

File #18398
Received in Committee
5/3/18
JN



Budget Priority Hearing-Other Policy Priorities

May 3rd, 2018

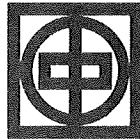
Youth Workforce Development in the Arts-Spotlight on the Arts

Spotlight on the Arts is the **only** workforce development program in San Francisco that provides training and immersion in **all** the arts disciplines. Youth are placed in internships at arts organizations and businesses that have included the de Young Museum, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, A.C.T. Costume Rentals, New Conservatory Theater Center, African American Art and Culture Complex, Chinese Culture Center, and Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts. Now in its 25th year, Spotlight has served more than 900 low income and disadvantaged youth interested in the arts. Established in collaboration with the SFUSD in 1993, DCYF has supported the Spotlight program since inception. In the summer of 2017, we experienced our best year ever, when we exceeded our contract goal of placing 30 youth. We placed 32 youth, and 31 completed the program for a 103% retention rate. Yet our application for the five-year grant cycle was denied.

Since our appeal was denied, we are seeking support through the upcoming budget negotiations. We are concerned about the **gap in services** that would result if Spotlight is not funded because no other arts organizations that were funded to provide workforce development training provide opportunities to work in all art disciplines. We are seeking add back support to serve 30 youth in the summer program and seven in our after-school program per year for two years.

With enrichment workshops and individualized college counseling, we are proud that several of our youth have gone on to very competitive colleges, such as the University of Chicago, Columbia University and UCLA, as well as the California State Universities and San Francisco City College. Many of our alumni state that this experience was one of their singular experiences as a teen growing up in San Francisco, because we focus the youth on setting their own goals and pursuing their academic and career goals. We are also seeking state support to expand the program to other cities in California, so it is crucial to keep the model program intact in San Francisco.

Please see the attached letters written by several alumni, as well as a work site, that illustrate the value of the program



舊金山中華文化基金會
Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco

Dedicated to elevating underserved communities
and giving voice to equality through education and contemporary art.

March 12, 2018

Chairperson

Minna Tao

Vice Chairs

Wai-ling Eng
Sherman Tang
Alfred Tom

Secretary

Shannon Yip

Treasurer

George Mak

Board of Directors

Daniel Cheng
Ben Choi
Helen Y. H. Hui, Esq.
Thomas Klitgaard, Esq.
Ryan Lee
Laurene McClain
Mark T. Ng
Warren Seeto
Cecilia Sze
Garry K. Wong

Executive Director

Mabel S. Teng

Global Art Council

Hou Hanru
Mami Kataoka
Pi Li

Art Advisory Board

Terese Tse Bartholomew
Tatwina Chinn Lee
Manni Liu
Gang Situ

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco to urge you to support the Spotlight on the Arts program. Spotlight is a unique leadership and mentorship program that provides access and opportunities for youth to gain life experience and to build valuable skills in the arts. As a community-based arts nonprofit, this program has been extremely valuable to us.

CCC has been a proud site for Spotlight interns for the last 6 years. In that time, we have hosted a number of interns that have continued to be part of our work to elevate underserved communities and be a voice for equality. For CCC, as a nonprofit based in San Francisco's Chinatown and who serves a low-income immigrant community, this program is important in several ways.

First of all, Spotlight invests in youth to provide access to the arts and builds a diverse set of talents. CCC as an organization provides the professional experience to the youth that builds confidence, knowledge, and leadership, but Spotlight is the connector. We value that they are able to bring youth interns to assist us with our programming, but more importantly, that we have the opportunity to reach youth to serve the community. It is extremely important for us to connect with youth and give them early training in serving the community. For many of our Spotlight interns, this is the first time they have ever worked in an arts nonprofit. Many of our interns that we are paired with are also low-income bilingual youth. They are extremely talented, but without Spotlight, they would not otherwise know about the opportunity. It is one of the ways we build the next generation of community and arts leaders.

What is truly unique about Spotlight for the Arts is the mentorship, coaching, and financial support that comes with the program. Spotlight and their amazing team provides training and mentorship that we have not seen in other internship programs. The training and leadership complements the work we do, and provides a model to ensure success for interns. Spotlight is committed to their youth throughout the program, and we have seen our interns grow and

750 KEARNY ST., 3RD FLOOR, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94108

T (415)986-1822 | F (415)986-2835 | W www.cccsf.us | E info@cccsf.us



舊金山中華文化基金會
Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco

Dedicated to elevating underserved communities
and giving voice to equality through education and contemporary art.

develop leadership skills. In addition, as a site, we provide the training and projects, but do not pay our interns. This financial support enables many of our youth to spend their summer with us and for us to host them. As a community organization, we understand this is very important for many low-income immigrant families.

