

SNAAP Alumni Study: Arts Degrees Lead to Jobs and Fulfilled Lives

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Findings from the [Strategic National Arts Alumni Project](#) (SNAAP), a national study released last week, show that Americans with arts degrees are highly satisfied with their educational and career experiences. Nine out of 10 (87 percent) of arts graduates responding to the survey who are currently employed are satisfied with their jobs.

The study also revealed of those employed alumni, 82 percent reported being satisfied with their ability to be creative in their current work, whether working in the arts or in other fields. Only 4 percent of the survey respondents report being unemployed and looking for work -- less than half the national rate of 8.9 percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011).

SNAAP Surveyed 36,000 Arts Alumni Nationwide

The report, "A Diverse Palette: What Arts Graduates Say About Their Education and Careers," details findings from more than 36,000 arts alumni of 66 institutions in the United States and Canada, including California College of the Arts (CCA). Participating schools include independent colleges of art and design, research universities, conservatories, liberal arts colleges, and arts high schools.

The SNAAP survey results provide insights into the lives and careers of arts graduates of all ages, including their satisfaction with their educational training and experiences, various employment paths, involvement in the arts outside of work, and overall satisfaction with their jobs and income.

CCA President [Stephen Beal](#) commented, "I'm not surprised to see these results. As the role of creativity in our society and economy is increasingly recognized and valued, we're seeing a growing demand for creative people across a broad range of industries. Companies and organizations are casting a wider net and actively seeking artists and designers who bring to the table an entrepreneurial spirit, distinct problem-solving skills, and a hacker/DIY mentality. Our alumni are using their education to build rewarding and meaningful careers."

Arts Grads Are Generous

Arts graduates are very involved in the arts and in arts organizations. Almost half (45 percent) of all respondents donated money to either an arts organization or an artist in the past 12 months, including more than a third (37 percent) of those with household incomes of under \$100,000. Nationally, only 6 percent of all U.S. households earning under \$100,000 contribute to the arts (Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2007).

Other Noteworthy Data

Other noteworthy findings from the 2011 SNAAP survey:

- 84 percent of employed alumni agree that their current primary job reflects their personalities, interests, and values, whether their work is in the arts or other fields.
- Only 3 percent of all currently working arts graduates are "very dissatisfied" with their primary job.

- Degree level matters in terms of whether an arts graduate works as a professional artist. Eighty-six percent of those with a master's degree in the arts have worked as professional artists compared to 71 percent whose highest degree is a bachelor's.
- 57 percent of all arts alumni have at some point worked as teachers of the arts, and 27 percent do this currently.
- Aspects of their institution with which alumni are least satisfied include career advising, opportunities for degree-related internships or work, and opportunities to network with alumni and others.

About SNAAP

SNAAP is a collaboration between the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and the Vanderbilt University Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy. Participation in the annual survey is open to all degree-granting colleges and universities as well as arts high schools. The registration deadline for this year's national administration is July 2, 2012.