



Spring 2020 News

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!

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Students Bernard and Frank in our new computer lab

CAA Classes go online during Shelter in Place

When the shelter in place mandate was put in place March 2020 there was one week left in the quarter. In the last week of the Winter Quarter, CAA transitioned to a fully online learning platform, and we have Michael Reisman, Director of the School of Science and Technology, and Dr. Pamela Lindsay, Dean of Instruction, to thank. They worked tirelessly researching Zoom and establish links that the students would use. They also wrote and published instructions for accessing each of the 58 courses.

Spring Quarter resumed on Monday, April 6. CAA welcomed ten new students. New course offerings include US History, Fun with Famous Artists, and English as a Second Language. The San Andreas Regional Center, under the visionary leadership of Executive Director Javier Zaldivar, approved an increase in the number of courses students could take, from six to 12. This community collaboration has been instrumental in allowing more adults sheltered in place at home to access more classes.

These are not easy times by any measure. Many days it feels like we take two strides forward and three strides back. Yet so many silver linings have appeared to support this small and mighty college. CAA welcomed its seventh School Underwriter, the Brian & Denise Schmidt Family, underwriting the School of Art for the upcoming academic year. CAA's current landlord waived the last three months of rent, which was given to CAA's hardworking staff. A private family underwrote new tech equipment to be able to give the students the tech access they needed. Northrup Grumman of Sunnyvale extended financial support as well for distance learning infrastructure buildout.

The CAA Mountain Movers Board welcomed a wonderful new member, Sabina Nat, a parent with the Basis Independent High School Robotics team. CAA established a rich community partnership

with Joint Venture Silicon Valley to secure community volunteers to help CAA students and families with their new distance learning equipment.

CAA student ambassador Oliver M. was able to give Mayor Sam Liccardo a CAA Visionary Award the day the Mayor Zoomed in to be interviewed by the CAA podcasting class.

CAA extends to the entire community heartfelt thanks for your support and goodwill during these times. Communication, teamwork, and a steadfast desire to give adults of all abilities a chance to continue learning will see this school through during these challenging times to a brighter and more inclusive future.



CAA student and professor Bernard, and CAA Signers, perform at a DKG Gamma Psi luncheon



Student Tyler using distance learning in a previous quarter

From the Dean's (Home) Desk

When I reflect on the unprecedented end of the Winter 2020 quarter and the fully online Spring 2020 quarter, I have feelings of overwhelming gratitude and thankfulness. One word stands out above all others: Commitment. When current events propelled CAA students away from their physical classrooms to online classrooms, I think of our commitment to providing an equitable, collegiate experience to adults with differing abilities and our 10-year-strong vision for providing that same experience online for students anywhere in the state, country, and world.

The pandemic forced our Cardinal family to leave their beloved college campus nest “on a dime.” The students’ hunger for learning and staff members’ commitment to our students proved to be sharp tools that quickly carved a new pathway for developing and delivering classes online. Our amazing community supporters showed their continued commitment to CAA by stepping forward to help provide program and technical assistance to students and professors. Each step reflects our ARTS Model for Learning, especially regarding incredibly positive attitudes, productive teamwork, and where we can trust each other as equal.

We salute the commitment of our CAA families who have supported their students by providing space, assistance, encouragement, and love as they navigate this exciting new learning path together. CAA’s community of supporters that include families, friends, and organizations have Moved the Mountain once again for our students, whose continued growth and contributions are our local and broader community’s gain. As we say at CAA, “When Cardinals support each other, all take flight!”



Dr. Pamela Lindsay, EDD/CI Co-Founder & Dean of Instruction

Super Staff Spotlight: Professor Roland Schmidt



Professor Roland Schmidt

Roland is a local who grew up in San Jose. He learned about CAA from his sister, Nicole, also known as Professor Nicole or Art Nicole. He began his CAA career as a volunteer golf coach in the Spring of 2013. A few years later he was hired to site manage and AP.

Roland graduated from Sonoma State University with a B.A. in communication studies and a minor in astronomy. Roland enjoys being a part of CAA because of the students' growth. “It has been an absolute blessing to watch our students grow and evolve as individuals through their various independent and collective endeavors.”

Roland, an experienced guitarist and is the lead professor of Adaptive Guitar Class.

If Roland could create a new class for CAA, it would be the Basics of Cooking because he thought it could qualify as a solid option for anyone wanting to learn how to cook. Roland started learning to cook from a young age and he knows that so many of our students have the capability to gain basic kitchen skills that they could apply to the real world. He enjoys making what he calls “food science” by mixing different flavors that have a unique taste.

CAA has allowed Ronald to grow into the best possible version of himself. Roland learns something new each day he spends with the students and he thinks he will continue to gain new skills, some which he thought were out of his reach. CAA’s students have taught him not only how to love unconditionally but also how to be more patient while still spreading unbridled joy. It is an awesome relationship that he did not foresee when he was younger.

Roland’s Plan A was to go to graduate school for broadcasting, but his thoughts kept returning to CAA and the students. He is now intent on pursuing a Master’s Degree in Special Education.

