the same approach that Damon has and I'm going to give you a history of where we started and where we've come.

So next slide, please?

So New Media Arts was a term that one of our artists came up with when she started thinking about the combination of new media, which is like I said photography, video, digital technology with traditional arts.

We felt that traditional arts is something that most of our folks were really familiar with and comfortable with and had experienced a lot of success with through some of our work and

some of the work that they did in other organizations.

So we decided to use the traditional art practices as a way to engage young adults in learning new skills in new media. And thus came the term "New media arts."

Next slide?

This is the photograph from last summer. It's a vintage car named "ruby." And this is not all of our summer camp, but this was part of the summer camp. And they were learning how to take photography, take pictures, and so the owner of this car brought the car, and he had a number of different costumes. And we spent the day. That's outside of our building. We're officed in that building, which is an old Confederate Women's home.

This picture was put on the cover of the annual report for the Texas Council for Development Disabilities, because they were the folks that gave us the funding that launched all of this.

Next slide?

So like I said, in the beginning, we started to work with young adults in transition to employment through a grant for the Texas council for development disabilities. We were lucky to get a five-year grant from them which was called "artworks creative industries."

And the focus of that grant was to provide opportunities for young people with developmental disabilities to move toward employment in the art.

We started it out as an apprentice program and we focused on creating artwork with pricing and marketing activities and then they would bring and sell their art, they would present their art to the gallery Curator, and we would put their work for sale in our studio space. We did that for two years. But unfortunately, your gallery wasn't as well situated as the Denver gallery is. We did haven't a lot of traffic that came through, so our sales weren't as good as we hoped them to be, but the experience for the folks was really great. They enjoyed it.

But we knew this was probably not going to be the direction that we were going to continue to move in. Next slide please?

So this is the studio space. And this is one of our young men with autism next to some banners that they had created and he had just sold his banner. So we have this picture to show his very happy face.

Okay, next slide please?

From this, we created a career planning resource. We created quite a number of different resources and worksheets and handouts, which lead us ultimately to create the curriculum that is the end product of all of this. And on this resource, the gallery curator uses this form when someone come to her and wants to have art shown in the gallery, or even if they're just trying to figure it out. They're a beginning artist, they're not even an emerging artist in many ways. It was helpful for her to sit down and have a conversation. And to get the person, and a lot of times this planning process took place with a carer, or someone from our DARS, which is our state department on rehabilitation. A lot of time these conversations were facilitated with another adult. But we would hold this conversation with the individual artist. And from that, they were able to establish what

the first three goals were from the individual, and then from the first three goals, break it down into what are the five actions that they need to do in order to reach those goals. And then April would check back with them over a period of time and so this was a really nice resource to sort of help folks as they either went into the state rehab to get funding to support their work or, you know, to some other organization to help them buy the equipment that they needed to get their project up and running.

So this is the resource that we have put into place and has worked very well for us. And it is really useful, too, when you have somebody come in and they're usually pretty nervous and excited and they have a lot of times unrealistic goals of what they're going to be able to accomplish in a short amount of time. So this resource is a really good record of being able to capture in the moment and help them be able to celebrate what they have been able to accomplish and rethink about other things that they need to do in order to move forward in their career.

And a lot of this was just visual artists, but we have expanded more and more to musicians and writers and artists in other disciplines.

So next slide please.

So like I said, after we did our first set of classes and our first couple of summer camps, which were really based more on visual art and theater, and we were observing our teens interact with each other and the various media available in the classroom, we decided that we were going to focus our future endeavors on trying to teach 21st century employment skills through a combination of arts and new media.

And so that's when we began to, that's when we started to really focus in on what we needed to do in order to make that happen and make it a meaningful experience for our participants.

So next slide please.

We have a couple of photographs of some of our folks.

On the left is a young man who has been with us for five years. And this was outside at the art car, at the themed car shoot. We had just gotten him, that is either an iPod or an iPhone. And he was taking pictures. We figured out how to hook it up to his wheelchair. He's very, very fragile. He can't push on anything. So we were able to hook this up so he could take his own photographs. He now goes all over town taking photographs.

And the girl on the right, we were in a television studio there. So she was operating one of the cameras at our local cable access studio.

She was learning how to operate that camera.

So next slide, please.

So the purpose of our New Media Arts program is number one to address the need for quality transition to employment opportunities for folks with intellectual and developmental disabilities with a focus on the autism spectrum disorder.

