

# **The Community Arts Programs of the Cooperative Extension Service: Comparative Study of Arts Initiatives in Kentucky and Wisconsin**

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University of Oregon  
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A MASTER'S PROJECT

Presented to the Arts and Administration Program of the University of Oregon in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Arts Management

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**The Community Arts Programs of the Cooperative Extension Service:**  
A Comparative Study of Fine Arts Initiatives in Kentucky and Wisconsin

Savannah Chantal Barrett

Approved: Ann Galligan

Dr. Ann Galligan  
Arts and Administration Program  
University of Oregon

Date: 5 - 29 - 2013

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*"What is a friend? A single soul dwelling in two bodies."*

-Aristotle

To the students, faculty, and staff of AAd:

Thank you to all of you people that made it shine, thank you for the immense power of your offerings. You are an incredible group of people. I have been blessed to learn from you, and know that I wouldn't have made it through without your love and support. I look forward to our continued friendships!

To my friends and family:

I'm humbled each and every day by the bounty I've been provided, by the swelling heart of all of my good friends from home, from the road, in the struggle, and where I am. Thank you for your love and support!

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## EDUCATION

**Masters of Science in Arts Administration**, University of Oregon  
Community Arts Management Concentration, 4.0 GPA

May 2013

**Bachelor of Arts in Modern Cultural Humanities**, University of Louisville  
Minors: Social Change, Cultural Anthropology, Magna Cum Laude, 3.74 GPA

May 2008

## EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

**Program Development Fellowship, Center for Community Arts and Cultural Policy** 9/2012-current

**Program Development Fellowship, Arts Administration Program at University of Oregon** 9/2012-current

- Assist university department and research center with program development related to:
  - Creation of undergraduate major in arts administration
  - Strategic partnerships with national, statewide, and local organizations
  - Research related to federal and foundation grant opportunities
  - Grants management & Database management
  - Graduate Program events and communications

**Education Programs Manager, Louisville Visual Art Association**

7/2009-9/2011

- Managed 23 instructors, 35 classes, and 750 students recruited from 484 schools in 19 counties
- Initiated and direct the LVAA internship program (15 interns per year)
- Re-established the LVAA Adult Education program (15 workshops and master classes per year)
- Co-founded the Buy Local First Fair (Expanded from 25 vendors and 250 attendees in 2009 to 150 vendors and 4,000 attendees in 2010 & 2011, review: [www.louisvillevisualart.org/buylocal.html](http://www.louisvillevisualart.org/buylocal.html))
- Compiled quarterly reports and event summaries, authored 4 fully awarded grant proposals

**Creative Director, Salvo Collective**

10/2010-8/2011

- Founding member, responsibilities included:
  - Concept development
  - Creating patron database
  - Artist recruitment & merchandising
  - Public relations, website & social media

**Outbound Sales Representative, Actor's Theatre of Louisville**

10/2008-4/2009

- Aggressive sale of tickets and season subscription packages
- Direct sponsorship requests during annual campaign

**Western KY Recruitment Coordinator, Governor's School for the Arts (GSA)**

8/2008- 1/2009

- Identified, scheduled, and led informational sessions at twenty-one Kentucky schools
- Created arts advocate database for twenty one Kentucky counties
- Developed presentations, informational literature, and admissions guides
- Previous experience with GSA
  - Residential Advisor (2006-2008)
  - Administrative Intern (2005)

**Gallery Assistant Curator, Paul Paletti Gallery**

7/2004 -7/2008

- Marketed all gallery events
- Built national to local media network

## SAVANNAH BARRETT

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- Designed, ordered, mailed announcements
- Maintenance of gallery mailing list
- Sale of artwork
- Design of label and cataloging systems

## SKILLS

**Administrative skills:** Budget adherence; Committee recruitment; Educational programming; Grant writing; Intern management; Logistical operations; Marketing; Auctions; Sponsorships; Statistical assessment

**Technology competencies:** Adobe platform; Microsoft Office platform; Constant Contact; Facebook; Flickr; Google (Mail, Reader, Documents); LinkedIn; Skype; Survey Monkey; Tessitura; Vimeo; Wordpress; Youtube

**Community Involvement:** Over 600 hours of service in the arts, farming, mental health, & social justice.

**Cross Cultural Understanding:** Community-based Arts training in England, Senegal, South Africa, & the U.S.

## EVENT PLANNING AND CURATORIAL EXPERIENCE

Graduate Internship: University of Kentucky Fine Arts Extension	2012
What We Carry Exhibition: co-curator	2012
Fools for Love Annual Squallis Puppeteers Fundraiser: committee head	2011
<i>Children's Fine Art Classes</i> program annual exhibition (750 artworks)	2010, 2011
Visual Art College and Career Day (17 Colleges and Universities nation-wide)	2010
Permanent Collection of CJ Presma/ Center for Photographic Studies: archivist	2009
"Passed On: Making Identity through Objects": curator, event catalogue	2008
2007, Jack Norris "Photographs in Memory of Anne Braden": curator	2007
James Nachtwey "Witness" exhibit: curator and lecture facilitator	2006
Louisville Photo Biennial: project manager	2005, 2007
"Art for A Cause" benefit for GSA and Darfur victims: project manager, grant writer	2005
5-Week Community Education Creative Writing Class: teacher, grant writer	2003
Fallin' for the Arts: Committee head	2003
Grayson County Arts Awareness Campaign: project manager	2002, 2003
* Assistant curator of 20+ additional exhibitions	

## COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

Rural Arts and Culture Working Group, National Rural Assembly	2012-2013
Culture and Education Alliance of Eugene, OR, Founder and Member	2012-2013
Emerging Leaders in the Arts Network Co-Chair	2012-2013
Student Advisory Group, Cohort Representative	2011-2012
Governor's School for the Arts Alumni Advisory Council	2011
Squallis Puppeteers Board of Directors	2010-2011
LVAA Education Committee Staff Liaison	2009-2011
Buy Local First Fair Committee Chair	2009-2011
Western Middle School Visual and Performing Arts Magnet Advisory Committee	2009-2011
University of Louisville Arts and Cultural Partnership	2009-2011
Kentuckianna Cultural Consortium	2009-2011
Kentucky Arts Council Arts Education Partner Representative	2009-2011
Arts for Social Change Seminar in Johannesburg, South Africa	2006
Grayson County Arts Council: Founding member, Youth Representative	2002-2004
Grayson County HS Arts Club: Founder, President	2002-2004

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## AWARDS/PUBLICATIONS

Ina McClung Graduate Student Research Award	2012
Contributing Author: Art of the Rural	2012
Thesis published at University of Louisville Research Symposium: <i>"Who's Identity? Biographical Objects as an Alternative Representation of the American South."</i>	2008
Harry S. Truman Scholar in Public Policy regional finalist	2007
Presented the Ali Scholars Program on BBC radio in Manchester, England	2006
Spoke before Kentucky House and Senate for funding GSA	2006
Muhammad Ali Institute for Peace and Justice Ali Scholar	2005-2007
Marlene M Helm GSA Alumni Achievement Award	2003
Kentucky Governor's Scholars Program	2003
International DECA Conference Public Relations: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Team Winner (Arts Advocacy Campaign)	2002
Kentucky Governor's School for the Arts: Creative Writing	2002

## REFERENCES

**EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES:**

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**The Community Arts Programs of the Cooperative Extension Service:  
Comparative Study of Arts Initiatives in Kentucky and Wisconsin**

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Spring, 2013

**ABSTRACT:**

This research project reviews the important benchmarks throughout the broad history of arts programs within the Cooperative Extension Service; and evaluates the current design, evolution, challenges, and best practices of the University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program through case study and comparison to best practice methods in the University of Wisconsin Extension Service's arts program: "Putting Culture Back into Agriculture."

**KEYWORDS:**

Rural Arts  
Rural Cultural Policy  
Cooperative Extension Service  
Land-Grant Universities  
Arts in Kentucky  
Arts in Wisconsin  
Community Arts  
Community Cultural Development  
Model Program  
Best Practices in the Arts  
University of Kentucky  
Putting Culture Back into Agriculture

## **I. Chapter One: Introduction**

In 2005, the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Program partnered with their School of Fine Art to place Extension Fine Arts agents in rural counties across the state. Also in 2005, University of Wisconsin Extension funded Maryo Gard Ewell & Miranda McClenaghan to promote rural arts initiatives pairing regional culture and agriculture. My research offers comparison of these two arts extension programs specifically because they originated at the same time and sought to engage communities in similar ways.

Historically, the investment in rural arts by Cooperative Extension programs has provided new possibilities for sustained arts programming for small communities. These partnerships can provide learning opportunity for both rural arts practitioners and community arts academics linked to land-grant universities. This study considers the broad history and important benchmarks of the Fine Arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service. In this study, I examine the design, challenges, and best practices of the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension program through a case study, and use these findings to compare the University of Kentucky program to best practice methods in the Wisconsin Extension Service's arts programs. Based on the results, I will evaluate both Extension initiatives as model programs for arts and cultural programming in rural communities.

The Fine Arts Extension program in Kentucky is an ongoing program intended to gradually expand throughout the state, while the "Putting Culture Back into Agriculture" program in Wisconsin was a two-year, grant funded project. To the benefit of my research, the Wisconsin program concluded and is now summarized on the Gard Foundation website, which includes project summaries and a substantial evaluation of the project as a whole. I hope to

apply lessons learned in the Wisconsin project evaluation to my investigation of the Extension Fine Arts Program in Kentucky, and to use this information to evaluate both as model programs.

## **II. Research Methodology**

### **I. Purpose Statement:**

My Masters Research Project explores the broad history of the arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service. With that history and current landscape of cultural policy in mind, my research study evaluates the design, evolution, challenges, and best practices of the Fine Arts program of the Extension Service in Kentucky through a case study, and uses those findings to engage in comparison to best practice methods in the Wisconsin Extension Service's arts programs. Based on the results of that study, I aim to evaluate these Extension initiatives as model programs for arts and cultural programming in rural communities.

I consider this research study to be of importance because I believe rural and statewide arts programs to have an enormous opportunity to affect positive change in the United States. Federal estimates of rural population vary, yet, according to the 2000 United States census, in addition to the 21% of Americans live in rural areas, an additional 11% live in small towns with a population below 50,000 people, thus 32% of the population currently lives outside of urban centers ("Census 2000 population," 2011). According to the 2008 National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts* (SPPA), just 12% of non-profit arts organizations are located outside of urban centers (Iyengar, 2010).

A century ago, rural towns were the center of American life. Dramatic shifts in economic resources in rural areas have left many small towns without opportunity for their residents. In the past twenty years, rural areas have also seen their populations dwindle as their best and

brightest leave the region to pursue education and employment unavailable in their hometowns. Of those who remain, many struggle with long commutes to work, school, healthcare, and cultural services. One problem of rural-urban migration is that the cultural heritages of rural places, which have produced much of the iconic “American” culture, are put at risk when a generation is no longer present to practice and preserve these cultural traditions.

This rural-urban flight creates a Catch 22 for small communities. Many rural areas and their small urban-cluster county seats are actively recruiting knowledge jobs, but are challenged by providing the quality of life that these jobs demand. As Richard Florida explains in his bestseller *The Rise of the Creative Class*: “The creative class is largely oriented to large cities and regions that offer a variety of economic opportunities (and) a stimulating environment” (Florida, 11). Tom Borrup, author of the *Creative Community Building Handbook*, also argues that “an active and participatory cultural scene are essential to a strong economy” (Borrup, 6).

The arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service must be evaluated as model programs because they offer an alternative to often unreliable national arts policy and funding model. Utilizing the extensive social capital and financial resources of the extension service to fill the increasing gaps of state arts agency programming offers an opportunity for rural arts programs that counties can afford and that their citizenry are comfortable engaging with.

## **II. Research Questions**

My Masters Research Project investigates the following question: *What is the history of the Fine Arts Extension program in Kentucky as compared to the history of the “Putting the Culture back in Agriculture” project in Wisconsin?* In the process of answering that linear question, I have also examined the following qualitative queries: *How does the Fine Arts*

*Extension program impact/add value to rural Kentucky communities? In what ways are these programs in Kentucky and Wisconsin model rural arts projects for other states to consider?*

### **III. Methodological Paradigm:**

In this research study, I have employed a triangulation of methods to explore my research questions in this qualitative research study. I address questions in my research by utilizing research methods including comparative case studies and various field data-collection techniques, which are contextualized by extensive literature review.

### **III. Research Design**

#### **I. Research approach/dimensions of research**

My research methodology has required gathering relevant data from specified sources through data collection tools including interviews, surveys, and personal communications including email and telephone calls. I have compiled relevant data in spreadsheets, and have coded data across multiple interviews. Additionally, I have compared the field-data collected in relationship to the Kentucky project to relevant, publicly-available data regarding the Wisconsin program.

From this comparison I have identified similarities and differences in organizational structure, community selection, personnel qualifications, programming, levels of community engagement, levels of community satisfaction, and other fields that I will recognize as important based on my research findings. I have evaluated which aspects of the programs can be considered best practices in the community arts field, and make recommendations to the organizations.

## **II. Strategy of inquiry**

My overarching strategy of inquiry is from a social constructivist point of view and is designed as a qualitative approach to produce new data in the form of case study of the Kentucky arts program in Whitley County; and to compare that new data with existing data from Wisconsin's arts program. I have obtained the existing data from Wisconsin's project through literature review and data analysis, with occasional personal communications with the Wisconsin project's leadership.

A primary research method for the development of new data has been a case study regarding the University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program in Whitley County, also referred to as Whitley County Fine Arts Extension. This case study includes interviews and surveys produced in Kentucky during January, 2013; as well as the review of publicly available evaluative data, including grey papers, grant summaries and annual reports from both the Kentucky and Wisconsin projects. Before reviewing these sources, I created a spreadsheet to capture the following data categories, including: mission, purpose, assets, challenges, organizational structure, capital and human resources, goals, value, and results. Based on comparison of the data, I compared and evaluated each project's effectiveness, and evaluated the viability of each project's probable repeatability in other regions through partnerships with other Cooperative Extension Service programs. Additionally, I have engaged in extensive literature review to situate my case study in the broader cannon of knowledge in the rural community arts field. While few academic sources are available in relationship to these specific programs, there is a great deal regarding the history of arts programs in the Cooperative Extension Service which will ground my research in the community arts field.

### **III. Research Design Overview**

#### **i. Data-collection Tools**

I used direct data-collection and analysis techniques to supplement my evaluation of the Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program in relationship to their effectiveness and probable repeatability in other regions. I also utilized these techniques to gather information about the history of, impetus for, and process of managing these programs.

#### **1. Part A: Interviews:**

I conducted both interviews and surveys in relation to the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program. I extensively interviewed the Whitley County Arts Extension Agent, Arts Extension Assistant, and State Director of Kentucky Fine Arts Extension. The interview questions were designed to include queries relating to: the history of fine arts extension in Kentucky; how the Kentucky program adds value to rural communities; the best practices, programs, and challenges of the fine arts program in Whitley County; what aspects of the Whitley County program have proven to be effective; and how this program could be adapted to other communities outside of Kentucky through partnerships with Cooperative Extension.

Considering my internship with Whitley County Fine Arts Extension during the summer of 2012, I do acknowledge my biases towards the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension program in this research study, but have designed this study to be as impartial as possible.

#### **2. Part B: Surveys**

I created online surveys through Qualtrics, which was disseminated to members of the Whitley County Fine Arts Advisory Board as well as constituents (parents, supporters, etc.) of their programs. These surveys gather data in relationship to the arts program's stakeholders and participants' assessment of the mission, purpose, assets, challenges, organizational

structure, capital and human resources, goals, value, and results of the Fine Arts Extension programs in their counties.

O'Leary defines surveying as "the process of collecting data by asking a range of individuals the same questions related to their characteristics, attributes, how they live, or their opinions through a questionnaire" (O'Leary, 2010, pg. 181). She identifies the primary benefits of surveying to include a) reaching a large number of respondents; b) representing an even larger population; c) allowing for comparisons; and d) generating standardized, quantifiable, empirical data (O'Leary, 2010, pg. 183). On the contraire, she explains that collecting survey data can be a challenge. Specifically, she explains that generating response to your survey and the cost of printing/ mailing surveys can be significant (O'Leary, 2010, pg. 183).

Data collection through surveys can provide significant challenge, particularly in regards to generating survey response. Despite the possibility of that challenge, I identified this method as ideal for my case study because it provided specific information and testimonials from constituents of the Whitley County Fine Arts Program while simultaneously producing quantitative statistical data about community participation in their programs. I did foresee and experience challenges in locating contact information for those I hoped to survey, but experienced a strong response rate despite this challenge.

In anticipation of these challenges, I secured relationships over the course of my summer internship that assisted me in contacting stakeholders and participants. I used online surveys primarily because of their built-in data-analysis function. However, I understood that internet access and technological competency are significant issues in rural Southeast Kentucky, and in consideration of this, I did adapt my survey strategy to include less than ten personally

distributed surveys. Twenty-three people participated in the survey, out of a maximum participation of 25. Participants took the survey between January 8<sup>th</sup> and February 10, 2013. Of the 23 participants, 19 (83%) confirmed their willingness to be contacted to provide further information.

### **3. Part C: Personal Communications**

Communications with Cooperative Extension supervisors and University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension staff were best addressed through emailing and phone calls related to specific questions, most likely regarding the history of the Fine Arts Extension program.

#### **ii. Anticipated ethical issues**

I grew up in and personally identify with a small community in rural Kentucky. I am deeply committed to rural issues; particularly access to the arts based on geographic and economic isolation. As such, I have strived to confront my personal biases towards the culture and lifestyle of rural communities, of their inherent importance in American culture and policy, and on the assumed need for arts access programs in rural communities.

I also served as a graduate intern of the University of Kentucky fine arts extension program in Whitley County during the summer of 2012. This is the location in which I conducted my case study, and as such, was an acquaintance of many of my interview, survey, and personal communication respondents.

### **IV. Delimitations**

For the purposes of this study, I have considered only the states of Kentucky and Wisconsin in my comparison. The study is informed by literature written about other states and their historical contributions to arts programs in the Cooperative Extension Service. Another boundary of my research is that I am considering only one of the five county-wide arts program

in Kentucky in actual case study field research, and only looking at Wisconsin's examples through literature review and document analysis, but not through case study. Moreover, I use only one type of research approach (interview, survey, or personal communication) per group of people involved in the study.

#### **V. Limitations:**

I anticipate that the results of this study cannot be generalized across regions and Extension Service organizations because extension work is so closely tied to particulars in terms of place and community culture. However, both the best practices and challenges found in Kentucky and Wisconsin programs can be externalized to the benefit of developing model programs in other regions, and producing some advice for the improvement of the current programs.

#### **IV. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures**

I began my research process with a general awareness of the relatively new Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program. Based on this prior knowledge, I have spent the past two years gathering resources related to both historical and contemporary arts programs in the Cooperative Extension Service. This extensive literature review broadened my understanding of the history of arts programs in agricultural extension dating back to the early twentieth century. Through this historical lens, I now understand the vital importance of arts extension programs in the development of the community arts field. With this in mind, I have endeavored to investigate whether or not contemporary arts extension programs could play a similarly important role in the development of more ubiquitous arts programming across rural America.

During this literature review process, I discovered the University of Wisconsin's "Putting Culture Back into Agriculture" program, which provided a well-documented case study of

Wisconsin's attempt to provide arts extension programming to the same number of rural communities as the Kentucky arts extension program. Simultaneous to my exploration of arts extension program history, I contacted the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Program to gather more information on the purpose and structure of their program. The rural focus of both programs and the similarity in scale of the two initiatives led me to pursue a comparison of these projects in my research. Since Wisconsin's project has already been reported on and evaluated, I chose to actively study Kentucky's program as a case study, and to compare my findings to the information publicly available regarding Wisconsin's program in order to evaluate the viability of these arts extension programs as model rural arts programs.

As a result of my contact with the University of Kentucky, I secured an Extension Fine Arts internship in Whitley County, Kentucky. My internship experiences led me to narrow the scope of my case study to specifically look at the Whitley County program. While completing this internship, I also attended at National Rural Assembly Rural Arts and Culture Working Group convening, which introduced me to practitioners and academics across the nation that could offer expertise regarding the development of arts extension programs, but also broadened my understanding of the role public policy must play in the development of these publicly funded university-community partnerships. With that realization in mind, I came to consider this research project through a cultural policy lens, focused on federal and national policy and funding groups' relationship to the rural arts.

### **I. Recruitment Methods**

I used purposive sampling to select my interview and survey respondents because of their unique experiences and expertise related to my research topic. Interview participants

were limited to University of Kentucky Extension employees, and survey participants limited to less than 25 Whitley County Fine Arts program constituents. I had interacted previously with all of my interviewees and many of my survey respondents during my internship, and considering my familiarity with study participants, felt comfortable contacting them directly to ask them to participate in the interviews and surveys.

## **II. Informed Consent Procedures**

Prior to investigation of these sites, a recruitment letter and consent form was distributed to and signed by University of Kentucky Fine Arts Extension employees participating in the interview process. Surveys included a disclaimer at the beginning of the page that guarantees that no personal contact information will be made public. Please refer to Appendix E. to view the interview subject consent form, which reviews anticipated risks, provisions for participant confidentiality, and potential benefit to research participants.

