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## A Qualitative Study of Adult Perspectives of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop

Colleen Stafford

*Loyola Marymount University*

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Colleen Stafford

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A Qualitative Study of Adult Perspectives  
of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop

by

Colleen Stafford

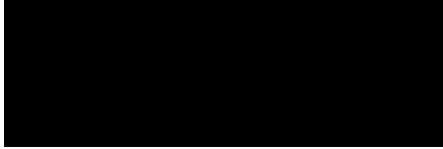
A research paper presented to the

Faculty of the Department of  
Marital and Family Therapy  
Loyola Marymount University

In Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree  
Masters of Arts

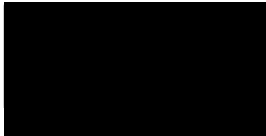
May 6, 2018

**Signature Page**



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Colleen Stafford, MA Candidate, Marital and Family Therapy/Art Therapy Trainee; Researcher



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Jessica Bianchi Ed.D., ATR, LMFT; Research Mentor

### **Acknowledgments**

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To the community of Dolores Mission School, thank you for allowing me into your space to be an outsider provided the opportunity to dialogue about art and creativity. As a community, you have further cultivated my belief in the potential of the arts as a catalyst for growth.

Lastly to those I call my family: endless thanks. You have each been a pillar of support and unconditional love all throughout this journey. I celebrate this with each of you.

### **Abstract**

This research is a qualitative exploration of the impacts of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of the youth participant's teachers and caregivers. The intention of this research was to compare findings in the literature of similar youth arts programs to LMU's through examination of a previously unexplored perspective. Data was collected through an arts based focus group as well as paper-pencil questionnaires including both Likert scale and open ended questions. Themes emerged through thorough analysis of all data collected and presented both themes of specific program impacts and opportunities for future program improvements. The findings of this research further illuminate established assertions found within the literature of prosocial impacts produced within youth participation in community arts programs. Additionally upon expansion of emergent themes, the researcher established the findings of LMU's Summer Arts Program to positively impact adolescents and identity development, generate gains in social capital and produce positive community impacts through art making.

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the impacts of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of caregivers and teachers who directly interact with the participants throughout their engagement within the program. This study is guided by the following question for research: What is the impact of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of the participant's caregivers and teachers and how do these caregivers feel community engagement might be extended for further impact?

### **The Study Topic**

The Summer Arts Workshop is a well-established annual program facilitated in collaboration between the College of Fine Arts at Loyola Marymount University and Dolores Mission School in Boyle Heights, CA. The program has occurred consecutively over the last eleven years. The workshop takes place over five days at Loyola Marymount University and includes the middle school student's immersion in a large, culminating art project, community art show, and mastery of newly learned art making skills. The workshop allows youth participants the opportunity to engage in community with their peers/mentors, explore identity, and apply creative expression through art making. Although participant's caregivers are not directly involved in the program, many adult figures interact with the youth before and after their engagement within the program. Additionally, many families from Dolores Mission have witnessed either multiple children within their family or the same child attend the program for multiple consecutive years. Through the use of a qualitative study design, the researcher's intention within this research is to gain informative, thoughtful responses from adult figures connected to youth participants as to further deepen research already conducted on the program through the inclusion of a new perspective.

### **Significance of Study**

Per research found on Loyola Marymount's Digital Commons, graduate research has been implemented on the Summer Arts Workshop throughout the past ten years, however there is currently no research established surrounding the impacts from a non-participant's viewpoint. The potential for positive correlations between a youth's participation in arts programs and improvements in interpersonal and community relationships has been established, but may require more research as findings within the literature are limited (Averett, Crowe, and Hall, 2015). Potential benefits of this research study may include an opportunity for program directors to evaluate Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop impact on participants thus far. This study poses specific significance to both the researcher and research mentor as both have been directly involved within the facilitation of the program. This evaluation may lead to potential changes to the Summer Arts Workshop to further positively impact its participants and the community. Additionally, this research study may allow participants insight into behaviors and attitudes portrayed by the youth they engage with and this insight may potentially strengthen these established relationships.

### **Background of Study Topic**

The following paragraphs pose as a synthesis of a more extensive literature review found within the next section. This synthesized information includes key points found within the literature to provide the reader with more contextual information of the research topic this researcher is using to guide her research. Although not directly discussed, a multitude of Master's level research has been conducted on the Summer Arts Workshop at Loyola Marymount University and poses as an additional guide for this researcher to assess gaps and points of focus for this proposed research. A more in depth exploration of the following can be found within the literature review presented in this proposal.

The exploration of impacts of community engagement have been vastly researched especially within the field of community psychology. These impacts are often explored and defined on an individual and communal level to understand a broader perspective of impacts such engagement can provide (Mannarini & Fedi, 2009). Exploration of these impacts has shown that engagement in community acts can lead to action that creates desired change, communal empowerment, and a domino effect towards a continuation for potential change to occur in the future (Pilisuk, McCallister & Rothman, 1996). Saegert and Carpiano (2017) provide both a sociological and community psychology perspective that explores the potential for participation in community acts to move communities towards gains in social capital. Additionally, community psychologists assert that social capital gains can assist communities “as a protective factor against socio-environmental stressors or harms... as an aspect of empowerment... as a component of social regularities in social settings” (Saegert & Carpiano, 2017, p. 304). Research specific to youth community engagement has found that such participation can assist youth in building relationships that provide them with strategies to effectively transition into adulthood

(Jarrett, Sullivan & Watkins, 2005) as well as provide youth in establishing “mutually beneficial relationships with community groups and businesses for the purpose of increasing action on projects that make a difference” (Baker & Johannes, 2013, p. 36).

Discussed above are the potential impacts found within current literature as a broad discussion of any form of community engagement. There is also research that proposes the specific impacts of the use of art within communities that has occurred throughout history (Kaplan, 2005). For example, in their 2006 article which explicitly explores the effects of social art making, Timm-Bottos asserts that the positive implications that art making produced within communities creates moves past solely the individual level and impacts societal structures as a whole. Frostig (2011) refers to such engagement as “arts activism” and conjectures that “innovative use of public space” such as community arts projects “engage community participation as a means of affecting social change and galvanizing citizen dissent” (p. 51). A clear and consistent thread throughout the literature discussing arts activism conjectures that art making can act as a catalyst for change on a personal and social level (Rossetto, 2011).

Outside of the many benefits expressed above, research within the field of art therapy also asserts that the process of creating art work communally can lead to therapeutic and mental health effects (Kaplan, 2005). Canas (2011) asserts that the application of art therapy within community settings “can provide a valuable perspective through its emphasis on process...its valuing of relationships and the establishment of trust, and its ability to create and nurture a place of safety” (p. 32). Slayton (2012) also conjectures that the practice of community art therapy mirrors the participants engagement with societal structures and can be reparative to these past relationships and impact participants positively on a prosocial level.



All of the impacts discussed above have been previously explored within Loyola Marymount University graduate research, but only from the perspectives of Summer Arts Workshop participants themselves. Both the explicit research conducted on this program as well as minimal research found within the literature calls for further research to be explored from the perspective of adult figures who witness the youth's engagement. In understanding community as a multi-faceted concept (Krause & Montenegro, 2017) community engagement should also be explored through the perspectives of those not directly involved in the engagement but connected through the immediate social circles as a means to further understand the layers of impact (Averett, Crowe, & Hall, 2015). The minimal research found within the literature does assert a positive correlation between caregiver's observations of youth and the youth's participation in community. Averett et al. (2015) pose that youth engagement in community arts programs can lead to caregiver observations of improved family dynamics, increase in positive communication, strengthening of coping skills and problem solving. Additionally, Buskirk-Cohen's 2015 research yields that from a caregiver perspective a creative arts program can produce positive impacts on a child's acting out behaviors and learning problems.

Despite these established findings, more research exploring these cross-informant perspectives should be conducted to better understand the layers of impact of the youth's community engagement. This research attempts to fill in these gaps found in the literature with a specific emphasis on community art making.

## Literature Review

### Introduction

This literature review explores the simultaneous impacts of community arts engagement on individuals, family systems, and communities as a whole in order to evaluate impact of a Summer Arts Workshop for middle school students. The literature reviewed moves the reader from a broad understanding of community engagement into the specific impacts of art therapy and community. The review begins with mainly literature from community psychology as an exploration of various ideas of community and the effects of community engagement specifically within gaining social capital. As a move towards considering the effects of art as an agent of change, the review first defines art as social action and then moves towards presenting an amalgamation of each of the previous explorations of topics discussed above. The following section of this review defines and discusses community art therapy as a specific agent of change in family and community. Lastly, asserting that communities are layered constructs that inherently include the roles of adult caregivers within their context, the literature reviewed explores the perspectives of caregivers surrounding youth participation in community engagement and the current lack of literature found with respect to these perspectives.

### Definitions of Community

Before exploring any of the impacts of engagement within communities, the varying definitions of community found within the literature should be introduced and explored. Mannarini and Fedi (2009) describe the complexity and ambiguity of the term *community* within the social sciences and assert that there is an ongoing debate whether to eliminate the term's use completely or to embrace the concept's ambiguity based on the ideas that "individuals still seek high levels of interaction, common interests, identity, and shared values" (p. 212). Krause and

Montenegro (2017) explore the term *community* throughout a historical context stating that the term has been used throughout history across a multitude of contexts dating as far back to at minimum the time of Aristotle. Krause and Montenegro (2017) also assert that this definition has changed throughout time and continues to change in structure and theory based on the transformations and growth of societies.

Most definitions of community found within the literature delineate their theories into core elements of an overarching definition. For example, a highly referenced model for defining the framework of community within community psychology comes from McMillan and Chavis in 1986 whom explore four elements of community often referred to as sense of community:

“The first element is membership. Membership is the feeling of belonging or of sharing a sense of personal relatedness. The second element is influence, a sense of mattering, of making a difference to a group and of the group mattering to its members. The third element is reinforcement: integration and fulfillment of needs. This is the feeling that members’ needs will be met by the resources received through their membership in the group. The last element is shared emotional connection, the commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, time together, and similar experiences” (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 9).

A more recent definition within the field conceptualized by Krause in 2001 offers that there are three defining pieces to community, but like McMillan and Chavis (1986) still refers to these pieces as core elements. These elements proposed by Krause include “belonging, interrelation, and common culture” and stand as Krause’s attempt to minimize a definition into the simplest interpretation that still successfully delineates communities from other social groups (Krause & Montenegro, 2017, p. 279). Similarly, in the field of anthropology McKeown,

Rubenstein and Kelly (1987) deliberate towards a definition of community and come to describe three important concepts that should be included: “(1) that community is a multifaceted concept, (2) that communities are best viewed as assortments of social processes, and (3) that each community has within it many different communities” (McKeown et al., 1987, p.36). It is clear from many of these elemental definitions provided above that defining community is complex and involves the exploration and development of multiple characterizing facets. As Krause would suggest, this complexity has not diminished since Aristotle’s time, and as societies develop, factors impacting the way in which community is defined and communities define themselves is also ever evolving (Krause, 2017).

The concept of community may hold many different definitions as discussed within the literature above, however one thread remains consistent throughout: a community is defined in some way by the individuals whom are within its scope (McKeown et al., 1987).

### **Social Capital and Community Engagement**

Considering the individuals involved in community, as discussed in the above section, many of the same fields whom have worked to successfully define the concept of community including social work, community psychology and anthropology have also explored the impacts of individual members engaging in community acts. A multitude of research has been compiled within current literature regarding the positive impacts that various acts of community engagement can provide both an individual and the community as a whole (Mannarini & Fedi, 2009). Pilisuk, McCallister, and Rothman (1996) summarize the potential impacts of community participation as they state:

“...goals once thought to be external to the individual’s control may be seen within the collective grasp...as successful action brings about desired change, the original needs that

created the group may be diminished but the organizational skills and the feelings of empowerment remain. This encourages action for more far-reaching goals for social change” (Pilisuk et al., 2009, p. 18).