And we knew that just as Damon had said, we knew that employment was going to be possible, or at least more likely in the arena of new media than in some other areas.

Just because of the skills of our folks and then some of the limitations that can be accommodated in that environment. Our classes are format flexible, so students work individually and in groups.

And of course, following the universal design for learning, we adapt to each student's capabilities and interests.

And the person, Carol Fencer who created it and worked with us for the past five years on this project, she has a doctorate in recreational therapy and is in tune for the need for socialization and for folks to get out into rich social environments.

And so a lot of what we do also involves that. Going out to cafes when they're is paperwork to be done. We have a little coffee shop that is just a block away are where our classes are held. They do their paperwork in that social environment.

And they learn how to ride the bus. Many of them have never ridden a bus, because we're a rather urban environment, but Texas doesn't have a strong bus culture, unfortunately. So helping them learn those independent skills of getting around on a bus.

That's another purpose of what we do. Try to provide a bridge to the media arts community and the world of employment, but through community connections and what we call "link events."

So next slide please.

So with those purposes in mind, we came up with three measurable objectives. And one was to enhance the pre-locational skills of teens through media and arts classes, and create the connections of teens and young adults through well-organized link events, and to expand the capabilities of parents and caregiver to provide meaningful coaching in new media arts.

So everything we do parents and siblings are invited to attend. Teachers, if we're in the classroom, are expected to participant right alongside our teaching artists. So it's something that everyone gets skilled in.

So that when we walk away, we know we've left behind a group of support personnel that can carry this forward, either with their child or their student or whoever it is that they're working with.

So we have those three-prong objectives to everything that we do.

So next slide please.

So we have a number of components that I've touched on a little bit. Of course, we have classes. And the classes can be in many different things. We've done classes in art making, theater games, and improvisation. We've made musical instruments and then made music and recorded the music. We've learned photography and learned how to put together the basic slide shows and simple video production.

Those are the classes that the students sign up for when they come. Because again, Carol is a doctorate in recreational therapy and has taught at a college level.

She very much believes that the classes need to be conducted like a community college. She gives pop quizzes, and there are student assessments. And she tells the students in there that, you know, she runs it, it's not like harsh where they come quivering into the classroom. You wouldn't be able to do this, you wouldn't be able to talk through my lecture, this sort of thing, if you were in a community college setting. So we want you to learn the pre-college skills of being able to go to a community college. We've actually had some of our students who came into our class who were really terrified of going into

community college and had had some really bad experiences. They've enrolled and are doing quite well now as a result of the work and the things that we've helped them to learn.

Another component are field trip to the community media or art resources. We've gone to local radio stations and had tours and have done some on-air work. We've gone to the local television stations and gone to fine arts museums. Here in Austin every year there's a south by southwest, which you might have heard about. There's a huge interactive component. And every year they have Screen Burn, and they bring in all the new media and games arcade. And it's wildly crazy and interactive and we take field trip to that. These are link events to get them out into the community and to begin to understand where some of the resources are and where they might be able to volunteer, where they might be able to find an internship, or just in terms of where this radio that you listen to, where does it come from? How is it broadcast?

And those, we do very well organized trips. We do social stories before we leave on the trips. Lots of pre-planning. Of course, you can't ever foresee the one thing that's going to go wrong. But you can try to be as planned as possible.

Like I said, we do walking trip to the local cafe across the street in the high school that we worked in this year, was the ACC, campus of Austin community college. We would walk across the street and go to the cafe and interact with cafe employees. This was the first time for some of their people where they were able to go into a cafe and pick out what they wanted themselves and order it and pay for it. That is a really empowering experience for them.

And so we tried to do several trips during a class period, you know, during a semester in order to get folks out.

We also have a thing called "taster workshops" which are shorter workshops. We've done them on Saturday afternoons generally.

And that's where we introduce just a new subject area and just do a one-time thing to give people an idea of it, to see if it's a class that we want to grow into a larger class.

So we've done taster workshops in voice-over techniques, how to record with garage band, animation. Things like that just to test the water.

Our taster workshops are inclusive. They're for anyone who is interested in coming.

We usually have a variety of folks with and without disabilities at the taster workshops.

And then the other component of our project, are mere mentors that are with and without disabilities as active participants.

We've had several of our folks who came up through the ranks and started out just as participants in the class, and have been hired in subsequent years, we have them come in as peer mentors. They work with the class, but they're there also to provide assistance to those who need to have assistance with operating a mouse or whatever it is that they need some assistance with.