## **III. Data Collection Procedures**

I travelled to Whitley County, Kentucky during early January, 2013 to conduct all three interviews with University of Kentucky Extension employees. I sent all interviewees a recruitment letter, consent form, and potential interview questions in advance of the interviews. While on location, I also distributed and collected surveys. I attempted to recruit survey participants before traveling to Whitley County, and also send surveys digitally as well as distributed them physically. Both physical and virtual distribution is necessary considering the lack of internet access across the region, and the limited time of the researcher to visit Whitley County.

#### IV. Coding and Analysis Procedures

All relevant data procured through these data collection processes are organized into formal data collection sheets and coded through the following code system:

H: General History  
 HK: History related to Kentucky  
 HW: History related to Wisconsin  
 K: Related to the Kentucky Extension program  
 P: Related to Public Policy  
 R: Related to rural arts  
 W: Related to the Wisconsin Extension program

This data coding strategy applied to interviews of University of Kentucky employees as well as document analysis related to both Kentucky and Wisconsin. Survey data was organized into spreadsheets, with each survey question as a spreadsheet data field.

#### V. Strategies for validating findings

To validate my research findings, I employed a variety of validation strategies and reliability procedures suggested by John Creswell in his authoritative text *Research Design*. I closely compared my interview transcriptions to the interview recordings to ensure that I captured the exact responses of the interviewee. I also developed a coding strategy in advance of data collection, and utilized the same coding procedures throughout the research process to ensure consistency. These reliability procedures help ensure that the raw data is clean and well organized for conversion into meaningful supporting evidence.

Creswell defines validity in qualitative research as “based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of the account” (Creswell, 2009, pp.191). To accomplish validity, I engaged in triangulation of data sources (interviews, surveys, document analysis) so that I could gather data from a variety of

informants in a variety of data procurement formats. I have already clarified the biases that I bring to this study. Moreover, I have developed a member checking process by inviting interview respondents to confirm the accuracy of their quotes and statements. Finally, I made use of the academic community at the University of Oregon to engage in peer debriefing through a faculty research advisor's comprehensive review of my research findings.

### **I. Role of the Researcher**

My role as the researcher in this study is that of an active listener. While I have worked with the Whitley County branch of the University of Kentucky Fine Arts Extension program previously, I do not consider those experiences to warrant an ethnographic approach because my time immersed in the organization was limited to nine weeks.

I traveled to Whitley County in early January to conduct field research, which included in-person interviews with the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension personnel, and the direct distribution and collection of surveys with adult members of the Whitley County community. I have also distributed surveys electronically. I know many of my respondents as acquaintances. My perspectives from previous engagement will be used to contextualize some of the responses, but will not be utilized as testimonial. I have also collected, reviewed, and analyzed existing documents and literature that are publically available because of the publicly funded status of this organization.

My engagement with the University of Wisconsin "Putting Culture Back into Agriculture" project is limited to the review of documents available to the general public. I have occasionally contacted the program's leadership for clarifying questions, or to request additional materials.

## **II. Benefits of the study**

Evaluation of the arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service in Kentucky and Wisconsin as model programs is necessary because they offer an uncommon opportunity for rural communities to engage with arts and cultural community-focused programming at little direct cost to the citizenry. Extension programs are publicly funded, through a combination of investment through public agencies and universities and through a percentage of local taxes. Moreover, these programs are provided with an infrastructure at the state and regional levels, so that qualified personnel, expertise, and other resources are available.

### **VI. Expectations**

Based on my experiential familiarity with the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Service and my literature review based understanding of the Wisconsin “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project, I expected to find that the Wisconsin project was designed with best practices in mind to a greater extent than the Kentucky project. I expected this because Wisconsin has a history in using community arts programs to increase the effectiveness of the Cooperative Extension Service in fulfilling their mission to improve the quality of life in the communities they serve.

Based on prior conversations with Kentucky Fine Arts Extension administrators, this program did not seem to be aware of the history of using arts programs in Extension Service agencies. Considering this lack of knowledge on the history and accomplishments of former leaders in this field, I suspect that the University of Kentucky program is strongly practitioner-based, and has engaged in very little evaluation or evidence-based program assessment. However, I do expect that each of these programs will benefit from learning about their complimentary programs in other states, and that the field as a whole can benefit from

increased awareness of the significance of Cooperative Extension Service arts programs in the Community Arts field and exposure to an under-publicized rural arts program model.

#### **V. Significance of this Study:**

The purpose of this study is to explain the history of arts programs within the Cooperative Extension Service, and to evaluate of the arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service in Kentucky as compared to those in Wisconsin as potential model programs. As mentioned previously, evaluation is necessary because these Extension arts programs offer an alternative funding model and organizational structure for arts engagement in rural areas. Extension programs are publicly funded, through a combination of public investment through federal and state agencies and universities as well as through a percentage of local taxes. Moreover, these programs are provided with an infrastructure at the state and regional level, so that qualified personnel, expertise, and other resources are available from outside the small communities they serve.

This study has the potential to evaluate these programs as evidence-based models. Regardless of the results of the study, the publication and presentation of such research will allow for broader dissemination of information regarding the history, significance, and viability of these programs. This is beneficial to the agencies currently engaged in this work because it promotes their work and their contribution to their communities and to the larger rural arts field. This study will be beneficial to the field because it offers insight on alternative organizational structures for rural communities interested in arts engagement. Furthermore, this study will be of benefit to the policy and funding field, because it will offer additional insight regarding the variety of arts and cultural programs in rural America.

## **II. Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **I. The State of the Rural Arts Today**

In order to evaluate these contemporary Extension programs in Kentucky and Wisconsin as models for arts engagement in modern rural communities, I must also assess the cultural policy paradigms that impact arts and culture programming in these demographics. By so doing, I aim to establish need for alternative funding models for rural arts and cultural programming.

I believe American rural policy to be experiencing the opening of a policy window, and consequently rural cultural policy has an opportunity to become a fundamental aspect of that conversation. Former University of Michigan Chair of Political Science John Kingdon explains that policy windows occur when a problem or issue surfaces to the extent that it is acknowledged by policy communities, is then strategized on by those communities (acting as policy entrepreneurs) which results in varying proposals to improve the problem, and simultaneously becomes a topic of interest to governmental officials and their interest groups (Galligan and Burgess, 2005). Kingdon argues that significant political change is not enabled unless policy windows are open, and as such that the above described indicators of policy windows (problem identification, policy entrepreneurship, political interest) are in place to guide the political process towards action.

Rural America is undoubtedly experiencing sweeping changes in the twenty-first century. Today rural America represents roughly “16 percent of the U.S. population distributed across 75 percent of the land area, compared with 21 percent of the population (and over 80 percent of the land area) in 1990” (Cromartie, 2012). Along with the 16% of Americans living in rural areas, an additional 11% live in small towns with a population below 50,000 people, thus

32% of the population currently lives outside of urban centers ("Census 2000 population," 2011). According to the 2008 National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), just 12% of non-profit arts organizations are located outside of urban centers with a population of 50,000 or more (Iyengar, 2010).

The twentieth century ushered huge shifts in the American economy, primarily through transition from resource-based economies (agriculture, mining, forestry) to industrial based economies. Agricultural production on the small family farm dwindled following the 1980's Farm Financial Crisis. Now manufacturing, which was once hailed as the economic savior for rural communities, is at risk as production centers ship overseas. In response to the steady loss of economic opportunity, natural population growth has declined in many rural areas resulting from twentieth-century urban migration:

In fact, some 77 percent of farming counties and 62 percent of mining counties lost population between 2000 and 2004. In many farming counties, so few young adults now remain that births to their depleted numbers no longer offset deaths (Johnson, 2006).

Despite these alarming trends, rural America remains the vital harvest-land of America. Between 85-90 percent of food consumed in the United States is produced domestically despite only about 2 percent of Americans identifying as farmers (Pew Charitable Trust, 2010). Rural Americans produce the vast majority of our country's food and energy, yet our rural communities are de-stabilizing as a result of the above mentioned (among other) issues.

Rural communities, rural labor, and rural expertise are vital to this nation, yet about 1 percent of American philanthropy is devoted to rural development: "Rural organizations received only 153 of the 10,905 grants made, approximately 1.4 percent of grants" (Cohen & Barkhamer, 2004). Additionally, "corporate grantmaking for rural groups constituted 0.7

percent of the grant dollars awarded by all of the 124 surveyed corporations” in the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy’s 2004 report (Cohen & Barkhamer, 2004). Moreover, the typical amount of the grant was also smaller in rural areas than in their urban equivalents, averaging \$7,981 compared to an average grant size of \$17,751 for corporations’ grants to all charities (Cohen & Barkhamer, 2004). If resource investment were evenly distributed across the United States based on per-capita rationale, rural Americans would have enjoyed an additional \$28 billion of investment in 2010 (Wyant, 2012).

Moreover, rural areas receive significantly less federal funding than urban areas. A report by the National Rural Network explained that rural communities received \$6.5 billion less in federal funding than urban areas in 2001. In that same year, 71 percent of federal funds received by rural areas were issued in the form of transfer payments to existing federal programs (such as social security and Medicare) as compared to 48 percent for urban areas. This represents a 23 percent disparity in direct funding for community development and service generating investment (Rathge and Johnson, 2005). “In each year between 1994 and 2001, the federal government spent two to five times more money per capita on urban than rural community development” (Rathge and Johnson, 2005). Therefore, while rural areas secure more public investment than private philanthropy, these communities are significantly disadvantaged in both funding categories.

Many federally-funded rural community cultural development programs are subsidized through community development funding, such as the USDA Rural Community Advancement Program and Community Development Block Grant Funds; yet rural areas also received one-third as much federal money for community resources than urban areas (Rathge and Johnson,

2005). Thus, while rural areas are advantaged in federal funding in relationship to extraction industries such as farming and mining, the discrepancy between federal funding in rural and urban areas is most pronounced in allocations to underwrite programs that improve community members' quality of life, such as cultural and social service funding.

In 2010, the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) found that 88 percent of non-profit arts organizations are located in urban areas, and that rural areas experience additional barriers to arts participation, particularly the socioeconomic barriers of geographic isolation (Iyengar, 2010). Urbanites are 13 percent more likely to complete a bachelor's degree, and 7 percent more likely to have experienced arts training in their lifetime (Iyengar, 2010). Thus, rural communities contain fewer institutions to promote arts access and receive markedly fewer philanthropic investments than their urban contemporaries.

The congruence of these two data sets could suggest that rural communities receive fewer philanthropic investments because foundations prefer to invest in institutions, and there are fewer non-profit arts organizations to apply for and be awarded funding. This brings to mind the considerable barriers to accessing federal and national funding. Both national grants and federal agency funding typically require laborious application processes, extensive program documentation and evaluation, and often times require substantial matching funds.

The process of applying for these opportunities requires a) a general awareness of these opportunities and a skill set for navigating the philanthropy catalogs to locate appropriate opportunities; b) expertise to write the grant and the project evaluation; c) and extensive staff time to commit to the extensive process required by the funding agencies. Although not always the case, many rural communities cannot access these large funding prospects because they

have too little staff and staff expertise to qualify for or apply for these kinds of funding. Funding opportunities require these abilities, and because fewer non-profit arts institutions are located in rural America than is equitable to urban populations, granting agencies should consider non-traditional venues and fiscal agency for community arts and culture allocations.

Only 12 percent of American non-profit arts organizations operate in rural communities, as such participation in the arts must be more broadly defined than in urban areas to include attending arts performances and exhibits at community facilities. Community facilities are described herein as one aspect of ‘informal arts’, and including outdoor venues, schools, and places of worship. The 2008 SPPA survey found that while rural populations attend fewer ‘benchmark arts’ events such as dance and jazz performances, urban and rural populations participate comparably in ‘informal arts’ settings (Iyengar, 2010). The 2008 SPPA also acknowledged art-making trends, and found that while urban communities demonstrate higher levels of benchmark arts attendance; rural communities produce artwork at the same or higher rate than urban populations (Iyengar, 2010). The ‘informal arts’ that rural communities practice at average or exceptional rates include “playing a musical instrument; painting, drawing, or sculpting; ceramics; performing dance; singing in choirs; weaving, crocheting, sewing, or quilting; and creative writing” (Iyengar, 2010). Moreover, philanthropy and policy must keep in mind that these organizations, whose mission center may be unaffiliated with the arts, may be the appropriate institution to accept funding to enliven arts participation.

I argue that this dichotomy between America’s production expectations for rural America and absolute lack of policy and resource investment constitutes a significant policy problem which is now beginning to be identified across governmental agencies and sectors.

The federal identification of rural issues solidified in 2011, when President Barack Obama issued an executive order to establish the White House Rural Council, whom he appointed to “work across executive departments, agencies, and offices to coordinate development of policy recommendations to promote economic prosperity and quality of life in rural America, and shall coordinate my Administration's engagement with rural communities” (Obama, 2011).

Rural interest from the executive leadership of the United States government, along with this mandate, has effectively opened the policy window for rural issues in general. Yet, it remains to be seen as to whether or not this policy window is open for rural arts and cultural specifically. President Obama established a similar council for “Strong Cities, Strong Communities” in March, 2012 (Obama, 2012). While both Executive Orders required the heads of most major governmental agencies and departments to sit on these committees, the order for the urban council mandated inclusion from the chair of the National Endowment for Arts, while the decree to establish the White House Rural Council did not.

Nevertheless, there is materialization of a national community of policy entrepreneurs concerned with rural arts and culture who are acknowledging this inequity. Numerous Rural Arts and Culture interest groups/policy communities are emerging from academic, practitioner, and political arenas to discuss viable alternatives to the current under-investment in rural America, and particularly in rural America's cultural health. The Archibald Bush Foundation sponsored the Rural Cultural Roundtable in 2011, which focused on the power of place-based culture as integral to equitable, democratic, and culturally vital communities (Arts & Democracy, 2011). The Rural Arts and Culture Working Group established this past summer as an interest group of the policy-advocate coalition the National Rural Assembly (Fluharty, 2012).

Founded in 2001, the Center for Rural Strategies advocates for rural America through the creative and innovative use of media and communications, and co-convened the Rural Arts and Culture Working Group (Rural Strategies). The working group itself is comprised of membership across national policy, funding, advocacy, and academic institutions.

The convergence of these policy streams, and the problem identification relating to under-investment in rural communities, can be interpreted as foreshadowing the policy window for rural arts and culture. However, the political acknowledgement of the rural policy problem through the establishment of the White House Rural Council, and that council's lack of acknowledgement of arts and cultural issues, suggests that while the policy problem is being articulated and policy communities are forming, political will has not fully materialized for a rural arts policy window. The challenge now lies in convincing the political will to acknowledge the role that the arts and culture play in strengthening, enriching, stimulating, and enlivening our rural communities.

The past century has chronicled major shifts in national arts policy. These shifts are marked by political benchmarks, including: the Settlement House movement, the formation of land-grant university Cooperative Extension Service, the arts programs of the Works Progress Administration, the formation of local arts councils, the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), and Reagan-era arts politics (Hager, 2012). Each of these movements transformed national arts policy, and created opportunities for arts involvement at the local level for some communities, but in a structure that includes only 12 percent of non-profit arts organizations in rural areas, created arts access gaps for many places.

In typical United States cultural policy flow, legislators allocate resources to federal agencies; who then distribute these resources to national, regional, and state arts organizations and agencies; which then pass the funding on to local arts organizations. (Hager, 2012). While the National Endowment for the Arts allocates funding to every state arts agency in the nation, these state-supported agencies have struggled in recession years due to shrinking state allocations. “The big piece in rural arts is this whole decimation of state funding. I think that is a policy that’s been happening in places and unfortunately I think it really is affecting the rural arts world as a result of lack of funding”(T. Cameron, personal communication, March 8, 2013). This problem exacerbates the federal philanthropy challenge in rural communities, and while local funding is gaining steam nationally as an emerging resource for many arts organizations, rural organizations experience difficulty accessing this trend because fewer local foundations, corporations, and agencies serve their region. Moreover, rural arts organizations are well-poised to take advantage of federal grants, but as I explained previously, often do not have the staff resources or expertise to build the labor-intensive, inspiring applications necessary to secure federal funding.

Federal arts-specific funding is varied in the equity of its distribution to rural areas. Only 7 percent of National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funding is directly granted to rural areas, which signifies a 9 percent inequity based on the 16 percent population rate. According to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, the average state allocation of NEA funding to rural communities totals 24 percent and is 8 percent higher than the rural population average. Thus, the existing structure for distribution of federal arts funding overall seems healthier than the rural funding allocations across the board. Acknowledging this, direct federal funding is often

more significant in terms of amount and duration of investment than state arts agency allocations, which typically grant funding for a single year and often grant funds to rural organizations at the rate of \$1,000-5,000 per grant, as opposed to \$10,000-25,000 federal grants. (National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, 2011).

Moreover, while the data collected by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies represents an advantage for resource allocation to rural areas, this data is aggregate and is not representative across all state agencies. For example, the Kentucky Arts Council granted funds to 100 organizations across the Commonwealth in 2011 (Lawrence, 2011). The Commonwealth of Kentucky contains 120 counties with 85 counties defined as rural. The state has a total population of about 4.2 million, of which about 1.8 million people live in rural areas. Thus, 71 percent of Kentucky's landmass, and 43 percent of the state's population are classified as rural (University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Program, 2000).

Of the 100 organizations which the Arts Council granted funding, 21 were located in non-urban counties . Thus, only 21% of the total number of grants made was allocated to a 71 percent rural state. Moreover, the Arts Council distributed a total of \$1,616,835 in 2011, of which \$211,414.00 was allocated to rural organizations. Thus, only 13 percent of National Endowment for the Arts funding distributed through the Kentucky Arts Council reached the rural 43 percent of the state's population, thus representing a continuation in the trend of underinvestment (Lawrence, 2011).

The USDA is a surprising rural arts funding possibility. They granted more than \$20 billion to rural communities in 2011 (Trevino & O'Brien, 2012). However, like many governmental funding agencies, they cite their grant applications as highly competitive:

The grant funds have become so much smaller the last few years. Outside of the project and the other eligibility requirements of median household income and population (must be below 20,000 people), we are required, by statute, to provide extra points to a health care facility, an educational facility or a public safety facility. The other way to get that extra point is to be a part of your state's economic development strategic plan (Trevino & O'Brien, 2012).

These challenges are precisely why University-Community partnerships are both powerful and practical for rural communities. University programs, particularly with the Cooperative Extension Service, may come with their own project budget, or may be designed as grant-based partnerships as is the case of “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project in Wisconsin, which funded four communities for community projects that combined arts and agriculture. Furthermore, universities have knowledge resources, and in the case of land-grant universities, are achieving their own regional service mandates through partnerships.

These types of partnerships assist land grant universities in fulfilling their mandate to provide service to the entire state. Partnerships that cultivate rural cultural programs are especially appealing because they also strive to improve community quality of life, which is a key aspect of the Cooperative Extension Service mission. Partnerships between University Cooperative Extension programs and rural arts organizations are resulting in new possibilities for cultural projects that work outside of the traditional policy and funding streams that so often overlook rural areas.

I believe rural American cultural policy could soon experience the opening of a policy window. The need for greater investment is apparent, academics and advocacy groups are publishing reports and data to illustrate this need, and coalitions are forming to propose a new narrative for the rural arts. While some organizations and public institutions such as universities and the USDA do make willing partners for supporting rural arts and cultural

programs, there are simply too few of them to support a thriving arts and cultural network across the rural United States. 1 percent of philanthropy and as little as two to five times less federal investment allocated to 16 percent of the population is unacceptable. If we as a nation value rural people, if we have a true interest in preserving the rural communities that serve as the nation's feeder source for food, energy, human resources, and iconography, then we must as a nation take an interest in the cultural sustainability of these small places.

## **II. History of the Arts Programs of the Cooperative Extension Service**

To facilitate my assessment of these contemporary programs as models, I have researched the history of arts programming within the Cooperative Extension Service. I have principally examined this history based on its impact on the development of the American community arts movement as a whole, and on model arts programs that have been facilitated through the Cooperative Extension Service historically.

Land-grant universities have a robust history of fostering arts programs in rural areas. Several pioneers in the community arts field were enabled to do rural arts work within through their affiliation with land-grant university agriculture departments. In the 1920's, Alfred Arvold became a faculty member in the North Dakota State University Agriculture Department and developed the "Little Country Theatre Movement. "Arvold's work is among the first that uses the arts to fulfill the mandate of the Smith-Lever Act (1914), requiring land-grant universities to serve the communities" (Overton, 2001). Additionally, Robert Gard developed the Wisconsin Idea Theatre in the 1940s and a part of the Cooperative Extension Service in Wisconsin.

These extension programs were ideal conduits for community arts programming in rural areas because they already reached rural communities through agricultural and homemaking programs designed to engage the whole family. As Patrick Overton related:

Extension had a profound impact and from my perspective represented the beginning of an absolutely essential partnership between higher education and rural/small communities that I think still stands today. (P. Overton, personal communication, October 16, 2012).

The arts programs of Cooperative Extension Service programs have worked well historically because the rural citizenry was comfortable with engaging in Extension programs, and the infrastructure was in existence to disseminate programming to a wide range of geographically separated people. Overton echoes this assertion in his community arts text

Rebuilding the Front Porch of America:

A ... pattern emerged through the efforts of people like Alfred Arvold and Robert Gard, representing a value orientation based on art and culture as both process and product, keeping the arts centered in the community and central to the life of the people who lived there. This tradition continues today with those working in the arts who understand that bringing art into the community needs to be balanced with efforts to nurture the arts within the community (Overton, 2001).