The concept of social capital is a notable lens in considering gains of community engagement. Social capital is a concept, like *community*, that has been explored and redefined multiple times throughout history (Pfefferbaum & Horn, 2017). Through their extensive exploration of the concept of social capital, Saegert and Carpiano (2017) assert that in researching the literature three main theories consistently appear referring to those of Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988) and Robert Putnam (2000) yet Putnam’s theory is the most referred to within community psychology. Putnam’s definition of social capital refers to “features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam, 1995, p. 67). Jarrett, Sullivan and Watkins (2005) assert that “although Putnam’s conceptualization of social capital is embedded within a community context, it nevertheless suggests benefits to individuals” as these individual community members elicit and gain positive connections, traits and the ability “to get things done more easily” through the heightening of social capital (p. 43). This idea of social capital is researched within the field of community psychology based on three applications: “as a protective factor against socio-environmental stressors or harms... as an aspect of empowerment... as a component of social regularities in social settings” (Saegert & Carpiano, 2017, p. 304). In their conceptual framework of social capital in regards to community resilience Pfefferbaum and Horn (2017) suggest, “participation in a social network generates value or social capital, the collective benefits derived from the relationships among the people, groups, and organizations in the network including the cultural, economic, and social resources generated

by social networks” (p. 106) Baker and Johannes (2013) further explore the impacts on community capitals in correlation to youth engagement community projects in a research study implementing interactive community mapping as data collection and analysis across various communities ranging from Maine to Kansas. Their research yields that social and human capital were the most impacted by the youth’s community engagement and also asserts that this engagement leads to the promotion of “intentional, mutually beneficial relationships with community groups and businesses for the purpose of increasing action on projects that make a difference” (Baker & Johannes, 2013, p. 36). In a similar study, Jarrett et al. (2013) applied qualitative research to examine the development of social capital across three organized youth programs. Their research findings describe the participation in community programs as an effective way for youth to gain social capital and therefore as “helping them to achieve current goals and prepare for transitional steps into adulthood” (p. 53). The heightening of social capital within the context of community engagement is supported by both Baker and Johannes and Jarrett et al. studies. These gains of social capital are “in all uses... a resource inherent in particular social relationships that can be mobilized to achieve individual and collective ends” (Saegart & Carpiano, 2017, p. 304) as well as the transference “of resources and [provision of] positive benefits. For individuals, engaged social interaction with other individuals or groups provides resources to which they would not otherwise have access” (Jarrett et al., 2013, p. 43).

### **Art as Social Action**

The previous section of this review explores community engagement as a broad term focusing on the impacts on individuals and communities specifically in regards to social capital. Community engagement can come in many different forms including the implementation and use of the creative arts acting as an agent of change within societies (Frostig, 2011). Newman,

Curtis, and Stephens (2003) explore the challenges of measuring community arts projects and their impacts, however provide the reader with various examples of conducted research showing positive impacts with little to no negative consequences. Timm-Bottos (2006) explains the individual gains that the production of artwork can create by asserting that “art making articulates and strengthens our personal voice because it is a primary mode of human behavior and expression” (p. 20). In the same article, Timm-Bottos goes on to assert the positive implications that art making produce move past solely the individual level and impact societal structures as a whole (Timm-Bottos, 2006). In Rosen’s 2012 review, art as a potential catalyst for social action is further explored as the practice of art making is described as “a natural opening and facilitator for social change” (p. 220). The power of art making in societal spaces contends itself as a means to move an individual into a collective, collaborative experience involving growth of self and surroundings (Rosen, 2012).

Frostig explores the concept of arts activism thoroughly in her 2011 article and describes her framework for the term as the representation of “innovative use of public space to address contested issues of sociopolitical and cultural significance allied with systems of power and control. Arts activism engages community participation as a means of affecting social change and galvanizing citizen dissent” (p. 51). Kaplan (2005) asserts that throughout history artists have been using the tool of art to affect change on a communal, societal level. Rossetto (2012) reinforces Kaplan’s above assertion through the use of historical references including the production of murals for the “enhancement of cultural and political issues, for inspiration and reflection, and for connecting communities to their cultural heritage” (p. 19). Rossetto supports this assertion by alluding to the works of the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program and the Great Wall of Los Angeles. Both of these large scale art projects “involved participation from an array

of socially, economically, and culturally diverse members of the surrounding community” and allowed for these members to “voice personal and social concerns through the medium of mural making” (Rossetto, 2012, p. 19). Vogel and Jackson (2016) explore another medium of creative arts and its impact on community through their exploration of activist theatre and community performance. The authors define community performance as “a type of theatre that is communally created, focuses on process rather than product, and is created for the purpose of making social change” and go on to argue that “theatre that interrupts the narratives that legitimize oppressive systems may therefore reduce an audience’s motivations to justify current social systems and motivation social action” (Vogel & Jackson, 2016, p. 456). Frostig (2011) describes her own personal experience in connecting art as social action in various projects as she explains: “In all of my projects dialogue bridged difference, art inspired communal engagement, and action seeded empowerment” (p. 52). Another author in Timm-Bottos (2006) explores similar experiences with art as a means in stirring social action by defining this process as going “beyond an individual’s self-expression by providing an object to look at, write about and share with others. The neighborhood studio soon becomes a place to mobilize human and group capacity, instigating a feeling of being connected to a larger, meaningful community” (p. 20).

A clear and consistent thread throughout the literature discussing arts activism conjectures that art making can act as a catalyst for change on a personal and social level (Rossetto, 2011). But can this process of creating art in communal settings also hold therapeutic and mental health benefits? Art therapists engaged in community art therapy and social action would affirm this possibility (Kaplan, 2005).



## **Community Art Therapy**

Before discussing the specific implications of art therapy in a community setting, it is important to have an understanding of the historical context of community mental health as an overarching guide. Hunter and Riger (1986) assessed the development of community mental health and suggest that the concept of the field may be defined as “both a reaction and innovation” (p. 55). During the time period Hunter and Riger explore community mental health they propose the field had been developing for over the past two decades and emerged as a reaction to the process of deinstitutionalization during the 1960’s (Hunter & Riger, 1986).

Within this move away from institutionalization, community mental health may be seen as a shift away from the medical model (Ottemiller & Awais, 2016). Addressing community mental health as a “movement”, it can be conjectured that “ill persons were not institutionalized but re-labeled as clients with problems that stemmed from (and could be dealt with in) more ‘natural settings’” (Hunter & Riger, 1986, p. 56). A more recent assessment of the application of interventions within a community mental health natural setting was explored by Trickett and Birman in 2016 and defined as “target[ing] the local ecology rather than the individuals in their intervention efforts” (p. 418). In specific conjunction with art therapy, community, as referred to by Kapitan, Litell, and Torres (2016), is the “surrounding social environment of the individuals and groups with whom art therapists practice” (p. 65).

Although Kapitan et al. (2011) suggests that there are a limited amount of resources within the literature providing a model of community art therapy’s effective application; Ottemiller and Awais (2016) do explore such a model. This model explores and assesses the specific strengths the practice of art therapy holds in impacting communities and asserts its potential usefulness as a guide for community art therapists to “expand their scope of practice

beyond the medical model and individual psychodynamics in order to serve, include, and empower those in need” (Ottemiller & Awais, 2016, p. 144). A link between the process of art making within a community and the improving of overall health within such communities becomes an overarching goal within the facilitation of community art therapy (Slayton, 2012). Canas (2011) asserts that this specialized field of art therapy “can provide a valuable perspective through its emphasis on process...its valuing of relationships and the establishment of trust, and its ability to create and nurture a place of safety” (p. 32). In relating the process of community art therapy to community practice in general Kapitan et. al (2011) suggest that “art therapy looks outward as well as inward, engaging a people’s collective dream life, their hopes and images, their histories and current realities, and their discovery of new ways to go forward” (p. 64). Slayton (2012) also suggests that the engagement in community and group art therapy utilizes “the group as a social microcosm for the world at large... engag[ing] the group in meaningful and prosocial experience that mirrors community experiences many clients have lacked” (p. 179). Art therapists hold unique skills to foster such change through therapeutic, communal interventions including skills of “relational sensitivity, observational skills, awareness of group dynamics and proficiency in creating psychological safety” (Ottemiller & Awais, 2016, p. 145). An art therapist’s role is not necessarily to lead in the process of art making but rather to use their specific set of therapeutic skills to foster a safe and containing space for art making to occur naturally and therefore implement change through the natural process of the community itself (Canas, 2011).

In their exploration of community mental health, Hunter and Riger (1986) suggest the importance of the realization that “community mental health programs may be considered one more agency representing a narrowly defined, specific set of organized external interests that

intrudes into a community” (p. 68). Within their presented model for successful tenants of community art therapy, Ottemiller and Awais (2016) provide considerations to avoid such narrow definitions including the art therapist’s personal work to consider bias, privilege, and personal experience within and outside of the communities in which they provide services. Being mindful of these considerations should then allow for the opportunity of diverse, creative expression leading to positive therapeutic outcomes without judgment from the art therapist (Slayton, 2012). As an overarching goal, the process of community art therapy can hold the potential to “strengthen the development of the whole person- psychoeducational, spiritual, relational and political- that in turn exerts a positive transformational impact on a person’s family, community, and oppressive societal structure” (Kapitan et al., 2011, p. 71 ).

### **Indirect Caregiver Perspectives of Community Art Engagement/Community Art Therapy**

This review thus far has explored the definitions and impacts of community engagement and community art therapy from the perspective of those in direct participation. In understanding community as a multi-faceted concept (Krause & Montenegro, 2017) community engagement might also be explored through the perspectives of those not directly involved in the engagement but connected through the immediate social circles as a means to further understand the layers of impact (Averett, Crowe, & Hall, 2015). Much of the referenced literature throughout this review explores the engagement of youth within community projects. Research of direct impacts on youth participants can be found throughout the fields of community psychology, sociology, and art therapy including research conducted by many of the authors presented above. However, the literature is not dense in assessing research findings regarding the outside perspective of growth as seen by members of the community connected to the participants (Averett et al., 2015). Within

the fields of art and play therapy, there has been a great deal of research that explores the positive implications of dyadic interventions between caregiver and child. The majority of this research within this literature involves direct participation of caregivers within the youth's engagement of therapy, as the caregiver is present and engaged in the interventions and such involvement becomes an indicator for growth for all parties involved (Cummings & Wittenberg, 2008). The independent engagement of youth in community art therapy lacks research regarding the indirect witnessing of change seen by caregivers and the potential social capital gained through such a process (Buskirk-Cohen, 2015). Jarret et al. (2004) explore the possibilities such data could accrue in evaluating various youth programs as stated: "our data came only from the youth (not from community adults)... We don't know what capital the adults may have gained. Nonetheless, it can be argued that these relationships also have benefits for society as a whole...essential for well-functioning communities" (p. 53). This is not to say that there is no research on this topic in its entirety. For example, in regards to art therapy within school settings a 2017 qualitative research study conducted by Deboys, Holtum, and Wright applied analysis of parents and teachers viewed change post art therapy. The study found that these caregivers observed positive changes in mood, communication, and confidence within the participants. Although this study did not evaluate the impacts of a community arts project, it does explore the effects of therapy in a non-clinical, community setting as "many parents and teachers spoke of school being a natural and supportive setting for art therapy, contrasting mental health clinics as intimidating and stigmatizing" (Deboys et al., 2017, p. 121). In a study that did explore the observed caregiver impacts of a community's creative arts program, Buskirk-Cohen (2015) also applied qualitative analysis to explore the impacts of the program on participants social behaviors and relationships. Applying a Parent-Child Rating scale Buskirk-Cohen's 2015

research yields that from a caregiver perspective a creative arts program can produce positive impacts on a child's acting out behaviors and learning problems. Similarly, Averett et al. (2015) pose that youth engagement in community arts programs can lead to caregiver observations of improved family dynamics, increase in positive communication, strengthening of coping skills and problem solving. Additionally, the participation within youth public arts programs can lead to substantial improvements between relationships and interactions within the community as a whole (Averett et al., 2015). Exploring cross-informant perspectives of individual participants, facilitators and caregivers can allow for community interventions to move towards discovering and applying a theory of change (Deboys et al., 2017). If all these perspectives are considered and evaluated, Averett et al. (2015) suggest, "not only do participants benefit from community-based art programs, but their family members and the community can as well" (p. 319).

## **Conclusion**

This review stands as an exploration of community, community engagement, and community art therapy. Through the above investigation of the literature surrounding these topics throughout the fields of community psychology, anthropology, sociology and art therapy it can be conjectured that the broad concept of community engagement holds positive impacts for individuals and communities (Timm-Bottos, 2006). These positive impacts can be defined through the gaining of social capital, the propulsion of social action, therapeutic growth and affected perspectives of change as seen through relationships. The use and implementation of art within community acts holds particular opportunities to affect personal and communal change (Newman et al., 2003). The literature reviewed also proposes that art therapy and art therapists hold unique qualities that qualify them to perpetuate positive changes on an individual and community level through the application of community art therapy interventions (Canas, 2011).

