

# Fall 2019 News



Student Golfer Ariel, Professor DeAnna, and CAA Board Member Sandee Raval-Kiehl at the 8th Annual Golf Classic

**We are Different.**  
**We are Able.**

## Mission

CAA provides an equitable collegiate experience to adults with special needs who historically have not had access to college education.

## Vision

Empowering the student body to creatively transform the way the world views individuals with disabilities. CAA creates successful contributing citizens through the arts.

## Motto

Showcase Ability!

## Founders

Dr. Pamela Lindsay, EdD/CI  
DeAnna Pursai, Exec. Dir.

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## CAA milestone anniversary celebrates differing abilities

The summer and fall quarters at the College of Adaptive Arts brought an abundance of joy with spectacular performances in the community; wonderful, artistic creations; exciting, new classes; library lectures and workshops; and endless opportunities for students to shine.

The CAA 10th anniversary celebration at Saratoga Springs was a thrilling milestone for the College, students, family, friends, and community supporters to come together for a fabulous evening of music, food, and honoring those who have helped CAA along the way. DeAnna Pursai, CAA co-founder, would soon get her much-anticipated tattoo as the college reached 100 donors by 10/10!

The CAA Golf Classic was a hole-in-one success, raising \$67,000! The CAA community came together at Santa Teresa Golf Course for a beautiful afternoon of golf, a live auction, and a delicious buffet. CAA student ambassador Curtis gave a moving speech about his achievements, including being a voice-over actor and introducing Mayor Sam Liccardo at a recent event. Multiple golfers called it their favorite time of the year.

CAA was named a Top NonProfit 2019 with Great NonProfits. Additionally, CAA achieved the Guidestar Platinum status, the highest level attainable. Having this highest status is auspicious as it demonstrates fiscal and program transparency, showing how CAA is using its precious resources as impactfully as possible to support the mission of the organization, and demonstrating that it is internally holding itself accountable to all metrics decided upon by the Board of Directors.

CAA students and Cisco employees shared their similarities together at the 2nd Annual Cisco Team Building day in November. It was a memorable afternoon filled with interactive games,

discussions, class showcases, and chatting over a sumptuous buffet. A Cisco employee eagerly expressed interest in helping this innovative model gain national exposure.

Students beamed with pride as they received their diplomas at December's graduation ceremony at the historic Hoover Theatre. Big smiles were on the faces of graduates as they had their pictures taken with diplomas in hand, standing alongside co-founders Dr. Pamela Lindsay and DeAnna Pursai. Keynote speaker Daniel Peck, Mission College President and Santa Clara rotary member gave an electric speech; we were honored to have him with us. Student valedictorian Stephanie stood tall and proud at the podium in cap and gown and spoke about her role as a CAA intern, being a grad student of theatre and dance, and enjoying her college friends.

Summer and fall quarters were not simply a changing of the seasons, but the changing of perceptions of adults with differing abilities. CAA moves mountains every day to provide students amazing opportunities that historically have not been available to them.



CAA Student Ambassador and Golfer Curtis

## From the board

Hello Mountain Movers,

It is my honor and pleasure to work with this amazing organization. A great man once said, "if you want to change the world, change the way you look at the world." We are changing the way the world looks at people with disabilities and thereby changing the world. I would like to thank the board, staff, volunteers, and most of all the students we serve.

We have come such a long way with the guidance and leadership of our esteemed co-founders Pam and DeAnna. From one room, one school with 12 students to an organization with over 100 students, 10 schools and staff of 33.

Congratulations team!!!

We are now moving the mountain and the best is yet to come. We have an aggressive plan, a dedicated board, and a devoted staff. We are taking the leap of faith to get to a self-sustainable funding model to expand across America and the world!

With the support of the community, we will move this mountain. We will be self-sustaining and we will change the world.

I look forward to the coming years and all the contributions we will make to the world!! It is my honor and privilege to be associated with this phenomenal team.

Thank you!

Go CAA!

Joe Siecinski



CAA Board Chair Joe Siecinski enjoying the CAA Golf Classic

## CAA's moment of lift

I am right now reading Melinda Gate's book, *Moment of Lift*. It is a most powerful read about the idea of empowering, or lifting, women and how their communities and the world at large benefit. Mrs. Gates adeptly uses as a metaphor the moment when a plane goes from taxiing down the runway to experiencing that first surge of power that lifts it into the air.

