



Fiscal Year 2022 Highlights

Grants to Arts Organizations, Communities, Schools, and Individuals

Total: 125 awards and grants totaling \$608,191 (an increase of 12.5% from last year!) were awarded to area organizations and artists through fourteen grant or award programs, including:

- **\$165,127 for 28 grants through our Art Projects Grants, \$60,000 for 3 Art Project Legacy Grants, and \$2,500 for 1 Board Initiated Grant**
- **11 Operating Support Grants** to arts organizations totaling **\$107,363**
- **\$17,638 for 8 Quick Support for Organizations Grants (NEW grant!),** awarded for organizations for activities such as planning for an Art Legacy project, strategic planning or board training, costs to apply for 501(c)(3) status, small equipment purchases, or small arts projects
- **\$80,201 for 10 Equipment/Facilities Improvement Grants,** awarded for the purchase of equipment items and facilities improvement that will aid in the organization's capacity to serve the community through the arts
- **\$32,998 to 11 area schools for artist residencies and arts related field trips through our Arts in the Schools Grant Program**
- **8 grants** were awarded to students through the **Art Study Opportunity for Youth Grant Program** for a total of **\$3,947**
- **43 individual artists** were granted a total of **\$132,417** for projects to further their careers as artists through the **Individual Artist Programs for Emerging Artists & Established Career Artists, Artist Equity Grants, Individual Artist Community Collaboration Grant, and Quick Support for Artists Grants (NEW grant!)**

Awards

SMAC awarded the Prairie Star Award for \$5,000 in 2022 to John Sterner of Marshall. The Prairie Star Award is given out every other year and it recognizes an individual artist whose body of work has made a significant contribution to the arts over an extended period of time, who has been recognized by their artistic peers, and who has best exemplified the highest quality of work in the SMAC region. John has been making personal and public art for decades and works in a variety of mediums. He sculpts in bronze, iron and fabricated steel with many of these pieces featured in private homes, high school, colleges, universities, hospitals and public parks. His recent interest has been in Plein Air painting and he has participated in numerous Plein Air art festivals. John has exhibited in many galleries of the SMAC region including SMAC, Marshall Area Fine Arts Council, Jackson Center for the Arts, Hutchinson Center for the Arts and Ridgewater College. In addition, John is a licensed K-12 art teacher at Lakeview Public Schools and teaches art at Southwest Minnesota State University. In 2020, he was featured in Pioneer TV's Postcards program, which discussed his creative process and passion for creating art. Not only does he regularly create, but he loves to share and teach how to make art with others.

SMAC awarded the Prairie Disciple Award for \$1,000 in 2022 to Melanie Loy of Worthington. This award is to recognize a person who has been instrumental in promoting the arts in the 18-county area of southwestern

Minnesota. When Melanie arrived in the Worthington District 518 Schools in 2006, there were 94 students throughout the district for her program; her tenacity and leadership has grown the program to well over 350 orchestra students, requiring adding two additional full-time instructors at the middle school level to maintain the growth and energy! Students from her program that go onto college playing or majoring in music have received the highest dollar amounts awarded in scholarships in the school district. Melanie has an impressive 100+ students in her 4th grade class at the start of every year.