Despite a dense amount of literature surrounding the positive impacts of individual participation within community engagement and art therapy the current literature is lacking in the assessment of what these positive impacts look like from a layered outside perspective including caregivers and other community members (Averett et al., 2015). Further research should be conducted to not only assess the perspectives of change indirectly involved members have witnessed within participants' community engagement but also ways in which community leaders and community art therapists can continue to foster positive change within communities in a non-intrusive, non-harmful approach (Frostig, 2011). Understanding and exploring these perspectives can posit a more cohesive consideration of community arts engagement and community art therapy within family and community contexts (Ottemiller & Awais, 2016).

### **Research Approach**

The overarching approach applied within this research is qualitative. The following provides a definition of qualitative research which is applied within this research as “methodological scientific practice aimed at producing knowledge about the nature of experience... including social processes” (Levitt, Motulsky, Wertz & Morrow, 2017, p. 2). The use of qualitative interview process within this research poses as a means to gather data surrounding such an experience, directly related to the adult perspectives of the youth’s participation within the Summer Arts Workshop. This choice to apply qualitative questionnaire processes allows the subjects the opportunity to “describe their experiences with great attention to gaining access to the often covert and internal experiences... that may be challenging to observe” (Levitt et al., 2017, p. 10), or analyze through a more quantitative approach.

In addition to this research involving a questionnaire interview process, it also involves the gathering of data through an arts based focus group. The application of art within data gathering is especially important to this research as the topic of study explored is inherently connected to the effects of the art making process. Similarly, the process of a focus group allows for such data to be gathered in a social-process mirroring the importance of community engagement as provided within the literature. Additionally, the use of a focus group to conduct research allows for data to be enhanced through group interaction (Carey, 2016). Carless and Douglas (2016) pose that the use of art within research allows for “an effort to utilize the forms of thinking and forms of representation that the arts provide as a means through which the world can be better understood” (p. 354). The addition of applying artwork to this research aims to gain this more in depth understanding for experience through multiple forms of communicative dialogue. Carless and Douglas (2016) also conjecture six different components of arts based

research that assert specific benefits which they include as: providing the participant the opportunity to shape direction and focus of research, the embodiment of researcher and participant interaction, use of imagination, accessibility and ability to engage, expression of what might otherwise not be said, and the production of an active audience. The hope of this research was to engage participants most specifically in the benefits expression of what might not otherwise be stated and accessibility and ability to engage with topic within these stated art based benefits.



## Methods

### Definition of Terms

The following terms are key concepts applied within both the reviewed literature and contextual understanding of this research project. The terms included are those which often find several meanings dependent on the context they are researched. The following includes an overview of dictionary definitions, definitions of terms as stated in the connected literature, and a clear delineation of definitions this researcher will apply throughout applications of this proposed research.

**Community.** The term community is used throughout the literature review and within the question guiding this research. Merriam-Webster (2017) provide a dictionary definition of community as “a unified body of individuals: such as...the people with common interests living in a particular area.” However, the field of community psychology explores this definition further illuminating multiple possibilities for the functioning of this term (Krause & Montenegro, 2017). Within many of these definitions, the term community is often understood by providing subsections of core elements that further explain the parts within a culminating definition (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). For the purpose of this research, the researcher will use the definition of community as provided by McKeowen, Rubenstein and Kelly (1987) whom define community as a “multi-faceted concept.... Best viewed as social processes, and that each community has within it many different communities” (p. 36). Most specifically, this research focuses on community as a “multi-faceted concept” (McKeowen et al., 1987, p. 36) allowing this researcher to frame the qualitative study from the lens that outside, non-participatory perspectives, of a youth’s community engagement are inherent to its studied impacts.

**Social Capital.** Additionally, the literature explores such impacts, as stated above, in regards to social capital. A basic internet search yields the definition of social capital from *Dictionary.com* as: "the interpersonal relationships, institutions, and other social assets of a society or group that can be used to gain advantage". This definition is also found to be explored throughout the literature of community psychology. Through their extensive exploration of the concept of social capital, Saegert and Carpiano (2017) assert that in researching the literature three main theories consistently appear referring to those of Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988) and Robert Putnam (2000). Each of these theorists provide the literature with a variance in definitions of social capital (Saegert & Carpiano, 2017). For the purpose of this research, Putnam's definition of social capital provided a guiding definition for researcher to study potential gains. Putnam defines social capital as, "features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1995, p. 67).

### **Design of Study**

The following section of this proposal provides a thorough explanation of the procedures within this qualitative research study to allow the reader a better understanding of the researcher's applied methods. The design of the study is a qualitative approach applying a case study and arts based inquiry as a means to study the impacts of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of the caregiver and to illuminate potential for future community impact. The qualitative interview process includes the following themes for inquiry: observed changes in relationships of participants with others, observed changes in behaviors of participants and strengths and weaknesses of current program. The following subsections include

sampling, gathering of data and analysis of data and provide an overview of procedures that took place in a chronological order within this proposed research study.

**Sampling.** Subjects were contacted via telephone or email by the researcher through Dolores Mission School with previously established permission from school principal, Melissa Jara. In this first correspondence the researcher introduced herself and her status as a Loyola Marymount graduate student conducting her Master's research project and gave a brief description of the proposed research study. This explanation included the researcher's inquiry to understand the impact of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of caregivers and teachers. Subjects were selected based on their established relationship as a caregiver and/or teacher to the youth who have participated in Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop. The researcher aimed to include five to ten adult subjects within in the study. Six subjects consented to participate, three female and three male, all over the age of eighteen. Subjects collaborated with the researcher to determine participation at a time convenient for the subjects. Subjects were informed of their voluntary involvement and were notified that all information gathered would be kept confidential. Once subjects agreed to participate, and prior to the interview, subjects were educated about their rights as human subjects in order to obtain informed consent.

Potential sampling bias within this research may include teachers who have a difficult time differentiating between behavior being observed from a day to day within the classroom setting versus the broader definition of behaviors researcher is attempting to explore. The researcher was strategic in providing the inclusion of questions that assessed similar behaviors in order to assess for consistency throughout questionnaire. Additionally, Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop already maintained a pre-established, and in some cases long-standing

relationship between some families within the Dolores Mission community. There may have been predisposed bias within these participants to answer questions with certain responses to uphold the relationship already established. Again, the researcher provided repetition of similar questions throughout the interview process to cross-check for consistency of participants provided answers. The researcher also included interview questions that ask subjects to define pre-existing relationship to the workshop to analyze data for themes and correlations within responses.

**Gathering of Data.** Within initial contact with participants, the researcher requested to interview the subject during a sixty minute semi structured interview including questionnaires and art making at Dolores Mission School at a time convenient for the participant. In particular this interview process focused on exploring observed impacts on behavior, relationships, and attitudes of participants of the arts workshop. Additionally, a focus on ways in which the arts workshop can further community engagement and impacts was also explored.

As stated above, the specific means of gathering data included the process of face-to-face interviews conducted by the researcher during an approximately sixty minute semi-structured focus group that included art-making and completion of a paper and pencil questionnaire at Dolores Mission School at a time convenient for the subjects. The researcher gathered data during the interview through audio recording, paper and pencil questionnaires, art-making, and observation notes taken during the interview sessions. In order to ensure confidentiality, data was kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the interviewees involved. Additionally, data was kept confidential through a password-protected computer. Preceding the date of the focus group as well as again on the scheduled day, subjects were informed of their voluntary involvement.

**Analysis of Data.** Data gathered was analyzed by revisiting and assessing questionnaire responses, audio recordings, art-making, observation notes to compare and contrast emergent themes. After the researcher reviewed the data multiple times, emergent themes further illuminated themselves. Once themes were illuminated the researcher examined data again to reconfirm examples of themes throughout data and provided explicit evidence of these examples within findings. The artwork produced by participants was also analyzed by the researcher as a means to deepen connections found within emergent themes discovered from the other forms of data. The verbal responses recorded in direct response to the participant's artwork were analyzed alongside the images of artwork as to provide important contextual information and deepen understanding of potential themes. All data analysis gained through audio recordings, questionnaire responses, art-making, and observation notes was thoroughly analyzed and member checked by the researcher and research mentor to ensure accuracy in advance of publication.

## Results

### Presentation of Data

The data will be presented in chronological order following the research process from start to finish. This section will present the data objectively without immersive investigation of themes or connections to the literature. The chronological order of this section will describe the events of the focus group including participants' artwork and audio recording. Following the focus group, the paper and pencil questionnaires' data will be discussed including Likert scaled questions and question and responses.

**Focus Group.** The researcher conducted the focus group in the late afternoon on a school day as to best accommodate the availability of the school site where the focus group took place. The researcher was met with the challenge of gaining a multitude of participants due to conflicts in schedules. The focus group was comprised of four adult members, one female and three male. Three of the members identified their relationship to the workshop participants as their middle school teachers, while one participant identified as a parent. The researcher began the focus group by providing a personal introduction to all participant's and explaining her role as a graduate level student researcher. In addition, the researcher described her personal connection the LMU Summer Arts Workshop as a senior mentor during the previous year's program. After the researcher thoroughly discussed and clarified purpose of her research as well as participant's informed consent and rights, a video recap of the previous year's program was shown to give context of the program outside of the researcher's direct explanations in hopes to provide a less biased introduction to the exploration of research participant's thoughts in connection to the program.

*Artmaking.* After introductions and clarification of research the initial participatory part of the focus group involved inviting each participant to create their own piece of artwork in response to a prompt provided by the researcher. A list of the names of recent participants was also included and was provided with the intention for teachers and parents to reflect both on observations of individual youth participants and the participant list as a whole as a means to potentially gain information on both exclusive and comprehensive impacts. The prompt provided was as follows:

Please review the list of student participants listed below who have been involved in LMU's Summer Arts Workshop. Using the art materials provided create visual representations of the impact you have observed as a result of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop. Please give your artwork a title.

The materials provided for the art making process included the following: pre-cut collage images, magazines for collage, washable markers, oil pastels, tempera paint crayons ("Kwik Stix"), glue and scissors. These materials included were intended to offer participants with some variety by providing structured materials (collage and markers) as well as some inclusion of slightly looser, more expressive materials (oil pastels and "Kwik Stix"). Each participant was given a sheet of off-white paper just above standard letter size to create their artwork on. The participants were given approximately ten to twelve minutes to create a piece of artwork in response to the provided prompt. Although not explicitly distinguished by the researcher conducting the focus group, participants chose to work mostly silently with a few moments of relevant dialogue regarding the art process shared out loud. After completing artwork, participants were asked to synthesize their piece into a title to be discussed during the verbal sharing portion of the focus group. All of the materials provided were utilized in some capacity

throughout the focus group, however each individual participant made use of different choices of material within their own pieces.

Participant 1's artwork (Figure 1A) included the use of materials of pre-cut collage images, markers and oil pastels. Upon observation within the focus group, researcher noted that participant 1 worked quickly and was the first to finish and title her piece. Participant 1 included text and symbols to represent response to prompt including symbols connected to the concepts of faith and connection. Pre-cut collage images included within the art piece were images of text the participant found applicable to her work. Within the center of her piece, participant 1 wrote in all capital, black letters "DMS" in reference to Dolores Mission School and drew a cloud like pink border surrounding the three letters. There are four blue arrows drawn stemming from the center "DMS" text pointing to the inclusion of collage and drawn symbols representing "attitude, faith, connected and activism". There were clear similarities between participant 1 and participant 2's artwork in regard to materials used (collage, markers) and this may be due in part to the fact that these participants sat directly parallel to one another.



FIGURE 1A: Participant 1's Artwork "Holistic Education"



Participant 2 chose to express his thoughts in response to the prompt through the use of pre-cut collage images, oil pastels and markers (Figure 2A). Additionally, in a similar fashion to participant 1's artwork, participant 2 used the drawing of symbols including a cross drawn in oil pastels and small stars placed sporadically throughout the top third of the page drawn in blue marker. Participant 2 also utilized mostly pre-cut collage images of text with one cutout image of a large star placed within the top third of the page. In addition to the drawn in symbols, participant 2 also wrote in his own text using oil pastels to add to the pre-cut text producing the inclusion of the following words within the artwork: "college, future, goals, friendship, family, life".