As I was reading, I reflected on CAA's first ten years and I recognized moments of lift. The first year began with just Pam and I, our experiences, and a vision for better opportunities for my sister and Pam's daughter who were both aging out of the public school system. We were determined to create something more and with that, our plane started down the runway.

Over the next 10 years, so many incredible forces joined us to get CAA moving on its wheels. We could not have created CAA

without our visionary parents who followed us to each of our over eight locations, our small business donors who continue to donate and patron our events, endorsements from Mayor Sam Liccardo, and the generosity of Case Swenson, of Swenson Development, who gave us the space to double the size of not only our student body and staff and faculty, but of the number of classes we offer.

As we begin our next 10 years, I sense another moment of lift and that something beautiful is about to happen. CAA, its model for education, and life-long learning for adults with special needs was unheard of until now. We are making history and you are a part of it. I see with my mind's eye our plane, filled with our amazing students, staff and faculty, our parents, and our generous supporters. I can envision the wheels leaving the runway and I can feel that moment of lift that takes all of us soaring into the limitless blue sky.

DeAnna ☺

## Student highlight: Jeff Martinez



CAA Graduate Student Jeff

Jeff is an accomplished artist and author, and knowledgeable about a whole bunch of stuff. He was born in Perry, Georgia; moved to El Paso, TX; and then moved to California. He currently resides in El Paso with his wife and new baby daughter and attends his CAA classes via Zoom.

Jeff got interested in art when he was five years old watching his brother draw comics. He's a star artist in his visual and graphic arts classes, where he explores themes that include urban legends, folklore, and mysteries of the supernatural kind and those surrounding the people of New Orleans. A chance meeting with a passerby led Jeff to discover his talents with portraiture.

His writing takes over where his art leaves off; often the two are melded together. The world of zombies and voodoo serves as a backdrop to mysteries, love triangles, and discovering

existing inner strength. His enjoyment of researching fuels his writing. He remembers a favorite assignment from the sixth grade where he researched Japan, samurai, and ninja. He wrote his first script as a junior in high school.

Jeff is also a virtual film library that extends from Vincent Price to film noir to the classic, *The Godfather*. His go-tos are the *Skeleton Key*, anything by Quentin Tarantino, and more recently, Italian *geli* (spaghetti western) and *Mission Impossible*.

What you may not know is that Jeff has been married for nearly eight years. His wife introduced him to *Supernatural*, which provided the seed for the world of ghost hunting. When talking about his baby daughter, who was born in September 2019, he gets that smiley, dreamy look that new parents get. He wants to instill in his daughter the power to speak her mind and more importantly, to be herself.



Jeff attending class via ZOOM



## Dr. Pam Lindsay honored by University of Phoenix

Dr. Pamela Lindsay, co-founder and Dean of Instruction at the College of Adaptive Arts, was honored with the most prestigious University of Phoenix Alumni Impact Award for her groundbreaking dissertation on higher education for students with intellectual disabilities, paving the way for more research into this innovative field of study.

John Sperling was a founder of the University of Phoenix when there was no option for working professionals to access higher education degrees in non-traditional formats. Dr. Pamela was honored with this prestigious award for her parallel work providing college opportunities to adults in the community who historically have not had access to a college education.

This particular award is a special honor with just one recipient for work in honor of visionary founder John Sperling, the original developer of online education. Sperling was the first to create opportunities for adults



*Dr. Pamela Lindsay and Randy Lichtenfeld, Senior Vice President of Campus Services, University of Phoenix*

who could not access classroom learning in a typical format due to work, age, schedule, etc. The award recognizes the work being done at CAA for similarly forward vision and progress, developing impactful access to education in new, unique ways with program processes based in Dr. Lindsay's doctoral work and shared research.

## Superstaff spotlight: Sharon Lea



*Sharon Lea, Director of the School of Music*

When Sharon came to CAA in the spring of 2016, it was to volunteer for *Greasy Hairspray* at Pioneer High School. In short order, she became a site manager, next an AP, then a professor, and now she is the Director of the School of Music. She currently does all of the above and teaches podcasting and directs the concert choir.

Sharon is a local girl having grown up in Los Altos. She graduated from CSU Chico with a B.A. in English. Sharon loves being a part of CAA because of its warm, uplifting, and supportive environment. "Every student is offered a safe and caring place to grow, to learn, to develop their innate talents, to develop new talents, to develop personally and professionally, to have good days, bad days and still be accepted."

