**Vans Custom Culture**

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**Indio High School**

We are very grateful for this opportunity. Indio High School is located in the east end of the Coachella Valley in Southern California. Over 90% of our students live below the poverty line. 28% of our students are English Learners, 16.5 % receive Special Education support, and many have families who work in the fields.

I offered the opportunity to work on this competition to all of my students from Art I to Studio Art Advanced Placement. The team is composed of freshmen through seniors and Art I to Advanced Placement. Students range, academically, from honor roll to struggling. Several team members are students with special needs. I believe that they are representative of the Indio High School student population and of our art department. Brilliance and ability exist in everyone. Students just need support and opportunity for these attributes to blossom. Art can be the avenue through which students connect with and discover the importance of their education.

We have several areas of need. We have a limited budget and the majority of our students do not have the means to purchase art materials. Most of our students have never had opportunities to travel outside of the valley in which we are located. Some of our most talented and creative students are accepted into top art schools with the dream of pursuing a career in the visual arts, only to be unable to close the gap between the cost of tuition and the amount received in financial assistance.

We would like to use the generous award from Vans to allow our students greater access to art materials and to purchase some digital equipment including a color printer, several tablets, and digital art software. We would like to use funds to travel outside of the valley to museums, galleries, and other locations which would support students’ art growth and connection with their world. We would like to designate a portion of funds to use as a base to establish a scholarship fund for students seeking to pursue further education in the arts. Indio is the host of many national and international festivals. We want to create partnerships with visiting artists to support our students in gaining experiences and skills to help them realize their dreams as they seek a future in the arts.