

2018 ARTS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FINAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2018



Program Overview

The LA County Arts Internship Program supports and strengthens the cultural sector of LA County by providing access to high-quality opportunities for college students of all backgrounds to gain experience, understanding, and transferrable skills relevant to careers in the arts, the creative economy, and engagement in public life. In addition to receiving ten weeks of paid work experience at their organizations, interns participated in group learning opportunities during the 2018 Arts Summit in Little Tokyo, and meetings with their regional Peer Groups which ranged from areas including downtown Los Angeles, Long Beach/San Pedro, Hollywood, Glendale/Atwater Village, and East LA. The 2018 program continued a nearly two-decade partnership with The Getty Foundation, which supports multicultural internships in museums and visual arts organizations and provides funding for the educational components of the County's program. Combined, the Getty and County programs continue to provide the largest paid arts internship program in the United States, employing more than 250 undergraduate interns in arts organizations across LA County this past summer. To date, more than 2,200 students have been through the County's program alone.

The Arts Internship Program furthers the County's goals for education and workforce readiness by:

- Introducing a new generation to the arts and cultural ecology of Los Angeles
- Bolstering nonprofit arts organizations with additional energy and labor that enhance their ability to deliver cultural services to County residents;
- Deepening the pool of volunteers, staff, advocates and leaders needed to strengthen the cultural sector of Los Angeles County; and
- Exemplifying a long-term, successful public-private partnership between the Getty Foundation and the Arts Commission.

As part of the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative, the Board of Supervisors approved a motion in April 2017 expanding the number of funded positions to 178, and requiring that at least 28 of the new positions be reserved for community college students. While community college students have always been eligible to apply, the Commission took multiple steps this year to specifically engage them. First, the 2018 Arts Internship Grant Review Panel identified 31 host organizations to serve as community college hosts based on their articulated interest in working with community college students, and their existing connections with local schools that further promote recruitment. Additionally, Commission staff worked closely with those organizations to help strategize best practices, and to share promising resumes and contacts at the school level. Finally, staff devoted ample time during Supervisor

Orientation for community college host organizations to discuss recruitment strategies with one another. The result was that 41 community college students participated during summer of 2018 – the largest number in the program’s history, far exceeding the Board of Supervisors’ mandate.

2018 Program Participants

The 2018 Arts Internship Program provided 179 college students internships at 124 performing, presenting, municipal and literary arts organizations. All interns completed the program, working at their organizations for ten consecutive weeks.



Outreach

Once available, internship positions were posted online at the end of March 2018, and the Arts Commission notified all local career development offices and departments such as music, theater, and dance at colleges and universities, including community colleges. Staff also sent out a press release; notified all arts deputies, commissioners, and municipal arts agencies; and advertised the program regularly via LA Culture Net and the Commission’s website and social media.

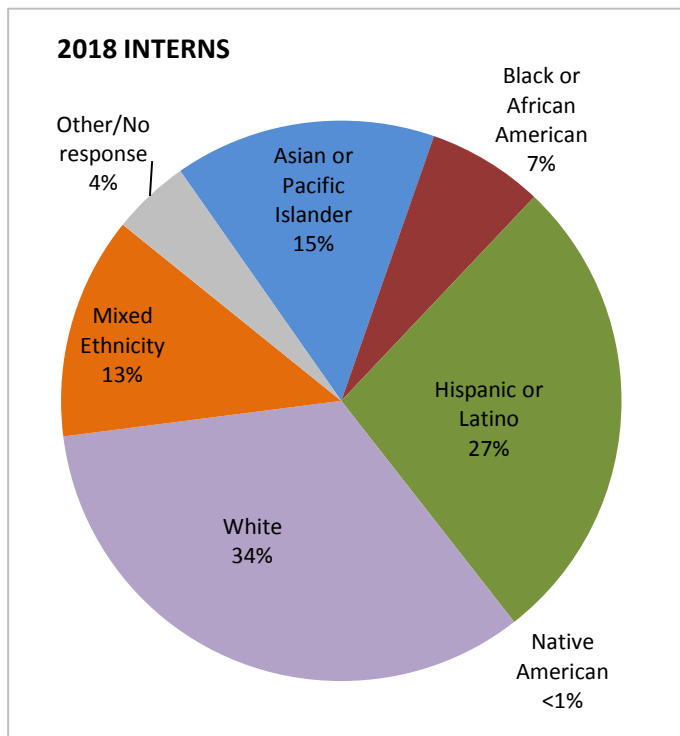
In the summer, staff convened a group of representatives from nearly 15 organizations to share their thoughts and experiences in outreach and recruitment of students from the community colleges. Almost unanimously, organizations shared that the work of outreaching to community college students and staff took much longer than they had originally anticipated. However, nearly all also said they were extremely happy with the candidates they selected. The insight gained from this focus group will be used to inform the Commission’s work around recruitment, messaging, and outreach next year, with the hope of continuing to grow the program’s accessibility to community college students.

