



DataBrief provides arts educators and arts policy makers with highlights of SNAAP data and insights into the value of arts-school education. Contact us for more information.

Spotlight on Recent Graduates

SNAAP's 2014 Annual Report [*Making it Work: The Education and Employment of Recent Arts Graduates*](#) focuses on the experiences and prospects of recent arts alumni—those who graduated no more than five years prior to taking the survey in 2011, 2012, or 2013.

As primary author Jennifer C. Lena notes in the introduction, "Each fall and spring, matriculating and graduating students in the arts and humanities face a withering assault of criticism about the value of their training. [They] are told, often on shaky evidence, that they face a perilous future—that their training has left them without many marketable skills as they enter a tight, post-recession labor market."

SNAAP data challenge the assumption that an arts degree lacks value. Our findings are based on a total of 88,000 individuals, of whom 17,000 were recent graduates (up to five years after graduating).

Some Results

Some overarching findings point to the overall value of an arts education:

- 80% of recent alumni who have found employment found first jobs that are closely or somewhat related to their arts education
- 75% of recent alumni are satisfied with the job in which they spend the majority of their time, versus 82% of older alumni
- 84% of recent alumni who pursued further education felt "very well" or "fairly well" prepared

- An overwhelming 90% of recent alumni report they supported the arts in their communities in the previous 12 months by volunteering, donating money or attending an arts event

Recent versus Non-Recent

A few key differences between the careers of recent arts alumni and older cohorts:

- Debt has had a major impact on the educational and career decisions of 35% of recent graduates, compared to only 14% of non-recent alumni
- Of past professional artists and those who have never been professional artists but intended to be, 39% of recent graduates gave debt as a reason, versus 22% of less recent alumni
- 49% of these recent graduates not currently working as professional artists report that they are not doing so because they could find higher-paying or steadier jobs in other fields, versus 59% of older alumni
- 56% of these recent alumni who do not currently work as professional artists said they do not do so because artistic work is not available, versus 36% of older alumni

Media Responses

Some of the media reaction to the SNAAP report include these articles:

[That Arts Degree Is Paying Off](#) *Pacific Standard*
[Good News, Art Students: Your Degree is Actually Paying Off](#) *News.Mic*
[Beyond the Bubble: Evaluating the Art Major](#) *The Dartmouth*
[Arts Degrees: Not Entirely Worthless](#) *The Smithsonian*

Coming Soon: SNAAP 2.0

In early 2015, SNAAP will release the results of our massive market study, in which we interviewed and surveyed 800 individuals from 759 institutions.

For a preview, here is a report given by SNAAP Director Sally Gaskill at a number of conferences this fall:

[You Spoke. We Listened.](#)

We welcome your questions about our new directions.



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