FIGURE 2A: Participant 2's Artwork "In Progress"

Participant 3 utilized the materials of solely oil pastels to create his art piece (Figure 3A). Upon investigator's observation this participant was the last to complete his artwork and appeared tedious and intentional with his choice of colors to apply to the page. Also, this participant filled the full composition of his piece with color including shading and horizon lines. Participant 3 included the portrayal of six figures appearing to be extending arms to one another, alluding to the depiction of holding hands. These figures comprised the center and focus of the

composition of the artwork. Each figure is represented with different colored clothing, hair color, and skin tones. Participant 3 titled his artwork “*Different Backgrounds Growing Together.*”



FIGURE 3A: Participant 3’s Artwork “*Different Backgrounds Growing Together*”



FIGURE 4A: Participant 4’s Artwork “*Sense of Purpose*”

Participant 4 utilized markers and “Kwik Stix” out of the materials provided (Figure 4A). Within the creation of his artwork, participant 4 stated an enjoyment with the process and an affinity towards the materials of “Kwik Stix”. Participant 4 depicted an outside environment including three city like buildings with multiple windows as well as a sunny outdoor landscape

including a tree, sun and birds. Participant 4 filled the full composition of the page provided and titled his artwork “*Sense of Purpose.*”

**Audio Recording.** After all participants were finished with the creation of their artwork, the researcher explained that the next portion of the focus group would be a time of elicited response and explanation of the content of the artwork to be shared verbally amongst the group. At this time, researcher also explained that this discussion would be the section of the focus group to be audio recorded and once recording was started elicited response from volunteers to share. The quotes within this section are direct transcriptions from the audio recording conducted within the verbal sharing portion of the focus group and pose with the intention to provide relevant contextual information to gain a better understanding of each participant’s produced artwork.

Participant 1 chose to share first and gave a detailed explanation of the content and imagery of her artwork . Upon explanation of the symbols and collage images included within her artwork and the ways in which it connects to her role as the youth’s teacher and observer of the arts workshop, participant 1 stated “...we have the attitude that the kids bring, their faith base, their feeling of being connected to one another, and of course their activism. And it seems that the LMU program all around tries to evoke all those four characteristics through art”. Given this contextual information of participant 1’s verbal explanation of her artwork (Figure 1A) it was observed that the symbolism of the arrows stemming from the center cloud might be representative of the “outpouring of a holistic education” she describes as her perceived intention of both Dolores Mission and LMU Summer Arts Workshop within the audio recording.

The next volunteer who shared was participant 2 who provided explanation of his artwork as an intent to represent his belief that LMU Summer Arts Workshop has had an impact

on his student's in such a way that, "LMU is making them think about where they're at and makes them think of their future and their goals and the foundations we are building here at the school and the friendships that they build here and the family that they have here, the program gives them the chance to think about the future and go beyond that." Verbalized words stated by participant 2 within the audio recording such as "goals, future, friendships, family" can also be seen directly represented within his artwork (Figure 2A) through written text and pre-cut collage.

Participant 3 chose to share his thoughts verbally next and shared for the longest period of time giving thorough explanation of the message he attempted to portray within his artwork. Participant 3 started his explanation providing a similar idea of the perceived connection to participant 1 of described intentions between Dolores Mission school's intention and LMU's programs intentions through his statement of "I feel like this program does a lot to push kids, it's the same thing we are trying to do at school, you know it's kind of a unified goal of helping them progress as people to grow into adults." (Figure 3A). Participant 3 described his attempts to create a "high perspective" through his use of shading and ground lines as a means to portray the idea that through the participation in the program the youth or as he states "these kids" are "kind of looking up and moving upwards and growing." Participant 3 went on to describe rationale for the use of various colors and for the depiction of the six figures as the main focus of his composition: "I was trying to use different colors here is that whatever these kids backgrounds might be they can unify around a program like this and differences they kind of go away and what's a lot easier to see when you kind of bring people together to do art.. I was kind of going for what seemed to be like a lot of different colors coming together in one place." This statement was participant 3's final input within the discussion and provides context for both the imagery produced as well as clarity on participant 3's choice of title for his piece.

Participant 4 was the last to share in response to his work. A pattern observed by the investigator within the verbal sharing process, was that each participant began their statements responding to or expanding on the previous participant in some way. Participant 4 displayed this pattern through his response to participant 3 in that he also intended to portray within his artwork this idea of expansion of education through LMU's arts program as he states: "I really like what he said about education, filling in the basics of education and then a program like this helping to introduce the students to other aspects of education." Participant 4 went on to describe the portrayal of the landscape depicted within his artwork (Figure 4A) as a landscape representing summertime and the importance he has observed of LMU's program occurring during the summer due to his stated belief that: "for a lot our students school... is a big constant...they know what's going to happen and then in the summer it's kind of thrown up in the air. Some of them will go out and travel and do different things and then some of them will go to a program and I think that a program like LMU helps to kind of fill in that summer gap where they're maybe not necessarily doing the structured work that they're doing here but they're practicing other skills and they're being creative and helps to give them a sense of purpose." Again, this verbal context was a synthesizing statement of both the imagery produced as well as rationale for participant 4's title. At this point of the researcher thanked all participants for their engagement in the art making and interview process and explained that the audio recording portion of the group was complete.

***Paper and Pencil Questionnaires.*** The final portion of the focus group provided an allotted time for each participant to individually respond to the paper and pencil questionnaire. In addition to the data received through the questionnaires from all members present for the focus group, two participants were unable to attend focus group but expressed interest in placing their

input into the research and did participate in the pencil and paper questionnaires via their preferred method of email. Both of these added participants identified as female and as parents in response to their relationship to the youth participants. The addition of these two participants created six total responses for data to be analyzed from the paper and pencil questionnaires. The questionnaire was a total of four pages and included seven Likert Scale questions and four open response questions. The Likert Scale questions (Appendix A) were created by the researcher considering data explored within similar studies found within the literature to allow for comparable quantitative data. The Likert scale questions applied the scaling measures of: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither or N/A, Disagree or Strongly Disagree and asked participants to choose check a single box best representing their answer to each question. All participants answered all of the Likert scale questions allowing for six responses to be graphed and compared throughout all seven questions (Figures 1B-7B).

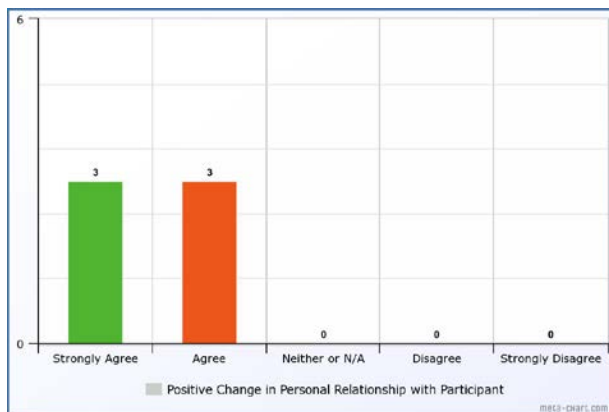


Figure 1B: Likert Scale Graphed Response Question 1: *I noticed a positive change in my personal relationship with the SAW participant as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop Participant*

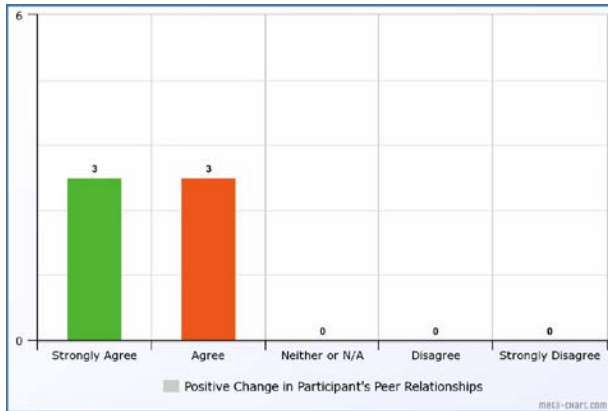


Figure 2B: Likert Scale Graphed Response Question 2: *I observed a positive change in the SAW participant's relationship with peers (siblings, classmates, etc.) as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop*

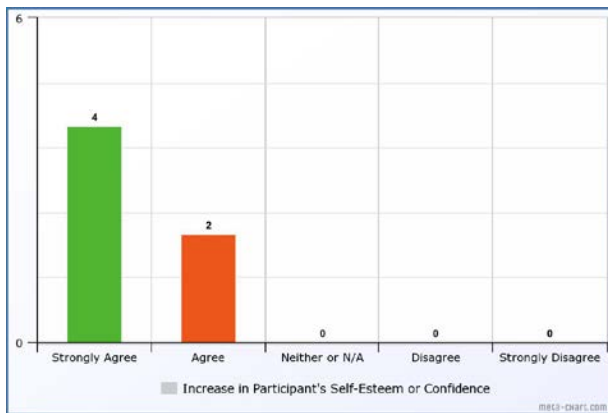


Figure 3B: Likert Scale Graphed Response Question 3: *I observed an increase in self-esteem or confidence (ability to take positive risks, try new things, volunteer in class, etc.) in the SAW participant as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop*

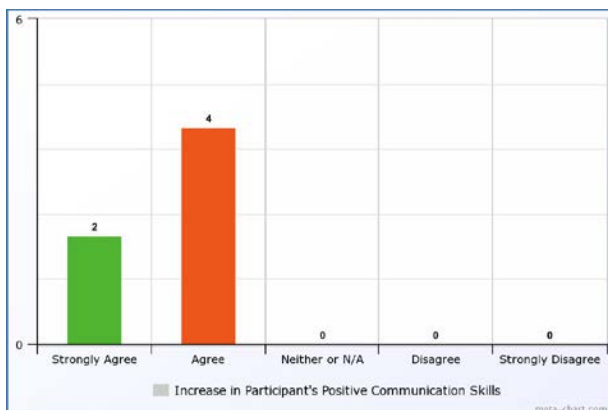


Figure 4B: Likert Scale Graphed Response Question 4: *I observed an increase in the SAW participant's positive communication strategies (listening skills, ability to appropriately express needs, etc.) as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop*

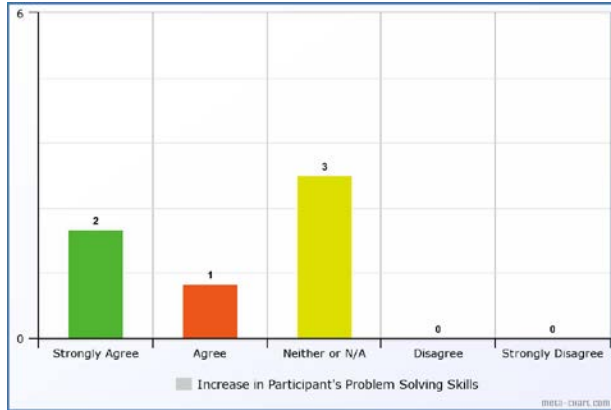


Figure 5B: Likert Scale Graphed Response Question 5: *I observed an increase in the SAW participant's problem solving skills as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop*

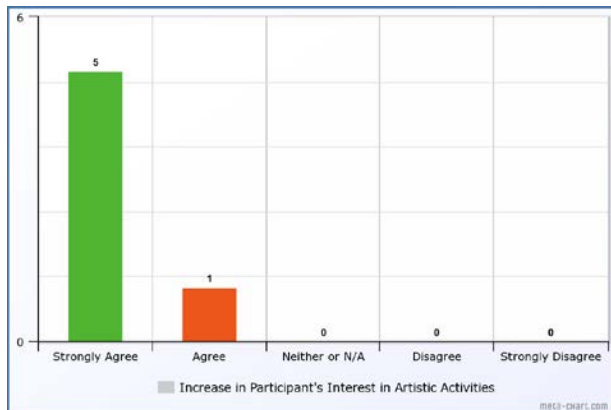


Figure 6B: Likert Scale Graphed Response Question 6: *I observed the SAW participant to increase their level of interest in artistic activities as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop*

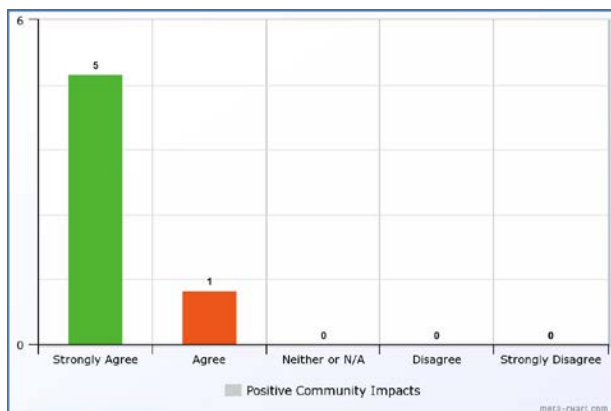


Figure 7B: Likert Scale Graphed Response Question 7: *I believe the LMU's Summer Arts Workshop has produced positive impacts on the Dolores Mission community as a whole*



The open ended questions (Table A) were formulated with the intention to answer and expand on the researcher's initial research question evaluating both observations of impacts and thoughts of future program engagement from the research participant's perspective of the individual youth and the community as a whole. The open ended questions were developed alongside the researcher's research mentor and program director of the arts workshop and were written with the intention to be more specific to LMU's program eliciting individualized response as to gain a deeper understanding of each participant's unique thoughts as well as support and contextualize Likert scale data. The content presented within the open ended questions is discussed in the following paragraphs including summarizing statements and relevant quotes and is broken down by participant response. Please reference Table A for stated questions referenced throughout the following paragraphs.