And we have a very high ratio of participants to staff members. Because we have a lot of interest. And we got several universities here in town. So we have a lot of graduate students that are interested in coming and serving as an intern to learn more about what we do and also just to develop their skills better in working with their particular craft,

working with young people with disabilities.

So we do have a lot of peer mentors that are interns from either Austin Community College, their recreational therapy department, the U.T. School of Socialwork, the school of theater and dance. It's real nice. We have a good mixture that makes for a rich environment.

Next slide, please?

This is a little bit about how we kind of grew. In 2010, we had been doing summer camps for younger children, and we finally decided we were going to focus on ages 15 and up by 2010.

So just because of the staffing ratio, really, with younger kids, we really needed to have a stronger staffing ratio and I didn't have the funding to be able to hire the people that I wanted to hire and I just couldn't rely on interns because I needed somebody that had experience. I didn't need someone who was trying to learn.

So we bumped it up. And we also realized that just like the middle school is the black hole of education, you know, once kids are like 15 and up and once they start to age out. Or once they're 18 in Texas, they graduate from high school, but they can stay in high school if they have a disability until 22, but they're no longer required to do any kind of academic scheduling. They're supposedly in job-related transition to employment type activities, which are pretty basic and not very good in many opinion.

And then once they're 22, there's nothing for them to do. Once they're out of the school system, there is very little for folks to do. We decided we were going to focus on ages 15 and up.

We did two, three-week summer camps in 2010. The first was really focused on visual art and theater. And the second one was focused on making videos at the local cable access TV.

This was our first beginning where we decided this is probably where we're going to need to be headed in terms of new media.

We had some campers come in. We had some people come from as far away as Mcallen, Harlington, which is down on the tip of the state, it's a 6-hour drive. Her parents came up and lived in a co-op up here so she could go to the six weeks of camp. She is the one who has now enrolled herself in photography classes down there at the community college and has become active in the community for services for young adults with disabilities.

That's been a real success story with her.

So the next slide please?

So here we have two pictures of our apprentices at work. The guy on the right, he's been with us for four years now. He just graduated from high school. And he is, they were making some kind of props for their video production. And that's her on the right. Her piece was about her being a warrior woman. She's rehearsing with her costumes, getting ready for her performance at the Channel Austin.

So we decided that we needed to move beyond just offering summer camps and see if we could break into the year-round, what was happening in the schools.

In Austin, they have a project called "go project" and that again is for high school students

between the ages of 18 and 22.

And they have eight or ten Go Project Sites around the town. And they are actually at, most of them are at corporate -- there is one at Dell's Children Hospital. Some are at churches and different kinds of activity centers.

The point is that the students go there and they have job coaches and they spend Monday through Thursday, either in class, you know, resume writing and those types of things, or out on interviews or, you know, working a job through a job coach.

And then they have Fridays, which were free.

Free time.

So we proposed that we would offer a 10-week class on Friday from 10-2 for the Go Project students who wanted to come to our classroom.

This is where we began to introduce our combination of the New Media arts concept of combining photography with the visual arts.

We brought in, we had Carol again as our lead teacher. And then we had a professional film maker who was from South Africa and a local actor who is in quite a few productions, and they were also teaching artists for a sister organization in town called Theater Action Project.

They came over and started to work with us because they wanted to develop their skills working with students with disabilities

They came and we had a ten-week class. And in this first Go Project, the first one that we did in the Fall, we focused a lot on creating art, but we also learned photography and stuff.

And then they sold and went through the same process, because our gallery was still open at the time of presenting their work to the Curator and putting their work in the holiday show. That was very successful.

They went on several field trips and the teacher and all of the students were just really, very positive and really, really happy about the class and what they had learned and what they had experienced.

So then the next slide please.

So then I decided that we would extend it to the Spring. I think I actually got a little bit of money for this. I can't remember. But we would extend this to the Spring and we would begin to write a curriculum. We would have something. We wouldn't have to invent it as we went along.

We would have something that was sort of a boilerplate. It's not scaffolded. You don't have to do one before the other in that regard, but it is tied to our standards here in Texas. And so we could bring in other teachers. So we met with them again. They agreed to come back, they were very excited and this time we incorporated photography with story telling by using little small sets. Carol has a collection of rubber Zombies and other small objects she's been collecting, and we created little slide shows.