An important indicator of the significance of extension programs in the history of the rural arts movement came in 1966, when Robert Gard and the Wisconsin Extension Service was awarded the newly formed National Endowment for the Arts' first grant for the arts in small communities:

In 1966, the Community Arts Development office of the Wisconsin Extension Service was awarded the nation's first NEA grant for the arts in small communities. The development grant funded three years of expansion in communities with a maximum population of 10,000 of the former Wisconsin Idea Theatre, which had been fostering arts participation throughout Wisconsin since the early 1940s. Directed by Gard, this extension agency "*founded and fostered throughout the state community theatres and creative writing groups, wrote and toured indigenous drama, and conducted workshops in many forms of creative arts*" (Gard, 2006)

The receipt of this national honor by a rural arts program created through partnership with an agriculture department indicates the considerable significance of Cooperative Extension Service arts programs. Recognition and financial investment by the national policy structure confirmed this historic program as a community arts model. Moreover, contemporary community arts scholars similarly value the work of Robert Gard and the Wisconsin Extension Service as both exemplary and essential in the establishment of the community arts field:

I cannot think of a single human being in our country who has made a more lasting and significant impact on the community arts movement than Robert Gard. Founder of the Wisconsin Idea Theatre, Gard created an extension outreach program in the College of Agriculture at the University of Wisconsin (Overton 2001).

In 1967, Robert Gard published his seminal rural arts book Arts in the Small Community. In it, he asserted that colleges and universities had a growing interest in connecting their programs to the communities around them. He then briefly explains the long history of University-community partnership in Wisconsin:

For more than fifty years, the University has maintained field specialists in the community arts who help citizens to develop grassroots drama, music, and art. Any community or any individual may request aid from The University of Wisconsin and expect to get a helpful response. One of the most optimistic things that can be said about any plan for arts development in smaller communities is that many universities and colleges now have such help available and indeed welcome the opportunity to extend themselves (Gard, 1967).

Maryo Gard Ewell (R. Gard's daughter) added to his description of rural arts in 2006 when she republished the landmark text. She explained the contemporary range of touring university programs to include everything from visual art exhibits to opera and musical performances to films and professional artists-in-residencies (Ewell, 2006). Additionally, she

explains the opportunities for University-Community partnerships through the Cooperative Extension Service:

Land grant universities throughout the United States house the Cooperative Extension Program. The Extension Service is not just about agriculture. Its staff includes community development specialists, youth specialists, and more. In Wisconsin, 4-H and children's theatre have been almost synonymous for decades (Ewell, 2006).

The primary philosophy of each of these University-Community partnerships was the essential belief that all citizens are capable of producing 'good' artwork, and that the focus of these programs must be on providing resources that facilitate local leadership in the production of artwork. Frederick Koch of North Carolina articulated this well by explaining that he believed that, "because of the nature of the American ideal, America's culture could *only* be recorded by ordinary Jo(e)... So he got people in his theater program to start writing so-called folk plays — plays about their background, about people in their communities. He insisted that his program be a mix of rich and poor, sharecropper and landowner, black and white" (Ewell, 2000).

In another article authored by Ewell, she articulates a detailed timeline of the robust history citing many of the founders of the American community arts field, including Robert Gard, Alexander Drummond, Baker Brownell, Alfred Arvold, Rachel Davis-Dubois, and Frederick Koch; and explains how they were each key players in arts programs resulting from University-community partnerships (Ewell, 2011). She offers a robust history of community arts programs within the Wisconsin Extension Service, including:

- 1910s- Professor Edgar Gordon created singing societies in small Wisconsin towns (Ewell, 2011).
- 1914- Smith-Lever Act created the Cooperative Extension Service to "improve the quality of rural life" (Ewell, 2011).
- 1925- University Extension and 4-H programs were involved in playwriting and production (Ewell, 2011).

- 1936- The first artist in residence of any university in the United States was in the University of Wisconsin's College of Agriculture when John Steuart Curry was hired to inspire farm family members to paint the culture of agriculture (Ewell, 2011).
- 1945- Robert Gard was hired to do the same thing for writing and drama (Ewell, 2011).
- 1969- Gard's *The Arts in the Small Community* advocated for the creation of a local arts movement (Ewell, 2011).
- 1973- 28 artists in all disciplines working statewide—from urban inner cities to rural hamlets to prisons—to help people develop their talents (Ewell, 2011).

In 1973, the University of Massachusetts established the Arts Extension Service to "take the arts resources of the University and share them with the Commonwealth" (UMass Amherst Arts Extension Service, 2010). Now in their fortieth year, Massachusetts Arts Extension Service "fosters community-based arts activity through building relationships and collaborations among diverse cultural organizations, artists, arts educators, business organizations, and community groups in the four counties of Western Massachusetts" (Steinkamp, 2004). The Arts Extension Service provides teaching and publications for the development of arts managers across the United States. They also provide educational programming for their university community, which includes campus lectures, campus-wide arts and culture internship program, artist business training programs, online arts management classes, and a wide range of academic publications and textbooks (UMass Amherst Arts Extension Service, 2010).

### **III. Contemporary Arts Programs of the Cooperative Extension Service**

The Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program was founded in 2005 as a University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service pilot study initiative in Pike County, Kentucky. Pike Arts was founded with a mission to "enrich the quality of life of Pike County citizens and strengthen our communities through the coordination, education, and development of the arts" ("Fine arts," n.d.). The University of Kentucky (UK) is a land-grant university, and as such, has a responsibility to actively improve the quality of life of the entire population in the state of

Kentucky (Hale, 2005). The Fine Arts Extension initiative was considered by the University of Kentucky to be “the nation’s first Cooperative Extension Service program focusing on the fine arts”, and was extended beyond a pilot study to become a fully supported Cooperative Extension Service program area in 2006 (Hale, 2005). Over the past eight years the program has expanded to serve five rural Kentucky counties with Fine Arts Extension specialists, including Boyd, Greenup, Muhlenberg, Pike, and Whitley counties in Kentucky.

The “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project was initiated by the University of Wisconsin (UW) to provide observation of the arts in rural areas in Wisconsin. Funded through a 2005-2006 Cross-Divisional Grant from the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension, the grant was managed by Margo Gard Ewell (a rural arts expert) and Miranda McClenaghan (Director of Theatre Education in the Liberal Studies Department). These arts managers invited rural Wisconsin non-profit organizations to participate in the program by sending requests for proposals to organizations whom the managers felt could suggest specific projects that responded to the ‘putting culture back into agriculture’ prompt. Of these, they choose four proposals that would facilitate the pairing of artists and farmers in community cultural development. These proposals included the Wisconsin communities of Amery, Kewaunee, Reedsburg, and Spring Green (McClenaghan, 2012).

The University of Kentucky established their first Fine Arts Extension Agency in 2005 (“Fine arts extension,” 2012) and the University of Wisconsin created “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” in 2006 (McClenaghan, 2012). For land-grant universities across the nation with mandates for service to their entire state, colleges and universities are realigning their academic and outreach priorities to consider regional needs (Steinkamp, 2004).

In my interview with University of Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Agent Melissa Bond, she identified existing Extension arts programs in Idaho, Missouri, and Wisconsin. She describes the program in Idaho as under the Extension program area of Family and Consumer Sciences, but with an emphasis on arts programming that intersects with heritage arts and community development. *Two Degrees Northwest* is a Cooperative Extension Service arts program managed by the University of Idaho and considered a Community Development program area Business and Entrepreneurship project. This pilot program is intended to “develop a strong regional economic sector comprised of cultural industries”, and was developed in response to research that indicates that the arts and handmade goods can be “central to a strong and vibrant place-based rural economy” (Higgins, n.d.).

*Two Degrees Northwest* is based in central Idaho and southeastern Washington, specifically the rural places between forty five and forty seven degrees longitude. The program is intended to create opportunities for “heritage, art and food-based economic development and cooperatively marketing the region’s arts and fine crafts along with other locally made products such as foods, wines, unique sites, services, and experiences” (Higgins, n.d.). *Two Degrees Northwest* provides artists with professional development related to 21<sup>st</sup> century business skills, and manages a cultural trail program showcasing artisans in the area.

Bond also spoke extensively about the arts extension program at the University of Missouri. This program was developed at the University level, and was initialized by hiring a community arts specialist to work in a pre-identified community, which university-level research had indicated would be an ideal location for this pilot study. She described this program as dissimilar to her own in funding structure, but similar in regards to program goals:

It's more of a regional level than a county level from what I understand. They had the benefit of growing support and the structure in place from the top, where as we are a bottom up approach with funding (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Additionally, Bond identified an arts extension program currently operating in the Wisconsin 4-H program area focused on arts and communication, which has grown out of a decades-long arts emphasis in Wisconsin 4-H programming (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). The breadth of their program is substantial, and acts as a testament to the long history of the program: In 2006, the Wisconsin 4-H Arts and Communications Program enrolled 19,000 Wisconsin youth in more than eighty individual projects in visual arts, performing arts, or communications (Taylor-Powell & Calvert , 2006)

Furthermore, 4-H, which is the national Cooperative Extension Service youth organization, recently identified expressive arts as a key program priority. As Bond explains: "It's seems that there is a trend through national 4H where they've developed a new curriculum called expressive arts, so I believe we'll be seeing more and more of these programs pop up that our similar to ours" (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). The Expressive Arts curriculum is aligned with the 4-H Citizenship Program, and offers pre-packaged curricula online in communications, photography, and theatre arts (National 4-H Council, 2013)

Use of the arts extension model is more common than it appears throughout the nation. In addition to widespread historical models and the contemporary projects of the University of Kentucky and University of Wisconsin, many communities have forged their own paths to leverage extension resources in building stronger arts communities.

### III. Chapter Three: “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture”

#### I. Project Description

The “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project was initiated by the University of Wisconsin (UW) to provide observation of the arts in rural Wisconsin. Funded through a 2005-2006 Cross-Divisional Grant from UW Cooperative Extension, the grant was managed by Margo Gard Ewell (Daughter of Robert Gard and rural arts expert) and Miranda McClenaghan (Director of Theatre Education in the Liberal Studies Department). These managers invited rural Wisconsin non-profit organizations to respond to the “putting culture back into agriculture” concept through funding proposals. Of these, they choose four such organizations to facilitate programs that paired artists and farmers in community cultural development.

This study focuses on the diverse opportunities for cultural programs in the rural United States that are based on partnerships between university Cooperative Extension programs and cultural organizations. The process and results of these partnerships may also deliver greater awareness of rural arts best practices. This program is appropriate for this case study for several reasons:

1) grant reports are available online; 2) the project is current (2005-2007), 3) the project aligns with my research interest in the arts programs of the agricultural extension program; 4) the project is rooted in Robert Gard’s history of partnering the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Wisconsin with community arts programs.

I investigated this case study through analysis of four project summaries authored by the project managers of each organization, as well as one comprehensive summary written by a project observer for the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project. Each project manager

was given similar project summary guidelines; therefore these documents address uniform questions and are ideal documents for comparison between the four projects. While developing this study, the projects are initially addressed solely on the individual project reports; then reviewed based on the comprehensive grant report written by contracted observer Jerry Apps and interjected irregularities as well as supporting statements that arose from that cross-comparison.

## II. Case Study

Partnerships between University Cooperative Extension programs and rural arts organizations are resulting in new possibilities for cultural projects, as well as stronger understandings of the best practices for American rural arts. “Putting Agriculture Back into Culture” funded four communities to design arts programs that partnered with the local farming community. These communities included Amery (population 2, 485) in Northwest Wisconsin, Kewaunee (population 2,806) in East-central Wisconsin, Reedsburg (population 10,014) in South-central Wisconsin, and Spring Green (population 1,585) in South-central Wisconsin (U.S. Census Bureau).

Northern Lakes Center for the Arts in Amery, Wisconsin partnered with the University of Wisconsin (UW) and agricultural extension agents in the region to highlight the history of rural arts in Wisconsin. Their project focused on farmer-artists that studied with the nation’s first University artist-in-residence John Steuart Curry in the 1930’s and 1940’s. This project first scanned the Wisconsin farmer’s original artworks and then printed reproductions for a travelling exhibition. They also re-printed *Rural Artists of Wisconsin*, a book originally published in 1948 in to celebrate the arts extension work of Curry. The project goal included touring the

historical exhibit, preserving a historical portrait of farming in the region, and promoting the history of the arts in rural Wisconsin (MacLaughlin, 2006).

The exhibition debuted at six university-led forums throughout Wisconsin regarding the future of rural farming. It was also displayed at the Fourteenth-Annual Conference for Local Arts Agencies as well as the Sustainable Agriculture Research Program's national conference. As a result, this exhibition communicated the history of arts programming within the UW Cooperative Extension program to both statewide and national audiences. The Amery project manager noted that "arts development in rural areas has a long history which needs to be more completely and more carefully documented" (MacLaughlin, 2006). She felt that the continuation of this project could address documentation issues regarding the John Steuart Curry project.

"These artists, by and large, were people of the land, small town people, farm people, men and women, young people— almost all earning their living doing something other than painting, but painting nonetheless" (Apps, 2006). This statement is compelling in light of recent attention to the 'ProAm revolution' concept in academic study of arts administration. Bill Ivey, former chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, introduced the concept in his 2006 discussion of cultural renaissance; and yet rural Americans have been artists working as farmers for generations (Ivey & Tepper, 2006). Garrison Keillor told Congress that "forty years ago, if an American meant to have an artistic career, you got on the train to New York. Today, no American family can be secure against the danger that one of its children may decide to become an artist" (Brown, 1999). In contrast to Garrison Keillor's famous address to the United

States Congress, rural Americans then and now were practicing art and perhaps not even considering themselves artists.

Kewaunee, Wisconsin's Agriculture Heritage and Resources organization developed *Old Iron and Old Irons*, an exhibit from extensive collections of rare farm equipment that had helped to “forge our existing agricultural and agricultural based business economy” (Agricultural Heritage & Resources, 2006). In addition to antique farming implements, the Kewaunee project exhibited domestic tools, kitchen appliances, toys, recreational objects, and photographs of historic farms and agricultural businesses in the region. The project featured a built-in community engagement component:

People were invited to bring their old tractors, old cast iron toys, pedal tractors, steam engines, farm machinery, sad irons from the kitchen—anything that was made of iron and used in the early 1900s on the farm (Apps, 2006).

The material culture exhibition was supplemented by heritage stories collected through a hometown oral history project, thus making community ownership of the project viable. Homemaker's Extension members dressed in period clothing and recited portions of these stories while performing 'old irons' cooking demonstrations. *Old Iron and Old Irons* was slated to become “an annual event used as a future partnership with area organizations to continue to preserve and promote the uniqueness of Northeastern Wisconsin's Agricultural and Ethnic Culture” (Agricultural Heritage & Resources, 2006).

The Kewaunee project promoted the historical and cultural traditions of their region, and by so doing enhanced community pride and engagement. *Old Iron and Old Irons* illustrates the similarities of folklife and community cultural development, and solicits term distinction from community-arts academics. Moreover, this exhibit strengthens the understanding that the

rural arts field significantly differs from the urban community-arts field, likely because of the great importance sense of place plays in many of these projects. As the comprehensive report explains:

LaMoine then went on to talk about the relation of the artwork in this book to teaching the importance of place. “A sense of place grounds you in community,” he said. “And I believe a lot of people have lost that... You need to experience a sense of place to understand it. When you come to a community and are home there, you recognize it, you realize it, and you feel it viscerally (Apps, 2006).

*Old Iron and Old Irons* explores other aspects of community-arts that are distinctive to rural cultures. The traditional arts and the creation of functional items has long allowed for the fulfillment of a practical need as well as a creative outlet. Apps described his realization of this understanding in the comprehensive report: “Early 1900 farmers built art into their lives,” Jerry said. “Art was expressed in the dresses women made, in the dollies that covered up their tables, the hooked and braided rugs they made, the clothing they knitted” (Apps, 2006).

The Spring Green Center for Creativity and Innovation (C4C) received the UW extension grant for the purpose of bringing “the arts and agriculture together by encouraging local landowners to appreciate the beauty of their landscape and, as a result, to enhance it” (Spring Green Center for Creativity and Innovation, 2006).

This project was by far the least developed at the time the set of grant summaries were written, and is somewhat less informative than the other project descriptions. The C4C hosted discussion sessions with area dairy farmers, but experienced difficulties pinpointing the best course of action to achieve the goal of enhancing the beauty of someone else’s property. Subjectivity was a concern; especially because of the farmers’ opinion that one man’s junkyard is another man’s “collection of antique farm machinery” (Spring Green Center for Creativity and

Innovation, 2006). While the report notes that “every effort is being made to implement a “grassroots” approach to this project and to avoid the impression of “culture” being imposed on agriculture from above”, the project appears to have been initiated by members of the Center for Creativity without substantial input or buy-in from the farming community (Spring Green Center for Creativity and Innovation, 2006).

The project was scheduled for presentation at a regional conference in April, 2007, which the grant’s comprehensive summary identified as primary focus of this grant project. The comprehensive report describes the Spring Green project as the following: “Nature of Project: To hold a conference in April 2007 with the title “Creativity and Innovation: Lifeblood of the Small Community.” The focus will be on exploring ways that creativity and innovation can enrich the business, education, government and public life of the rural community. The project also examined the relationship of a land ethic to aesthetics” (Apps, 2006). While land and aesthetics are mentioned in both statements, there is a difference of priority in the two reports. One reporter seemed to be reporting on the initial goal of the project while the other reported on what actually took place. Based on the early challenges of obtaining support from farmers regarding alterations of their land aesthetic, this project appears to have adapted while in process to secure a holistic community approach before struggling with such divisive issues as land aesthetic.

The Wormfarm Institute in Reedsburg was a natural partner for the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” grant. Their mission prioritizes the intersection of the arts and agriculture in rural places by “working to build a sustainable future for agriculture and the arts by fostering vital links between people and the land” (“An evolving laboratory,” n.d.). Wormfarm’s project

was *Home Grown Culture*, and included a series of meetings gathering artists, farmers, local business owners, chefs, writers, and cultural workers to share in a series of locally-cultivated, progressive dinners to discuss opportunities for artists and farmers to collectively build a stronger rural culture in Reedsburg. Although initial meetings presented somewhat of an ‘us-vs.-them’ mentality between farmers and artists, the progressive dinners succeeded in cross-fertilization as both groups came to understand the mutual benefits of their collective work:

Artists have lost touch with their constituencies. Artists need a story to tell. The link between the agricultural world and the artistic world can be mutually beneficial. People don’t know where their food comes from. Maybe farmers need artists to help them tell their story (Apps, 2006).

At the time the project summary was submitted, the initiative had gathered a substantial group of advocates, undergone an extensive cultural asset mapping project, and planned to develop an arts and agriculture brand that promotes the *homegrown* of Sauk County. The *homegrown* brand included an original word developed and defined during the meetings. The word is “cultureshed”, defined as “a geographic region irrigated by streams of local talent and fed by deep pools of human and natural history” (Apps, 2006). This definition further illustrates the place-based distinctiveness of the rural arts, and the lessons these projects offer for academic understandings of rural community-arts.

The group planned to pursue integration of the arts and agriculture in existing Sauk County cultural events, and the creation of a fiscal agency program for individual artists and farmers committed to projects that promote collaboration between the arts and agriculture. The primary concern of this project was to “create a format for ongoing collaboration in hopes of creating a 21<sup>st</sup> century rural renaissance” (Wormfarm Institute. Inc., 2006). The initial goal

was fulfilled, and the participants were moving into phase two of the initiative which included putting some of their collaborative plans into action.

As the Wormfarm Institute owners explained to me, in *Home Grown Culture*: “We were exploring the commonalities between making art and growing food and searching for opportunities to collaborate more across disciplines” (D. Nuewirth and Salinas, J., personal communication, February 18, 2013). This project led eventually to launching of the annual Fermentation Festival. In 2010, the Wormfarm was selected by the Wisconsin Humanities Council to host “Key Ingredients: America by Food” as a result of the strength of complimentary programming the Wormfarm could provide. As such, this Smithsonian travelling exhibition showcased not only an educational exhibit about the development of farming in the United States, but was made local and personal to Reedsburg through the foodways, food stories, and cultural content added by the Wormfarm to reflect their local culture. This event spurred enough community excitement to result in “Fermentation Fest: A Live Culture Convergence.” The Wormfarm method, like agriculture, seems to be a process of evolution, growth, harvest, decay, and regeneration: “Everything sort of grows out of the thing that happened before. The fertile soil that is left behind after you do a creative project makes the next thing easier to launch” (D. Nuewirth and Salinas, J., personal communication, February 18, 2013). Now approaching its third year, Fermentation Fest brings together farmers, chefs, artists, poets, and cheese makers to offer tastings, demonstrations, classes, events, seminars, farm tours, and the “Farm/Art DTour”, a popular fifty-mile tour of art installations, Roadside Culture Stands, pasture performances and rural culture education sites throughout the backroads of Sauk County.