1. Please describe any additional positive impacts you have observed in the <i>individual youth</i> participant as a result of the LMU's Summer Arts Workshop.
2. In your opinion, how might the LMU Summer Arts Workshop program create a strong, more lasting impact on the <i>individual youth</i> participants in the future?
3. Please describe any positive impacts you have observed within the Dolores Mission <i>community</i> as a result of LMU's Summer Arts Workshop.
4. In your opinion, how might the LMU Summer Arts Workshop program create a stronger, more lasting impact on the Dolores Mission <i>community</i> as a whole.

Table A: Open Ended Paper and Pencil Questionnaire Questions

Similar to the process observed within the art making portion of the focus group, participant 1 finished her paper and pencil questionnaire before all other participants. Within her response to the first open ended question exploring observations of individual positive impacts participant 1 wrote about her observations of peer interactions in addition to observed positive

impacts on program participant's school work. Participant 1 offered a deeper reflection of the importance of peer interactions within her response of open ended question two through her statement that "some students see this (SAW) as their only opportunity to interact with peers outside their immediate social group" and discussed potential benefits of expanding the program to include more youth participation than its current one week duration. In her responses to the open ended questions exploring the program's community impact, participant 1 stated that the impacts on the community have been "both refreshing and progressing to see" and specifically wrote about an increased communal support and interest in the arts. Participant 1 also wrote about her belief that "the community would benefit greatly from more opportunities to engage with one another" and would "rally for the program much more". In comparison to other written responses, participant 1's answers tended to be shorter in length but she still answered all bases of the questions presented.

Participant 2 responded to question one and discussed his observations of the program's impact as allowing youth to express themselves in a way potentially more difficult than within a classroom setting. Additionally, participant 2 was the only participant to explicitly discuss observations of improvements in youth's problem solving skills within the open ended questions despite all participants agreeing or strongly agreeing to observing these changes within the relevant Likert scale question (Figure 4B). Within his responses to both questions regarding ways in which the program might create a more lasting impact, participant 2 answered briefly utilizing only one sentence to complete his responses. Within question two he explored his belief that "students might benefit if the teachers they are taught by also attend the workshop so they can interact with the students outside of a school setting" and stated a similar belief regarding the involvement of community members in his response to question four. Participant 2 expanded the

most on his ideas within his response to question three and discusses observations including “that the impacts made on the student definitely impacts the community the students live in.” He expanded on this belief further discussing the ways in which the program’s specific engagement in “self-expressive” art allows students the ability to further impact their community.

Similar to his responses within the audio recording and art making process, participant 3 was the last to complete his paper and pencil questionnaire and within questions one and three provided the lengthiest responses in comparison to his fellow participants. Participant 3 did not provide constructive feedback within his statements written in questions two or four, but further explored his observations of positive impacts of the program throughout those responses. In his response to question one, participant 3 discussed his belief that the program allows for the youth participants to immerse themselves within the creative process utilizing art in a way not conventionally available to them within the classroom setting and therefore “offers an opportunity to grow together as a school community through individual and group activities.” Similarly, in his statements provided within response to question three, participant 3 further discussed his belief that the “program provides another place for these kids to work, play, and grow together” and again relates this to SAW’s use of art or rather as he stated the programs different approach as their school system is often “confined to academics and athletics.”

Within response to question one, participant 4 spoke explicitly about the impacts the youth experience through being “introduced and immersed in life at a university” and how this exposure impacts the youth in the present as well as in their future. Participant 4 posed similar responses in his statements within questions two and four exploring the program’s potential to create more lasting impacts within individual and community involvement. Within these responses participant 4 described his belief that the program should attempt to include a higher

number of youth participants and that this inclusion of more participants would not only benefit the individual youth deeper but the community as a whole. Participant 4 began his response to question three with his overarching belief that “the community of Boyle Heights, specifically in the Dolores Mission community, grows immensely with the exposure Loyola provides.” He expanded on this belief and provided a similar response to participants 1 and 2 through his discussion of the impacts the program’s inclusion of art making creates on the community as a whole.

Participant 5 and 6 are the titles given to the research participants by the researcher who were not present for the focus group but did engage in the paper and pencil questionnaires. Participant 5 engaged in three out of the four open ended questions, choosing to leave question three blank without a response. Participant 5 expanded the most within her response to question one. She began her response by stating: “The arts program reignited my daughter’s artistic interests” and described the impact of this increase in artistic interest as developing her daughter’s ability to connect topics such as “social justice” and “social change” to the process of art making. In addition, participant 5 also stated within question one the belief that the program’s exposure to a college campus has provided her daughter with the desire to “attend the university when she graduates from high school.” In her feedback contributed in question two regarding opinions of ways in which the program can provide the individual youth participants with a more lasting impact, participant 5 discussed the potential idea to “develop an intentional collaboration with the DMS art teacher” and explored a similar concept in her response to question four stating the program could benefit the community on a higher level if it was “integrated in the learning of all subjects, such as religion, social justice, social studies, etc.” Participant 5 also proposed her

theory that increasing the sustainability of the program for the community might involve the duration of “the art program all year long, not just with activities, but intentional art workshops.”

Participant 6 maintained a contextual thread throughout all of her open ended question responses through consistent exploration of the program’s positive impacts of the utilization of the creative art process. Participant 6 also provided the lengthiest responses within each question and related her statements to both the individual participants she has a relationship with as well as her observed impacts of the program within a broader, community wide perspective. In question one, participant 6 explored a very similar thought process to participant 5’s response in explaining the program’s influence on heightening her children’s interest in “the arts” and therefore observed her children to “see the world in a new and more creative point of view”. Similar to participant 5, participant 6 also expanded on the way in which this artistic interest “affects the way that they will continue their education due to the fact that they have knowledge about the arts.” Similar to participant 3, instead of explicitly offering feedback as to how the program might create a stronger impact within its future applications, participant 6 responded to questions two and four and described ways in which she believes the program has already created a lasting impact on her children and the community. She elaborated on these impacts in question two by stating her view that her children continue to apply their newfound knowledge of artmaking across multiple environments in various different avenues including application within their “daily lives.” In terms of the community, in question four participant 6 stated that she believes the program “leads [youth] to spread creativity with their classmates...kids and others at the school have lost the fear of using arts to express themselves and now know how to.” Within question three, participant 6 again included discussion of the importance of art making the program provides but also included her observations of positive impacts of inclusiveness the

program allows and stated: “I see the students working as a positive whole instead of a separate body.” Participant 6 ends her response in question three discussing positive implications of the program on the youth participant’s thoughts of the future but is the only participant who explicitly stated the ways in which the program provides thoughts of art as a “potential career choice.”

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher began analysis through listening to the audio recording multiple times while simultaneously viewing the artwork created for similarities and differences in formal and conceptual choices. This simultaneous analysis allowed for the researcher to create connections and begin to formulate themes. With preliminary themes discovered in connection to artwork and focus group audio recording, the researcher moved in to quantifying and comparing responses within the paper and pencil questionnaires. All of the written questionnaires were read over several times and then typed and categorized by question. Scaled Likert question responses were tallied and responses were then produced into graph form (Figures 1B-7B). Once all data was placed chronologically onto a single document, the researcher applied further analysis through the color coding of themes observed extricating quotes from participant’s to support discovery of themes. Themes emerged through consistent grouping of expressed words transcribed from both audio recording and paper and pencil questionnaire, content within artwork, and quantitative data found from Likert scale questions. Additionally, direct connections between the produced graphs of responses recorded from the Likert scale questions were found to support emerging themes found within both artwork produced, verbalized recorded statements and written responses from participants. The following are emergent themes discovered through thorough analysis and the subsequent qualifying supporting data.

**Observed Increase in Participant's Artistic Expression.** Perhaps the most well-supported theme discovered upon this researcher's investigation was that of adult caregiver's observations of an overall increase in the youth participant's use of artistic expression. This theme emerged consistently throughout analysis of all aspects of data analyzed including participant artwork, audio recording, Likert scale questions and open ended responses. Some form of the word or words "express", "expressed" or "expression" were stated nine times within open ended response questions and the words "creative" or "creativity" were also found nine times throughout responses. This theme is explicitly expressed and evidenced in relevant Likert scale graphed response (Figure 6B) as well as within direct participant quotes. For example participant 6 discussed her point of view that the program has increased her children's interest in and use of artistic expression as she states: "my children see the world in a new and more creative point of view and look for art in everything that surrounds them." Multiple participants discussed their observation that the SAW program allows the opportunity for students to engage in creative acts not otherwise available to them within a standard school setting. Participant 4's contextualized his artwork (Figure 4A) exploring this theme in stating "a program like LMU helps... where they're maybe not necessarily doing the structured work that they're doing here but they're practicing other skills and being creative and that helps to give them a sense of purpose." Participant 3 almost mirrors the previous quote in his response to open ended question one through the following quote: "The kids learn to love art. They otherwise don't get a chance to set aside time and other resources to dedicate entirely to something individual and expressive. I have observed that the program gives the kids a healthy outlet for their energies, introduces them to many varied forms of artistic expression..." The researcher began to also notice more systemic commentary of the observations of participants in regards to artistic expression and its

effects within multiple layers of the youth's community spaces. Participant 1 supports this through her statement that "a greater emphasis has been placed on art programs due to the interest demonstrated by students." Participant 4 states a similar thought within his response to open-ended question three by stating: "Giving our kids the opportunity to express themselves in an art focused program helps them branch out and builds interest in the arts that will have an important and lasting impact on our community." It became apparent through analysis that the theme of an increase in participant's artistic expressions has been observed from both an individual and systemic point of view. This theme emerged and was found threaded throughout all aspects of data analyzed and was supported in some way by each research participant whether in artwork or verbal/written statements.

**Transitions to Adulthood: Exposure to College.** The second emergent theme this researcher found through analysis was the observed impact on participants as providing thoughts of and encouragement within their transitions to adulthood. Most specifically the exposure to a college campus was discussed by multiple participants throughout various aspects of data collected. This theme was expressed by both those identifying as teachers and those identifying as parents. This theme is supported mostly by participant quotes transcribed and color coded by the researcher found within either audio recording or written responses to open ended questions, but is also found within aspects of artwork produced. There was no corresponding Likert scale question to support this theme, however the researcher's analysis of other data received created a prevalent amount of foundational evidence supporting the emergence of this theme. Research participants not only discussed ways in which the program has provided exposure to future involvement within career fields and university attendance, but also has allowed for youth participants to set concrete goals for their future selves. Participant 3 expands on this impactful



developmental age of participants and the potential the role of art within this program plays in identity and goal formation as he states within the audio recording: “At young ages they’re kind of just starting with seeds and kernels of what it is that they will eventually grow up to be... art has an effective way of pulling that out and helping them to develop and see it for themselves.”

Within his response to open-ended question one, participant 4 explains his feelings as a teacher surrounding the program as: “This experience is instrumental in helping us to build an interest and curiosity about college, what it’s like, and what it can do for their lives.” In his

contextualization of his artwork (Figure 2A), participant 2 discusses his belief that the program supports the youth in their future goals as it is “making them think about where they’re at and makes them think of their future and their goals and the foundations we are building here at the school end the friendships that they build here and the family that they have here, the program gives them the chance to think about the future and go beyond that.” Participant 2 supports this theme not only within the above verbal statement but also within the inclusion of collage and written text portrayed within his artwork as he cut and pasted the text of “college” within his art piece and also hand wrote the words “future” and “goals”. In correlation with participant 2’s

included elements in his artwork, participant 5 states in her response to open ended question one that “my daughter loved attending the LMU campus for the Summer Art Workshop and she hopes to attend the university when she graduates.” Participant 3 expands upon this impact, again supporting this emergent theme within his response to open-ended question two as he asserts, “The introduction to a college campus means a lot, I think it makes their educational goals that much clearer.” This theme was one of the first the researcher began to witness emerging throughout the analysis process and within the complete immersion into the analysis process this theme remained consistent as illustrated by explicit examples of evidence above.