They picked the items they were going to use, and they created their story, they story boarded a beginning, a middle, and an end to their story and then they shot photographs of that and then they put those photographs into a slide show, into a PowerPoint pretty much.

They layered in music and they layered in some sound effects and that was their little film that they put together.

And we had, at that point, I had an intern from the U.T. school of social work, I believe. Maybe psychology. And I had another intern, and their soul jobs were to write down everything that happened in the classroom so that we could have Carol's lesson plans. But Carol's lesson plans are sort of like mind maps.

So I needed to get some actual wording of what went on.

So I had one of our word study students was at film school at U.T. She filmed every class that we had. We had video documentation of everything that went on, and plus Carol from the school of psychology, who wrote everything. She had a smart pen, for her, that made it easier. Because she does have a disability.

We came up with all these notes and all this documentation and Carol's lesson plan about what went on with the Go Project and what was successful and how we had to change things.

We came up with really, really good information at the end of these ten weeks.

But I realize now I'm happy that the curriculum is done, because the students are like, "Man, you really pushed us.." I think now they're going to have more fun because we won't be on a tight deadline with this curriculum. We can relax a little more. It's not that we were mean. But we kept their feet to the fire.

We ended up getting an eight-lesson curriculum out of this. And each lesson was four hours long. It's pretty extensive.

Next slide, please.

This is two of the photographs from the Zombie invasion. They created that from the lid of a boot box with torn paper and some of the little things that Carol collects.

And they had great fun with it, and they worked in teams. It's very simple, it's not going to win an academy award. But they learned about the basic art of telling a story from the beginning, the middle, and the end.

And I found out through all these camps that zombies and vampires are it. I am an old lady, I tell you.

So you go where they are. You go where they're interested.

All right. Next slide please.

So in 2011, we did another series of camps. This time we targeted young adults with autism, but we enrolled actually, we had quite a diverse enrollment of folks with different kinds of intellectual and developmental disabilities. A professional photographer volunteered his time for both of the camps, as well as an intern from the department of theater and dance.

Then we had another U.T. intern. I can't remember her assessment and evaluation.

But she used our summer camp as her research for her master's thesis that she's just put in her master's thesis.

She was looking at universal design for learning, working in arts-related activities.

So, you know, it was just a very small, it wasn't a big, huge, pilot study. But it was, you know, she was also extremely helpful in the classroom. And just because they were in there working with the development of the curriculum and things, that meant they were

working hands on with all the folks in the classroom. They weren't just sitting back and taking notes. But they were definitely actively engaged in what was going on in the classroom.

And so we did again the first three weeks of photography. They learned to take portraits. The art car came. And the second week they made a music video. We had professional musicians come in.

And we were able to pilot their curriculum that they had worked on in the spring with the Go Project. They were able to see what worked and what we needed to add to that. That was in 2011.

Next slide is one of the projects that they do. They learn how to take portraits, which is on the left side, and then one of the activities they do, they mutate the portrait. So they can do whatever they want to it. They can cut the picture up and put it together in different ways, cut things out of magazine. Then they learn how to photograph that portrait. They learn how to do it to the photograph of the portrait.

They learn how to do the actual photograph and then learn how to take a picture of the mutated portrait.

So like I said, we came up with this eight-lesson curriculum, which incorporated universal design for learning principles.

It was eight lessons, the first four lessons on photography, the next four on video. We aligned it with the technology standards for high school students here in Texas.

Next slide, please. That, we thought was the end of it. But it wasn't.

We went onto then, we received the transition to employment grant. I thought what I wanted to do was take this now and take it into a high school. And actually put it into a high school setting and see how it worked there.

And so many original idea was I was going to go twice a week for ten weeks into a high school setting.

Well, I found out that I wasn't able to do that. In order to go into a high school class, even though was it was life skills and resource students, it needed to be an academic class and fit the academic schedule. We were scheduled to go in for 16 weeks, we went for 17 weeks, twice a weeks and then we had six additional Fridays because they're on the block schedule. It turned out to be a much bigger project than I originally anticipated, but it was very rewarding and very successful.

We were able to take that eight lesson, and now we've turned it into 36 lessons that are 90 minutes in length. We created PowerPoints and teaching videos that accompany the curriculum.

We were able to align them and have them teach the social studies, reading, and English. We've been in the classroom doing the work and putting together a curriculum.

So I have to say I'm happy again that the curriculum piece is over. I promised my staff and everyone that we're not moving anymore. I'm doing that.