Wisconsin is a state famous for fermentation, of cheese, yogurt, beer, sourdough bread, and sauerkraut, but fit particularly well in the context of intersecting art and agriculture:

It's just such a rich metaphor for an ongoing event because fermentation is about transformation. So not only grain to beer or milk to yogurt, but from one kind of community to another (D. Nuewirth and Salinas, J., personal communication, February 18, 2013).

One of the most significant results of the comparison of these projects is the diversity of programming possible in rural communities. Despite the common impetus for all of these projects, they were each carried out with vastly different facilitation styles and culminated with a wide array of deliverables to their communities.

There were also important similarities among the projects. One consistency throughout each of the projects was well summarized in the Apps comprehensive report: "that a sense of place is essential to a program focusing on arts and agriculture. As LaMoine MacLaughlin said, "Without sense of place, art becomes a frill"" (Apps, 2006). Two of the four projects presented their work at national arts and/or farming conferences, and by so doing exposed their organizations and their successes to a national audience.

Moreover, these projects cultivated the concept of cross-fertilization between art and agriculture in these communities and as such affected future collaborations in ways that are still actualizing. The arts involvement of the Cooperative Extension Agency in Sauk County has grown substantially. Sauk County's Agricultural Extension Agent served on the *Home Grown Culture* planning committee, the Community Development Extension Agent has been facilitating Fermentation Festival steering committee meetings for three years, and the Sauk County Extension Agency matches funding for the festival. Most significantly, Sauk County has been the only rural Wisconsin county to support Arts and Humanities programming, and five

years ago the Cooperative Extension Service began administering this program (D. Nuewirth and Salinas, J., personal communication, February 18, 2013).

The entire grant project has been published on the Portal Wisconsin website, which notes that the University of Wisconsin grant recipients concluded the following: “The project concluded that rural arts are not simply scaled-down versions of urban arts offerings. Rather, they must arise out of and share a connection with local people and places” (McClenaghan, 2012). This may be the biggest lesson of all for community arts academics, who often present urban neighborhood arts programs as synonymous with rural community arts programs. Each of the projects demonstrates the arts historical integration into agricultural life. Although rural communities are changing in response to the new economic frontier, the community engagement that arts practices promote is as important now as it was 100 years ago. This investment in rural arts by Cooperative Extension programs nationwide provides new possibilities for sustained arts programming and cultural preservation for small communities. Moreover, these partnerships provide significant learning opportunity for the arts administration programs linked to these land-grant universities.

**IV. Chapter Four: Case Study the University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program**  
**I. The University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program**  
**i. History of the University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program**

The University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program (UK EFA) was founded in 2005, through a cross-departmental partnership between the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the College of Fine Arts. The College of Agriculture houses the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service (KY CES), which is an educational resource and catalyst to build better communities and improve quality of life for all Kentuckians. Traditionally, the Cooperative Extension Service has been known as a community resource for agriculture, family and consumer sciences, and the nationally popular 4-H youth education program. Dr. Jimmy Henning, Associate Dean and Director of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Kentucky, remarked about the expansion of programming to include Fine Arts:

It is a transformation and an evolution of what people think of when they think of cooperative extension. One-hundred years ago, in 1913, the whole extension was born to take the University to rural Kentucky. The benefits that you might get from coming here, we were supposed to extend to rural Kentucky, and it was built on a system of grassroots conversations — ‘what do you need, what can we do’ — and it has grown to what it is today (Swindler, 2010).

While the history of arts programs in Cooperative Extension is robust throughout the nation, this initiative marked the first organized fine arts extension programming in the state of Kentucky, and the employment of the first Extension Fine Arts Agent title in the United States. The KY EFA program is housed within the Community and Economic Development Program Area of Cooperative Extension (CEDIK), and managed by Charles Stamper.

The UK EFA is Extension's program responsible for promoting support for arts education and development in Kentucky counties collaborating with the KY CES (University of Kentucky Ag. Communications Services, 2013). Their mission is to "create and support opportunities in the arts for citizens that will stimulate creativity, promote participation, and recognize artists, art educators, and arts supporters at all levels and mediums" (University of Kentucky Ag. Communications Services, 2013). The program's core objectives include arts development, arts education, arts programming, and arts venues and facilities throughout the state. As such, they support the development of performing, visual, and literary arts in Kentucky; as well as life-long learning opportunities in the arts, the expansion of opportunities for showcasing and publicizing the arts, the promotion of the KY CES as a leader and encourager of rural arts participation, and the development of arts venues and facilities to provide access to a cohesive and dynamic arts culture for all citizens (University of Kentucky Ag. Communications Services, 2013).

The initial program was designed as a three-year pilot and debuted in Pike County, Kentucky under the direction of the first Extension Fine Arts Agent, Stephanie Richards. Within the first year the University of Kentucky recognized the value of fine arts programming in relationship to rural community development, and hired a second Extension Fine Arts Agent in Greenup County. Meanwhile, the Kentucky Arts Council awarded Pike County Extension Fine Arts Agent Stephanie Richards the Kentucky Governor's Award in the Arts. As Dean of the College of Agriculture Scott Smith was quoted, "The Fine Arts Extension program is the first of its kind, yet it is representative of a wide range of new initiatives that use the Cooperative Extension network in new and important ways. Such partnerships offer a wonderful opportunity to connect the university with the entire Commonwealth." By 2010, the program

had expanded to include five rural Kentucky counties, including Boyd, Greenup, Muhlenberg, Pike, and Whitley counties (*University of Kentucky*).

Each of the KY EFA Program county agents have interpreted the mission of extending arts and cultural programming to their constituents in different ways that respond to the specific needs of their region. KY EFA Program Leader Charles Stamper designated the following projects to be some of the key areas of success for each of the county programs. Arts Boyd County has developed the Arts Boyd County Theatre Guild, which serves their audiences by creating a consortium of theatre organizations in the region and coordinates a comprehensive calendar of theatrical events linking to the Arts Boyd County website and Facebook page. As Stamper explained: “The largest impact indicator of the program is the 100% participation rate of Boyd County Theatres, including the creation of a new company in direct result of the ABCTG” (C. Stamper, personal communication, April 24, 2013).

Meanwhile, the focus for the Greenup County Extension Arts Council has been related to growing their existing constituent base through arts education and strategic cross-sector collaborations. In the 2011-2012 programming year alone, the Greenup County program collaborated with twenty-five schools and organizations in over eighty community events (C. Stamper, personal communication, April 24, 2013). As a result of these community partnerships, the extension mission is reaching new audiences, and “new council members have been recruited from an underserved demographic of people in the community” (C. Stamper, personal communication, April 24, 2013).

The Muhlenberg Arts Advisory Council has now commissioned and completed an original play regarding the history of local music. This production sold out nearly three

performances, raised \$15,000 in revenue, engaged both school aged children and an intergenerational cast and crew, and elevated the region's cultural pride (C. Stamper, personal communication, April 24, 2013). As mentioned previously, the Pike County Extension Fine Arts program was awarded the Kentucky Governor's Award in the Arts for their work in the Appalachian county, particularly in regards to their ACT Youth arts training program. The Pike Arts program has also been responsible for the Pike County Artisan Center, arts education in every area school, a theatre restoration project, cultural tourism initiatives, and arts and healthcare collaborations (Richards, 2008).

Now in their eighth year, KY EFA identified their primary challenges in meeting their core objectives in the statewide KY CES *Plan of Work*. This plan named developing curriculum for all program areas as the most pressing resource needed in this program area; and continuing to develop roles with the University of Kentucky College of Fine Arts faculty and administration and developing curricula as the next steps towards improving that resource need throughout the state (*Kentucky issues discovery*, 2012).

## **ii. Featured Extension Program Area: Arts in the Community**

While the KY EFA is designed to create robust programming and engagement opportunities that deeply impact communities, this structure only represents five Kentucky counties. Yet, the UK CES has come to value the arts as a programming component more broadly across programming areas, and as such have developed the "Arts in the Community" program. KY CES's primary guiding document indicates "Arts in the Community" as a featured program for the entirety of the Commonwealth, and was defined in their 2012 Annual Report as: "comprised of classes designed to teach agents, artisans, and local advisory committee

members' advocacy, planning, and leadership skills through collaboration and coalitions" (*Featured programs descriptions*, 2012). The program is one of many statewide Extension initiatives for which the University provides resources because they consider these programs, and particularly promoting the arts in rural Kentucky to be "an example of programs for under-served audiences" (*2013 Kentucky state*, 2012). This range of arts programming in a community illustrates the University's commitment to providing arts experiences beyond the KY EFA program area.

In addition to KY EFA programs in Boyd, Greenup, Muhlenberg, Pike, and Whitley counties, in fiscal year 2012 66 of Kentucky's 120 counties (55% of the state) participated in programs related to the "Arts in the Community" featured program. Within those counties, 1192 educational programs were conducted in relation to the arts or artisans; 208 artisan supported coalitions were assisted or facilitated by Extension; 1862 artisans were directly assisted by Extension; and 1863 volunteers supported Extension-sponsored arts programs. Of these participants, 981 participants reported an increased income from the arts, and 486 participants reported an increase in income due to knowledge gained from Extension's Arts programming (*Arts in the*, 2012). These statistics provide a foundation for the development of cultural programs across Extension because they illustrate benefits to both community members and county extension offices.

### **iii. Extension Fine Arts Program Funding Model**

The KY EFA model is designed based on the same funding model as other Extension program areas. In Kentucky, CES funding is rooted at the county level, but does utilize regional financial support to maintain research and program specialists, whom act as resources for

county extension agents. For most Kentucky counties, Extension Fine Arts Agents and Extension Fine Arts Agent Assistants are one hundred percent county funded, but significantly supported in other ways by the University of Kentucky.

The University of Kentucky ensures that those who are hired in as Arts Extension staff meet the standards of the University of Kentucky, and they provide training and professional development to staff members (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

This model applies the benefit of university expertise and the placement of highly qualified personnel in rural counties, yet salaries and program budgets of most KY EFA programs are funded locally:

Salaries are funded locally for most fine arts agents. The Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H, and Agriculture (or the first three positions created in the county) are funded in part (1/3 of total cost) by federal or state dollars, and 2/3 county funded. Any additional agents, as well as any support staff, are completely funded with county allocations... In almost every county, three positions already existed, so the fine arts agent is likely to be completely county-supported (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

The county-based funding structure may be advantageous for these rural counties, as this structure is less reliant on grant-based resource development and cyclical funding. With funding allocations decided locally, those who allocate resources to these initiatives have likely experienced the programming within their communities, and witnessed the results of their investment. This model exploits the benefit of community accountability, which is to say that it is likely more difficult for a local official to eradicate funding for a program that is locally supported and has the asset of community investment. Moreover, with the KY EFA operating in its eighth year counties are allocating these resources with the knowledge that this program has produced tangible results in the past. As such, rural counties have been enabled to invest in

programming that is supported by an evidence-based model and upheld by an affiliation with a research-one university.

#### **iv. Extension Fine Arts Program Organizational Structure**

The organizational structure of the KY EFA model is designed as a non-linear chain of command. The executive level leadership for the KY EFA is tied to the University of Kentucky's Dean of College of Agriculture, while the second in command is the Dean of Cooperative Extension Service. The primary contact for the KY EFA is Charles Stamper, Extension Program Leader for Community and Economic Development and Fine Arts through the office of the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK). Stamper serves as KY EFA Agent's direct link to the College of Fine Arts and the state level Cooperative Extension Service. This position also oversees the expansion of the program area to additional counties, develops curriculum development for use in county agencies, manages the development of the program at large, and oversees the professional development of KY EFA Agents (C. Stamper, personal communication, January 8, 2013).

While Agents report to Stamper for program development and resources, they report to their district director for daily concerns and personnel issues. District directors oversee sixteen-county districts throughout the state, and serve the Fine Arts Agents as well as Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H, Horticulture, and other program areas (C. Stamper, personal communication, January 8, 2013).

The Fine Arts Extension Agent works at the helm of the county level KY EFA in cooperation with a Fine Arts Advisory Board, which is recruited in the initial phases of the county's extension fine arts program. The Advisory Board identifies key priorities for the

county's program each year, and maintains EFA's connection to community needs and interests. Some KY EFA counties also employ an Extension Fine Arts Agent Assistant who in turn reports to the county Extension Fine Arts Agent.

## **II. The Whitley County Fine Arts Program**

### **i. Whitley County Fine Arts Program History**

The Whitley County Fine Arts Program (WCFA) is a branch of the Whitley County Cooperative Extension Service, and is one of the five Kentucky counties to host a Fine Arts Agent as a part of the KY EFA. Founded in 2010, WCFA is the youngest of the KY EFA programs (Swindler, 2010). WCFA Extension Agent Melissa Bond explains that the KY EFA program was initiated in Whitley County after community members, and particularly members of Whitley County Homemakers (an Extension club) had attended regional meetings and heard about other counties with KY EFA programs. These community members researched how to establish a program within their own community, and presented the idea to the Whitley County Extension Board with a request to invite the area District Director to explain the program to interested community members. Later that year, the local Extension Board approved funding for a KY EFA Agent in Whitley County (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Melissa Bond recalls hearing about the position through a co-worker who encouraged her to apply: "Our Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences told me about the program and told me to look it up, and said that eventually Whitley County may be interested in having a Fine Arts Extension Agent here" (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Bond was an ideal candidate for the KY EFA Agent position as she had graduated from nearby Cumberland College with an undergraduate degree in theatre, and was already working for the Whitley County Extension Service as a program assistant to their horticulture program.

As an article from a local paper announced Bond's placement in the new position in May, 2010, Bond had previously been engaging area schools in arts-related programming through an initiative to provide after-school theatre classes to local youth. In that article, Bond identified her initial project goals as "to keep working with the teens, and expand her theater projects to the general community" (Swindler, 2010).

For her first major assignment, she developed an inter-generational community theatre project about traditional quilt making in Whitley County:

The goal is to take my drama club at Whitley County High School and work with students in that to go interview some of the quilt makers who have been quilting for years... we're going to take the stories and turn it into a play or at least a collection of monologues (Swindler, 2010).

In that same article, she identified other projects that she would support in Whitley County as the KY EFA Agent, which ranged from the coordination of artist events during Extension farmer's markets, to hosting artist marketing workshops and expanding the existing Extension programming of bluegrass and old-time music concerts. As Bond explained:

I think the direction we want to go is really not just theater. We also have so many artists and so many musicians that we want to make it an all-reaching arts program, a cultural arts program (Swindler, 2010).

In the past two years, WCFA has produced a wide range of programming that has addressed a variety of audiences. They have accomplished many of the programmatic goals they announced in the 2010 article, particularly in regards to encouraging cooperation between artisans and farmers at the Extension farmer's markets, which now regularly showcases locally made arts and crafts and performances from regional musicians. In their two years of programming, Bond and her staff have hosted artist marketing programs, community singings, concerts, a film series, fine art and educational exhibitions, jam sessions, oral history projects,

square dance lessons, theatre productions, and a variety of hands-on workshops for participants of all ages.

## **ii. Whitley County Fine Arts Organizational Structure**

As explained in the earlier section regarding the organizational structure of the KY EFA Program, WCFA is managed locally by Melissa Bond, who acts as the WCFA Agent. She works at the helm of the county level KY EFA program in cooperation with a Fine Arts Council. Concurrent to the establishment of the KY EFA Agent position Bond and other Extension employees initiated the WCFA Council, which consists of Whitley County community members from varied geographic areas with an interest in the arts. The Council represents Whitley County citizens interested in promoting cultural offerings in the region in diverse artistic areas from visual art and craft to popular and classic music to theatre, dance, creative writing, new media, and cultural preservation (Swindler, 2010). WCFA Extension also employs KY EFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses.

When asked about her role as EFA Agent Assistant, Moses explained that while her job is as an assistant to Melissa Bond, she feels empowered to work collaboratively with Bond and is treated as an equal when it comes to decision making and new ideas. She defines her job as “introducing fine arts to the community and provide learning opportunities and also to make contacts in the county and get them here and involved, and to create quality programming for them” (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013). New to this position (which was created in October, 2012), Moses listed her primary responsibilities thus far as cultural program development and preparation, and working with area schools alongside Bond:

I like to have demos for each event we do, so for this intro to Charcoal class, I work for a couple of hours to create an example, just to figure out what we need to do the event and if we'll run into any problems. I create example works, and practice the

programming before teaching it. Also, I'm responsible for working in area schools with Melissa, and I know I'll be doing that soon, we're doing a trash sculpture with the humanities class this semester (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Moses acknowledges that she is new to this system, but appeared excited by the amount of programming they had offered in her three months of employment and is looking ahead to improve the organization. One aspect of her value to the organization is her hometown perspective, because she grew up in Whitley County without access to a program like WCFA Extension she has a passion to grow the program to be of importance to community members in a variety of aspects of their lives:

Growing up there was not a Whitley County Fine Arts and it fills a huge gap. We have a place where we can teach art, display art; a community center where people just come and hang out, buy food, and be in a formal art setting. The only way they could get that is to go to a city where there is a gallery. Here they can learn how to act around art, how to appreciate art and understand what its saying... I think that is the scary part for kids, is feeling intimidated. The Whitley County Fine Arts Center is a center for the community, not just for fine arts, but for resources. If someone in this community has a question, we can direct them to someone with expertise who can answer it (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

As a whole, community satisfaction with WCFA Extension staff is exceptional. One community member commented that WCFA staff: "professionalize outreach efforts in all its categories--from agriculture to fine arts. Great staff who are professional and passionate. I wish each small community could have such great educational, culturally enriching & educational opportunities--especially all the communities in Appalachia" (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013). Sixty-four percent of survey respondents rated the staff as exceptional, while twenty-seven percent of respondents rated the staff as above expectations, and nine percent as helpful. None of the survey respondents identified the staff as 'somewhat helpful' or 'not helpful'.

**Please rate your experiences with the staff at Whitley County Fine Arts Extension.**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Exceptional		14	64%
2	Above Expectations		6	27%
3	Helpful		2	9%
4	Somewhat helpful		0	0%
5	Not helpful		0	0%
	Total		22	100%

When asked about the ways in which survey participants had engaged with WCFA, thirteen percent had served as a board member; seventy percent had participated in programming as an audience member or attendee; fifty-two percent had participated in a “hands-on” workshop; thirty-five percent had volunteered; nine percent had worked as a teaching artist; thirty-nine percent had engaged as a performer or exhibiting artist; four percent had attended as a parent of a participant, and none of those surveyed had donated to WCFA (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

**In what ways have you participated with Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Board Member		3	13%
2	Audience Member/Attendee		16	70%
3	Workshop Participant		12	52%
4	Volunteer		8	35%
5	Teaching Artist		2	9%
6	Performer/Exhibiting artist		9	39%
7	Donor		0	0%
8	Parent of Participant		1	4%

### iii. Whitley County Fine Arts (WCFA) Organizational Mission & Core Programs

WCFA's mission is to create and support opportunities for art for the citizens of Whitley County (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). She emphasizes education and entertainment in the fulfillment of that mission:

Our programming fulfills that mission by ensuring that each program is providing an arts experience or an educational environment that the participant not only enjoys but walks away with a newfound sense of education, and ultimately a positive change in behavior, awareness, or experience in the arts. This could be through learning a new skill, or creating more awareness about their environment, and is ultimately about enriching their lives through the arts (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Thus, in Bond's explanation, WCFA is achieving their mission of promoting the arts through educational programming that seeks to transform the actively engaged participant into a new or renewed consciousness. When surveyed regarding the ways in which WCFA participants engage with programming, sixty-four percent of survey respondents said that they participate in WCFA events most often as a participant, while forty-five percent believe that they most often participate as an audience member.

**Do you participate with Whitley County Fine Arts most often as a participant (making/doing something) or an audience member (viewing something)?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Participant		14	64%
2	Audience Member		10	45%

This data suggests that WCFA programming empowers community members most often as participants rather than audience members, and reinforces the idea that the arts provide strong opportunities to actively interact with your community. While it is apparent from the survey results that opportunities to find social interaction and entertainment are a result of

WCFA programming, it appears that participation for the purpose of entertainment is less popular than participation for the purpose of engagement, which affirms Bond's summation of WCFA mission and purpose (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

When asked how the mission of WCFA is impacting the community, Bond responded that the organization provides "quality arts experiences and education on a community level in all four major discipline areas of the arts, which are visual arts, theatre/performing arts, music, and dance" (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).