Demographic Information (Gender, Ethnicity, Colleges)

All interns had the option to self-report their demographic data, and more than 95% did.

Gender	
Female	78%
Male	20%
Other	2%

Race/Ethnicity



	2018 Interns ¹	Arts workforce (2016) ²	Community colleges in LA County (2016)	CSU (2017)	UCLA (2018)
Asian or Pacific Islander	15%	10%	12%	17%	32%
Black or African American	7%	4%	13%	4%	5%
Hispanic or Latino	27%	14%	58%	42%	21%
Native American	<1%	1%	n/a	n/a	1%
White	34%	60%	15%	23%	26%
Mixed Ethnicity	13%	4%	n/a	5%	4%
Other/No response	4%	7%	2%	4%	n/a
Inter-national			n/a	6%	12%

While the 2018 Arts Intern cohort remained less diverse than the County as a whole, it was, in keeping with previous years, much more diverse than the current LA County arts workforce. These trends suggest that the Internship Program has improved diversity along the pathway to careers and leadership in the arts in the region.

In addition to identifying census categories, interns were also able to describe their ethnic and cultural identity in their own words. A word cloud of common responses follows.



¹ Some individuals declined to respond and some chose more than one category, so numbers do not add up to 100%.

² DataArts, April 2017, **The Demographics of the Arts and Cultural Workforce in Los Angeles County**. Available at <https://www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/artsworkforcedemog2017.pdf>

College Class Standing

Year	Percentage
Sophomore	18%
Junior	32%
Senior	38%
Recent (May-September 2018) Graduate	10%

65% of students reported enrollment in LA County colleges, including USC (15%), UCLA (8%) and Cal State Northridge (5%). For the first time in history, a community college made it in the top five represented schools, with Pasadena City College students making up 4% of the intern pool. As a direct result of the recruitment efforts of our staff and grantee organizations, a record-shattering 41 students from the community colleges participated in the program this year. For comparison, historically the program has hosted up to 10 community college students a year. The CEII expansion of the program and the County commitment to reaching community college students, and those of diverse backgrounds – especially those historically under-represented in the program and the arts workforce – coupled with changes in program guidelines, signaled to grantee organizations, students and colleges that this is a priority. It is also likely that the combined recruitment efforts of the Arts Commission and the community college host organizations raised the profile of the program in general on community college campuses, causing more students to apply.

“Learning to manage a 40 hour work week is not easy but my supervisor helped to make the experience exciting and educational. I always felt comfortable coming to my supervisor with problems or questions and was confident that she would help me find the perfect solution. I have gained not only marketing experience but life experience... and am so grateful to have been given this opportunity to work with such an inspirational and hardworking woman.”
–a marketing intern

Community College	Number of Interns
Pasadena City College	9
Santa Monica College	6
El Camino College	4
East LA College	4
College of the Canyons	6
LA City College	2
Glendale Community College	2
Long Beach City College	2
Moorpark College	1
LA Valley College	3
Mt. San Antonio	1
LA Southwest College	1

This year has facilitated a wealth of learning, and Arts Commission staff looks forward to building on this success in future years.

Program Evaluation

The Arts Commission used an online survey to gather feedback from interns and supervisors. Interns completed a pre-program survey that captured baseline data on their readiness and expectations for the program. The post-program survey provides a sense of their overall experience and changes in attitudes over time. All interns completed the pre and post-program reports. Each supervisor was also required to submit a survey at the end of the program.

Overall Experience

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “poor” and 5 being “excellent,” 87% of students reported their overall experience at their organization was “excellent” or “good.” An astounding 100% of interns said based on their experience, they would recommend the program to a friend.

Workforce Readiness

From the total pool, 72% of interns had never had a full time job before and one third of interns had never worked at an arts organization before. 20% of interns did report some volunteer or paid experience with arts organization in the past.



Before and after their internship, interns were asked to share their thoughts around entering the job market for an arts career. The data shows that the experience helped interns feel more competitive in the job market as a whole, while slightly fewer of them were likely to enter the arts sector.

<i>“With my education and working experience at this stage of my life, I feel ready to competitively enter the job market.”</i>		
Answer Choice	Pre Program Selections	Post Program Selections
Strongly Disagree	1%	<1%
Disagree	12%	7%
Neutral	19%	15%
Somewhat Agree	46%	52%
Strongly Agree	22%	26%
<i>“On a scale of 1-5, how likely are you to pursue a career in the arts?”</i>		
1	< 1%	1%
2	2%	8%
3	13%	18%
4	23%	15%
5	60%	58%

“Without this program, I would not have been able to get in on the ground floor of working in theater and really experience what it would be like to work my dream job... This internship pushed me in a way I did not know I needed and allowed me to be a better artist and overall worker.”

