

Missouri Folk Arts Program

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Missouri Folk Arts Program (MFAP) staff members are relieved, and excited, to have wrapped up the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program (TAAP). Over the course of the last fiscal year, we collaborated with International Institute, an immigrant resettlement organization in St. Louis, and the West Plains Council on the Arts to present showcases at the 2009 Festival of Nations and the 2010 Old-time Music, Ozark Heritage Festival in St. Louis and West Plains, respectively. At Festival of Nations eighteen traditional artists performed and demonstrated under the "Culture Corner" tent. Conservatively, we estimate over 5,000 audience members attended. A second anniversary celebration was coordinated ten months later at the festival in south central Missouri. In West Plains, another twenty traditional artists performed and demonstrated on the Main Stage, under the Brush Arbor and in the "Rendezvous Encampment" for over 2,000 spectators.

Sandwiched between these two events, MFAP staff gave presentations at the American Folklore Society annual meeting, MU's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and meetings of the Missouri Association of Community Arts Agencies—a member organization of local arts councils around the state. Most importantly, MFAP hosted eight new teams in the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program, in art forms such as blacksmithing, dulcimer music, Bosnian sevdah (a vocal music tradition), dance fiddling, twining rag rugs, johnboat building, long rifles building, and African-American storytelling. These eight teams bring the grand total of apprenticeships over the last twenty-five years to 351; 177 master artists have participated in the project since 1985.

Looking to the future, MFAP received an Access to Artistic Excellence grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to fund the twenty-sixth year of TAAP, and



TAAP master Van Colbert leads a claw hammer banjo workshop under the Brush Arbor at the Old-time Music, Ozark Heritage Festival in West Plains, June 19, 2010. Van is a featured musician on the soundtrack of the critically-acclaimed new film *Winter's Bone*, filmed entirely in Missouri's Ozarks. Photo by Darcy Holtgrave.



TAAP master Fardin Karamkhani (left) and Geoff Seitz demonstrated instrument making under the "Culture Corner" tent at the Festival of Nations on August 30, 2009. During this Q&A, Geoff, a fiddler and luthier, grabbed a *zarb* to accompany Fardin who is playing a *saz*, a string instrument that he also made. Photo by Darcy Holtgrave.

