



Figure 1 STEP VA's artwork at Via Colori 2023

STEP VA Celebrates 10th Anniversary

WE ARE STEP VA...

STEP VA's mission is to empower people with disabilities and their families through creative expression and sensory exploration. We lead with values and beliefs that enable all people with disabilities to develop their full potential and engage in a just, equitable community. Through the arts, all people's voices can be heard regardless of perceived barriers. Here's a view of what we did in 2023:

PEOPLE STEP VA SERVED THROUGH PROGRAMS

CLASS SESSION	# OF OPPORTUNITIES	SLOTS FILLED	NUMBERS of INDIVIDUALS SERVED	% RETURNING*
SPRING	4 classes	44	38	84%
MUSICAL†	1 staged musical	38	38	100%
SUMMER	4 camps	56	34	69%
FALL	10 classes	78	41	91%
TOTALS	18	178	38 (average)	81% (average)

* Percentage calculated by number of participants who enrolled in the 2022 session and who also returned for the 2023 session.

† Of special note is our spring musical, which served individuals, ages 5-30. Our 2022 musical served 21 individuals; the 2023 production, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, saw an 80% increase in enrollment.



Figure 2 Cast and crew of STEP VA's production of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*

AUDIENCE MEMBERS

700 +	2-day audience total for <i>You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown</i> Musical
250 +	4 camp session showcases audience total
170 +	All-Abilities Choir gala performance
50 +	All-Abilities Choir mall performance

VOLUNTEERS

31	Teens and adults volunteered at summer camps
4	Participants transitioned to volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 served as camp buddies ● 1 served as class support
4	Training sessions (virtual and in-person)



Figure 3 Volunteer sibling pairs at STEP VA summer camp 2023

STEP VA CONNECTS

Teen and Adult Connect	
96	Virtual Connect Group Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teen Connect (5-7 members) ● Adult Connect (12-15 members)
50 +	Attendees at participant-led, in-person Adult Connect outings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bowling night ● Family holiday party
Parent Connect	
69	Members of our private, moderated Facebook group, STEP VA Parents & Guardians Parent Connect members support a safe info/resource-sharing platform
2	Parent Connect guest speakers
2	Parent Connect-coordinated parties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cast party for more than 50 ● Holiday party co-hosted with Riverside First Church of God for more than 95

STEP VA in the COMMUNITY

3 Community events	Via Colori Street Art in Stafford Family Night at Fred Nats Stadium Spotsylvania Holiday Parade
4 Open mic nights	Arbor Haven Weddings Tri M Club Chancellor High School Rotaract Club UMW Riverside First Church of God
5 STEP VA presentations	VT Brain Lab Neuroscience Team UMW Historic Preservation Class UMW Special Education Class GCC Special Education Fair Chamber of Commerce Leadership Fredericksburg Class of 2023



Figure 4 Cast members of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* at the 2023 Spotsylvania Holiday Parade

STEP VA Success Highlights

- Received donations from 195 donors, a 25% increase from 2022 with a 42% donor retention rate
- Completed a full strategic planning process facilitated by a professional consultant to be implemented in January 2024
- Received \$5,500 in grants to support our programs and operations
- Raised more than \$80,000 in donations through our musical and gala matching campaigns
- Received significant donations from local businesses, including Atlantic Builders, Movement Mortgage, 1245 Realty, and the Durbin Group.
- Received Dominion Energy ArtStars Award for excellence in arts education for the Northern Virginia region at the Virginia Commission for the Arts Impact Celebration in January 2023
- Hosted our first fundraising gala for 170 guests, raising over \$50,000



Figure 5 Recipients of the 2023 Dominion Energy ArtStars award; Co-founder and Vice President Carolyn McKinney (far right) accepted the award on behalf of STEP VA



Figure 6 Find Your Voice, STEP VA's all-abilities choir, performs at the 10th anniversary gala

- Created the area's first-ever all-abilities choir, which debuted at our 10th anniversary fundraising gala
- Secured a dedicated studio space at the Bowman Center for classes, workshops, and set design creation

In the Press:

In spring 2023, fourteen individuals from the cast and crew of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* participated in the Virginia Tech Embodied Brain Lab's cutting edge research, "Examining the Neurological and Behavioral Effects of Musical Theater Training on People with Disabilities." The Embodied Brain Lab presented a poster on its findings to an international audience at a neuroscience conference. Click link for more information: [Virginia Tech researchers paid a royal visit at national neuroscience conference | Virginia Tech News | Virginia Tech \(vt.edu\)](#)