–box office intern, theatre company

Overwhelmingly, supervisors felt that their interns were ready to enter the job market. 90% of supervisors reported that their interns had the necessary skills and experience to qualify for an entry level job in arts production or nonprofit arts administration at the end of the program. They also felt that on the whole, interns performed well in their internships. 73% of supervisors reported that their intern “completely” achieved their learning objectives.

“Our intern was so quick in learning our summertime procedures and, in fact, managed them so efficiently that he was able to help train a new staff member, who started during the final week of his internship!”

-supervisor, music organization

Other Program Benefits

While emphasis on on-the-job training remains tantamount, elevating the interns’ awareness of the arts in LA County is also important. Before the internship program, 54% of interns reported that they attend more than 10 arts events per year, and 23% reported they attend between 6 and 10. Despite this high starting point, on the whole the internship pool noted an overall increase in their LA County arts awareness after their internships were completed.

<i>“How aware are you of the local arts environment in LA County?”</i>		
Answer Choice	Pre-Program Responses	Post-Program Responses
Not Aware	4%	<1%
Somewhat Aware	50%	27%
Aware	33%	52%
Very Aware	13%	20%

Relationships with Internship Supervisors

The relationship between the intern and the supervisor plays a big role in the success of the internship. In addition to supervising the day to day activities of the interns, supervisors also mentor, guide and develop the next generation of arts leadership during the course of the program. This year, 77% of interns report having an “excellent” relationship with their supervisor, and the same percentage of supervisors felt that in return.

Challenges

While the vast majority of interns were very positive about the Arts Internship Program, many expressed that their internship experience highlighted barriers that could keep them from pursuing an arts career. Some concerns were related to the “big picture” of the arts ecosystem, with interns noting things like, “being an artist in this economy will be slightly challenging to find sustainable work that will pay the bills” and that the arts “do not have enough long term stability.” Anecdotally, some students and organizations shared that the intern was one of the only staff being paid a full time wage in their

organization, or they were making more than their colleagues or supervisors. Others felt some barriers existed within their individual organizations, mentioning that at least in one instance “white men and white women have the most chance of ‘making it’ in the industry.”

Peer Groups continued to be very popular amongst interns, but an increasing number of them noted that they would like more focus and consistency between group experiences. One intern noted, “I enjoyed my internship so much, I wanted to be there more than anywhere else.” Another said, “My job has made it very hard for me to leave the office for these events. Maybe make just one mandatory, so that work time is not lost.” The Commission will be looking closely at Peer Group structure to determine how to better align the Peer Group experience with interns’ expectations.

“My peer group was a group of people my age with such similar interests yet such diverse career goals. It shows how broad the arts truly are.”
-public relations intern, music organization

Educational Components of the Program

Arts Summit

The day kicked off outside of the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) with a light breakfast and live, interactive taiko drumming. Interns then shuffled into the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy to hear welcoming remarks from an impressive roster of professionals including the Art Commission’s Executive Director, Kristin Sakoda, and President Eric Eisenberg. They were joined by LA County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and Ann Burroughs, President and CEO of the Japanese American National Museum as well as Arts Commissioners Helen Hernandez and Norma Provincio Pichardo.



Following the welcome, interns had the choice of attending two out of six workshops inside JANM. The workshops available were:

- *What Happens Next? Getting Your Act Together* presented by Camille Schenkkan, Next Generation Initiatives Director, Center Theatre Group; and Elena Muslar, Assistant Director, Entertainment and Fine Arts Professions at Loyola Marymount University
- *Navigating the Gig Economy*, presented by Marlon Fuentes, multidisciplinary designer, researcher, entrepreneur; and Marcus Kuiland-Nazario, artist, curator, educator, performing artist, and founder of Viva!
- *Art & Activism*, presented by Trevor Davis, community organizer and arts advocate; co-chair, Second Supervisorial District Empowerment Congress; and Ben Caldwell, founder, KAOS Network

- *Funding 101*, facilitated by Anji Gaspar-Milanovic, Director of Grants and Professional Development, LA County Arts Commission and presented by Robert Crouch, Executive Director, Fulcrum Arts; Jason Blackwell, Program Associate, The Irvine Foundation; and Jessica Li, Inaugural Member, The Bar Fund
- *Art Without Borders*, presented by Jeremie Loncka, Director of Prison Programming, The Prison Project, The Actors Gang; and Yosimar Reyes, poet, educator, performance artist, public speaker, and co-founder of La Maricolectiva
- *Arts Education in LA County: Achieving Equity at Scale*, presented by Leticia Rhi Buckley, Chief Deputy; and Gillian McCarthy, Arts Education Program Manager, LA County Arts Commission