KY EFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses explains the mission of the organization in regards to creating "opportunities for our community members that will stimulate creativity, promote participation, find artists, art teachers, and people that support the arts" (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Moses explains the core programs of WCFA as the following: teaching arts education programs in area schools and educating teachers to improve fine arts curriculum; the farmer's market; community center programming and workshops; and partnerships with area organizations including the Reclaiming Future's Drug Court Program, Horizon Elderly Assisted Care, and Williamsburg School District's production of "Christmas in a Small Town" (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Moses offered the Christmas production as a great example of how WCFA brings valuable skills and knowledge to the community even for groups of people that are already participating in the arts:

For Christmas in a Small Town, we did the lighting and sound for the musical that elementary, middle school, and high school band and choir students perform. Melissa helped them build the props and offers storage for the schools for free. This year we just had to take the props up there and set them up, so it was great for the school to have already made those (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Survey respondents largely participated primarily in these core programs. When asked about the types of programs they had engaged with ninety-one percent of respondents had viewed an art exhibit at WCFA. Additionally, eighty-six percent had attended a farmer's market event. Sixty-eight percent had attended a "hands on" workshop, while fifty percent had attended a community singing event. Forty-one percent of respondents had viewed a theatre presentation or play as a result of WCFA, while twenty-seven percent had seen a concert, twenty-three percent had seen participated in a dance workshop, eighteen percent had viewed an educational film, fourteen percent had experienced a storytelling project, and five percent had witnessed a writer's performance (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

This past summer, WCFA hosted "New Harmonies" a traditional music Smithsonian Exhibit on loan to the Kentucky Humanities Council. As Melissa Bond explains, it was the first time an interactive exhibit of that caliber had been in Whitley County. It seems to have created a resurgence in pride and an on the impact Kentucky music had on American roots music as a whole. Nearly 1500 community members viewed the exhibition and participated in corresponding educational programming (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

**What kinds of programs have you attended/ participated in? Please check all that apply.**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Art exhibit		20	91%
2	Theater/ play		9	41%
3	Singing		11	50%
4	Concert		6	27%
5	Movies		4	18%
6	Dance		5	23%
7	Writer's Performance		1	5%
8	Farmer's Market		19	86%
9	"Hand's on" workshop		15	68%
10	Storytelling project		3	14%

When asked about the most important thing WCFA provides for the community, Melissa

Bond responded:








I believe we're really filling a gap that has been missing in Whitley County by providing arts education and reaching out to people who deserve to have a quality arts experience. Living in a rural area should not hold you back from having the same arts experiences that others do (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

She also identifies providing arts education and experiences to the general public as a key focus, as well as providing support to area artists in regards to improving their business structure (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).






When asked what the WCFA program provides to the community, one hundred percent of survey respondents decided on arts experiences. Ninety-five percent of respondents agreed that this programming also provides community interaction, social events, and educational programs. Moreover, seventy seven percent felt that WCFA provides a sense of cultural pride to their community, while seventy-three percent feel provided with a safe place to talk with

neighbors. Equally important, sixty-four percent of survey respondents feel that WCFA provides economic benefits to the community (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

#### What does the Fine Arts Extension Program provide for the community?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Arts experience		22	100%
2	Community Interaction		21	95%
3	Social Events		21	95%
4	Educational programs		21	95%
5	Cultural Pride		17	77%
6	Economic Benefits		14	64%
7	A safe place to talk with neighbors		16	73%

When asked how well the needs of the community were currently being met by WCFA programming on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (completely), survey respondents responded with a full continuum: Ten percent of respondents answering that they were met completely ten percent not responding that their needs were not being met at all. The average response was 3.3, or somewhat (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

#	Answer		Response	%
1	1		2	10%
2	2		1	5%
3	3		8	40%
4	4		7	35%
5	5		2	10%
	Total		20	100%

When queried regarding WCFA programs that have had an immense social, educational, or economic impact on the community, ninety-one percent of survey respondents took the

time to write about an experience with WCFA that they are especially proud of. Thirty-eight percent of respondents wrote about the Smithsonian Folkways Traditional Music Exhibition. The following respondents wrote about the exhibits ability to educate community members while also inciting cultural pride in the community:

The Smithsonian exhibit on music was an excellent example of providing an educational program in the Fine Arts for our region. Its use of many examples of types of music around the country and across the ages was interesting and informative. Plus, the combination of this national exhibit with local related examples showed the relevance of music specifically to our locale. A large number of attendees of all ages enjoyed the exhibit and learned something new as well as remembered something from their past (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

As Mayor, I like the fact that they are bringing activities downtown. The Smithsonian Appalachian Music Exhibit was a tremendous success and I had several positive comments from people that attended. The area youth had a chance to see and get a hands-on lesson on the history of music that came from their own backyard...so to speak. The youth were not the only folks to benefit, I talked to several adults that loved to reminisce and learn as well. We also were treated to live music and food in an atmosphere not usually seen in our small town (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

Twenty-nine percent wrote about the improvements that the fine arts programming has brought to the farmer's market:

I have seen that the Extension's involvement in the fine arts relating to Whitley County's farmer's market has been everything encouraging to the city and the county's social educational, and economic impact. That and the art exhibits and workshops have encouraged socializing with their neighbors (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

Furthermore, nine percent of respondents wrote either about the wreath making project that raised money for Williamsburg Choir and Band, or about "Reclaiming Futures" Drug Court programming. One survey participant works with WCFA on the "Reclaiming Futures" partnership, and spoke of the collaboration's engagement with youth through a positive, creative outlet:

I work with youth who are struggling with substance abuse and addiction. The fine arts program gives these kids an outlet for their emotional and explorative needs, as well as an opportunity to volunteer their time to positively impact their neighborhood” (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

KY EFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses commented on a special experience that she shared with a student as a result of the Wreath Making fundraiser:

The art extension and agriculture programs partnered together and did a wreath fundraiser for Williamsburg Schools Band and Choir.... They do the fundraiser every year, but they usually have to buy the wreaths... I don't know exactly how much they made, but I know it was in the thousands. So I can see a big impact from that. It was a lot of work but it all paid off. The band especially has turned over a new leaf with this new band teacher and these kids really deserve these new instruments, they deserve money for costumes and they deserve to go competitions. Playing music is really important for education. One of the kids came out, and talking to a thirteen year old student about how much he loves band, and loves his new teacher, and how much she cares. It was really cool to hear a kid see us make a difference, it was really inspiring (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

One of the volunteers from the wreath making project also wrote about how their experiences working with Whitley County Fine Arts provided him with a sense of personal fulfillment in helping the community.

To help raise money for the band choir the arts program made Christmas wreaths. 150 were made! This helps the community, youth, and school immensely. I participated, and I feel very proud (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

Survey participants wrote about WCFA as an asset to Whitley County in terms of community development at a rate of nineteen percent. An additional five percent wrote about the Shape Note Singing workshop, or the Winter School Series. The following testimonial was provided by a parent who brought her family to a Winter School Series workshop:

I had to literally drag my middle school aged son with me, who convinced himself that it would be the most boring thing to do. We went to Kristen Smith's "How to make a terrarium" class, and my son, who also hates learning, hates school, hates most things associated with school, was so engrossed in building the terrarium that he actually asked to do another one. He actually retained most of the information that Kristen gave

to the class about terrariums and is doing a presentation this month to his Communications class on how to make one. Generally, I don't associate events like this to our Ag extension, but this whole year, they have brought something interesting and knowledgeable to the community. My only regret is that I cannot attend every single event they hold (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

#### **iv. Whitley County Fine Arts Demographics and Modes of Participation**

WCFA seeks to engage a variety of constituents in quality educational experiences. As the Corbin Times article reviewed earlier in this paper suggests, much of the programming in the early phases of WCFA focused on theatre as a result of Bond's educational specialization, yet Bond clarified that the programming is not tailored to a specific artistic genre. Bond describes the expansion of WCFA's programming into additional artistic genres as related to the acquisition of a downtown community space:

Now that we have a downtown location to provide services, we've branched out to the visual arts and providing visual art opportunities. We've also done community dance events. We helped to coordinate and teach the "Thriller" dance to 500 participants in the city of Corbin, which has grown each year. We also collaborate with the band program at the Williamsburg City School to work with their events and supplement them. We try our best to work in each genre. There are two well established dance studios in the area, so we try to recognize when an offering is already well established and not duplicate that programming, but instead support their efforts. Part of our mission is also to support existing arts opportunities (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

KY EFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses augmented Bond's description of programming to include workshops with charcoal, gourd art, mage page, shotgun shell jewelry, wreath making, photography, and trash sculpture. She adds that "we really want to get a kiln so we can teach pottery. We also offer theatre, instrumental and vocal music, and dance." (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Thus, WCFA does attempt to engage participants in a variety of arts experiences in a variety of genres.

WCFA program also endeavors to engage participants that come from a broad range of social demographics. As Melissa Bond explained:

Because we're funded by Whitley County specifically, we focus all of our programming as much as possible within Whitley County. As far as demographics are concerned, we strive to engage a variety of gender, race, and socio-economic status to really provide for all members of our community, for them to feel welcome regardless of their demographics (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Cortney Moses offered the Winter Market classes an example of programmatic offerings that are accessible to many demographics: "Our winter market that is going on right now, we make sure that each class covers material for kids, adults, and the elderly. The idea is to have something the whole family can enjoy" (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

When asked about whom WCFA programs serve, survey respondents echoed the testimonials of Bond and Moses. Survey respondents unanimously responded that the programming serves adults (100%). That said, most people felt that the programming served artists, families, and youth at a high rate as well (91%). Eighty-two percent of survey respondents believed that WCFA programming served seniors, and seventy-three percent believe that WCFA serves farmers (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

Another important demographic distinction in rural communities is based on geographic location. According to US Census data, Whitley County is comprised of roughly 438 square miles (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Whitley County is situated within the Cumberland Mountains as part of the larger Appalachian Mountain chain, and as such contains many geographically isolated communities within the county boundaries. The county seat is Williamsburg, which is also the location of the WCFA Community Center, while the city of Corbin, roughly twenty miles

to the north, serves as the population center in Whitley County. There are numerous small and scattered communities to the east, west, and south of Williamsburg and Corbin.

In a survey assessment of WCFA participants, fifty-three percent of survey respondents said that they live in Williamsburg, Kentucky. Thirty-eight percent of respondents lived in small communities and another nine percent did not currently reside in Whitley County, but had experienced WCFA programming. KY EFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses testifies to the difficulty of accessing Whitley County communities outside of Williamsburg. When asked about WCFA's most significant organizational challenges, Moses responded:




I would say reaching people out in the community outside of Williamsburg. Reaching everyone in the community so that they'll know about what's going on. If they wanted to come, we would go get them if they didn't have a ride. We have a bus. Or, we would do programs in those communities, if they have a place to do them (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Yet, when those same survey respondents were asked how WCFA could better serve their region of the county, fifty five percent requested more activities in their region, while only twenty percent asked for WCFA to provide transportation. An additional forty percent of respondents requested that WCFA provide more information about their programming (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

Despite these opportunities for improvement, most survey respondents believe that WCFA is doing a great job at providing arts and cultural programming that would otherwise not be accessible to the respondents. Survey respondents testified that they would be required to travel to have a similar experience if WCFA did not exist at an average rate of was 50-100 miles, or roughly 1-2 hours. No respondents claimed that they would be able to travel fewer than 10

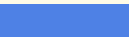

miles, or need to travel more than 100 miles, yet fifty-seven percent would be required to travel 50-100 miles to have a similar artistic experience (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

**If Whitley County Fine Arts did not exist, how far would you have to travel to have a similar experience?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Less than 10 miles		0	0%
2	10-25 miles		1	5%
3	25-50 miles		8	38%
4	50-100 miles		12	57%
5	More than 100 miles		0	0%
	Total		21	100%

That information is of particular importance because only twenty-seven percent of survey respondents replied that they would be able to travel to have a similar artistic experience each month if WCFA did not exist.

**If Whitley County Fine Arts didn't exist, would you be able to travel to have a similar experience monthly?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		6	27%
2	No		16	73%
	Total		22	100%

Thus, seventy-three percent of community members who have benefited from WCFA programming would not be able to experience similar programming if the organization did not exist. The most common reasons for not being able to participate were time and money, while transportation and lack of information were also concerns.

## **v. Whitley County Fine Arts: Sustainability and Continuation**

Through the data collection of interviews and survey assessment of the program, WCFA has demonstrated their effectiveness in serving Whitley County through providing quality arts programs to their constituents. A pivotal concern for any organization is their ability to continue operations into the foreseeable future, particularly a rural organization reliant on a localized funding structure. When asked about how WCFA's programming relates to their organizational capacity, KY EFA Agent Melissa Bond replied that while they operate within their programming budget, she related the question primarily to the program's relationship to the KY CES's structure as a whole. As she explained, WCFA not only provides entertainment experiences in low access areas, but provides quality educational experiences to community members:

A lot of people think "oh the arts, that's just entertainment, that is the same as going to a movie". We are really making sure that we are meeting the goal of also eliciting changes or cause and effect; that benefits the person's behavior as a whole as a result of participating in our programs. We provide benefits to the person's character development as a whole (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

As such, she believes WCFA to be especially sustainable as a result of the local funding mechanism. In the KY EFA model, funding comes from county revenue, and the county level Cooperative Extension Board allocates funding to each program from their general budget. These board members are also Whitley County community members, which Bond considers to be an advantage in regards to sustainability.

I could safely say that I would anticipate it continuing indefinitely. The benefit of our district board and the respect that they have for the program is that it could continue and grow and expand as time goes. We constantly ensure that our programming is quality and is meeting the needs of our community so that public demand will be there to keep us here for a long time (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

While the initial KY EFA program was designed as a pilot program in Pike County, the success of that organization encouraged the UK CES to create the next four programs to exist indefinitely. As such, once a county has voted to establish a KY EFA program, they have the ability to continue operation of that program with support from the University of Kentucky. In regards to WCFA, Bond describes this as a strong sign for continued support: “It is nice knowing that we are not a pilot program, as in trying a program for three years and evaluating at the end. We feel like we have the kind of support that once the board created this program that they will support it to exist here in our county” (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). KY EFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses echoes the support of the local community as a strong point for the organization:

The way we’re funded is also really great, because it’s locally funded and not federal it depends on us whether or not it can be taken away. Where federal agencies can be cut, here it’s more community based, they see our faces every day, they know us and see what we’re doing and see that it’s a good thing (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).



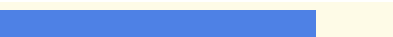
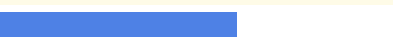

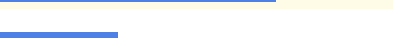

WCFA has secured equal funding to other Whitley County Extension program areas. As she explains: “By doing so they have recognized that the arts are just as valuable as the other three program areas. That helps us because we don’t have to frequently apply for outside funding and resources” (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Local support is a significant advantage for a rural arts organization, not least of all because of the startling lack of investment by private and public philanthropy discussed in Chapter Two. This funding structure is a key component of the extension model’s ability to incubate arts and cultural initiatives in rural communities; without the significant challenges of obtaining nonprofit status, procuring effective staffing, and securing investment in the early phases of an initiative.

## vi. Whitley County Fine Arts: Strengths, Challenges, and Lessons Learned

In my exploration of the WCFA program, I have sought to distinguish the strengths, best practices, and weaknesses that Whitley County Extension employees and constituents identified in our research communications, and to extract from this data some of the lessons they have learned about rural arts programming.

When surveyed regarding what WCFA does well, respondents identified ‘showcasing local artists and performers’ as the organization’s greatest strength. Seventy percent of respondents think WCFA does a great job at ‘bringing the community together’ and ‘working with area schools’. Sixty-five percent of respondents believe that WCFA does well at providing adult programs, while sixty percent are impressed with WCFA ability to ‘bring art from elsewhere to Whitley County’. Half of those surveyed feel that WCFA does a well with children’s programs, and significantly fewer (30%) respondents agreed that that WCFA does a good job of ‘promoting their programs so that I know about them’ (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).



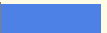

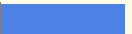


### What does Whitley County Fine Arts do really well? Please check all that apply.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Children's Programs		10	50%
2	Adult Programs		13	65%
3	Showcasing local artists and performers		16	80%
4	Bringing Art from elsewhere to Whitley County		12	60%
5	Bringing the community together		14	70%
6	Promoting their programs so I know about them		6	30%
7	Working with area schools		14	70%

Correspondingly, fifty-six percent of survey respondents feel that WCFA needs improvement on promoting their programs. Fifty-six percent of respondents also expressed a

need for improvement on bringing the community together. Forty-four percent responded that more could be done to showcase local artists and performers, while thirty-nine percent said more could be done to bring art from elsewhere to Whitley County. Thirty-three percent of respondents would like to see more effort in working with area schools, while twenty-eight percent would like to see improvement on providing both adult and children's programs.

**What do you think WCFA could use improvement on? Please check all that apply.**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Children's Programs		5	28%
2	Adult Programs		5	28%
3	Showcasing local artists and performers		8	44%
4	Bringing Art from elsewhere to Whitley County		7	39%
5	Bringing the community together		10	56%
6	Promoting their programs so I know about them		10	56%
7	Working with area schools		6	33%

This data is helpful in not only identifying the strengths and challenges of the organization, but also in identifying the priorities of the Whitley County community. The most pressing need of the organization appears to be better promotion of their existing programming. Otherwise, most community members seem satisfied with the level of programming in all other areas, although there does seem to be a desire for programming that emphasizes bringing the community together, and on presenting both local and outside artistic performances. While most community members seem to be excited about the level of engagement with area schools, many of those surveyed desire further engagement. Adult workshops seem to be providing the right amount of opportunities, while children's workshops may need improvement.

Despite the fifty-six percent of the survey respondents that indicated that emphasized a need for more programming that addressed “bringing the community together”, when surveyed about WCFA programming, ninety-five percent of respondents believed that the programming reflected the community’s culture, while only five percent believed that it did not. Many respondents left additional comments about this question that address the strengths and challenges of the organization, some of these are included below:

- Our Fine Arts Agent is very considerate of our culture and showcases it with participation of our local artists and musicians as well as farmers, homemakers and students.
- Because it showcases all the positives and enduring aspects and participants of the community.
- They listen and often evaluate the county's needs.
- I believe that they understand about Appalachian Culture and the pride that we hold in our community, but I also feel that they have enriched and added to the existing culture.

(Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

In addition to the strengths and challenges identified by survey participants, interviews conducted with KY EFA staff denoted supplementary strengths and challenges to the survey data presented above. The primary areas of organizational strength signified from these forms of data collection include community support and participation; collaboration and partnerships; providing a safe place; community pride and awareness; and WCFA Extension’s affiliation with the University of Kentucky.

### **Strengths, Challenges and Lessons Learned: Bringing the Community Together**

As the earlier survey data indicated, seventy percent of community respondents indicated that WCFA did really well at bringing the community together; yet fifty- six percent of those same respondents agreed that the organization could use improvement in that area.

When interviewed regarding the program's greatest organizational strengths, KY EFA Agent Melissa Bond named community input as their greatest strength:

We really pride ourselves on listening and trying to incorporate suggestions into our programming. We know that we exist because of the community members and for the community members and we value providing them with the experiences that they deserve (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Moreover, she listed the support of community and officials as another important strength, citing the decision by the Whitley County Extension Board to support the idea of converting the empty building on Main Street into a community arts center and the support of local politicians and other publicly funded entities and businesses: "They support us and we support them, it creates some really nice relationships, and helps to make us feel like part of something larger in the community" (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Bond asserted the tremendous level of community input in regards to the selection of arts programming as a primary aspect of this strength. WCFA Council is "made up of a varying demographic of community members in Whitley County who meet and identify key issues that they would like to work on throughout the year" (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). These council members establish the basic schedule structure for the year and consider incorporating programmatic developments that have been identified by the University of Kentucky as state or regional trends. Bond explains that the council attempts to "combine those together to meet both our local and state level needs" (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Furthermore, the staff endeavors to include community members at large in the development of programming. "We try to create a very open forum to provide community member's input" (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Whitley County Fine

Arts also engages community members through social media, but also emphasizes the value of gaining informal input through participation in community life outside of the arts.

The role of the citizenry in selecting Whitley County Fine Arts Extension programming is very strong... We really value selecting programming based on both our four-year plan of work as well as the needs of the community that emerge throughout the year (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Another significant organizational strength identified in both the interviews and survey data is WCFA's community collaborations and partnerships. Among survey respondents, seventy percent agreed that WCFA does a great job at "bringing the community together" and "working with area schools." As I discussed previously, there was some contention regarding the programs' ability to fully meet the needs of the community in regards to programming that encourages community cohesion, yet, none of the respondents indicated that any improvement was necessary for WCFA in terms of their partnerships with other organizations. One survey respondent commented that WCFA is "a magnet for various interest groups", and has an excellent opportunity to collaborate with other local entities:

They are open to suggestions, and are reaching out to other organizations in the community, such as the Kiwanis Club and churches. The downtown building is a great gathering place, and it has been, as of last year, re-decorated to accommodate a variety of activities, such as galleries, group activities, and a kitchen for social gatherings. It's a bonus that it's downtown, across from City Hall; many people can identify with the fine arts location of the Whitley Co. Extension of the University of Kentucky (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

KY EFA Agent Melissa Bond identified key partnership to include the "Reclaiming Futures" Whitley County Youth Drug Court and the regional drug prevention program UNITE, ongoing partnerships with the library, various adult care facilities, and affiliation with all area schools. As she explained:

We really value that community partnership and community involvement because it creates a unified front of support in the community, and we can supplement each other's programming while strengthening our community ties as a whole (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Cross-collaboration has long been acknowledged as a best practice in the field of arts administration, particularly among rural arts organizations, which because of leaner human and capital resources can often leverage partnerships to achieve an increase in programming and participation while still operating within their means. During our discussion of partnerships and collaboration, Bond shared the following example of a school system that is beginning to rely on WCFA resources as a result of parental demand:

I've been getting more contact from teachers as the core content standards have changed. These teachers are so used to memorizing terms. One example given by one of our parents, having students memorize a list of terms and definitions of rhythm and timing and key signature without ever actually playing an instrument is like having them go to PE class and color a basketball without ever touching a basketball. She had that conversation with the principal of her daughter's school, and from that illustration, the school made real changes, it was like a light bulb went off. In our area, we're so sports driven, as we are across the nation, you would never send a child to PE and not let them learn how to play basketball or dodge ball or kickball, but we do that in arts programming all the time (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Bond also refers to partnerships as an essential way of creating a safe space in the community. Moreover, the "Reclaiming Futures" partnership reinforces the safe space concept by providing an alternative place for youth to experience positive programming outside of the courtroom: "The purpose of that collaboration is to remove the youth from the courtroom environment and place them in a more comfortable learning environment where they are gaining arts experiences along with court" (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Bond further explains the goal of creating a safe space in terms of community members at large:

We want to provide that outlet and opportunity because sharing your art, or your music, or your dance, is a very vulnerable space to be in. We want to make sure that everyone knows that expression is welcome here and community is welcome here and we value their artistic abilities (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Moreover, Bond indicated that the UK EFA Program as a whole leverages partnerships on the regional and statewide level to engage other arts organizations in the rural community arts field. They have an ongoing relationship with the Kentucky Arts Council, which assists the program in maintaining a strong connection to nonprofit and state agency trends:

As far as just in the state of Kentucky, our extension agents have developed really good relationships with other rural arts entities... We keep aware of things like the Kentucky Arts Council, when we have our annual update; we meet with the directors of the Kentucky Arts Council and update each other on what is going on. We try to learn about things like the Kentucky foundation for Women and Appalshop, and create those relationships over time so that we can all grow stronger (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Furthermore, KY EFA Agents forge independent relationships with programs throughout the state: Pike County Arts EFA Agent Stephanie Richards has received state arts agency awards for her theatre programming, and Muhlenberg County EFA Agent Cora Hughes has served on the Kentucky Humanities Council.