Other Programs, Technical Assistance & Services

- After a 2-year hiatus due to COVID, SMAC was able to resume our **Annual Artist Retreat**, held at the Danebod Folk School in Tyler. This retreat allows creatives in our region to take part in two days of high-quality arts workshops, taught by artists from our region to support and highlight our regional artists, and catered to multiple artistic disciplines, at a very low rate for participants. This weekend also includes arts performances and celebrations from artists in our region.
- **18 Online Grantwriting Webinars and 3 Q&A sessions** were conducted with **78** people logging on. Videos of the webinars are recorded and provided online for viewing after the live event. All staff also have reservable meetings times available to meet by Zoom, phone, or in person.
- SMAC's **Annual Arts Celebration** was held in Jackson at Fort Belmont. We offered plein-air painting and community drumming prior to our event, as well as highlighted the arts scene in Jackson: Community Engagement murals, Jackson Center for the Arts, and the Chamber of Commerce Fall Festival events. SMAC's event included a catered meal and the public presentation of our 2021 Prairie Disciple, Rosemary Glesener.
- This year SMAC Introduced **County Arty Party's!** These are casual and free events meant to let arts supporters in the area network with each other and with SMAC staff. Each event features local arts performers and is catered by local establishments. We've hosted in a new county of our region almost every month this year! We've been to Yellow Medicine, Jackson, Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, and McLeod. We will finish with the remaining counties in our region in fiscal year 2023!
- The **SMAC Art Gallery** provided **6** regional artists (all SMAC grantees) the opportunity to have a solo exhibit. Each exhibit included a virtual exhibit option, as well as a virtual Artist Talk, which are still available to view on our YouTube channel, Facebook and website. Exhibits in FY 2022 included: Mary LaPatka of Willmar; Anne Wedler of Marshall; Don Sherman of Ortonville; John Sterner of Marshall; David Strom of Windom; Wičáŋŋpi Iyótaŋ Wiŋ Autumn Cavender of Granite Falls. Musicians featured at the artist receptions include Mark Rabaey of Marshall, Samson Obel of Marshall, Darwin Dyce and Emily Hoffmann of Ghent, and Oscar Arce of Granite Falls.
- Staff held monthly **Grant Support Open Office Hours** on the second Tuesday of every month in-office from 10 am to 2 pm. Applicants and grantees can use this time with staff to talk through project ideas or get help with finding the right grant program, filling out a grant application, preparing work samples or budgets, or completing a final report for a grant received.
- SMAC introduced **3 Arts Ambassadors** (one each for our South, North and Central regions) to build relationships, connections and networks with groups and communities that SMAC has not been successful in serving or reaching. The contract job included a priority of creating connections with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) artists and organizations and/or other groups or communities historically

excluded in the region. The North ambassador was Lisa Bergh of New London, the Central ambassador was Dani Prados of Granite Falls and the South ambassador was Serrina Martinez of Lake Benton.

- SMAC funded the opportunity for the cities of New London, Tracy and Milan to participate in multiple **Civic Arts Learning Exchange workshops** with the Department of Public Transformation of Granite Falls, who shared their knowledge of research and resources from being the first rural small town to have completed its own City-Artist-in-Residence program with city government.
- SMAC participated as a **regional partner for Welcoming Week** efforts, which included promoting and supporting the 11 communities in our region that held events striving to make their communities more welcoming places for all. Cities that participated were Montevideo, Granite Falls, Willmar, Hutchinson, Glencoe, Kerkhoven, Worthington, Windom, Milan, Lower Sioux Indian Community, and Marshall.
- SMAC **collaborated with the Walker Art Center** in Minneapolis to form the first **Prairie Teen Arts Council (PTAC)** where teens from SW MN met virtually January through June to collaborate with Walker staff, explore the inner workings of the museum, conduct original research and plan events. Teens from Marshall, Willmar, and Worthington participated.
- SMAC Hosted a **two-part virtual workshop “Beginning Your Accessibility Journey”** with presenter Scott Artley, with a limited-time video recording available for those who could not make the live event.
- SMAC continued to offer **our meeting room** for artists and/or organizations that need the space for teaching classes and holding meetings or receptions.
- The **VOICES** newsletter is published online monthly and includes upcoming SMAC events, grant information, arts opportunities, news items and more!
- **SMAC’s website www.swmnarts.org** continues to provide up-to-date information on resources for artists and arts organizations, available grants, news and arts opportunities, on-line grant forms, recorded webinars, calendar of arts events (including virtual & updated daily!), accessibility offerings & resources, a regional arts organization & artist registry, and more!



Funding for the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council’s programs and services is provided by memberships and donations from individuals, businesses, organizations, schools, cities and counties, the McKnight Foundation, an allocation from the Minnesota State Legislature and by the voters of Minnesota thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.