A short walk over to the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) brought the interns to lunch where they got to meet their Peer Group leaders, enjoy remarks from Leslie Ito of the JACCC and Chris Komai of the Little Tokyo Community Council, and a performance by Alison de la Cruz from the JACCC. The day concluded with an excerpted performance of “The Hunger Cycle” by Cornerstone Theatre Company at Artshare LA, a tour of the galleries at Hauser & Wirth, and a visit to East West Players, which presented an excerpt from “Tam Tran Goes to Washington.”

“Arts Summit was a pretty eye-opening experience as I had the chance to learn how the arts is a multidimensional career track that can be the intersection of a myriad other fields.”

-marketing and communications intern, theatre organization

Overall, students found the day to be very valuable. More than 81% were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the available topics and 70% felt the same about the presenters. 93% reported appreciating the opportunity to experience the arts in and around Little Tokyo, and 82% recommended that next year’s Summit includes similar offerings.



Hosting Arts Summit in Little Tokyo, with its central location and proximity to public transportation, seemed to be more accessible for interns than in previous years. While the Arts Commission has traditionally rotated the location through supervisorial districts, the growing number of interns and the distances they are spread out across the county may necessitate a continued commitment to central Los Angeles. For the first time, the Arts Commission asked interns to report how they got to Arts Summit; over half either carpooled or took public transportation, a significant indicator that Little Tokyo and other central locations may be a good option for future years.

Peer Groups

Arts Internship Program Peer Groups provide a structure for interns to come together to learn from one another and connect with arts administrators and organizations in an associated geographic region. Funded by The Getty Foundation, Peer Group Leaders coordinated at least two required opportunities for interns during the ten week internship program. 2018 Peer Group Leaders were:

- Jennifer Babcock, Los Angeles Opera Company
- Curtis Baxter, Young Storytellers
- Robert Crouch, Fulcrum Arts
- Nina Crowe, Glendale Arts
- Sonia Marie de Leon, Santa Cecilia Opera and Orchestra Festival
- Lisa DeSmidt, Arts Council of Long Beach
- Alice Dutton, American Youth Symphony
- Ernest Figueroa, The Broad Stage
- Sara Ford, Free Arts for Abused Children
- Jessica Hanna, Bootleg Theater Company
- Karen Mack, LA Commons
- Ilia Lopez, Cornerstone Theater Company
- Debra Pasquerette, The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
- Manny Prieto, Los Angeles Music and Art School
- Alma Villegas, artworxLA



Peer Group leaders have been encouraged to be as creative as possible in the coordination of their convenings and often draw upon their own personal passions, experiences or networks to craft informative and engaging experiences for their interns. A sampling of events from this year includes:

- A tour of the LA Opera Costume Shop
- Visiting Angels Gate Cultural Center and the Korean Bell of Friendship
- A tour of the Alex Theatre and Antaeus Theatre in Glendale
- Working on a mural project at the Jordan Downs housing projects in Watts
- A “speed networking” event at The Wallis with arts professionals sharing more about their career path

76% of interns reported that their Peer Groups felt beneficial or very beneficial. 70% reported their Peer Groups increased their understanding of arts careers and how to get a job, and more than 85% also felt events allowed them to meet and learn from additional people who had been working in the field. 80% felt that Peer Group events should continue to be mandatory for future interns, with some interns suggesting in their surveys that we increase the number of meetings.

Looking Ahead



Looking toward 2019, the Arts Commission will continue to focus on ensuring that the internship program is accessible to all students living and attending school in LA County. Building on the momentum of the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative, Arts Commission staff will work to initiate and strengthen partnerships with schools, expand recruitment, and engage alumni in such a way that each year’s intern cohort increasingly mirrors the county population at large.

Updates to elements like supervisor training and Peer Groups are also on the horizon, in an effort to ensure both the student and supervisor experience in the program is maximized. Arts Commission staff also recognizes the interconnectedness of the internship program and other grants programming like the Organizational Grant Program (OGP) in cultivating an arts ecology that is vibrant, stable and ready to hire former interns with high-quality positions at a living wage. Concerns raised by interns underscore the importance of the Commission’s broader efforts to grow that support, including but not limited to, increasing the overall budget for the OGP program to better sustain salaries in the field.

The 2019 application for organizations is currently open and will close October 17th, and a list of available positions for students to apply to for summer 2019 will post in March. Arts Commission staff looks forward to continuing to ensure a successful experience for all students next summer and beyond.