**Observed Increase in Participant's Peer Interactions.** Similar to the first emergent theme discussed above, through analysis the researcher found the emergent theme of observed increase in participant's peer interactions throughout all elements of data including artwork and corresponding audio recording, Likert scale questions, and open ended responses. The theme first emerged explicitly in the researcher's graphing of Likert scale responses (Figure 3B). The researcher noted this observation and continued to find relevant data as analysis continued. This theme is also observable within participant 3's artwork (Figure 3A) as he portrayed five distinct figures appearing youthful in representation and harmonious within their shared space. The participant guides the emergence of the theme observed within his artwork through his verbal contextualization of his artwork provided within the audio recording as he states: "I was trying to use different colors here is that whatever these kids backgrounds might be they can unify around a program like this and differences they kind of go away and what's a lot easier to see when you kind of bring people together to do art and through art therapy like you would say is that they can see the things that they have in common." Similar quotes supporting participant 3's statement and artworks were found within the data from statements made by participant 1 in responses to open ended questions one and two. In question one she asserts that the program has "bridged the gap between students who normally shy away from interactions with one another. The program has helped bring together a community of learners. They have been much more open to one another in the process." She expands on this thought further illuminating this emergent theme in her response to question two by stating the following: "Some students see this as their only opportunity to interact with peers outside their immediate social group." Participant 3 resounds a similar response in his assertion within open ended question three giving more evidence to the emergence of this theme as he writes: "The art program provides another place for these kids to

work, play and grow together.” This sense of togetherness between peers is also expressed by participant 6 in her response to the same open ended question maintaining “at the program the students work as a positive whole instead of a separate body.” This emergent theme is evidence of the programs lasting impact as observed throughout the included above statements as increasing positive relationships for youth participants within their peer groups and academic community.

**Observed Community Growth.** The following theme was seen to emerge in a similar way than the above themes explored, however the exploration of this theme investigates community impact rather than impacts on individual youth participants. Supportive data found throughout the researcher’s analysis illuminated the consistent theme of the Summer Arts Workshop’s impact on community growth. This emergent theme was observed through analysis within the corresponding Likert scale graphed responses and open-ended written responses. The Likert scale response showed five participants to strongly agree and one participant to agree with their observations that the arts workshop has produced positive impacts on the Dolores Mission community as a whole (Figure 7B). Research participants expanded on their scaled responses throughout their written explanations found within analysis of the transcription of the open ended questions. Participant 3 supports this theme in her assertion that the program “offers an opportunity to grow together as a school community through individual and group activities.” Participant 2 and participant 4 state highly similar responses to their provided statements in open ended question two, both of which support the emergence of this theme. Participant 4 asserts, “the community of Boyle Heights specifically in the Dolores Mission community grows immensely with the exposure Loyola provides.” Participant 4 mirrors this assertion through his personal statement of: “I believe that the impacts made on the students definitely impacts the

community the students live in.” Throughout transcription the researcher noted that the words “community” and “growth” were used in statements ten times similar to the above provided quotes. Additionally, participant 3’s chosen title of “Different Backgrounds Growing Together” for his artwork (Figure 3A) not only supports the above theme of increased peer interactions but also supports the discussion of community growth as he portrays a group of individuals occupying the same space “growing together.” This artwork title as well as the inclusion of the additional above evidence analyzed throughout the data allowed for the researcher to explore an emergent theme indicating the program’s broader observed impacts.

**Expressed Areas for Future Improvement.** The following emergent themes are somewhat outliers within this discussion in the sense that they do not correspond with observations of positive impacts as displayed in all other themes above. These themes emerged mostly through participant responses to the open ended questions, however specific elements of participant artwork also display the emergence of these themes. The emergent themes explored within this section fall under the overarching category of expressed areas of improvement for the program to continue to consider throughout its prospective future.

***Duration of Program.*** This emergent theme of an expressed desire for an increase in the duration or length of already established program is perhaps the more concrete suggestion for improvement between the two illuminated through the researcher’s analysis. This theme was found throughout almost all open ended questions by at least one participant and was also expanded on within Participant 4’s verbal contextualization of his artwork. In their open ended written responses to question two, participants 1 and 4 both state their thoughts of improvements to the program through including more opportunities for the youth to participate. Participant 1 states, “students can benefit greatly from a program that is longer than a week” and participant 4

expands on this thought by providing a timeframe within the academic year to expand on these opportunities through his belief that “possibly stretching the program to include Spring Break or other opportunities would be great!” In his verbalized summary of his artwork (Figure 4A), participant 4 explores his belief that the program’s summer timing has been beneficial as it “helps to fill in the summer gap” for students providing structure and exploration of new skills. This contextualization of participant 4’s art piece, complements his above stated notion of expanding the program through school breaks. Additionally, participant 1 explores her belief that the potential increased duration of the program could lead to not only impacts on individual youth participants but the community as a whole through providing “more opportunities to engage with one another.” Participant 5 resounds similar assertions and supports the emergence of this theme in her response to open-ended question four by providing her thought of avenues to create a stronger, more lasting program impact by stating: “I think collaborating with DMS and finding ways to sustain the art program all year long”. Participant 4 also explores duration in his response to question four as he states “I could suggest...having the program reach more students, more often.”

***Full Circle Integration.*** The theme of more suggested integration of the arts program within multiple elements of the youth participant’s lives became evident as an emergent theme to the researcher through analysis of various pieces of data. Through analysis of artwork the researcher began to notice similar elements of cyclical movement within the composition of three pieces of artwork produced further illuminating the emergent theme of integration and movement of different facets of the arts program working alongside already established school objectives. Artwork created by participants 1, 2, and 3 all display circular placement of artistic components (Figures 1A, 2A, 3A). Within participant 1 and 2’s artwork, the placed elements of

collage, symbols and text create a circular movement within their compositions while participant 3 utilized the techniques of shading and line quality to produce a cyclical movement within his piece. Participant 1 contextualizes this idea of integration found depicted in her piece by verbally exploring the “holistic education” Dolores Mission aims to provide students and the ways in which the summer arts workshop integrates these within the arts program as she states it “seems to be contributing to all four factors of their education.” Upon further analysis, the researcher began to find more examples of not just the acknowledgment of integration but the expressed desire for deeper, multilayered integration to occur within the program’s future endeavors. One of the most consistent examples of the concept of creating a more integrative program was seen within multiple statements of deeper inclusion of Dolores Mission teaching staff within the arts program agenda. Participant 2 states within his response to open-ended question two that “students might benefit if the teachers they are taught by also attend the workshop so they can interact with the students outside of a school setting.” Participant 5 asserts a very similar response within the same open-ended question exploring her ideas of integration by stating: “I would like to see the SAW program develop an intentional collaboration with the DMS art teacher to support and create art appreciation as a medium for students to learn alternative forms of expression and integrate into the rest of their school subjects.” Participant 5 expands on this concept within open-ended question four through further exploring the theme of integration by stating her belief that the program might benefit to include “intentional art workshops where it’s not only hands on art, but integrated in the learning of all subjects such as religion, social justice, social studies, etc.”

Both of the emergent themes discussed under the umbrella of expressed needs for future improvement fall under the desire for expansion of the program. The first theme to emerge

discussed expanding the length of the program, while the second explored expanding the program further into various components of the youth's academic experiences.

## **Findings**

Throughout this researcher's process and thorough analysis of data, several themes revealed themselves. These themes become important foundations not only for the current and past established Summer Arts Workshop but also for the arts program to consider throughout its future endeavors. The emerged themes and subsequent findings provide outcomes to this researcher's initial, guiding question of: What is the impact of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of the participant's caregivers and how do caregivers feel community engagement might be extended for further impact? Overall this research stands as evidence that from a secondary, non-participant perspective Loyola Marymount University's Summer Arts Workshop has been observed to produce specific impacts on both individual youth participants as well as upon the broader community as a whole. These impacts revealed themselves through emergent themes and include observations of increases in youth participant's interest in artistic expression, positive peer interactions, thoughts of future/goal-oriented thinking as well as observed community growth. These themes are expanded on throughout the sections below further broadening meanings of the examined data.

**Program Impacts: Similarities and Differences within the Literature.** The emergent themes discussed within analysis of data can be linked to the already standing literature exploring similar arts programs further supporting evidence that youth arts programs lead to positive, multi-layered impacts. The researcher discovered similarities within the literature as supported throughout multiple elements of data collected throughout this research including research participant's artwork, audio recording, and paper and pencil questionnaire responses.

Similar to the themes found within this research, in their 2015 study of a public youth arts program, Averett, Crowe and Hall also found that an arts program led to significant observations in the increase of the youth participant's artistic skills, peer interactions and community growth. These impacts discovered throughout Averett et al. 2015 study were the themes discovered most consistently throughout all elements of data analyzed within this researcher's research. For example participant 4 explores such an impacts through his statement that the summer arts workshop through "giving our kids the opportunity to express themselves in an art focused program, helps them branch out and builds interest in the arts that will have an important and lasting impact on our community." The above statement by participant 4 supports all three of the impacts explicitly discussed within Averett, Crowe and Hall's 2015 study including artistic expression, peer interactions ("branching out") and community growth adding further evidence to the literature's standing assertions of impacts of youth arts programs. Buskirk-Cohen's 2015 study also supports the impacts of youth art programs on peer interactions within their explorative research study. This increase in peer interactions is also evidenced explicitly in the graphed responses of research participant's answers found within Likert scale question number two (Figure 2B). Jarrett, Sullivan and Watkin's 2004 study found similar positive correlations as themes discovered in this research within assisting youth with goal setting and transitions to adulthood. This found impact within the established literature is supported within this research by participant 5's specific observations of her own daughter as she states: "My daughter loved attending the LMU campus for the Summer Arts Workshop and she hopes to attend the university when she graduates from high school."

The parallel of the above discussed studies adds support to the evidence that youth arts programs create positive impacts on individual participants and consequently on the extended



community. However, upon comparison, this researcher also noted differences within this research's findings and those identified within established literature. For example, Averett, Crowe and Hall's 2015 study noted positive correlations to youth participant's self-esteem, which although provided as an exploration of possible observed impact within Likert scale questions (Figure 3B) was not otherwise supported by other areas of data to be included as a significant theme within this specific research. Additionally, due to the similarities in research to Buskirk-Cohen's 2015 study, this researcher also included the topics of problem solving and communication skills within Likert scaled questions (Appendix A), however this study of LMU's summer arts workshop did not show significant data to support the inclusion of observed increases in these stated skills for youth participants. Participant 2 did state in his response to open-ended question number one that he believes, "Those students who have attended the SAW program come back confident in their ability to problem solve." However, this is the only mention of problem solving this research found allusions to throughout the process of data analysis and therefore chose to not include this as an impact within emergent themes. Due to the evidence of literature showing that the capacities of problem solving, communication and self-esteem can be improved or impacted within youth within arts programs, it might be an element program directors explore or expand on in the future. Within this exploration of the program's potential future, the themes found within this researcher's analysis regarding adult perspectives for future improvement might be considered as ways to create more positive impacts. This research explored suggestions from the adult perspective for future improvement in order for the program to create a stronger, more lasting impact on individual participants and the community and found that increasing the duration of the program as well as integrating the program further into other areas of the youth's experiences might be beneficial. Finding ways to incorporate these

suggestions into LMU's summer arts workshop might not only create an increase in more positive social skills for individual participants, like those found in similar literature, but also might create further additions of social capital within the Dolores Mission community.

**Adolescents and Identity Development.** Throughout multiple elements of data analyzed, this researcher began to formulate the conclusion that in correlation with the observed impacts on youth participants, the data can be expanded on to additionally emphasize the youth's exposure and opportunity to further develop their identities in the context of how they define themselves individually, alongside peers, and within a broader community and societal context. In terms of developmental theory, this finding is supported contextually by Erik Erikson's psychosocial stages which are considered of high importance within developmental psychology. Erikson asserts that as adolescents, youth are in the prime developmental stage of defining their identities (Erikson, 1950). In his contextualization of his artwork (Figure 3A) transcribed within the audio recording, participant 3 explains that he believes LMU's summer arts workshop assists "kids to realize... what makes up their identity... at young ages they're kind of just starting with seeds and kernels of what it is that they will eventually grow up to be. Art has an effective way of pulling that out and helping them to develop it and see it for themselves." Buskirk-Cohen (2015) explores the belief that youth arts programs allow for youth participants to increase perspectives of self as they assert: "such creative activities...offer youth the opportunity to gain insight about their own thoughts and behaviors" (Buskirk-Cohen, 2015). In her 2014 dissertation exploring specifically LMU's Summer Arts Workshop, Bianchi examines not only the ways in which this program provides youth with the opportunity to further develop their identities, but she also expands further through asserting the meaningful impacts this exploration has upon the participant's lives. Bianchi states these impacts within the following statement:

“adolescents are encouraged to uncover and build strengths versus focusing on deficits...Embodied within PYD [positive youth development] is the notion that as an adolescent develops a positive identity he/she is more likely to engage in prosocial behavior, defined as behavior that is advantageous to the community as a whole (i.e., sharing, acceptance, altruistic behavior, and empathic behavior)” (Bianchi, 2014, p. 114).