In her podcasting classes, Sharon teaches her students everything they need to know to create and air their own podcasts. They practice

on real live people, such as Bryan Adams, a local broadcasting legend.

In her choir classes, Sharon instills in her students' confidence in their own voice while listening to others and working as a team. Her students sing loud and proud and soft with emotion. Sharon enjoys listening to them and watching their faces when the crowds show their appreciation.

Sharon's love of music doesn't end when the CAA day is over. She can be seen singing at jams at Little Lou's in Campbell. When she's not doing something musical, she's writing poetry, going to Monterey and Half Moon Bay, finding treasures at antique shops, and spending time with friends. When she's not doing any of that, she can be found—or rather not be found—snuggling with her two kitties, Lizzy and Emma, or driving around the open golf fields.



*Professors Sharon and Michael and the Music Production class*

## Upcoming events

### Communications Showcase

Campbell Church of Christ (Oak Room)  
Saturday, February 15, 2020  
6:00–8:00 pm

### The 11th Annual Celebrating Abilities Film Festival

San Jose Museum of Art in the  
Wendell Education Center  
Saturday, April 18, 2020  
12:00–3:00 pm

**"A Mid-Summer Night's Dream"** by  
William Shakespeare (adapted version)  
and the CAA School of Theatre Arts  
City Lights Theater Company  
Friday, June 12, 2020  
3:00–4:00 pm

### "Music Through the Decades"

written by the CAA Students  
City Lights Theater Company  
Friday, June 19, 2020  
2:00–4:00 pm

## 2020 Quarter Dates

### Winter

January 6–March 20  
(Mid-quarter break February 10–14)

### Spring

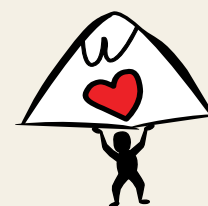
April 6–June 19  
(Mid-quarter break May 11–15)

### Summer

July 6–September 18  
(Mid-quarter break August 10–14)

### Fall

September 28–December 18  
(Mid-quarter break October 26–30;  
Thanksgiving break November 23–27)



# CAA Creating Memories 10 Years Strong

## 2009 | 12 students

In 2009 College of Adaptive Arts opened its doors in July of that year, offering 1 musical theatre summer workshop class. That spring Pam and DeAnna had conducted multiple fact-finding sessions in the community to gather input from families about what they would like to see in the vision of building a unique college specifically for adults with special needs.



## 2011 | 35 students

College of Adaptive Arts student body has grown to about 35 students. Here is a photo of one of our students portraying Elvis singing Blue Christmas at Christmas in the Park. Course offerings had grown to about 15 classes throughout the week that adults could choose to attend: from on-camera acting to watercolor to songwriting to guitar to Showboaters.



## 2013 | 60 students

College of Adaptive Arts had its first formal graduation ceremony at Trinity Cathedral Church in downtown San Jose. Kim Rains was named our inaugural valedictorian. Pastor David Bird gave the keynote address of this most auspicious ceremony. Sam Liccardo was a District 3 councilmember at the time, and he came to the ceremony and immediately wanted to get involved as a CAA Executive Board Member.



## 2010 | 26 students

A day in the life of College of Adaptive Arts from 2010: Michael Jackson Networking Lounge Night. CAA had nicely settled into our anchor site at Randol School, and our student body had almost doubled at this point from 12 original students to about 26 students in 2010. We used to conduct Networking Lounge Nights once a month during this period.

## 2012 | 45 students

2012 brought more students and course offerings. CAA's on-camera acting class was thriving, and we were starting to produce regular videos with Flip Cameras that had been donated by Cisco. Our student body had grown to 45 students. Professors Katie and Nicole F. had joined our small and mighty staff. This was the year we had to leave our site at Randol School as rent was going to triple within a month.

## 2019 | 121 students and growing: the new School of Business makes ten!

### Art



### Business



### Communications



### Dance



### Health and Wellness





# A look back at 10 years of changing perceptions...

## 2015 | 75 students

College of Adaptive Arts has grown to about 75 students in our 7th year of existence. Professor Janet, Director of the School of Dance, had created the Heroes Outreach Dance Troupe, who continue to transform perception and celebrate abilities at the sjDANCEco annual festival.



