

# CAREERS IN ACTION

ADULT, CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MANATEE COUNTY

**Students:  
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## Increasing the WOW Factor

Southeast High School's (SEHS) Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) Academy has already upped the WOW factor for students and teachers this year by attaining National Model Academy status. This prestigious designation means that the VPA has met stringent requirements called National Standards of Practice as defined by the National Career Academies Coalition (NCAC), the recognized leader for the support and sustainability of career academies.

As the academy has grown, the VPA's leadership has gained a reputation of excellence. Each year, NCAC holds a national conference, and our own VPA Academy leaders delivered presentations at the 2009 event in Philadelphia. Academy co-lead teacher Barbara Tapley-Kenny is slated to make a presentation at the 2010 conference in Austin, where she will share some of the lessons learned and the student achievements gained in the VPA.

"Earning Model Academy status is the highest level an Academy can achieve," stated Tapley-Kenny. "We have earned a reputation as having an excellent fine arts program that has been recognized nationally. As a result, we are attracting students from surrounding counties."

The VPA Academy has several unique features that provide creative and independent students a strong base of arts and academics to help them prepare for college or a profession. Its environment allows students to find a place to fit in among like-minded, creative students and teachers. Students enjoy field trips to community venues such as the Asolo Repertory Theatre, Sarasota Opera House, Manatee Art Center, and the Van Wezel. On-campus guests have included artists from the Village of the Arts, the West Coast Symphony, and Manatee Players. Academy leaders have developed special events and projects that strengthen the program, such as the Freshman Project, Honor Points, and Academy Day.

The Freshman Project is a venture that ensures that all VPA freshmen participate in a fine arts related club, promoting an active and well-rounded high school experience. The project encourages participation, personal growth, and service opportunities.

The Honor Points system embraces involvement in community fine arts. Students create a formal record of all fine arts activities throughout their high school career. It becomes a visual story of the student's commitment to their craft and an asset when applying for scholarships, internships, and college. Students can earn awards based on their level of involvement.

The monthly Academy Day is a time when students meet with their Academy Coach. This designated day allows students to build relationships with teachers, provides mentoring opportunities, and improves student ownership of their education.

One VPA student has truly found her niche in this academy and serves as a role model to other students. Junior Erin Kenney has a full year planned, including serving as art director for the upcoming school production of the musical *Wicked*, serving on the junior class advisory board, and as an active member of the National Art Honor Society and the Art Club. Erin is also attending the upcoming 2010 NCAC National Conference where she will serve as a student representative, offering perspective and insight into the VPA Academy. This is Erin's second year to represent the VPA at this conference.

The SEHS VPA is a place where the arts can flourish and where artistic, imaginative, and innovative students can shine. Is this where you belong?



VPA Academy lead teacher Barbara Tapley-Kenny recruiting at the SEHS student orientation.



VPA student Erin Kenney and her painting titled "Dark Side of the Circus" at the members' exhibition at ArtCenter Manatee.

# JOBS



**Arts & Design Occupations**  
**Salary: \$24,700 – \$58,600\***  
**Workplace: studios, theaters, television**  
**Hours: flexible**



**Sound Engineering Technicians**  
**Salary: \$27,200 – \$44,000\***  
**Workplace: studios, live events**  
**Hours: flexible**



**Music Directors and Composers**  
**Salary: \$15,900 – \$53,700\***  
**Workplace: community music and theater**  
**Hours: flexible**



Southeast High School's Visual and Performing Arts Academy serves as a national model for career academies and small learning communities. It creates an academic environment where creative student artists can refine their craft while preparing for college or careers.

\*All salaries reflect local Suncoast region data

## PARENT CORNER

- Discussion starter: try this communications experiment. Sit down together for a family dinner. Place a blank white paper and some markers or pens at each place. Ask each family member to draw their mood, and then take turns sharing the picture. Let art communicate!
- Many brain scientists and psychologists tell us that participation in visual and performing arts improves brain function. Music and art can make you smarter! How can you and your family add music and art to your day—and to your lifestyle?
- "Academies allow us to provide strong career pathway options to our students while creating a supportive community within the school." VPA Academy Co Lead teacher Barbara Tapley-Kenny. For further information about the VPA Academy, contact Southeast High School Academic Advisor Brandy Braver at 941-741-3366, ext. 2027.

## FCAT reading comprehension QUESTION

★ What is the highest status a career academy can achieve, according to NCAC?

Answer: National Model Academy

## What's on the WEB?

- [www.manatee.k12.fl.us/sites/highschool/southeast/html/vpa.html](http://www.manatee.k12.fl.us/sites/highschool/southeast/html/vpa.html)
- [www.manatee.k12.fl.us/departments/mef/heart\\_soul\\_gala.html](http://www.manatee.k12.fl.us/departments/mef/heart_soul_gala.html)
- [www.ncacinc.com](http://www.ncacinc.com)



**EdVantage Strategic Objective #4: Actively engage in global outreach.**



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