This assertion introduces the idea that the individual positive development of each youth participant leads to positive community gains, otherwise defined within relevant literature as social capital. It is important to note that this researcher and Bianchi share somewhat similar perspectives of LMU’s summer arts workshop as Bianchi has maintained the role of program director for several years while this researcher held the role of a youth mentor within the 2017 annual program. This researcher's personal observations of the program correlate directly with Bianchi’s assertion of identity development. This researcher observed youth participant’s to explore elements of themselves directly within the artwork they produced further illuminating their beliefs and value systems, unique qualities and individual skill sets therefore providing better understanding of individual identity throughout the program’s process. Participant 4 explores the impacts of these illuminations the arts program provides through his statement that within their exposure to this program, the youth participants are “being creative and [this] helps to give them a sense of purpose.” This “sense of purpose” allows for youth participants to formulate thoughts of current self as well as idea of future selves.

**Social Capital Gains.** It might be argued that the emergence of each theme discussing observed impacts within data analysis could be seen as a factor aiding in the provision of social capital within the Dolores Mission community as supported by Jarrett, Sullivan and Watkins’ (2004) assertion that “social capital is embedded within a community context, it nevertheless

suggests benefits to individuals” (Jarrett, Sullivan & Watkins, 2004, p. 3). However, the gaining of social capital can be explicitly seen through this researcher’s findings that community growth has been a direct observation of the adults connected to LMU’s Summer Arts Workshop (Figure 7B). Additionally, participant 2 states in his response to open ended question two his belief that “the impacts made on the students definitely impacts the community the students live in” further illuminating that the individual effects on participants create broader gains on the society the youth participants inhabit. This perspective is of value in terms of social capital and the summer arts workshop in that a secondary, outside perspective allows for ripple effect of community impacts to be observed from more viewpoints than just first-person, individualized examples of program impacts (Baker & Johannes, 2013). Participant 4 supports this widespread view of impacts as he states in his response to open ended question number three as he states: “art is self-expressive. It allows students to take the positive impacts they have experience out to their community.” The importance of this rippled perspective is supported by Baker and Johannes’ 2013 study of social capital and youth and could potentially be explored throughout LMU’s summer arts workshop future as a means to continue gaining perspective of the layered impacts produced through program engagement.

**Impacts of Community Art Making.** This researcher’s findings further illuminate the relevant community art therapy literature’s assertions that artmaking in a community context has powerful impacts for both the individual and the community. Participant 3’s verbal statements and associated artwork (Figure 3A) are important pieces of this research indicating the capacity for artmaking in a community setting as he discusses: “whatever these kids backgrounds might be they can unify around a program like this and differences they kind of go away... and through art therapy... they can see the things that they have in common.” Participant 3’s thoughts are

supported by various data provided from other research participants and support multiple themes within this research as well as the tenants of community art therapy as Slayton (2012) would summarize as “the opportunity for expression of diverse values without judgment” (Slayton, 2012, p. 180). The discovered themes within this research also found specific impacts on the individual youth, all of which were contributed by research participants to the effects of the art making process LMU’s program provides. These observations of individual growth can be viewed in the context of community art making and art therapy through Kapitan, Litell and Torres’ (2012) understanding of art making as a social process within their perspective of “creative art therapy as an emancipatory process for strengthening the development of the whole person- psychoeducational, spiritual, relational and political- that in turn exerts a positive transformational impact on a person’s family, community, and oppressive societal structures” (Kapitan, Litell & Torres, 2012, p. 71). Additionally, through her personal involvement in the 2017 program, this researcher observed the youth participants to bond over the integration of personal community elements into the artwork. It became clear that the students hold a sense of pride in the community they come from and the summer arts workshop allows them the opportunity to explore this sense of pride in a shared space with others sharing similar values. This multilayered “transformational impact” (p. 71) explored by Kapitan et al. (2012) above alludes to ways in which the art process can advance the gaining of social capital within a community. This researcher’s research exploring adult perspectives of LMU’s summer arts workshop found both individual and communal impacts as program contributions therefore further illuminating the ways in which social capital has been gained within the Dolores Mission community through the art making process.

## Conclusion

The above research process guided the researcher in cultivating findings to answer her initial research question of the potential observed impacts of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop on youth participants and Dolores Mission community from a secondary, outside adult perspective. Research on youth arts program from a secondary perspective is limited throughout relevant literature and despite ten years of graduate level research completed on this program, this research is the first to explore program impacts from an adult perspective including teachers and parents. The themes emerged through this researcher's analysis of data included secondary observations of increase in youth's interest in artistic expressions, increase in youth's positive peer interactions, increase in youth's positive transitions to adulthood and positive impacts on community growth. Additionally, this research provided data supporting the thematic expressions of research participant's desires within areas for future improvement for the program including duration of program and deeper integration of program elements into other facets of youth participant's lives. These themes are important contributions to both the already established literature and in specific context of Loyola Marymount University Summer Arts Workshop. In relation to relevant literature, this research adds sufficient perspectives and data supporting the effectiveness of youth arts programs in producing individual and communal impacts. Data found supports previously discovered impacts such as youth arts programs capacity to provide participants with an increase in important inter and intra personal skills as well as adds additional data to limited research of adult perspectives that include the importance of youth arts programs to assist youth in identity and goal development. In relevance to LMU's specific program, this research provides data from a perspective not previously explored leading

to an expanded understanding of the program's impacts as well as noted areas for improvement including duration of and deeper communal integration of the program.

However, limited amount of data received within this research endeavor should be noted and considered within similar future studies. This research could benefit from further investigation to include a higher quantity of research participants and subsequent data to continue adding to currently established themes and possibly further exploring the emergence of other important aspects of the arts program not sufficiently supported within these findings. On a similar note, a potentially helpful addition to this research would be to provide input from community members loosely involved in program, or from those who have witnessed impacts from further removed perspectives, such as community leaders, as to further understand the program's depth of rippling effects of social capital. In expansion of these themes within future research it might be beneficial to provide program directors with more explicit, concrete strategies within functional future application. For example, this researcher believes the program might benefit from increasing the duration of the program through a continuation of arts workshops throughout the academic school year. The connection to Loyola Marymount's established art therapy program could collaborate with Dolores Mission continuously throughout the school year to provide as Participant 5 stated "intentional art workshops" integrated within collaboration in Dolores Mission's curriculum. The singular or combination of above mentioned expansions of this research might add to greater understanding of current program impacts thus allowing for program directors to create a program meeting the community's expressed needs and to produce sustainability for the future.

This research observed in conjunction with both relevant standing literature and research conducted solely on LMU's program provides contextual understanding of the past eleven years of program impacts as well as considerations for prospective growth.



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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Paper and Pencil Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to give your input about the Loyola Marymount University's Summer Arts Workshop. The following questions are meant to assist this researcher in gaining a better understanding of the specific impacts of LMU's Summer Arts Workshop from your adult perspective. Your honest observations are greatly appreciated!

1. Please check the box stating your relationship to the Loyola Marymount University's Summer Arts Workshop Participant

Parent

Guardian

Teacher

Caregiver

2. I noticed a positive change in my personal relationship with the SAW participant as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop. .

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

3. I observed a positive change in the SAW participant's relationship with peers (siblings, classmates, etc) as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop..

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

4. I observed an increase in self-esteem or confidence (ability to take positive risks, try new things, volunteer in class, etc.) in the SAW participant as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

5. I observed an increase in the SAW participant's positive communication strategies (listening skills, ability to appropriately express needs, etc.) as a result of the Summer Arts Workshop.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral





In your opinion, how might the LMU Summer Art Workshop program create a stronger, more lasting impact on the Dolores Mission *community* as a whole?

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#### FOCUS GROUP ART DIRECTIVE

Please review the list of student participants listed below who have been involved in LMU's Summer Arts Workshop. Using the art materials provided create visual representations of the impact you have observed as a result of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop.

Please give your artwork a title.

## Appendix B: IRB Letter of Approval

Dear Ms. Stafford,

Thank you for submitting your IRB application for your protocol titled *Adult Perspectives of LMU Summer Arts Workshop*. All documents have been received and reviewed, and I am pleased to inform you that your study has been approved.

The effective date of your approval is December 6, 2017 – December 5, 2018. If you wish to continue your project beyond the effective period, you must submit a renewal application to the IRB prior to November 1, 2018. In addition, if there are any changes to your protocol, you are required to submit an addendum application.

For any further communication regarding your approved study, please reference your IRB protocol number: LMU IRB 2017 FA 51.

Best wishes for a successful research project.

Sincerely,

Julie Paterson

Julie Paterson | Senior Compliance Coordinator | [Loyola Marymount University](#) | [1 LMU Drive](#) | [U-Hall #1718](#) | Los Angeles, CA 90045 | (310) 258-5465



## Appendix C: IRB Application

### LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

#### IRB Application Questionnaire

#### 1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the impacts of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of caregivers and teachers who directly interact with the participants throughout their engagement within the program. The potential for positive correlations between a youth's participation in arts programs and improvements in interpersonal and community relationships has been established, but may require more research as findings within the literature are limited (Averett, Crowe, and Hall, 2015). The Summer Arts Workshop is a well-established annual program facilitated in collaboration between the College of Fine Arts at Loyola Marymount and Dolores Mission Middle School in Boyle Heights, CA. The workshop occurs over five days at Loyola Marymount University and includes the middle student's immersion in a large art project, community art show, and mastery of newly learned art making skills. The workshop allows youth participants the opportunity to engage in community with their peers/mentors, explore identity, and apply creative expression through art making. Graduate research has been implemented on the Summer Arts Workshop throughout the years, however there is currently no research established surrounding the impacts from a non-participant's viewpoint. This study is guided by the following question for research: What is the impact of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of the participant's caregivers and teachers and how do these caregivers feel community engagement might be extended for further impact?

#### Reference

Averett, P., Crowe, A., & Hall, C. (2015). The youth public arts program: Interpersonal and intrapersonal outcomes for at-risk youth. *Journal Of Creativity In Mental Health*, 10(3), 306-323. doi:10.1080/15401383.2015.1027840

#### 2. SUBJECT RECRUITMENT

Subjects will be contacted via telephone or email by the researcher through Dolores Mission School with permission from school principal, Melissa Jara (see attached letter of approval). Subjects will be selected based on their established relationship as a caregiver and/or teacher to the youth whom have participated in Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop. Five to ten adult subjects will be included in the study and subjects will be male

and female, all over the age of 18. Researcher will request to interview subjects during an approximately 60 minute semi-structured focus group that will include art-making and completion of a paper and pencil questionnaire at Dolores Mission and at a time convenient for the subjects. Subjects will be informed of their voluntary involvement and will be notified that all information gathered will be kept confidential. The researcher will contact Dolores Mission teachers and participant's caregivers via telephone or email (Appendix A). In this first correspondence the researcher will introduce herself and her status as a Loyola Marymount graduate student conducting her Master's research project and give a brief description of the proposed research study.

Please see attached Appendix A: Email Telephone Invitation

Please see attached letter of approval from Dolores Mission principal

### 3. PROCEDURES

Dolores Mission School will provide email and/or telephone numbers for subjects with approval from school principal, Melissa Jara (see attached letter of approval). The researcher will contact subjects via email or telephone (Appendix A) to introduce herself and her status as a Loyola Marymount graduate student conducting her Master's research project, give a brief description of the proposed research study-to understand the impact of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of caregivers and teachers, and request to interview the subject during a 60 minute semi structured interview including questionnaires (Appendix B) and art making at Dolores Mission at a time convenient for the participant between the dates of Monday January 8th and Friday March 30th. In particular the interview process will focus on exploring observed impacts on behavior, relationships, and attitudes of participants of the arts workshop. Additionally, a focus on ways in which the arts workshop can further community engagement and impacts will also be explored. Once subjects have agreed to participate, and prior to the interview, subjects will be educated about their rights as human subjects in order to obtain informed consent. Interviews will be face-to-face conducted by the PI during an approximately 60 minute semi-structured focus group that will include art-making and completion of a paper and pencil questionnaire at Dolores Mission and at a time convenient for the subjects. Subjects will be informed of their voluntary involvement and will be notified that all information gathered will be kept confidential. A faculty representative will be on site should any challenges occur. The researcher will gather data during the interview through audio recording, paper and pencil questionnaires, art-making, and observation notes taken during the interview sessions. Data gathered will be analyzed by revisiting and assessing questionnaire responses, audio recordings, art- making, observation notes to compare and contrast emergent themes. All data analysis gained through audio recordings, questionnaire responses, art-making, and observation notes will be thoroughly analyzed and member checked by PI and research mentor (Dr. Jessica Bianchi) to ensure accuracy in advance of publication. Data will be kept confidential

through the use of pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the interviewees involved. Data will be kept confidential through a password-protected computer.