### **Strengths, Challenges, and Lessons Learned: Cultural Pride**

The WCFA Extension program identified their ability to stimulate cultural pride as another important organizational strength. Ninety-five percent of survey respondents believe that WCFA programming reflects the community's culture, and an additional seventy-seven percent believe that offers the community a sense of cultural pride. One survey respondent wrote about the ways in which WCFA enriched the community's cohesiveness:

The enrichment of arts in any and all forms allows people from all walks of life to come together in a common ground of enjoying something creative, building community pride and value of its artists and creative peoples (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

Moreover, KY EFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses talked about the ways in which fine arts extension programming are expanding the cultural pride of her hometown:

I'm hoping that this exposure will expand the culture but also hone in on the heritage of the place while also doing new things. We have a strong heritage here and it needs to be displayed so that people see that there are a lot of great artists here, it makes people proud of their community and their neighbors. I think it makes people proud to have a community center where they can see their neighbor's art work (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

When asked about lessons learned from working in the Whitley pertaining to how the arts contribute to people and their sense of identity, culture and place; Melissa Bond emphasized the importance of considering the cultural history and assets existing in the place.

I've learned that long before an organized arts entity was created, there was a tradition of incredibly talented artists in this area who directly linked their artwork to either their upbringing or their experiences in this area. It's really helped me to develop a strong respect for the artists and their desire to share their art with their communities and those who are not the artists but get to participate in viewing or experiencing art, and come away with a renewed sense of pride and identity seeing their own area celebrated (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

She offered the example of Whitley County artist and lifelong resident Joshua Bunch as an example of how presenting a local artist's artwork can help to engage community members in reconsidering their ideas about the place they live and their own cultural pride.

One of our artists, Josh Bunch, is well known in our community as a cartoonist... He's a state trooper, and everyone just knew him as the kid who was able to draw cartoons. But in the work he displayed here, he is deep artist that does very complicated pieces with elaborate commentary through his artwork of our area and the pride he feels and the things he sees on a daily basis. This was the first chance he had in Whitley County to share his work with his community members. Through this experience, he's created a mutual pride that has inspired him to create more work, and has also created community pride in this area that community members recognize through his paintings (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

### **Strengths, Challenges, and Lessons Learned: Affiliation with UK: Strategic Planning, Professional Development, & Evaluation**

As both administrators noted, one of the key strengths of WCFA is their affiliation with the University of Kentucky. As explained in the organizational structure section of this document, the University of Kentucky supports the KY EFA by providing access to university resources through ties to KY CES research specialists and College of Fine Arts faculty and staff, and through the distribution of research-based-information to community members (MB Interview). Additionally, the University of Kentucky affords Extension Agents access to key resources related to program development, strategic planning, and evaluation. WCFA organizes their strategic planning process around the national CES's logic model, which is designed to ensure that programming is reaching the county and programs' long and short term goals:

We have templates available and training from the University of Kentucky for how to do an impact statement or how to do develop a plan of work and how to develop quality programming. Having that accountability and structure existing through extension is really nice too, because it helps us make sure that we are meeting the standards that extension expects (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

WCFA utilizes University of Kentucky templates and specialist staff to complete a comprehensive strategic plan that considers the short-term, mid-range, and long-term needs and goals of the organization. The Whitley County Extension Council is comprised of members representing all four major Extension program areas and governs all Whitley County Extension business. This council identifies the priority community issues that upcoming Whitley County Extension programs will address. County agents and staff then draft a four-year plan of work based on these recommendations. Bond emphasizes the need to balance community input and the professional expertise and competencies of the KY EFA staff:

Make sure that your work is completely focused on the community and what the community desires out of the work, as well as your educational experience and background. Try to combine those into a program that really satisfies both sides of the spectrum. Combining fine arts and culture is definitely not black and white, there is a lot of grey there, and all of it is beneficial and valuable is just identifying the parts that you want to incorporate (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Within this larger structure, Extension staff schedule and plan specific programming on an annual basis. She describes one of her greatest challenges in this process as discerning the most pressing needs to the community:

In terms of providing programming, the challenge is really to determine the most important issues. There are a lot of rural arts challenges in our area and we would love to be the answer to all of them. Identifying the key ones is important, because we want to provide key quality experiences, rather than many mediocre experiences (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Moses explains that the success of the program is in part a result of the resources that the University of Kentucky provides: “I think we can do things well because of our affiliation with UK, they offer the resources and knowledge to do anything in the arts that we want to pursue” (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Moreover, the university lends the program the credibility of their name. As a research one university and the largest college in the Kentucky Colleges and Universities system, the University of Kentucky is recognized across the region as an educational institution that provides quality, evidence-based programming to constituents.

Bond goes on to explain that another key benefit to the University of Kentucky relationship is the benefit of belonging to a network of Extension Fine Arts Agents: “We have regular conference calls and we get together once a year for a three-day professional development” (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Bond explained that in the initial phases of her hiring, she shadowed the Pike County EFA Agent:

It was the level of training that I received that was already established rather than if I were a standalone entity starting this through other funding sources, I would have to seek out where to go to begin to learn all of these things on my own. I'm the youngest program, but I have the wisdom and advice of the other agents to guide me (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

She also notes that the university relationship provides a supplementary awareness of grants and outside funding opportunities as well as trends that are developing in rural arts organizations across the state. One of the most beneficial aspects of this relationship is the professional development opportunities provided to WCFA staff and Advisory Board. The KY EFA has a budget to send its employees to professional development opportunities throughout the year. Last year, Bond attended the Educational Theatre Association to improve her abilities in providing quality community theatre programming.

Cortney Moses also attended the Southern SOG Conference, where she participated in the Sustainability in Agriculture working group and attended numerous farmers' market marketing classes, where she learned new strategies and promoted the Whitley County model of arts integration into the Farmer's Market program. Moses explained that these professional development opportunities are a boon to her ability to serve the county as well as invest in her personal development (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013). WCFA also seeks to invest in the professional development of their advisory board. Bond arranged for a fieldtrip for advisory board members to attend a woodworking workshop at the Appalachian Artisan Center in Hindman, Kentucky in order to evaluate whether or not an investment in a woodshop facility would be realistic for the program.

One of the things that we were identifying was the need to create a woodworking club in the area where established woodworkers would apprentice youth and beginners to develop this symbiotic relationship of teaching and learning from each other. So we explored that option and turned bowls and learned about the process to evaluate if that

was something we could feasibly handle in our community (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

The KY EFA program is also in the process of working with CES Programs in other states to identify Fine Arts related practitioners around the nation. As Bond explained: “You spend so much time doing your day to day job that you don’t always get to learn that this other state may be doing this relevant thing as well, and we could really benefit from learning from each other in a national conference environment” (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013). The hope is that this information will lead to a national professional development experience linked to using arts programming to achieve community and economic development in rural communities.

While the relationship with the University of Kentucky has certainly been identified as a strong point of the KY EFA Program, there are some challenges that Fine Arts Agents face as a result in regards to accessing resources. One significant challenge is presented because of the Fine Arts Program’s relatively new status as a key program area. As Bond explains:





One key challenge would be that most extension programs in the State have been around for so long that they have a strong core of established specialists and contacts that they can reach at the University of Kentucky or throughout the state or nation. The challenge is that because we are such a young program, we don’t have those relationships in place as significantly. Long term we really hope to see certain programming and curriculum that are packaged and handed down to us to use without having to create all of the materials in-house (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

The Community and Economic Development Program Area of Cooperative Extension (CEDIK) and Extension Fine Arts Program Manager Charles Stamper develop best practices and evidence-based research to provide to the KY EFA program area, but are limited in comparison to the other Extension program areas by the relatively short lifeline of the program.

The University of Kentucky provides a well structured guidelines for program evaluation and accountability, yet like many organizations the Whitley County program appears to struggle with the consistent participant evaluation. When queried about the frequency of which they were asked to evaluate a WCFA event that they had attended, only ten percent of survey respondents believe that they are always asked to evaluate a program after participation.

An additional fifty-seven percent responded that they are usually asked to evaluate, and nineteen percent are occasionally asked to evaluate programs. Fourteen percent responded that they had never been asked to evaluate a program in which they had participated at Whitley County Fine Arts. More survey participants had never been asked to complete program evaluation following their attendance at an event than those who always are, which represents a significant challenge for the Fine Arts program if they hope to improve their ability to create programming rooted in evidence-based assessment (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

**When you participate in a Fine Arts program, are you asked to evaluate the program afterward?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Always		2	10%
2	Usually		12	57%
3	Occasionally		4	19%
4	Never		3	14%
	Total		21	100%

Conversations with the KY EFA staff illustrated that while participant evaluation is an important component of their evaluation strategy, it is not their primary tool. The University of Kentucky Extension program requires an annual report relating the previous year's programming to the larger four year plan of work, as well as a long-term evaluation of the previous four years and their fulfillment of the former plan of work. Yet, both Bond and Moses

described their most consistent program evaluation tactic as informal, evaluative conversations among their staff (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

We do a somewhat informal evaluation after each event. It can be as simple as meeting on Monday mornings to debrief the previous week and to talk about what went well and what didn't, and what we would change in repeating this event... We file that evaluation with the programming notes for the next time we want to run that program (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Bond explained their use of formal participant evaluation as more occasional depending on the format, subject matter, and desired outcomes of the program. She spoke about the importance of participant evaluation in programs designed to illicit a change in behavior or a specific measurable effect:

For our Enhancing Marketing Skills for Eastern Kentucky Artisans (EMSEKA) program, we have a formal evaluation that we hand out prior to the workshop (to test their beginning knowledge), after the workshop (to see what they have learned), again six weeks later, and again six months later to see what they have learned and if they are earning any more revenue. Those numbers give us a lot of support, to know that a participant learned X, and because they learned X, they increased their revenue by X amount. We try to do a variety of evaluation, but for those who might attend a gourd making workshop, they may not feel comfortable filling out a questionnaire because they feel like they are rating the person sitting right there next to them who taught the class. So we will just ask them if they enjoyed the workshop and if they'd like to do more (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Based on this evidence, I surmise that while WCFA does not appear to engage in rigorous participant evaluation, they do appear to operate under a strict long-term evaluative process. Thus, the KY EFA program does benefit from their relationship to the University of Kentucky through its requirement of annual evaluation, but would perhaps need more concrete evaluative systems in place to fulfill the requirements of many of the funding mechanisms to whom nonprofit arts organizations must demonstrate accountability.

## **Strengths, Challenges, and Lessons Learned: Program Marketing and Promotion**

The most prevalent organizational challenge facing WCFA appears to be public awareness through marketing and promotion. As I discussed previously, when asked about the tasks WCFA does really well, only thirty percent of respondents agreed that that WCFA does a good job of ‘promoting their programs so that I know about them’. Correspondingly, fifty six percent of survey respondents feel that WCFA needs improvement on promoting their programs (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013). The most pressing need of the organization seems to be related to better promotion of their existing programming. This challenge is considered by KY EFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses to be one of the most pressing, particularly because the community-based educational programming that Extension provides could be a transformative resource for geographically isolated populations, who in many rural Kentucky communities tend to be in lower income brackets than those living in population centers. When asked about whether or not the general public is aware of their programs, Moses indicates geographic and class-related distinction between those who are and are not:

I feel like certain types of people are aware... I know that there are many families that live out in the boonies, that don't get newspapers, don't have internet, and who knows if they hear this stuff on the radio. I'm worried about those places, so I think our biggest challenge is to reach those people. We're going to have to go to those places to reach those people. I think there are a lot of people that we still need to reach, and those might be the ones that need these programs the most, especially to bring those people in to be a part of our community (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

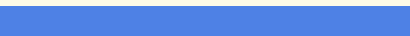






When asked about all of the ways they had heard about the programs of WCFA, most survey respondents had become involved based on a word-of-mouth recommendation. Eighty six-percent became aware based on a recommendation from a friend, while fourteen percent heard from a family member, and five percent from a neighbor. KY EFA Agent Melissa Bond

explained that the majority of Whitley Countians likely remain unaware of the fine arts programming in their community. Bond clarifies that while a increase in participation demonstrates that public knowledge is growing, word of mouth continues to be the most reliable way to solicit new audiences.

We're a young program, and we've learned in this community, even with extension as a whole, that word of mouth seems to be what we have to rely on... Due to the rural and spread out nature of our community, it's a challenge to make the general public aware of the events we have going on, unless someone they know has been to an event and asks them to come along (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

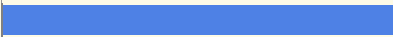

Following word of mouth, survey respondents most often hear about the programs through the newspaper, at a rate of thirty-six percent. Comparatively, fewer respondents become aware of programs via online promotion, as only twenty-seven percent of respondents had heard from either email or Facebook. The least popular way to hear of WCFA programs was by mail, which only five percent of those surveyed had received (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

**How did you hear about Whitley County Fine Arts? Please check all that apply.**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Friend		19	86%
2	Family Member		3	14%
3	Neighbor		1	5%
4	Email		6	27%
5	Newspaper		8	36%
6	Facebook		6	27%
7	Mail		1	5%
8	Poster		0	0%

When surveyed regarding whether or not their friends and family knew about WCFA programs, eighty-two percent of respondents felt that their friends and family were aware, while the eighteen percent believed that their friends and family were not (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

### In your opinion, do your friends and family know about Whitley County Fine Arts?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		18	82%
2	No		4	18%
	Total		22	100%

That said, fifty-four percent of survey respondents commented on this question to indicate that their friends and family knew about these programs because they made a point to tell them about it (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013). Other comments included the following:

- They know about this program because I have told every single person I know how amazing it is! I try to influence my co-workers and family to participate in programs constantly.
- Our Fine Arts Agent has an ability to relate to all ages and promotes her department's importance with fun and interesting projects.
- Probably not interested.
- I do not know why they don't know more about it.
- Yes, but more should. Promoting and advertising could help.

(Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013)

Promoting programs can be particularly challenging in rural communities where access to broad-based communication outlets is more limited than in urban areas, and where public transportation is non-existent. When asked what lessons she would impart to other folks regarding how to best use arts and cultural work in rural communities, KY EFA Agent Melissa Bond underscores the importance of listening:

For me personally, what I've learned from experience is to really get to know your community, and listen everyday to what the *community* identifies as arts and cultural work. Create that relationship with your community members to know that you're meeting these rural needs, and understand how they're different from urban needs in many ways, but there are also parts that are incredibly similar. Then use the resources you can access to develop a cohesive rural arts program (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Thus, while program promotion seems to be the greatest organizational challenge for WCFA, they emphasize the importance of leveraging community input in programmatic design.

### **Arts Extension Programs Elsewhere**

WCFA is an uncommon program model in the community arts field, which is often dominated by local arts agencies, nonprofit arts organizations, public partnerships, and informal arts. Yet, it does appear to be experiencing resurgence in its distribution across the United States. WCFA Extension Agent Melissa Bond spoke about noticing an increase in interest in rural arts, particularly among urban audiences.

There is such an increase in awareness and interest in more rural arts development. There has been resurgence toward handcrafted things nationwide, with programs like Etsy and the awareness of the local food movement, so that has worked its way into rural and urban arts. You suddenly have urban populations interested in what rural folks are doing artistically. It's created a nice opportunity for dialogue that I don't know that we've had previously as much (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

That said, the CES has a long history of providing arts programming in rural communities, particularly in Montana, North Dakota, and Wisconsin. The short-term "Putting Culture Back into Agriculture" project in Wisconsin, along with the development of the robust and long term UK EFA Program were two of the initial programs designed and deployed in the twenty-first century, and other states are beginning to prioritize the arts in their programs.

### **Summary of Whitley County Fine Arts Case Study**

The Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program (WCFA) is a county-level program of the University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program (KY EFA), which seeks to develop and promote support for arts education and development, particularly in five rural Kentucky counties. The KY EFA exists as a partnership between the KY CES and the University of Kentucky

College of Fine Arts, and is supported by the university through provided educational and professional development resources, but funded locally at the county level for each program.

WCFA has been in operation for three years and secured a community arts center in downtown Williamsburg, Kentucky in the summer of 2012. The program is managed locally by KY EFA Agent Melissa Bond and her assistant, Cortney Moses. WCFA is supported locally by an arts advisory board, as well as the Whitley County Extension board, and managed by the University of Kentucky by the KY EFA Program Manager and the District Director for Southeast Kentucky. WCFA staff was ranked as exceptional by sixty-four of survey respondents, which may be a testament to the benefit of utilizing the University of Kentucky for human resource needs.

WCFA programming is designed to engage community members as participants more often than as audience members, which may be key to the significant community support for their programming. Programming addresses a variety of artistic mediums, as at least five percent of survey participants had engaged with each of the following activities: art exhibit, theatre, singing, concert, movies, dance, writer's performance, farmer's market, hand's on workshop, and storytelling. When asked what WCFA provides for the community, one survey respondent replied with the following:

It brings interaction with cultural activities into our area. It encourages participation in artistic endeavor and provides an exploratory opportunity to branch out into new interests. It provides the resources for crafts, art projects and entertainment. It coordinates different ages of people working and playing together in the area. The Fine Arts focuses the importance of art in a rural setting and provides diversity and interesting programs (Survey, 1/8/2013-2/10/2013).

More than sixty percent of participants agreed that WCFA provides their community with arts experiences, community interaction, social events, and educational programs, a sense

of cultural pride to their community a safe place to talk with neighbors, and economic benefits to the community.

Their most significant organizational strengths include their affiliation with the University of Kentucky, collaborations and partnerships, community engagement, inciting pride in the community, showcasing local artists and performers, strategic planning, and working with area schools. The most significant organizational challenges are related to participant evaluation and public awareness and promotion of the program.

Arts access is a significant issue in Whitley County, as more than fifty percent of WCFA participants surveyed would be required to drive more than fifty miles to attend a similar cultural event, and only twenty-seven percent of survey respondents believed they would have access to an arts opportunity each month if WCFA did not exist.

The CES has a long history of providing arts opportunities for rural populations. While the University of Kentucky is the only program of its kind operating currently, a growing number of other states and regions are adopting arts programming as an aspect of their Extension offerings. As a result of the resources and support of the University of Kentucky, the KY EFA model appears to offer a viable alternative to the traditional nonprofit arts organization for rural communities.

The Kentucky State Program Leader for the Extension Fine Arts Program (Dr. Charles Stamper) has volunteered to counsel communities or Cooperative Extension Service chapters in the development of an arts extension program, and may be able to travel to assist in development. To contact Charles Stamper, Extension Program Leader for Community and Economic Development and Fine Arts, [cstamper@uky.edu](mailto:cstamper@uky.edu) , [859-257-9511](tel:859-257-9511) x233.

## **Chapter 5: Research Study Summary, Findings, and Conclusions**

### **I. Summary of the Research Study**

This research project has examined the Extension Fine Arts program in Kentucky and the “Putting the Culture back in Agriculture” project in Wisconsin through case studies, and considered the value of these programs in their home states and the ways in which these programs are model rural arts projects for other states to consider.

As explained earlier in this report, the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Program founded the University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program in 2005. Also in 2005, University of Wisconsin Extension supported an initiative to promote rural arts projects that promoted the intersection of culture and agriculture. This study considered the history and benchmarks of the arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service alongside the development of the community arts field and the considerable under-investment of public and private philanthropy in the support of cultural initiatives for rural communities. Later in this chapter, this study will utilize data analysis of the two case studies to evaluate the arts extension concept as a model program for leveraging the arts and cultural programming to achieve community development in contemporary rural communities.

