Promoting the Arts Action Team: Mural Contest & Orchestra  
Project Executive Summary

We are team Red Rhythm, and our task was to promote the Fine Arts to elementary school children in and around Starkville. We served the Starkville-MSU Symphony Association by helping Dr. Joe Underwood in the organization’s “Programs for Children.” Our team goal was to inform many students around the Starkville area about the importance of America and American heroes. We wanted all the students we visited to have somewhat of an idea of what an American hero is. Our team wanted to accomplish this by getting each class we visited to create a mural of what came to their minds when they hear the word America. Our team has accomplished many things this semester. We successfully visited 8 elementary schools in the surrounding Starkville area. During these visits, we worked as a team to introduce the kids to patriotism, the orchestra, the arts, and heroes by singing patriotic songs and creating example murals with the kids. In addition to these things, we told the teachers and children about the art mural contest and encouraged them to participate. We then worked together to judge the art murals and award prizes. After this, we ushered our final event where all the elementary school students came together to Lee Hall to watch an orchestra program with patriotic music. The accomplishments we achieved were important because it’s important to teach the younger generations of what came before them. It enhanced our leadership skills which is also important to growing as young adults. Teaching those students tested those leadership skills such as communication and patience. These accomplishments benefited our CP by making it possible for the showcase to be held successfully and for another year. We have served about 100 hours altogether. We have traveled over 200 miles, and we have assisted over 500 students.

A challenge that our team experienced was finding times that were good for everyone to meet and visit the schools. Our process had to be completed at each school that we visited, and it required more than one team member to attend. Due to our conflicting class schedules, it required a lot of us to work around our schedules. Another challenge that we faced was trying to figure out how to get the children’s undivided attendance and participation in the classroom. Whenever kids were rowdy or were shouting out responses, it stopped the flow of our class several times. Also, it decreased our ability to successfully get through the whole lesson with the kids.

To overcome these challenges, we made sure to communicate often. To find times that worked for all team members, we compromised on our schedules, so we could find a time that worked. When faced with disruptive children in the classroom, we usually introduced an activity that allowed them to move around a little and get out excess energy. When judging the art murals, we made sure to use our best judgement so that it would be a fair contest. Throughout this project, we were thrust into an atmosphere where we had to learn for ourselves how to be leaders. Most of what we learned about being leaders came from the experience of working with the kids at the elementary schools.

These interactions with the kids taught us patience and communication skills while the presentations we gave taught us confidence, especially in the realm of public speaking. These communication skills were learned by talking to the kids as they did their murals and by answering the questions that they had. Communication skills are an important part of being a leader because you have to be able to respectfully and clearly get your point across in a manner that your team will understand. The patience we learned by working with the children made us into better leaders because being patient allows you to better interact with team members, especially during conflict, and it helps you to reach your goal in a quicker and more effective manner. The confidence we gained from the constant public speaking demanded by our presentations turned us into better leaders as well because we now have confidence in our own abilities and opinions, and we know how to effectively share our views. Finally, this project taught us time management, especially in regards to having to find time to go to the schools. Time management is an important part of being a leader because it helps you to plan out a project and have a deadline to complete it in an effective manner, while also keeping you accountable to the person you’re serving by not wasting their time.
We only really expected to learn history that we may not have known, but we ended up learning much more. We learned history of America along with the children and learned about the younger generation we visited as well. We learned children are the best at expressing themselves and that you can influence their learning. There are many ways we can apply all the things we have learned to our future. For starters, we learned a lot about kids which will help if our future career field involves working with kids. We’ll know what to expect and how to handle situations involving children. Also, by us learning all about the history of America, we are now more informed on our country and will have knowledge on it if we ever need to use it. Also, what we did involved a lot of patience so that will pay off in the long run with any situation we face. We will be able to handle hectic situations calmly and collectively. Lastly, by it strengthening and teaching us more leadership skills, we will be more comfortable handling situations head on. We will be more capable of standing up, taking the lead, and setting an example.