#### **4. RISKS / BENEFITS**

Potential risks may include discomfort, inconvenience, embarrassment, nervousness, and invasion of privacy for caregivers, which will be minimized by conducting interviews individually, at times chosen for their convenience by subjects, and in safe locations chosen by subjects. Potential benefits of this research study may include an opportunity for program directors to evaluate Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop impact on participants thus far. This evaluation may lead to potential changes to the Summer Arts Workshop to further positively impact its participants and the community. Additionally, this research study may allow participants insight into behaviors and attitudes portrayed by the youth they engage with and this insight may potentially strengthen these established relationships. The PI will interview each of the subjects in accordance with their availability. The PI will facilitate focus groups in accordance with the availability of the participants. The PI will ensure the confidentiality of all subjects involved, obtain full consent and provide detailed explanation of research purpose. PI conducting the focus group will remind participants of the importance of maintaining confidentiality in order to ensure boundaries of confidentiality are not breached.

#### **5. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The subjects will not be identifiable by name or other means such as their artwork. Privacy of participants will be protected through the use of pseudonyms, in order to de-identify the data. The data collected from the interviews in the form of audio recordings, questionnaire responses, art-making, and observation notes will be transcribed and saved in digital format on a password secured laptop. Printed questionnaires will not contain any identifying information and will be shredded after being transcribed to digital format. All audiotapes, photos and transcripts will be destroyed when the analysis is completed. Material and content from the interview will be analyzed in order to find emerging themes and content. All data analysis gained through the audio recordings, art-making, and observation notes will be member checked by PI and research mentor (Dr. Jessica Bianchi) in order to ensure accuracy and prior to publication. Content from the interview (audio of interview, questionnaire responses, artwork, and observation notes) will be referred to in the final written portion of the research project. The data collected will be used to answer questions for this research study that aims to investigate the impact of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop from the perspective of caregivers and teachers. In particular the interview process will focus on exploring observed impacts on behavior, relationships, and attitudes of participants of the arts workshop. Additionally, a focus on ways in which the arts workshop can further community engagement and impacts will also be explored. Participation is voluntary and all participants have the right to terminate the interview and focus groups at any time. A summary of the results will be available to participants upon request.

## **6. INFORMED CONSENT**

See attached informed consent.

## **7. STUDENT RESEARCH**

The PI is a current graduate student in the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy at Loyola Marymount University. The PI has been assigned a faculty sponsor, Dr. Jessica Bianchi whose signature appears on the cover page of the application.

## **8. RENEWAL APPLICATIONS**

N/A

## **9. PAYMENTS**

N/A

## **10. PSYCHOLOGY SUBJECT POOL**

N/A

## **11. QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING**

The researcher, Colleen Stafford, is a current Marriage and Family Therapy Trainee and second year graduate student with current IRB ethics training certification and has taken the following research methodology courses in concordance with Master's level research graduation requirements: MFTH 690 Introduction to Research, MFTH 691 Research Methodology. Additionally, researcher will be enrolled in MFHT 696 Research/ Clinical Paper in the Spring 2018 Semester. Dr. Jessica Bianchi will be the primary faculty sponsor and is the program director of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop and also has current IRB ethics training certification

(Please view attachments for both certificates).

## **12. RANDOMIZATION**

N/A

### **13. USE OF DECEPTION**

**There will be no deception in this study.**

### **14. QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS**

**Questionnaire is in the process of being developed. However, it will include the following themes for inquiry:**

**-Observed changes in relationships of participants with others**

**-Observed changes in behaviors of participants**

**-Strengths and weaknesses of current program**

**Please see Appendix B for possible examples of questions addressing the above themes.**

**The format of the focus group is in the process of being developed. However, similar themes mentioned above will be explored within the art making process of the focus group.**

**Please see Appendix C for possible examples of questions to be used within the focus group.**

**Researcher plans to interview participants and facilitate the arts based focus group in January or February 2018. Finalized questions used within questionnaires and focus group will be submitted to IRB committee prior to usage. Copies of questionnaires will be provided in Spanish for potential Spanish speaking participants.**

### **15. PHYSICIAN INTERACTIONS**

N/A

### **16. SUBJECT SAFETY**

**The identity of the subjects will not be revealed in the data presented in the study (artwork, questionnaire responses, transcribed audio recordings) and pseudonyms will be used to reference subjects to protect anonymity.**

#### **17. REDUNDANCY**

**This research study exhibits minimal risk.**

#### **18. COUNSELING**

**N/A**

#### **19. SAFEGUARDING IDENTITY**

**N/A**

#### **20. ADVERTISEMENTS**

**N/A**

#### **21. FOREIGN RESEARCH**

**N/A**

#### **22. EXEMPTION CATEGORIES (45 CFR 46.101(b) 1-6)**

**If you believe your study falls into any of the Exemption Categories listed below, please explain which category(ies) you believe it falls into and why.**

**1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.**

**2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), if information taken from these sources is recorded in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.**

**3) Research involving survey or interview procedures, except where all of the following conditions exist: (i) responses are recorded in such a manner that the human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, (ii) the subject's responses, if they became known outside the research, could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subject's financial standing, employability, or reputation, and (iii) the research deals with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior, such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior, or use of alcohol. All research involving survey or interview procedures is exempt, without exception, when the respondents are elected or appointed public officials, or candidates for public office.**

**4) Research involving the observation (including observation by participants) of public behavior, except where all of the following conditions exist: (i) observations are recorded in such a manner that the human subjects can be identified, directly or through the identifiers linked to the subjects, (ii) the observations recorded about the individual, if they became known outside the research, could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subject's financial standing, employability, or reputation, and (iii) the research deals with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior, or use of alcohol.**

**5) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.**

**6) Unless specifically required by statute (and except to the extent specified in paragraph (1)), research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of the Department of Health and Human Services, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) programs under the Social Security Act or other public benefit or service programs, (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs, (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures, or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.**

N/A

## Appendix D: Informed Consent

### LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

## Informed Consent Form

Date of Preparation November 29, 2017

### Loyola Marymount University

Adult Perspectives of Loyola Marymount University's Summer Arts Workshop

- 1) I hereby authorize Colleen Stafford MFT/ATR trainee to include me in the following research study: Adult Perspectives of Loyola Marymount University's Summer Arts Workshop.
- 2) I have been asked to participate on a research project which is designed to explore the impacts of the Summer Arts Workshop on youth participants from the perspectives of caregivers and teachers and which will last for approximately six months.
- 3) It has been explained to me that the reason for my inclusion in this project is that I have some established relationship (parent, caregiver, teacher) with a youth participant of the LMU Summer Arts Workshop.
- 4) I understand that if I am a subject, I will participate in an interview process that will include participation in the filling out a questionnaire as well as an arts based focus group facilitated by researcher Colleen Stafford. The questionnaires and focus group will be semi structured and will involve audio recording, written response and art making. The researcher will collect and analyze the data. Data will be transcribed and stored digitally on a password protected laptop. All audiotapes, photos and transcripts will be destroyed when the analysis is completed. Participation is voluntary and all participants have the right to terminate the interview and focus groups at any time. Participants may decline to answer any questions throughout the interview process or within the provided questionnaire. A summary of the results will be available to participants upon request.

These procedures have been explained to me by principal investigator, Colleen Stafford MFT/ATR trainee.

- 5) I understand that I will be audiotaped and that my artwork will be photographed in the process of these research procedures. It has been explained to me that these recordings and photos will be used for teaching and/or research purposes only,



- that my identity will not be disclosed, and a pseudonym will be provided to further protect my identity. I have been assured that the recordings and photos will be destroyed after their use in this research project is completed. I understand that I have the right to review the recordings and photos made as part of the study to determine whether they should be edited or erased in whole or in part.
- 6) I understand that potential risks involved in participating in the study described above may include discomfort, inconvenience, embarrassment, nervousness, and invasion of privacy which will be minimized by being informed that all aspects of my participation are voluntary and I may refuse at any time.
  - 7) I also understand that possible benefits of this study may include an opportunity for program directors to evaluate Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop impact on participants thus far. This evaluation may lead to potential changes to the Summer Arts Workshop to further positively impact its participants and the community. Additionally, this research study may allow participants insight into behaviors and attitudes portrayed by the youth they engage with and this insight may potentially strengthen these established relationships. The PI will interview each of the subjects in accordance with their availability. The PI will facilitate focus groups in accordance with the availability of the participants. The PI will ensure the confidentiality of all subjects involved, obtain full consent and provide detailed explanation of research purpose. PI conducting the focus group will remind participants of the importance of maintaining confidentiality in order to ensure boundaries of confidentiality are not breached.
  - 8) I understand that Colleen Stafford MFT/ATR trainee can answer any questions I may have at any time concerning details of the procedures performed as part of this study via the research mentor Dr. Jessica Bianchi reached at [jbianchi@lmu.edu](mailto:jbianchi@lmu.edu).
  - 9) If the study design or the use of the information is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained.
  - 10) I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from this research at any time without prejudice to (e.g., my future medical care at LMU.)
  - 11) I understand that circumstances may arise which might cause the investigator to terminate my participation before the completion of the study.
  - 12) I understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent except as specifically required by law.
  - 13) I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question that I may not wish to answer.

14) I understand that if I have any further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may contact David Moffet, Ph.D. Chair, Institutional Review Board, 1 LMU Drive, Suite 3000, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles CA 90045-2659 at david.moffet@lmu.edu.

Subject's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Loyola Marymount University's Experimental Subjects Bill of Rights

### **LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY**

## **Experimental Subjects Bill of Rights**

Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code §24172, I understand that I have the following rights as a participant in a research study:

1. I will be informed of the nature and purpose of the experiment.
2. I will be given an explanation of the procedures to be followed in the medical experiment, and any drug or device to be utilized.
3. I will be given a description of any attendant discomforts and risks to be reasonably expected from the study.
4. I will be given an explanation of any benefits to be expected from the study, if applicable.
5. I will be given a disclosure of any appropriate alternative procedures, drugs or devices that might be advantageous and their relative risks and benefits.
6. I will be informed of the avenues of medical treatment, if any, available after the study is completed if complications should arise.
7. I will be given an opportunity to ask any questions concerning the study or the procedures involved.
8. I will be instructed that consent to participate in the research study may be withdrawn at any time and that I may discontinue participation in the study without prejudice to me.
9. I will be given a copy of the signed and dated written consent form.

10. I will be given the opportunity to decide to consent or not to consent to the study without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, coercion, or undue influence on my decision.

## Appendix F: Dolores Mission Principal Letter of Approval



# Dolores Mission School

"Forming Men and Women for and with Others"

170 S. GLESS ST. LOS ANGELES, CA 90033 (323) 881-0001 FAX (323) 881-0023

[www.doloresmissionschool.org](http://www.doloresmissionschool.org)

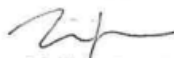
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October 10, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is to verify that I support Colleen Stafford under the supervision of LMU faculty Dr. Jessica Bianchi in the research that she is conducting with teachers and staff at Dolores Mission School for the spring semester of 2017. She is conducting research aimed at understanding the impact of a Summer Arts Workshop with the school's middle school students from the perspective of participant teachers and staff. If you have any further questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at (323) 881-0001.

Sincerely,



Melissa Jara, M.A.  
Principal

## Appendix G: Letter to Participants

Hello,

My name is Colleen Stafford. I am a second year graduate student at Loyola Marymount University studying marriage and family therapy/art therapy. I also was a mentor for Dolores Mission students during this past year's (2017) summer arts workshop at LMU- in fact we have met in person this last summer!

I'm contacting you to ask if you would be willing to participate in my research project that looks at the impacts of Loyola Marymount's Summer Arts Workshop. I am reaching out to you as you are either a primary caregiver or teacher involved with a child who has participated in the Summer Arts Workshop one or more years. I am conducting research to explore the various impacts of the program on participants as observed by you- the adult figures in their life. This research will help us to understand the impact of the arts workshop as well as improve future participants.

Your involvement would include completing a short questionnaires along with a short art making group that would take place on Dolores Mission's campus. The group is currently scheduled for next week, Thursday February 15th in the afternoon directly after school gets out. The group will take no longer than one hour.

I would so greatly value your personal participation and input in my research!

Please respond to this email if you are interested in participating and I can pass along more detailed information. In addition, please contact me if you have any questions at all.

I hope to meet you next week!

Kindest Regards,

Colleen Stafford  
MFT Trainee  
Loyola Marymount University