So next slide, please.

This is kind of tiny. So you really probably can't see too much.

Next slide.

I took two, one-page samples from the new media curriculum to show you the format.

They have learning objectives, the main task, and then the activity. And then the circle of enclosure. Each lesson follows that format.

Then you'll see in the one on the left, I mean on the right, again, we have the learning objectives, the main task, and then materials. And then a discussion on activities.

So if you need certain materials from your activity, we'll tell you what those are. And again, we got the PowerPoints that people are able to use if they want to, which are powerPoints in photograph, the different movie genres, we have PowerPoints that people with use if they like.

And up on Youtube, we have videos that aren't meant to be teaching videos in the classroom, they're just videos of Carol talking about the philosophy and the work she's done, and a video about the camera we chose with its accessibility features.

This is just an example of what the lessons looked like.

All righty, so onto this past summer.

The next slide please.

So this curriculum was finished up with the Crocket High school residency that ended in June. So we went onto do our summer camps this year. We shortened them from two weeks to three weeks. We found that over the years that three weeks was just a little too long.

People have other things to do, vacation, things like that. We offered three, two-week camps, and expanded the content, we did several field trip to the radio stations and one of the local news stations. And the students had cameras and they did a story telling and created a video about their experience at summer camp. And they made up a story that they called zombie idol, and they all rehearsed for the zombie idol competition.

And then we brought in one of our artists, and she did a popular workshop. Made some simple instruments, we brought in guest artists every day, they jammed with the artists, and learned what they were doing in terms of their profession, and they learned how to record music in Audacity or Garage Band, depending on what computer they had at home.

Then the last one was theater games and improve. It was a very popular camp. They recorded a radio broadcast with sound effects. We had a request to continue both of those. And we're hoping to be able to continue both of those workshops in the Fall.

So next slide, please.

You'll see two photographs. One of Pearly. I'm sorry it's so dark. On the left is Pearly, and victor, one of our peer mentors with a kettle drum. And the gentleman with his back to us is a guest artist from Florida who worked with VSA Florida on drumming. And he's now moved to Austin, and he's come on board as one of our new teaching artists. We're thrilled.

And on the right, they're working on their radio drama. They're working on the skit for their radio drama at the theater camp.

Okay, almost to the end. So next slide, please.

What have we learned?

We learn that you can never plan too much. We've learned to always listen to the students, because they're going to let you know how things are going. And you need to

pay attention, because if you lose their interest, it's really hard to get it back again. We learned to try to anticipate any problems or challenges and be prepared for them and that's really the universal design for learning model. And it became easier as we got to know the students. It's hard at the very beginning. You just decide how you're going to create it and how you're going to make this work for anybody.

And then as soon as somebody walks through the door we say, okay, well, that's not going to work and we go forward from there. We are pretty good at anticipating problems and challenges.

We learn to give everybody the opportunity to show what they're capable of. At the end of every day of the theater camp we have an open mic and people can stand up and recite poetry or sing or whatever they wanted to.

It was their opportunity to really shine and also by providing a variety of materials and activities, even though it was a theater camp, we did visual art every day. They made props, they made thank you cards when we did a trip or when a guest artist came in. Just really tried to meet the artistic capabilities and interests of every student that was in the room.

We learned that if it's not working, to re-group and move on, to not try and just stay with something, because it's what the lesson says. But figure it out and keep going.

We learned to be flexible in our high school. Because in the Spring we had standardized tests, so we would find out the day before that our class wasn't going to happen or it was going to be two hours later or only half an hour long. We learned to be very flexible in how we delivered our material, and we came up with lessons that we were going to be able to use in that kind of environment and that kind of situation.

Next slide please.

The biggest lesson that we learned from the growth that all the students experienced during every stage since we started this in 2010. We had students enter community college, we had students volunteer for local theaters as ushers, as docents in museums. We have students writing animated shorts.

And our goal is they come to us, we work with them, they leave, and we don't ever have to see them again in our classroom. We hear about them in the community. Ours is not to keep them with us. Ours is to give them the wing to fly so they can go out into the community and do what they really want to be doing in the community and everyone has grown in self-esteem, self-direction and independent-living skills.

Next slide.

We really, what we did really met every guide post to success by ODEP. We identified youth, development, and leadership as our goal.

But every aspect of what we did touched on one of the five guide posts to success. So we are very pleased with that.