CAA Student Highlight: Amy H.



Amy learning from home

When you first meet Amy you may think she is a shy and quiet young woman. Once you get to know her, you will see that she is really an energizer bunny with a wicked sense of humor.

Amy came to CAA in 2017 and received her undergraduate degree in December of 2019. Amy enjoys the stage. She can play bad, as in Cruella, and heroes, like Underdog. She’s equally comfortable on the dance floor. Her school of study centers around fitness and living a healthy lifestyle. Her favorite classes include Latizmo, pound fitness, and tumbling. When she’s not studying about healthy choices, she is an advocate for healthy living, highly enjoying making smoothies.

Amy communicates with her voice and sign language, but she doesn’t sign what she is saying, which her mom explained is very unusual. Her signs augment her spoken words; it’s like how both smell and taste make eating a richer experience. Amy’s mom observed her communication style and incorporated it into her own signing, especially when she performs interpretive songs.

When Amy’s day program closed due to COVID-19, she didn’t turn to the TV and sofa 24/7. Instead, she did ABCmouse, an education and activity website for learning math, reading, etc., on her computer; devised her own penmanship exercises; and of course, did Latizmo via Zoom. When she does watch TV, her favorite program is *SpongeBob Square-Pants*. She is also watching *Underdog* in preparation for a role.

What you may not know about Amy is that she is an adventurer. She’s been to Graceland, Dollywood, and a dude ranch. She also enjoys hiking and camping. Her life is without borders and she embodies the idea that everybody can be exactly who they are and be happy with who they are. Amy isn’t a superhero only on the stage; she’s a superhero in real life. If you’re really lucky you might get a glimpse of her orange cape as she flies around spreading love and hugs (from a distance of 6ft.)



From the Board: Toni Cook, Vice Chair

You may see the Board Members' names printed on the front page of this newsletter and wonder what we do. DeAnna Pursai calls us the Mountain Movers, and I believe every person reading this newsletter is moving the mountain. I'd like to explain this mountain-mover concept and how we are working in teams to move the mountain and how you can, too.

The board is divided into teams, represented by the figures in the diagram. Each team member has a responsibility, explained below. These team leaders need community volunteers to complete their responsibilities. As we complete the tasks, move closer to the fully sustainable goal on the right. When CAA's mountain achieves that mountain, our students will have an equitable collegiate experience.

- College Campus - The Facility Team is moving full steam ahead to get our college on local Bay Area wonderful community college campus. At the time of this writing (mid-May 2020), CAA is in the process of finalizing that momentous gain. When this move is achieved, CAA students will be learning in a true collegiate environment.

- The Donor Engagement/Recurring Donors Team is the financial heartbeat of the movement. This team works on securing grants and corporate underwriters, motivating and communicating with current donors, and planning and implementing fundraising events. CAA needs a full two million dollars to run a viable program in which all staff is paid living wages and instructional needs are met.
- The Public Relations Team is the third team. This team is focusing on national recognition. We are beginning with a focus on increased local publicity and we are looking for a celebrity spokesperson. Our Mountain will be Moved when CAA is nationally recognized as a model for education for adults with special needs

Where do you fit in this picture? If you haven't yet taken a virtual tour, start with that. While we work to move the mountain, we love your help in joining a team. That mountain will move faster if we work together. Contact us at info@collegeofadaptivearts.org or 408-538-3809.



Mayor Sam Liccardo being interviewed in May by the CAA Podcasting class



Coding class students build a robot with the Basis Independent High School robotics team

June Zoom Theatre Performances

Zoom in, meet the actors, and enjoy the shows. If you're in a position, we invite you to help us reach a \$10,000 goal in lieu of the Giving Luncheon which was not able to happen in person this past May at Scott's Seafood.

Friday, June 12: Midsummer Night's Dream



2:30 pm - 4:00 pm Free tickets Visit CAA's Website Events to Register

Friday, June 19: Musical Theatre Variety Show



1:30 pm - 4:00 pm Free tickets Visit CAA's Website to Register

CAA pivoted its academic programs as well as its community performances showcasing abilities through Zoom.

Testimony of Distance Learning Support in Action

I just wanted to drop a note that my student was able to participate in class 100% because of her new iPad.

She looked a lot more encouraged to be there. When we were playing a musical example, she was grooving to the music and smiling like the other students.

You all did a great thing with providing the iPads to students in need!

*Professor Michael Reisman,
Director School of Science & Tech*



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Lifelong learning for all!

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CAA Spreads the Love

Professor Sharon Lea - School of Music

CAA spreads a love of learning in every class, lecture and play it's an excellent college for all whether on Zoom or in person in the most joyous kind of way

CAA spreads a love of words to read and speak and to share telling a story with your voice growing in confidence and self dancing with wings in the air

CAA spreads a love of music where joy and friendship are free doing a showcase all your own singing from the depths of you yes, you can earn a real degree

CAA spreads a love for people accepted just the way they are knowing this is a learning place no grades or high-pressure tests every student is a shining star

CAA Students spread the love during Shelter in Place: how do you spread the love?
 (info@collegeofadaptivearts.org)

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