## 2017 | 100 students

2017 saw more momentum for this small and mighty equitable college. The student body historically reached 100 students. The Rotary Club of San Jose had given CAA a grant to lay the dance/art floor in the Parkmoor space. The ninth school of instruction was formally added to the College that year: the School of Library Arts.



## 2014 | 65 students

After 18 months without a site, our student body increased from 45 to 65 students. Case Swenson of Swenson Development significantly moved the mountain for College of Adaptive Arts by giving us a site on the 2nd floor of his Parkmoor building at a monthly rate we could afford. The San Jose Chamber of Commerce gave us an amazing ribbon cutting ceremony.



## 2016 | 95 students

Under the visionary leadership of San Andreas Executive Director Javier Zaldivar, CAA became a vendor with their organization founded through the prestigious California legislation of the Lanterman Act. An abundance of new and awesome students joined the Student Body this year, and CAA's student enrollment quickly grew from about 75 to 95 students in 1 year.



## 2018 | 112 students

In 2018 CAA forged a wonderful community collaboration spearheaded by the San Jose Museum of Art called New Terrains: Redefining Mobility. SJMA allowed CAA to perform multiple times at their amazing venue in downtown San Jose throughout the year. CAA is most very grateful for the leadership of Robin Treen and SJMA's vision of community and inclusiveness.

### Library Arts



### Music



### Science & Technology



### Theatre



### TV/Film



# Together we are moving mountains

## 2019 Donors and Partners

### SCHOOL UNDERWRITERS

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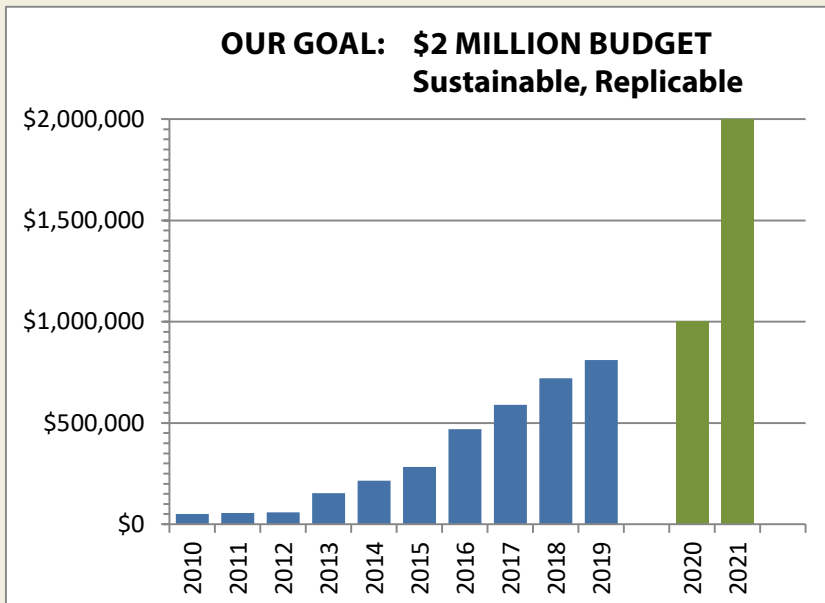
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Moses Adjei

## From cutting expenses to diversified revenue streams

### We must reach \$2 Million = sustainable, replicable

Within the next 6–8 months, CAA must find a new location; optimally, on a campus of higher education. And we must achieve a \$2 million operating budget which will allow CAA to be fully sustainable and replicable.



YEAR	BUDGET
2010	<55,000
2011	<55,000
2012	58,073
2013	153,423
2014	214,988
2015	283,011
2016	470,056
2017	590,012
2018	719,955
2019	811,000
<b>GOAL:</b>	
2020	1,000,000
2021	2,000,000

\* Budget data per 990 reports



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 \*Mike Allport  
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CAA was delighted to host the West Valley Mission Community College leaders, including Chancellor Bradley Davis on a tour this fall



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# 10s OF 10s AT 10 IN 10

10s OF 10s: 100 NEW DONORS  
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When we started the 10 10 10 10 campaign, DeAnna pledged that she would get a CAA logo tattooed on her arm when we reached our goal of 100 recurring donors. We reached 110. DeAnna always keeps her word.

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**#CAA 10 YEARS STRONG  
TEN MORE YEARS!**

**THANK YOU FOR MAKING HISTORY!**