So next slide is just where you can contact me. Except I forgot to put my 800 number up there.

I know one of the questions is going to be where is the curriculum. We are in the process right now of formatting it and figuring out how we're going to make this available.

We're getting the PowerPoints as a read only and they'll be available on our website.

The videos are up on our Youtube channel right now.

By the first week of September we will have the curriculum available for people who are interested in getting a copy of it.

So, that's our new media arts program.

>> LISA DAMICO: Great, well thank you Celia. We are now going to open it up for questions. Questions that you may have for Celia or for Damon. If you would like to ask a question, please click on the raise your hand button.

We have a question from Betty.

>> Thank you so much for doing such a great overview of your programs. They're both very dynamic. In my question is in one sentence, what advice would you give to people who want to start similar programs?

>> CELIA HUGHES: Well, like I said, the curriculum that we have has been written so anyone can pick it up and has somewhat comfort with the student population and the subject matter can run with it. Because there's always someone in the community that you can find to bring in to do the expertise in terms of photography and things. But I would think just to know your community, know what your capability is, that you got the equipment that you need, and you got the space, and not try to do too much at once. Start small. Damon started with eight. And we started our first classes with eight. So it's not the numbers that matter. It's really the quality and getting comfortable with the material.

>> DAMON McLEESE: I would second that. And really say knowing what your market can bear. Knowing what you're good at. We ventured off into a theater and poetry project a few years ago, and it didn't work well. We do best gallery work. Do what you know best. Find the story of the kids that are coming through your program door. Find something that nobody else is doing. There were more dogs here than people. And we realized there were a lot of young, start up companies that weren't working with art consultants that were really taken by the corporate commission stuff. We're focusing on what we know well and not trying to be something that we're not.

>> LISA DAMICO: Great, thank you. It looks like we have a question from -- Betty, are you finished?

>> Yes, I am.

>> LISA DAMICO: It looks like we have a question from Ilene.

>> This is for Damon. What graphic design program were you using in your ARTWORKS program?

>> DAMON McLEESE: The purpose of the graphic design element was to expose the student to graphic design as a possible career path. And so each of the graphic designers, our goal was to pair the student participants one on one with the professional graphic designer. So whatever program they were using, most of them would bring their laptops in, and I think they were just using a variety of different software programs. And then at the end of the mentoring aspect of it, we took our students over and we spent a half a day at Kindler, a large design and architect firm here in town. It's not like we were teaching the students how to do graphic design, we were exposing them to professionals who work in that field and they developed the posters together.

>> Okay. The other question I had. The Artomat machines, how costly are they? And do you rent or buy them?

>> DAMON McLEESE: Technically it's a lease. And we leased it directly from the Artomat program in North Carolina. We got lucky. It was a used machine that was in a gallery in Kansas City that was going out of business. We were able to get this a little under \$3,000. And we'll be able to lease it as long as we're using nit the program. And what we do is at the end of the month we send him a check for \$1 for each of the pieces of art that our students have sold and then we keep the rest.

>> I see, thank you.

>> LISA DAMICO: Do we have any other questions from the participants? It doesn't look like we do.

>> CELIA HUGHES: This is Celia. I don't have a question. But I wanted to follow up on what Damon said in response to Betty's question. And that's do what you do well. They determined they do art. They have a gallery. That's sort of why we went off of the art and into a combination of art and new media. That's where we had a need and that's what we could really do well.

And so I think that is really, as an organization, you have to sit back and say, yeah, this program sounds great. But is it something that we do and can do well? That is one of the things that I've learned through my years here. I hear great ideas and then I come back and I think, "Well, I don't have this, or I can't do that." You have to pay attention to where your skills are, and where your staff's skills are, and where your artist's skills are and then just go with that.

I think that's important to remember.

>> LISA DAMICO: Great. Thank you to both Celia and Damon. I personally really enjoyed hearing about your programs a little bit more from you all directly.

And after the webinar ends, you all should receive an e-mail, an automatic e-mail from John Abodili, who is the person whose name is on our account with a recording of the webinar. That will be available temporarily until someone else records another one. We'll also include a link to that into the update that Stephanie sends out. And we're looking into uploading these so you can access them from the Sharepoint shared documents folder. We'll send out an e-mail.

Thank you all and we will see you next time.

>> DAMON McLEESE: Thank you.

>> CELIA HUGHES: Thank you.

>> LISA DAMICO: All right. Good-bye.

(Presentation ends)