

C O M M E N T A R Y

“I learned excellence at HSPVA!”

this is just one of the many comments made by HSPVA alumni who participated in a recent national arts alumni survey. At a time when Texas public education and the Houston Independent School District are in financial crisis modes, and the threat of closing magnet schools has been discussed, it is interesting timing that this survey of HSPVA's alumni regarding their arts education experiences at HSPVA has been released. What better testimony to the effectiveness and quality of education at Houston's remarkable HSPVA than the experiences shared by its alumni!

After several years of planning, the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) is in its third year and is administered by Indiana University. The project, funded by the Surdna Foundation and the Houston Endowment, was designed to isolate and define ideas, trends and needs of arts high schools across the country. Houston's HSPVA was invited to participate in the national survey of its alumni with nine other leading arts schools, including the Interlochen Arts Academy, Idyllwild Arts Academy, and the University of North Carolina School of the Arts – as well as art schools in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Baltimore.

In the survey, a random sample of HSPVA alumni from eight graduating classes, (1988, 1989, 1993, 1994, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2004) responded to questions about their arts education, ensuing work experience, and their overall sense of art engagement in other areas of their lives. Here are a few noteworthy comments from the randomly selected HSPVA alumni who opted to participate in the SNAAP survey:

- *I learned excellence at HSPVA!*
- *I now have three children and ensuring that they have an education in the arts is paramount!*
- *I work entirely outside the arts sector. However, I am grateful every day for the focus and discipline I learned through my artistic training at HSPVA!*

The extraordinary forty-year track record of excellence at HSPVA is fortified from many directions: the expressed pride of its alumni, the outstanding leadership of its staff and faculty, the pro-active efforts of articulate parents and students, and the exceptional loyalty of supportive community leaders. At a recent Encore for Excellence Luncheon, Annisse Parker, Mayor of the City of Houston, stated *“Houston's HSPVA is one of the nation's best public schools, and all of us need to do our part in ensuring its bright future.”* HSPVA Friends is proud to support the tradition of excellence at Houston's premiere High School For The Performing And Visual Arts, and we are committed to *ensuring its bright future!*