Jill Roisen and the team at the Spotlight on the Arts have been fantastic partners. They have truly been tireless and passionate, connecting with many diverse partners across the City. We thank them for their leadership through this program and wholeheartedly support it and wish for its continued success.

Best regards,

Jenny Leung
415-986-1822
jenny@cccsf.us

To whom it concern,

My name is Izza Anwar and I am writing this letter to share my experiences as a Spotlight on the Arts alumni in hopes that this important program may get the funding it needs.

I was part of the Spotlight program for 2+ years. As an immigrant, I did not have the guidance that I needed to find an internship, build a resume, and learn professional skillsets for the workforce. Spotlight gave me the crucial resources that I needed to succeed in the professional world.

Joining Spotlight was a pivotal point in my academic and professional career. Not only did I get to intern at unique venues where I got hands on experience, I also learned professional development through the workshops. During my time in Spotlight, I was given various leadership opportunities such as leading workshops for new interns and leadership roles in group projects. Spotlight was also a fun and exciting way to spend my summers. We worked on different projects (a community mural, a mini-documentary etc.) that further advanced my skillsets that I don't think any other program would have.

Spotlight on the Arts is a crucial program that has given many low-income youths much needed guidance into the professional world. Without Spotlight, I would not have had the opportunities and skillsets that I have today. Being able to list these on my college applications definitely helped with my college acceptance. For that I am so grateful.

I hope that you may reconsider the funding for this important program.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at ianwarc@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Izza Anwar

Sophomore at UC Merced

Malia Jenkins
maliajenkins13@gmail.com

March 11, 2018

To Whom it May Concern:

In these past few years, **Spotlight on the Arts** has been solace for me. In it, I found a sense of purpose that I have yet to experience anywhere else. The program allowed me to flourish in a multitude of ways.

Along with other interns, I found support for my choice of an artistic career that I would have never found elsewhere. Art-focused internship programs in San Francisco are surprisingly small in number. At school, I felt and still feel overshadowed by the mass focus on STEM careers. I learned strength, courage, and confidence from my time with Spotlight. I understand now that I can be proud of my career, successful and a person of merit as an artist. I do not have to bend to the expectations of my academic peers and mentors.

Due to my experience with Spotlight, I can state that I have genuine experience in my field. Without it, I would not have the level of skill nor number of college acceptances I feel blessed to have at the moment. As a graphic designer, I can attest that the single most important aspect of the practice is experience working in the field. Skill and natural talent fall shortly behind, of course, but to work onsite with professional graphic designers as mentors and supervisors as design clients has vastly prepared me for my adult workplace. Now, I can call myself a true graphic designer, as that is what I have done through practice - worked with clients to design a piece for their organization, gone through the process of critiques, and received help from professionals during. In doing so, I have built an art portfolio that encompasses my skill and work.

My art and exploration of identity flourished. In my second continuation year, working alongside skilled local artist Claire Rabkin, Spotlight allowed me to discover the artistic medium of textile work through batik and soft sculpture, which inspired me to pursue it further. Now, I hope to continue my work in it during college alongside my graphic design work as an academic minor. From working with Spotlight, I learned that I can explore themes of community and identity, which in the past have been difficult for me to understand, through my art and build confidence independently.

I was not only able to develop skill in my desired career field and art mediums, but was challenged to branch out to others as well. At my internship sites, I learned a variety of art-related professions including exhibition installation, youth education, and organizational, financial, and management jobs. Those who I worked with were not only skilled, but friendly and encouraging, and allowed me to develop without worry about perfection. Spotlight gave to me not only the experiences, but the role models that I valued highly. Working with a diverse group of people at each of my internship sites allowed me a glimpse into my future as an artist. My dream to be a Bay Area artist could be achieved. I did not have to defer it in exchange for a more “practical” career. They also gave me direction towards what type of job I desire to take in the future - after college, I plan to become an in-house designer for a nonprofit dedicated to social justice or education, because Spotlight’s allowed me to have such positive learning experiences in this position and align my personal values with my work.

