



Mariposa County Arts Council Secures Funding to Expand Art Programming at County Day Camp

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Photo: Puppets made by Day Camp participants in Bryan Starchman's theatre workshop.

Mariposa, CA – The Mariposa County Arts Council is pleased to announce they are the recipient of two grants that will support deeper and more extensive art programming for youth enrolled in Mariposa County Parks and Recreation's Summer Day Camp. These grants are: a Local Innovation Block grant awarded by the County's Office of Probation and California Arts Council's Artists in the Schools Extension grant. While the Arts Council has provided art program for the County's summer camp program for many year, the support from these grants provides an opportunity to significantly deepen the program, allowing for 6 solid weeks of sequential art learning, at no additional cost.

Art programming for youth is extremely limited in Mariposa and children interested in developing their artistic abilities must have the means to pay private instructors who have very long waiting lists. This program will provide equitable access to these in-demand art and music teachers to children who would not be able to receive private lessons from them due to economic barriers. Socially speaking, it is important that low-income youth are provided the opportunity to engage in arts programming because studies have shown that economic disadvantaged youth who participated in arts education were:

Four more times likely to have high academic achievement and three times more likely to have high attendance than those who didn't, and that these students were more likely to be elected to class office and participate in a math or science fair. Additionally, updates to these studies showed that these advantages only increased over time, and that arts-engaged low-income students are more likely than their non-arts-engaged peers to have attended and done well in college, build careers, volunteered in their communities and participated in the political process by voting. (Presidential Committee on the Arts, 2008.)

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Teaching artists attached to this program include: Bryan Starchman, Moira Donohoe, and Adams Burns who will be leading theatre, painting, and music workshops for summer camp participants.

Playwright Bryan Starchman, who will be leading the theatre workshop, grew up in Mariposa, CA. He began writing short stories in the first grade and fell in love with screenwriting and playwriting in high school. At UCLA, he spent four years honing his craft. There, he worked as a script reader and production assistant at FOX studios for John Davis (Predator, Courage Under Fire, Grumpy Old Men, Dr. Doolittle), Bender/Spink (The Butterfly Effect, The Ring, A History of Violence) and STARZ (Spartacus, Magic City). Now he lives in Mariposa where he teaches American Literature, Advanced Placement Language, and Theatre at Mariposa County High School. His 21 published plays have been produced over 2000 times in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, 9 out of 10 Canadian Provinces (come on Prince Edward Island!) and six more countries including Mexico, England, Italy, Dubai of the United Arab Emirates, South Africa, and Portugal. He has also collaborated with playwright and composer Stephen Murray to create the satirical "Just Another High School Musical."

Heading up the visual arts workshop will be Moira Donohoe. Raised in Yosemite National Park, Donohoe is a full-time landscape painter and teaching artist. She has worked as an artist-in-residence at Mt. Lassen Charter School, Lassen College, and Long Valley Charter School. She has worked as a teaching artist for the Mariposa County Arts Council as a teaching artist for Mariposa County Arts Council's summer day camp and after school art programs.

Finally, leading the music workshop will be Adam Burns a musician and educator based in Mariposa, California. Burns grew up in rural England and moved to California in 2004. He worked as a Field Science Educator for NatureBridge in Yosemite for seven years before transferring his education skills to music. In 2010, He launched the [Beat Harvest](#) music education program with a mission to inspire people to make music and teach them the skills they need to do so. In his teaching, Burns focuses on unleashing creative potential and collaboration with other musicians. His goal is to teach his students not only to play their instrument, but also how to use music to express themselves and build community.

"I'm absolutely thrilled we are able to expand our summer camp offering so significantly this year," says Arts Council Executive Director, Cara Goger. "I really admire how Parks and Recreation design their summer camp program in way that is no cost-prohibitive to local youth and so it's just a pleasure for us to support them by providing gifted teaching artists. I have no doubt that working with these artists will be a transformative experience for many kids and I am so grateful to funders for supporting this program."

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This program is made possible by a Local Innovation Block grant and the California Arts Council's Artists in the Schools Extension grant program.

The Mariposa County Arts Council is funded in part by the County of Mariposa, the California Arts Council (a state agency), and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency).

The MARIPOSA COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL, INC. is an incorporated not-for-profit organization, created to promote and support all forms of the cultural arts, for all ages, throughout Mariposa County.