**Oregon Supported Living Program**

Arts and Culture Program Marketing Plan

**Background**

The Oregon Supported Living Program is a nonprofit based in Eugene that works with adults with disabilities in a group home environment. Over the several decades since their inception the staff and board discovered that a quality life was a creative life. The Arts and Culture program was developed to allow OSLP clients to have equal access to creative spaces and programs. In addition to access to the space, OSLP staff and board members determined that integration with the greater community was also essential to improving the quality of life of their clients. Educating the community about OSLP’s clients was essential to the long-term success of the program and to the clients themselves.

OSLP has a moderate staff but only staff member is dedicated to running the Arts and Culture Program. Marketing and development resources are shared with the umbrella organization. Although not technically staff, workshop instructors are an invaluable resource to the program. In addition to the Board, the A&C program also has a technical advisory committee comprised of dedicated community volunteers with expertise in the arts, education, and access. The facility itself is located near the Library in downtown Eugene. The Gallery is home to workshop space and an exhibit space.

After four years, the program has outgrown the limited resources available to it through OSLP Medicaid reimbursements. OSLP A&C now wants the program to increase the number of participants from the nonclient community and is considering separating the A&C program from under the umbrella of the parent OSLP organization. Staff also suggested that the State of Oregon is looking at the OSLP A&C program as a model program because of its success at inclusive participation.

**Needs, Goals, Challenges (SWOC)**

Challenges and Needs – The OSLP A&C program is not currently sustainable. While there are resources to manage the program the longevity of the program is limited as the funding used to support the program is reliant on congressional allocations. The program is also at risk from an ever-changing political climate which results in variable funding. Because the program is not financially sustainable the program is significantly understaffed. Additionally, the A&C program is reliant on volunteers who both serve to docent at the gallery and to promote the program. Because the program relies on volunteers and is understaffed, it is at risk of severe upheaval from minor changes. This is similar to the founders-syndrome philosophy in that once the passion of the founding members (staff in this case) is no longer present the program flounders. If the current staff were to leave it’s possible that the A&C program would not be maintained. Finally the program is competing with a saturated program market. The A&C program needs to differentiate itself from the many community Arts and Culture programs available in Eugene.

Goals – I evaluated three arts and culture programs within northwest Oregon; the Cannon Beach Arts Association, the Tolovana Arts Colony, and the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology. These programs offer courses ranging from painting and drawing to journal making, dancing, and ecology. Price ranges are typically in the $15-20/hour range and instructor payment are between $20-$40/hour. Programs are offered weekly in most cases, typically on weekends and evenings. In order to make the A&C program sustainable without the support of the OSLP parent program, the A&C program would need to at least double community participation. There are additional challenges with this in that the program would have to increase staff capacity to manage this increase in participants, given that many of the classes are already at capacity. Additionally, I recommend increasing program fees for nonclients to industry standard rates of ~$15/hour of instruction. This may decrease participation by some community members so I suggest offering this on a sliding scale.

**Current Marketing Strategies**

OSLP utilizes a variety of marketing tactics to advertise the A&C program including printed materials, website and social media advertising, and word of mouth. A&C staff monitor Facebook likes and shares as a form of evaluation but there is no consistent method of evaluating the success of the marketing programs.

**Recommended Marketing Strategies**

The most consistent finding across all groups was that word of mouth is the most successful form of marketing for the OSLP A&C program, once people visit the gallery and attend the classes they understand the need and importance of the program and are hooked. I recommend offering free workshops for volunteers to increase their advocate base. The A&C program has an essential need for regular funding. I recommend partnering with Sacred Heart hospital to fund the gallery. By cobranding one of A&C’s gallery walls as a Have a Heart wall and sharing a sister wall in the Hospital, the program can increase awareness of the program and generate regular revenue. Finally, I recommend increasing the educational opportunities for people who want to work with the disabled population by partnering with educational programs at area colleges and universities. This will increase the opportunities for marketing within the university system.

**Desired Outcomes**

* Double the volunteers, use volunteer support to market the program through word of mouth
* Bring in $500 monthly from Sacred Heart through the Have a Heart wall
* Increase awareness of the A&C program through the sister wall program starting with Sacred Heart Hospital
* Increase staff support through a graduate educational intern (a student that wants to use art in health care, or educational activities with the disabled population)