Spotlight wasn’t just about the internships - alongside these experiences, the professional development workshops allowed me to build further confidence, skills, and meaningful friendships with other interns. I learned public speaking, networking, resume building, essay writing, interview skills, and other topics essential to the working world. I became a Leadership Assistant in my second summer with Spotlight, and was able to collaborate with a small team of interns to help facilitate workshops. resources such as college advising allowed me as a high school senior to begin to develop a plan towards my postsecondary education.

Spotlight gave me these opportunities. It was Spotlight on the Arts that allowed me to develop my skills in such a positive and encouraging setting. Only because of these experiences can I now say that I’ve explored my field thoroughly and professionally; and therefore, am a better student, employee, and person for it.

Without these motivating environments, I surely would have lazed at home, begging for summer to be over so that school could come and instill structure in my life again. As an individual who has struggled with mental illness and many symptoms of depression and anxiety, I’ve found great difficulty during my teenage years to achieve when not being forced to for a grade. My experiences with Spotlight allowed me to develop structure and schedule in my daily life - individually - that improved both my physical and mental health.

Spotlight was more than skill acquisition and genuine preparation for my career. On an emotional level, Spotlight was there for me. The people I worked with that impacted my life so heavily. There were times that I felt suicidal, depressed, and isolated due to pressures from my school and social life. Unlike

other mentors, supervisors, and adults that I've worked with during my high school career, Jill actually cared about my wellbeing. It may seem trivial, but simply meeting with me after noticing self-deprecating behavior, asking about my boundaries, and giving me the support I needed allowed me to accept, heal, and grow. It was one of the first times that I had experienced goodwill and recognition not just toward my productivity or achievements, but my personhood and humanity. Because of this and experiences previously mentioned, Spotlight allowed me to recognize self-value and self-love as not only important, but necessary acts of growth.

Spotlight on the Arts has been absolutely crucial to my professional, social, and intrapersonal development as a teenager. I feel blessed to have worked with the program and its coordinators due to the amount of support and growth they have provided me with. Spotlight changed my life, and I wish only that it will continue and other students will have the wonderful opportunities that I have had.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Malia Jenkins". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Malia Jenkins

Spotlight Intern Summer 2015 and 2017

Spotlight Intern Continuation Program 2015-16 and 16-17

March 12, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Tiffany Silas and I am writing this letter in support of the Spotlight on the Arts Summer Program. I participated in the Spotlight on the Arts Summer Program in 2005. I grew up in the Bayview Hunters Point district of San Francisco. I was the first in my family to attend college and graduate. I have an Associate's in Administration of Justice from Skyline College, and Bachelor's in Human Development and Master's in HealthCare Administration, both from California State University-East Bay. I also recently purchased my first home in Oakland, CA.

During my time in the Spotlight on the Arts Summer Program I had the opportunity to work at the Merola Opera program. The Merola Opera program exposed me to a genre of music that I was unfamiliar with. The program allowed me to develop office, budget management and event planning skills. I not only had the opportunity to expand my views and mindset but I also developed a new appreciation for Opera. Spotlight on the Arts Summer Program helped me develop skills that were fundamental to my development into adulthood. The two most important things the Spotlight program taught me were financial literacy/money management and goal setting.

San Francisco offers a variety of summer youth programs and I've participated in a few during my high school years. Out of all the programs, Spotlight on the Arts was the most beneficial. Since spotlight host about 30 students for the summer, they were able to give each student personal time and attention and we were able to develop a closer relationship with spotlight staff. In other programs, that hosted 100 students or more, I was not close with staff and treated like a number. The Spotlight program is also the only youth program that has reached out to me over the years to check-in, see how I'm doing and to offer me opportunities to come back and speak to the youth. The fact that it has been 13 years since I've completed the summer program and I am still in touch with Jill just makes my heart warm inside. It makes me feel supported and reassures me that this program cares about the youth that they work with.

Spotlight on the Arts Summer Program is one of the best programs that San Francisco has to offer. Spotlight offers opportunities for youth to develop job readiness skills and life-skills. The program allows networking opportunities for youth to connect from different backgrounds and neighborhoods in the city. I hope this program is around for 25 more years because it would be a shame to take such an amazing opportunity away from the youth.

Thank You,

Tiffany Silas