#### **a. Purpose of study**

The significance of this study is derived from an emerging opportunity to affect positive change in rural areas through use of cultural programming. As this study demonstrates, rural communities witnessed consistent population loss in the twentieth century and while many struggle economically, remarkably little investment from policy makers and philanthropic agencies has been devoted to their aid. This study asserts that the cultural programs of the Cooperative Extension Service should be evaluated as model programs for rural communities

because they present an alternative to the standard arts policy and funding model. The considerable social capital and financial resources of the Extension Service have been and continue to be leveraged to fulfill the needs of rural communities across the United States. This programming model is relatively unknown in the field of arts administration, and should be evaluated as a model so that small communities are familiar with the resources that the Cooperative Extension Service can provide.

### **b. Conceptual framework**

This study assessed the cultural policy paradigms impacting cultural programming in rural communities in an effort to justify and to establish the need for alternative funding and policy models for rural arts and cultural programming. I evaluated the state of the rural arts and rural cultural policy through the lens of John Kingdon's policy window theory. While the policy problem has been identified by policy entrepreneurs, the federal and state political will has not yet identified rural cultural policy as a key issue. This study examined the lack of investment in rural communities from both a public and philanthropic perspective, and found that only one percent of philanthropy and as little as two to five times less federal investment per capita are allocated to rural communities despite our nation's reliance on rural agriculture and resources for the prosperity of urban centers.

This report argues that this dichotomy between America's rural production expectations and lack of policy and resource investment constitutes a policy problem which is now beginning to be identified across governmental agencies. The Federal Government established the White House Rural Council; numerous national policy think tanks and academic conferences have convened rural arts leaders to address rural cultural policy issues; and the Rural Arts and

Culture Working Group was established this past summer as an interest group of the policy-advocate coalition the National Rural Assembly (Fluharty, 2012). The convergence of these policy streams and problem identification relating to under-investment in rural communities foreshadows a policy window for rural arts and culture. Yet, political acknowledgement of a rural policy problem through the establishment of the White House Rural Council that does not directly address arts and culture suggests that while the policy problem is being articulated and policy communities are forming, the political will has not materialized for a rural arts policy window to be opened. While new possibilities for rural cultural policy are forming, these communities are struggling and need more effective models for community development now.

The arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service apply evidence-based community development models to cultural programming, and have experienced considerable success in isolated examples throughout the United States. The history of Extension arts programs extends back to the first decade of operation for the Cooperative Extension Service. Several pioneers in the community arts field including Alfred Arvold, Baker Brownell, Alexander Drummond, Rachel David Dubois, Robert Gard, and Frederick Koch, were enabled to do rural arts work within through their affiliation with land-grant university agriculture departments. Moreover, the University of Massachusetts established the Arts Extension Service in 1973, and the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program was founded in 2005, while the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project was initiated by the University of Wisconsin (UW) was established in the same year. Additional extension cultural programming exists in Idaho, Missouri, and Wisconsin; and the expressive arts have been identified as a component of national 4-H curriculum. As such, the arts extension model is both historically grounded in established

community arts practice and has been increasingly leveraged by small communities in the twenty-first century as a way to provide arts programming to rural constituents.

## **II. Findings**

### **a. University of Wisconsin “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” Case Study**

The “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project was created by the University of Wisconsin (UW) through partnership with the Robert Gard Foundation to examine the arts in rural Wisconsin. One grant manager from each of these respective institutions invited rural Wisconsin organizations to respond to the “putting culture back into agriculture” idea through proposals for funding. Four such proposals were granted funding with the goal of addressing the intersection of cultural programming and agriculture. The projects that resulted from these proposals included organizational participation from the Agriculture Heritage and Resources organization in Kewaunee, Wisconsin; the Northern Lakes Center for the Arts in Amery, Wisconsin; The Spring Green Center for Creativity and Innovation in Spring Green, Wisconsin; and the Wormfarm Institute in Reedsburg, Wisconsin.

This case study’s methodology was primarily based on document analysis of the four project summaries, as well as Jerry Apps’ evaluative report of the project as a whole. Limited literature review and conversation with participants contextualized this case study. The study focused on the wide array of cultural programming made possible by the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project and through university-community partnership with the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Wisconsin.

### i. Strengths

The primary strengths of the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project can be summarized as the following: an innovative funding structure, the level of expertise of their granting panel; the engagement and support of existing rural arts organizations; of cultural pride; ongoing collaboration; and strong program evaluation.

The grant process was managed by Margo Gard Ewell (former state arts agency employee and rural arts expert) and Miranda McClenaghan (Director of Theatre Education in the Liberal Studies Department), both of whom provided a high level of grantmaking and rural arts expertise to the process. By extending invitations for participation from rural Wisconsin organizations, the grant managers solicited responses from known arts leaders throughout the state, and by so doing guaranteed quality programming and supported excellence in the field.

The projects themselves produced considerable results. The Northern Lakes Center for the Arts in Amery partnered with the extension agents in their region to showcase the history of Wisconsin rural arts programs through renewed dissemination of the work of John Steuart Curry, the nation’s first University-artist-in-residence. As a result, they not only created contemporary programming to the benefit of their community, but also emphasized the longevity of Cooperative Extension Service arts programs in rural communities and promoted the long term investment of Extension in Wisconsin.

The Agriculture Heritage and Resources organization in Kewaunee developed *Old Iron and Old Irons*, which invited community participation and secured local community members in ownership of the project. As a result, this programming helped Kewaunee to reflect on cultural pride in the place that they live. The Wormfarm Institute in Reedsburg’s project led to

partnerships that eventually developed into the creation of the annual Fermentation Festival. Thus, their project resulted in an ongoing event that continues collaboration between art and agriculture, which leveraged their relationship with their local Extension agent and stimulated cultural tourism in the region.

As the Apps report suggests, all of the projects engaged members of their community in appreciation of their place, and two of the four projects presented their work at national arts and/or farming conferences, thereby exposing their organizations and communities to a national audience. One of the most significant strengths of these four community arts projects is the display of diversity of programming possible in rural communities. These projects each considered the uniqueness of their community, and designed programming tailored to their people and places.

One of the most noteworthy strengths of the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project is its program evaluation component. Each organization provided a summary and evaluation of their project upon completion of the grant cycle. More importantly, they hired an independent consultant to conduct project evaluation on a project-by-project basis as well as the process as a whole. They published descriptions about the community projects and their findings online, and as a result of this documentation, other agencies interested in promoting arts and agriculture can access evaluative information from which to design programming.

#### **i. Challenges**

The most significant challenges for the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project were related to the project’s temporary nature. The grant funded each project for a two year time span, and as such was limited in its ability to support sustainable programming.

Furthermore, because rural arts organizations were invited to create programming around a specific prompt, their programming was exploratory by nature and could not guarantee sustainability. Lastly, because the grant projects were limited to a timeframe, the organizations were somewhat restricted in creating deep partnerships, which take considerable time and resources to develop.

The projects themselves also seemed to experience a common challenge in integrating artists and farmers. Both the Center for Creativity and the Wormfarm Institute identified cohesion between these two communities to be a challenge. The Center for Creativity experienced substantial hesitation from the farming community in re-designing the aesthetics of their landscape. The Wormfarm Institute discovered an ‘us-vs.-them’ mentality between farmers and artists in initial meetings, but eventually moved beyond those divisions to work collaboratively. These examples illustrate the need for sensitivity when developing cultural programming so that risk of dividing communities along party lines is minimized; and the need for negotiation skills between the project organizers and the community at large.

#### **i. Feasibility of Exporting the Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program Model**

Despite the challenges of the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” Project, this model would work well for many organizations that have an interest in supporting rural cultural programming, but have few resources to devote to the process. Each of the “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” projects developed into events that accomplished the following:

- Brought the community together
- Enriched community pride
- Explored ideas about place
- Enlivened conversation between artists and farmers
- Produced economic stimulation for their communities

The scale of this initiative and the relatively low financial investment required from the University of Wisconsin make this project realistic for a range of institutions. The “Putting Culture Back into Agriculture” project supported rural arts organizations and promoted their existence across the state while also advancing the interests of the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Service and the Gard Foundation by combining the concepts of the arts and agriculture. Moreover, the project themes’ intersection with art and agriculture may be viable for a Cooperative Extension Service state that does not have significant experience integrating the arts and culture into their existing programmatic structure, but want to explore an Extension arts programming model.

#### **b. The University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program Case Study**

Founded in 2005, The University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program was developed through a cross-divisional university partnership between the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the College of Fine Arts, and is managed by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. The University of Kentucky’s Cooperative Extension Service did not have an extensive history of arts and cultural programming, but approached the development of this new project as an way to deepen their service to Kentucky communities by providing programming capable of stimulating rural economies and enhancing quality of life.

The University of Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program’s core objectives are to support arts development, arts education, arts programming, and arts venues and facilities throughout the state. The organizational structure of the Extension Fine Arts program model is grassroots by design, with the development of new Fine Arts Extension County programs restricted to counties that approach the Extension Service with an interest for the program, can

demonstrate a programmatic need, and can provide county-level funding. There are five Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program counties, and all programs are managed by the Director of the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.

This case study examines the history, organizational structure, and viability of this program as a national model through staff interviews, constituent surveys, and extensive organizational document analysis. While this study does include information about the Kentucky Extension Fine Arts Program as a whole, the case study is primarily developed around evaluation of the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension program.

#### **i. Strengths**

Considering the Kentucky Extension Fine Arts program as a whole, the cross-departmental partnership between the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the College of Fine Arts is a significant organizational strength. While the College of Agriculture houses the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service and manages the Extension Fine Arts program, the program can also rely on the support of College of Fine Arts faculty and staff. This partnership strengthens relationships within the university while simultaneously offering greater public access to the university. Moreover, this program has the benefit of lateral support from both the Dean of Extension and the Dean of the College of Fine Arts.

The Extension Fine Arts program benefits from a consistent mission and set of statewide objectives across county programs. Their mission is to “create and support opportunities in the arts for citizens that will stimulate creativity, promote participation, and recognize artists, art educators, and arts supporters at all levels and mediums” (University of Kentucky Ag. Communications Services, 2013). They support the development of performing, visual, and

literary arts in Kentucky; as well as life-long learning opportunities in the arts, the expansion of opportunities for showcasing and publicizing the arts, the promotion of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service as a leader and encourager of rural arts participation, and the development of arts venues and facilities to provide access to a cohesive and dynamic arts culture for all citizens (University of Kentucky Ag. Communications Services, 2013). Moreover, the Extension Fine Arts program is designed in accordance to the assessment of their initial pilot project; and as such guarantees an evidence-based model.

Additionally, the University of Kentucky's Cooperative Extension Service has come to value the arts as a component across programming areas, and have developed "Arts in the Community" as a featured program area for all Kentucky Cooperative Extension agencies, regardless of their designation as Extension Fine Arts programs. In addition to Fine Arts Extension programs in Boyd, Greenup, Muhlenberg, Pike, and Whitley counties, in fiscal year 2012 66 of Kentucky's 120 counties (55% of the state) participated in programs related to the "Arts in the Community" featured program. Within those counties, 1192 educational programs were conducted in relation to the arts or artisans; 208 artisan supported coalitions were assisted or facilitated by Extension; 1862 artisans were directly assisted by Extension; and 1863 volunteers supported Extension-sponsored arts programs. Of these participants, 981 participants reported an increased income from the arts, and 486 participants reported an increase in income due to knowledge gained from Extension's Arts programming (*Featured programs descriptions*, 2012). This data suggests that integrated programming outside of the Extension Fine Arts Program is a priority for the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

In the Whitley County Fine Arts program (WCFA) case study, the most significant organizational strengths include 1) their affiliation with the University of Kentucky; 2) collaborations and partnerships; 3) community engagement; 4) community pride; 5) showcasing local artists and performers; 6) strategic planning; and 7) working with area schools.

As explained in the previous chapter, more than sixty percent of participants agreed that WCFA provides their community with arts experiences, community interaction, social events, and educational programs, a sense of cultural pride, a safe place to talk with neighbors, and economic benefits. Arts access is a significant issue in Whitley County, as more than fifty percent of WCFA participants surveyed would be required to drive more than fifty miles to attend a similar cultural event, and only twenty-seven percent of survey respondents believed they would have access to an arts opportunity each month if WCFA did not exist. As such, WCFA is demonstrating an ability to fulfill a community need.

WCFA constituents indicated ‘showcasing local artists and performers’ as the organization’s greatest strength. Seventy percent of respondents feel that WCFA does a great job at ‘bringing the community together’ and ‘working with area schools’. Additionally, sixty-five percent of respondents believe that WCFA does well at providing adult programs, while sixty percent are impressed with WCFA ability to ‘bring art from elsewhere to Whitley County’. Half of those surveyed feel that WCFA does a great job with children’s programs, and significantly fewer (30%) respondents agreed that that WCFA does a good job of ‘promoting their programs so that I know about them’.

This study identified WCFA’s three primary organizational strengths to include bringing the community together, inciting cultural pride, and its affiliation with the University of

Kentucky. Seventy percent of constituents indicated that WCFA did well at bringing the community together, and staff interviews echoed this assertion as a programmatic priority. Additionally, ninety-five percent of constituents considered WCFA's programming to be a catalyst for cultural pride across the community. Ninety-five percent of respondents indicated that their programming was reflective of the community's culture. WCFA's affiliation with the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension service also provided significant advantages in regards to strategic planning and professional development of WCFA staff and board members.

### **i. Challenges**

While the history of arts programs in Cooperative Extension is robust throughout the nation, the Kentucky Extension Fine Arts program (KY EFA) was the first significant Extension arts programming in the state of Kentucky. In their eighth year of operation, KY EFA identified their primary challenges as developing curriculum for the fine arts program area and continuing to develop roles with the University of Kentucky College of Fine Arts Faculty and Administration (*Kentucky issues discovery*, 2012).

The most significant organizational challenges of WCFA were identified as inconsistent participant evaluation and public awareness of the program. Fifty-six percent of constituents expressed that WCFA needed improvement on program marketing and promoting. Correspondingly, only thirty percent of constituents agreed that WCFA does well at promoting their programs. WCFA's staff agreed that this was a significant organizational challenge.

While the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service provides clear and structured guidelines for holistic program evaluation, WCFA struggles with consistent individual program evaluation. Only ten percent of constituents agreed that they were always asked to

participate in an evaluation process. This study concludes that while WCFA does engage in long-term qualitative analysis, they do not fully engage in short term programmatic evaluation, which can be a limitation.

#### **i. Feasibility of Exporting the KY Extension Fine Arts Program Model**

The rapid development of new Extension arts models across the country and the designation of Expressive Arts as a core focus in 4-H programming are indicative of a growing desire to explore arts programming in rural communities. The growth of these programs in the Extension model, which many rural communities are familiar and comfortable with, indicates that rural cultural programming through Extension can be a viable alternative to more traditional arts organization structures.

When asked if she believes the UK EFA model could work for other states, WCFA Agent Assistant Cortney Moses felt confident that it would work: “Definitely. As long as they have the funding and the resources, it could work. It’s working here, in Southeastern Kentucky” (C. Moses, personal communication, January 9, 2013). WCFA Agent Melissa Bond elaborated that a similarly structured, county-funded Extension agency could adopt the structure most easily, but acknowledged that there are many states in which Cooperative Extension Service funding is sourced through less reliable structures:

There are a lot of Extension states that are not county funded and have a very small budget because of the decrease of federal and state funding and have even lost their core Extension programs, so those states would have a challenge... Even if they weren’t specifically county funded, as long as a strong funding mechanism is in place it would translate easily (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

Depending on the funding structure, Bond indicated that the KY EFA model could benefit rural communities initiating or expanding arts programming; particularly because the

Cooperative Extension Service logic model has been in place for nearly 100 years, and is embedded in every state in the nation.

The benefit of the Extension Fine Arts model is that extension has been around for a long time, and it is built into every land grant university as part of their charge to provide education and support in all of their counties. So it is following a structure that has been followed for a long time, but is just providing arts rather than agriculture, or arts in cooperation with agriculture. It's already there, we just change the topic (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

The process of establishing an Extension arts program should begin with a conversation with your local or state Cooperative Extension Service. Bond emphasized the need to evaluate your state's Extension structure and whether that state has recognized a need for increased rural arts programming:

Several states already have community and economic development agents, which is another aspect of the land grant university's charge to provide, it is just whether or not the arts need to be a key part of that (M. Bond, personal communication, January 9, 2013).

The Director of KY EFA does believe that the KY EFA model would work well in other states, but emphasized the need to develop a structure to manage the program before hiring the first EFA employee. As he explained:

In the KY CES EFA program, we have developed a professional development plan for our EFA Agents as well as Mission, Vision, and Goal Statements. Questions that need to be addressed: Who will be the direct supervisor for the agent? Who will provide professional development for the agent? Who will mentor the EFA agent? (C. Stamper, personal communication, April 24, 2013).

Moreover, Stamper emphasized the need for communities interested in developing an EFA program to encourage conversation between their Cooperative Extension Service and the Fine Arts department at the corresponding college or university.

## **Viability of Cooperative Extension Service Programs as a Rural Arts Model**

In conclusion, the underinvestment of both private and public philanthropic resources in rural cultural programming establishes a need for new strategies for investment in cultural development in rural areas. Moreover, because only twelve percent of nonprofit organizations in the United States are located outside the urban core, there is a need for a more diverse variety of organizational structures to serve these communities.

The structural variations between the Wisconsin and Kentucky Extension arts programs illustrates the adaptability of these model, which can be tailored to the needs of the communities with which the organization works, the history of Extension in that state, and the available resources of that Cooperative Extension Service. As the findings of the preceding case studies indicate, the arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service are serving their communities needs. The fulfillment of these needs are varied based on the demographics and cultural history of the community that the program targets. The Wisconsin project developed as a means for the Cooperative Extension Service to support existing rural arts organizations, while WCFA fulfilled community desire for cultural programming in a low arts access region.

This study aimed to inform rural arts practitioners, community arts academics, and policy makers regarding the limitations of existing resource investment in rural areas and need for additional rural arts organizational models. The arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service are evaluated as model programs in this study because they offer an alternative to the unreliable arts policy and funding model. Utilizing the extensive social capital and financial resources of the Extension Service offers an opportunity for rural arts programs that counties can afford and that their citizenry are comfortable engaging with. Therefore, based on the

clearly articulated need for increased investment, and on the success of the Kentucky and Wisconsin programs in meeting that need through adaptable structures, this study found the creation of arts programs within the Cooperative Extension Service to be a viable option for the development of cultural programming in small communities.

