

What's Your Passion?

What's your passion? Is it dance or drama? Music or art? If you answered "yes" to any of these, then pay attention to Southeast High School's outstanding Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) Academy, one of the fine smaller learning communities (SLCs) in Manatee County.

VPA Academy co-leads Barbara Tapley-Kenney and Kathy Campbell are dedicated to the arts and to students. They strive to provide an environment where students can think creatively and independently and can flourish and succeed. VPA teachers embrace individual talent, helping students hone their craft and academic knowledge. They help students to own the attitude of an artist and pursue their passion as a career.

Keeping up with the times is an important part of the success of the VPA Academy. Barbara explains, "I'm constantly looking for new and innovative assignments for my students. It is important to create renewed energy within the classroom."

Supplementing classroom instruction is also a priority for this Academy. The VPA has welcomed to the Southeast campus various speakers and performers such as guest artists from the Village of Arts, the Sarasota Opera, the West Coast Symphony, Manatee Players, and Singers Of United Lands. VPA students have experienced career-enhancing trips to the Asolo Theatre, the Van Wezel Performing Arts Center, State College of Florida, and the Manatee Arts Center.

New this year is the addition of Academy Day. This monthly activity creates a specific time for students to be personally mentored by an Academy teacher. It also establishes an opportunity for students to discuss their personal goals, résumés, and portfolios.

VPA Academy student Erin Kenney is only a sophomore but her résumé reads like that of a seasoned artist. Erin is majoring in art with a minor in music. She has earned many first place blue rosettes and premiums, including the coveted Best of Show and the Ringling Art & Merit Award in the recently held Heart & Soul high school competition.

Erin also serves as a Southeast Student Senate representative, VPA Academy Officer, and a board member for the National Honor Society. She is the Art Coordinator for the Seminole Marching Band and has attended many summer and weekend classes at the Manatee Art Center and Ringling College of Art and Design. Erin also enjoys volunteering for many local organizations.

Students like Erin thrive under the leadership of VPA Academy teachers who have worked hard at creating an academic and creative atmosphere with excellent communication and team support. In fact, the VPA Academy is so successful that this past summer they were invited to present at the National Career Academy Coalition Conference in Philadelphia.

If your goals include developing your artistic creativity and embracing academic success, the Southeast VPA Academy can help you pursue your passion as you transform your talent into a career.



Left: Teacher Barbara Tapley-Kenney with daughter and VPA Academy student Erin Kenney celebrating Erin's Best of Show and Ringling College of Art and Design Merit Award wins at the Heart & Soul High School Competition. Erin's work is titled *New Constellation*. Right: Erin's *Broken Heart and Broken Wing* sculpture. These two pieces (the painting and the sculpture) sold for a total of \$1,275 to benefit the Manatee Education Foundation

JOBS



High School Art Teachers
Salary: \$38,500 – \$82,600
Workplace: schools
Hours: daytime



Graphic Designers
Salary: \$31,500 – \$49,200
Workplace: tech firms, marketing departments
Hours: daytime or freelance



Art Directors
Salary: \$45,300 – \$76,700
Workplace: high end retailers, advertising agencies
Hours: daytime, evenings



Musicians
Salary: Varies
Workplace: local, regional, and national venues
Hours: days, evenings, weekends

PARENT CORNER

- ✓ Brain researchers presenting at the "Learning, Arts, and the Brain" summit at Johns Hopkins University found that students who study music and art often improve skills and strengthen regions of the brain linked to attention, focus, self control, and general intelligence. Parents: what can you do to add music and art to your child's learning?
- ✓ Did you know you can visit the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art free of charge on Mondays? This was a stipulation of John Ringling himself—that one day a week the Museum of Art would be open to the public at no charge. (This is only for the Museum of Art; regular admission prices still apply if you wish to see the Circus Museum or the mansion, *Cà d'Zan*).
- ✓ "Southeast High School's VPA Academy includes pathways for dance, drama, music, band, keyboards, and chorus." Barbara Tapley-Kenney, Co-lead teacher. For further information contact Barbara at (941) 741-3366 ext. 2041.

FCAT reading comprehension QUESTION

- ★ In the Parent Corner, what did brain researchers discover about the link between the arts and the brain?

Answer: Students who study music and art strengthen regions of the brain linked to attention, focus, self control, and general intelligence.

What's on the WEB?

www.ManateeACT.com (Click Academies)
www.ringling.org
www.vanwezel.org
www.manateeplayers.com