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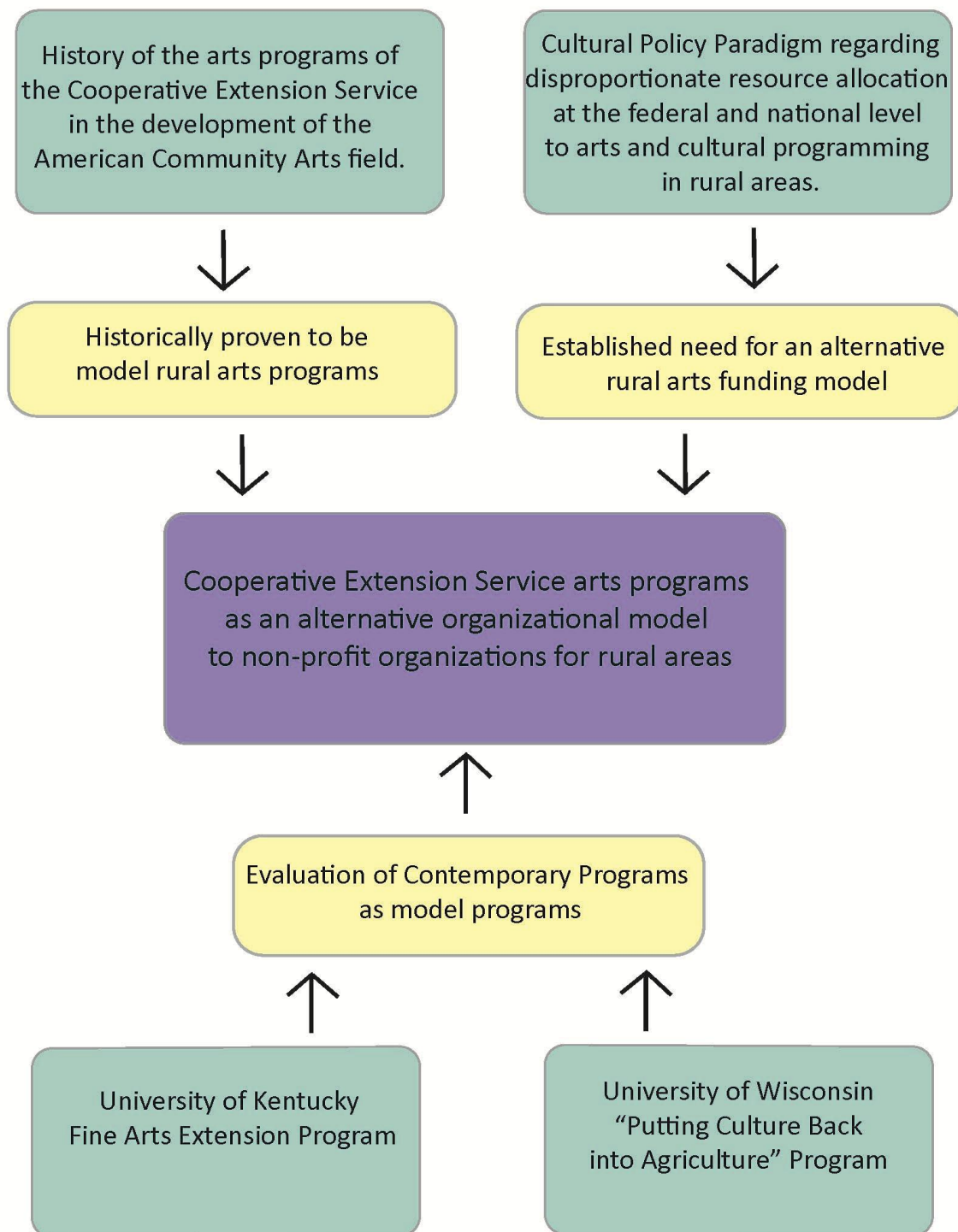
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**Appendix A. Conceptual framework schematic**

**Appendix B. Research timeline**  
**Arts and Administration Program**  
**Master's Research Timeline, 2012-2013**

**Fall 2012 (AAD 631)**

- Complete full research proposal, meeting regularly with research adviser
- Draft detailed research instruments
- Draft human subjects documents and complete CITI training
- Create general outline of final document
- Submit human subjects application

**Winter 2013 (AAD 503, 601, or capstone courses)**

*January*

- Begin data collection and analysis
- Refine research instruments
- Convert proposal into chapter drafts
- Plan with your advisor the dates that chapter drafts will be due; submission of chapter drafts will be worked out in agreement with your advisor over the next several months

*February/March*

- Prepare detailed outline of full document
- Complete data collection
- Continue with ongoing data analysis
- Begin to submit chapter drafts

**Spring 2013 (AAD 503, 601, or capstone courses)**

*April*

- Write full first draft of final document, submitting chapters to advisor for review and feedback according to plan

*May*

- Wednesday, May 1: Deadline for draft of full document to be submitted to advisor
- Week of May 6: Feedback from advisor prior to student presentations
- Friday, May 10: Student presentations of master's research
- Monday, May 20: Deadline to submit for inclusion in student research journal
- May 20-31: Continue revisions to full document
- Friday, May 31: Deadline for full final draft to be submitted to advisor

*June*

- June 3-11: Submit final document and PDF

**Appendix C. Research instruments****a. Data Collection Sheet for Document Analyses****Case Study:****Data ID:****Key Theme:****Date:****Document Location:****Document Type:**

- ☐ Report, Article, Book etc  
☐ Government Document  
☐ Arts Management Instructional Materials  
☐ Cultural Statistics  
☐ Arts Organizations' Written Materials  
☐ Job Descriptions  
☐ Online Information  
☐ Notes  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference Citation:****Coding:**

H: General History

HK: History related to Kentucky

HW: History related to Wisconsin

K: Related to the Kentucky Extension program

P: Related to Public Policy

R: Related to rural arts

W: Related to the Wisconsin Extension program

Coding	Information	Notes

**b. Data Collection Sheet for Interview of Fine Arts Extension Agent****Case Study:****Data ID:****Key Descriptor:****Date:****Interview Location:****Interviewee Details:****Consent:**    ☐ Oral                      ☐ Written (form)                      ☐ Audio Recording☐ OK to Quote    ☐ Thank you Card Sent**Notes on Interview Context:****Key Points:**

Coding	Information	Notes

## **Interview Questions for Fine Arts Extension Agent:**

### **History of Fine Arts Extension Program**

1. How did you become aware of the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program in your state? How did you start working with them?
2. How does the University Cooperative Extension service support the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program?
3. Please explain how the Fine Arts Extension Program came to exist in your community.
4. Who is served by the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program? Is there a particular demographic that your organization aims to engage?

### **Structure of the Fine Arts Extension Program**

5. What is the organizational structure of the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program? How do you link your job from bottom to top (chain of command)?

### **Organizational Mission, Strengths, and Challenges**

6. What does the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program do for the community? How would you characterize your core programs?
7. What is the most important thing the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program does for the community?
8. How are decisions made? Do community members feel included in the process?
9. Tell me about one of the projects the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program has been involved with that has had an immense impact on your community, or that you are especially proud of.
10. From working in your community, what have you learned about how the arts contribute to people and their sense of identity, culture and place? What role does this work play in the community?
11. Do you believe the general public in your region to be aware of the programs that the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program offers?
12. How would you describe the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program's greatest organizational strengths? What does it do really well?
13. What are the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program's most significant organizational challenges? (Human Resources, funding, other?)
14. What are the toughest problems and decisions with which the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program must cope?
15. What is the most beneficial aspect of being involved with a statewide organization like the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program?
16. What is the greatest challenge of being a part of a statewide organization?
17. What advice, or lessons, do you have to impart to other folks regarding how to best use arts/cultural work in rural communities?

### **Arts Extension Programs elsewhere**

18. Are there other major extension programs that you're aware of?
19. Do you believe the Fine Arts Extension model could work for other states?
20. How would another state go about starting a Fine Arts Extension program?

### **Best Practices**

21. What is the mission of the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program and how does programming fulfill that mission?
22. What role does strategic planning have in the development of these programs?
23. How does your programming relate to the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program's organizational capacity?
24. What is the role of the citizenry in selecting Whitley County Fine Arts Extension programming?
25. How sustainable is the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program? How often must you apply for funding and resources?
26. How long would you anticipate the program continuing, and what does the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program do to plan for that continuation?
27. Does the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program have partnerships with other community organizations or institutions that make your programming more effective?
28. Does the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program seek to create a "safe space" for community involvement? How so?
29. How does the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program provide professional development to staff members and/or board members?
30. By what standards and how often does the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program evaluate its programs?
31. Is Whitley County Fine Arts Extension programming tailored to a specific artistic genre? If not, what genres do they offer programming in?
32. Are you aware of any research or publications that support the ways in which the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program designs its programming?

### **Connections across the field**

33. Name three organizations that you consider to be model rural arts programs. What is their work and why are they exemplary?
34. How would you characterize the climate/state of rural arts today?
35. How does the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program work intersect with or inform the rural community arts field?
36. What role does policy play in the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program? Do you feel your work could be impacted through political advocacy? What can be done to be more effective rural arts advocates on the individual, organizational, and field levels?

c. Data Collection Sheet for Interview of State Manager

Case Study:

Data ID:

Key Descriptor:

Date:

Interview Location:

Interviewee Details:

Consent:    ☐ Oral                      ☐ Written (form)                      ☐ Audio Recording  
                  ☐ OK to Quote    ☐ Thank you Card Sent

Notes on Interview Context:

Key Points:

Coding	Information	Notes

## **Interview Questions for Fine Arts Extension State Manager:**

### **History of Fine Arts Extension Program**

1. How did you become aware of the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program? How did you start working with them?
2. How does the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service support the Fine Arts Extension Program?
3. Please explain how the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program came to exist (what did the process involve and how was the organization structured)?
4. Was the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension program modeled after another state or organization?
5. What was the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension program created to accomplish?
6. Why arts and culture?
7. Who is served by the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program? Is there a particular demographic that your organization aims to engage?

### **Structure of the Fine Arts Extension Program**

8. What is the organizational structure of the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program? How do you link your job from bottom to top (chain of command)?
9. What other agencies/departments in the university are linked to the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program?

### **Organizational Mission, Strengths, and Challenges**

10. What does the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program do for the community? How would you characterize your core programs?
11. What is the most important thing the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program does for the community?
12. How are decisions made at the university level? Do you involve constituents in the process? If so, how?
13. Tell me about one of the projects the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program has been involved with that has had an immense impact on your community, or that you are especially proud of.
14. From working in your community, what have you learned about how the arts contribute to people and their sense of identity, culture and place? What role does this work play in the community?
15. Do you believe the general public in your region to be aware of the programs that the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program offers?
16. How would you describe the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program's greatest organizational strengths? What does it do really well?
17. What are the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program's most significant organizational challenges? (Human Resources, funding, other?)
18. What advice, or lessons, do you have to impart to other folks regarding how to best use arts/cultural work in rural communities?

### **Arts Extension Programs elsewhere**

19. Are there other major extension programs that you're aware of?

- 20. Do you believe the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension model could work for other states?
- 21. How would another state go about starting a Fine Arts Extension program?

### **Best Practices**

- 22. What is the mission of the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program and how does programming fulfill that mission?
- 23. What role does strategic planning have in the development of these programs?
- 24. How does your programming relate to the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program's organizational capacity?
- 25. How sustainable is the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program? How often must you apply for funding and resources?
- 26. The Kentucky Fine Arts Extension program currently serves 5 of 120 counties in Kentucky, do you intend to expand the number of county programs?
- 27. Three of the five counties included are located within Eastern Kentucky, are county programs created based on geographic location?
- 28. How long would you anticipate the program continuing, and what does the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program do to plan for that continuation?
- 29. How does the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program provide professional development to staff members and/or board members?
- 30. What conferences and/or professional associations do staff members attend/belong to?
- 31. By what standards and how often does the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program evaluate its programs?
- 32. Is Kentucky Fine Arts Extension programming tailored to a specific artistic genre? If not, what genres do they offer programming in?
- 33. Are you aware of any research or publications that support the ways in which the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program designs its programming?

### **Connections across the field**

- 34. Name three organizations that you consider to be model rural arts programs. What is their work and why are they exemplary?
- 35. How would you characterize the climate/state of rural arts today?
- 36. How does the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program work intersect with or inform the rural community arts field?
- 37. What role does policy play in the Kentucky Fine Arts Extension Program? Do you feel your work could be impacted through political advocacy? What can be done to be more effective rural arts advocates on the individual, organizational, and field levels?

**d. Data Collection Sheet for Interview of Fine Arts Extension Assistant**

**Case Study:**

**Data ID:**

**Key Descriptor:**

**Date:**

**Interview Location:**

**Interviewee Details:**

**Consent:**    ☐ Oral                      ☐ Written (form)                      ☐ Audio Recording  
                  ☐ OK to Quote    ☐ Thank you Card Sent

**Notes on Interview Context:**

**Key Points:**

Coding	Information	Notes

## **Interview Questions for Fine Arts Extension Assistant:**

### **History of Fine Arts Extension Program**

1. How did you become aware of the Fine Arts Extension Program in your state? How did you start working with them?
2. How do you interact with the University level Cooperative Extension Service?
3. Who is served by the Fine Arts Extension Program? Is there a particular demographic that your organization aims to engage?

### **Structure of the Fine Arts Extension Program**

4. What is your role and your primary responsibilities in the Fine Arts Extension Program?

### **Organizational Mission, Strengths, and Challenges**

5. What does the Fine Arts Extension Program do for the community? How would you characterize your core programs?
6. What is the most important thing the Fine Arts Extension Program does for the community?
7. Tell me about one of the projects the Fine Arts Extension Program has been involved with that has had an immense impact on your community, or that you are especially proud of.
8. From working in your community, what have you learned about how the arts contribute to people and their sense of identity, culture and place? What role does this work play in the community?
9. Do you believe the general public in your region to be aware of the programs that the Fine Arts Extension Program offers?
10. How would you describe the Fine Arts Extension Program's greatest organizational strengths? What does it do really well?
11. What are the Fine Arts Extension Program's most significant organizational challenges?

### **Arts Extension Programs elsewhere**

12. Are there other major extension programs that you're aware of?
13. Do you believe the Fine Arts Extension model could work for other states?

### **Best Practices**

14. What is the mission of the Fine Arts Extension Program and how does programming fulfill that mission?
15. What is the role of the citizenry in selecting Fine Arts Extension programming?
16. Does the Fine Arts Extension Program provide you with professional development opportunities?
17. Are you involved in program evaluation? In what way?
18. Is the Fine Arts Extension Program programming tailored to a specific artistic genre? If not, what genres do you offer programming in?

### **Connections across the field**

19. How would you characterize the climate/state of rural arts today?

### e. Whitley County Community Member Survey

<p><b>Whitley County Fine Arts Community Member Survey</b></p> <p>This survey serves to gather information regarding your experiences with the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program. This survey is for information purposes—contact information will be kept confidential.</p>
<p>Name _____ Date _____</p> <p>Email _____ Phone _____</p>
<p>In what ways have you participated with Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program? Please check all that apply.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Board Member    <input type="checkbox"/> Audience Member/Attendee    <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop Participant    <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer  <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Artist    <input type="checkbox"/> Performer/Exhibiting artist    <input type="checkbox"/> Donor    <input type="checkbox"/> Parent </p> <p>How did you hear about Whitley County Fine Arts? (check all that apply)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> A friend    <input type="checkbox"/> Family    <input type="checkbox"/> neighbor    <input type="checkbox"/> Email    <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper    <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook    <input type="checkbox"/> mail </p>
<p>What town or neighborhood of Whitley County do you live in?</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>How could Whitley County Fine Arts better serve your region of the county?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Who do Whitley County Fine Arts programs serve? (check all that apply)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Adults    <input type="checkbox"/> Artists    <input type="checkbox"/> Families    <input type="checkbox"/> Farmers    <input type="checkbox"/> Retirees    <input type="checkbox"/> Youth </p>
<p>How would you describe the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service's role in Whitley County Fine Arts?</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Tell me about one Whitley County Fine Arts program that has had an immense impact on your community, or that you are especially proud of.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>What kinds of programs have you attended/ participated in? (check all that apply)</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Art exhibit    <input type="checkbox"/> Theater/Play    <input type="checkbox"/> Concert    <input type="checkbox"/> Singing    <input type="checkbox"/> Movies    <input type="checkbox"/> Dance  <input type="checkbox"/> Writer's performance    <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer's Market    <input type="checkbox"/> "Hand's on" workshop    <input type="checkbox"/> Storytelling project </p>
<p>What does the Fine Arts Extension Program provide for the community?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Do you participate with Whitley County Fine Arts most often as a participant (making/doing something) or an audience member (viewing something)?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Participant    <input type="checkbox"/> Audience member </p>

What does Whitley County Fine Arts do really well?

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What do you think Whitley County Fine Arts could use improvement on?

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Please rate your experiences with the staff at Whitley County Fine Arts Extension.

☐ Not helpful    ☐ Somewhat helpful    ☐ Helpful    ☐ Above expectations    ☐ Exceptional

What do you think is the greatest challenge that the Fine Arts Extension program faces in Whitley County?

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When you participate in a Fine Arts program, are you asked to evaluate the program afterwards?

☐ Never    ☐ Occasionally    ☐ Usually    ☐ Always

Why is Whitley County Fine Arts important to your community?

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What are the needs of your community that could be improved through arts and cultural programming?

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How well are these needs currently being met? (On a scale of 1-5)

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

Do you believe that Whitley County Fine Arts programming reflects the community? Why or why not?

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In your opinion, do your friends and family know about Whitley County Fine Arts?

☐ yes    ☐ no    Why or why not?: \_\_\_\_\_

If Whitley County Fine Arts did not exist, how far would you have to travel to have a similar experience?

☐ less than 10 miles    ☐ 10-25 miles    ☐ 25-50 miles    ☐ 50-100 miles    ☐ more than 100 miles

If Whitley County Fine Arts didn't exist, would you be able to travel to have a similar experience monthly?

☐ yes    ☐ no    Why or why not?: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix D. Recruitment Letter**

Date

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Dear <Potential Interviewee>,

I met you over this past summer while I was serving as a Graduate Intern with Whitley County Fine Arts Extension. As you may recall, I am a Master's Candidate in the University of Oregon Arts Administration program, and am in the process of completing my research project relating to the history of arts programs within the Cooperative Extension Service. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research project.

You are invited to participate in this research study because of your leadership position with Whitley County Fine Arts Extension and your experiences with and expertise pertinent to cultural development in my research project.

Participating in this study would require an interview, lasting about 1 hour, with me that will address the history of fine arts extension in Kentucky; how the Kentucky program adds value to rural communities; the best practices, programs, and challenges of the fine arts program in Whitley County; what aspects of the Whitley County program have proven to be effective; and how this program could be adapted to other communities outside of Kentucky through partnerships with Cooperative Extension. If you wish, interview questions will be provided beforehand for your consideration. Interviews will take place in Whitley County or at a more conveniently located site. Interviews will be scheduled at your convenience. In addition to taking handwritten notes, with your permission, I will use an audio tape recorder for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked to provide follow-up information through phone calls or email.

Please let me know if you'd be willing to participate in this project. I will be in Whitley County during the second week of January, 2013 and would like to meet with you at that time to conduct the interview. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time, or contact Dr. Ann Galligan at 541-346-4489 or [anng@uoregon.edu](mailto:anng@uoregon.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact: the Office for Protection of Human Subjects, University of Oregon at (541-346-2510) or [ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu](mailto:ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu).

Thank you in advanced for your consideration! I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Savannah Barrett  
1801 Orchard Street, Unit A  
Eugene, OR 97403  
[Barrett7@uoregon.edu](mailto:Barrett7@uoregon.edu)  
270-589-7165

## **Appendix E. Consent Form**

### **Consent Form**

**University of Oregon - Arts & Administration**

**Informed Consent for Participation as a Subject in:** The Arts Programs of the Cooperative Extension Service: Considerations of Fine Arts Initiatives in rural Kentucky and Wisconsin

**Investigator:** Savannah Barrett

**Type of consent:** Adult Consent Form

#### **Introduction:**

You are being asked to participate in a research study of arts programs in the Cooperative Extension Service in Kentucky and Wisconsin. You were selected as a possible participant because of the location and type of your organization. Please read this form and ask any questions before agreeing to be in the study.

#### **Purpose of Study:**

The purpose of this study is explore the history of arts programs in the Cooperative Extension Service as well as current model programs that are currently promoting arts extension through the Cooperative Extension Service in Kentucky and Wisconsin. Participants in this study are from Kentucky and are affiliated with the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service (as employees or constituents).

#### **Description of the Study Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: be interviewed by the researcher to discuss various topics relating to the history, structure, best practices, challenges, programs, evaluation, and adaptability of the Whitley County Fine Arts Extension Program. Certain cases may require a follow up phone call, or second interview. These cases will most likely include additional questions to allow for clarity and credibility of the study. Documentation of the interview will be done using an audio recorder. Having an audio recording available will be helpful to clarify any questions from the researcher's written notes. Additionally, hearing the exact conversation on record will allow for further credibility of the study. You will be given an opportunity to review the content you've submitted before completion of the project. The interview should take no longer than two hours of your time. In addition to an interview, analysis of organizational documents *may* be included. For example, planning documents, programming materials, website content, evaluation materials, and other publicly available documents. Analysis of any non-public documents will occur on site and will only be copied if you give permission. This study will be conducted over the course of one month, but participants can expect to be involved directly with the research for no more than two weeks time over the one month period.

#### **Risks/Discomforts of Being in the Study:**

There are no reasonable foreseeable (or expected) risks. This study may include risks that are unknown at this time.

**Benefits of Being in the Study:**

The purpose of this study is to explain the history of arts programs within the Cooperative Extension Service, and to evaluate of the arts programs of the Cooperative Extension Service in Kentucky as compared to those in Wisconsin as potential model programs. This evaluation is necessary because these Extension arts programs offer an uncommon opportunity for rural communities to engage with arts and cultural community-focused programming at little to no direct cost to the citizenry. Extension programs are publicly funded, through a combination of public investment through federal and state agencies and universities as well as through a percentage of local taxes. Moreover, these programs are provided with an infrastructure at the state and regional level, so that qualified personnel, expertise, and other resources are available from outside the small communities they serve.

This study has the potential to evaluate these programs as evidence-based models. Regardless of the results of the study, the publication and presentation of such research will allow for broader dissemination of information regarding the history, significance, and viability of these programs. This is beneficial to the agencies currently engaged in this work because it promotes their work and their contribution to their communities and to the larger rural arts field. This study will be beneficial to the field because it offers insight on alternative organizational structures for rural communities interested in arts engagement. Furthermore, this study will be of benefit to the policy and funding field, because it will offer additional insight regarding the variety of arts and cultural programs in rural America.

**Payments:**

There will be no payment for involvement in this study.

**Costs:**

There is no cost to you to participate in this research study.

**Confidentiality:**

If you decide to be involved in this study, it is likely that your name will be identified in the final paper when reporting findings of the organization's structure relating to the above mentioned subject areas. Identification of your name may be used through quoting and in the references section. Before the study is completed, you will have the opportunity to review the comments you've submitted and where applicable, edit your remarks.

☐ I wish to review the content I've submitted before completion of this project

All electronic information will be secured using a password protected file. Access to the records will be limited to the researcher; however, please note that the Institutional Review Board and internal University of Oregon auditors may review the research records. Files will be deleted after one year (as determined by the University of Oregon).

**Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal:**

Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate, it will not affect your current or future relations with the University. You are free to withdraw at any time, for whatever reason. There is no penalty or loss of benefits for not taking part or for stopping your participation.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is Savannah Barrett. For questions or more information concerning this research you may contact her at 270-589-7165 or Barrett7@uoregon.edu. The research advisor overseeing this project is Dr. Ann Galligan. If for any reason you wish to contact her, you may do so at 514-346-4489 or [anng@uoregon.edu](mailto:anng@uoregon.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact: the Office for Protection of Human Subjects, University of Oregon at (541-346-2510) or ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu.

**Copy of Consent Form:**

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records and future reference.

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form and have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received answers to my questions. I give my consent to participate in this study. I have received (or will receive) a copy of this form.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

Study Participant (Print Name):

Participant Signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_