

COMMUNITY ACCESS TO THE ARTS

Impact Report | 2024



Our accountability report to you, our supporters:

THANK YOU!

Your generosity brought life-changing opportunities to people with disabilities in 2024.

1,050

people with disabilities served



an 11% increase over last year

2,677



arts workshops provided

a 17% increase over last year

Your support is helping us reach more people:

CATA artists served in weekly programs:



Youth with special needs reached in weekly programs:



Workshops provided:



Community members who attended CATA events and exhibits



“I feel everything inside me wants to express myself.”

—JESSICA, CATA ARTIST

Ali (Riverbrook Residence) taps into her love of dance at CATA.



Dear CATA friends and supporters,

How do we create positive change in our world? What does it mean to stand up for what we believe in? To change the course of a person's life?

These are the questions that animate our work at CATA. As a CATA supporter, YOU are putting your values into action, transforming people's lives every day. Here are a few snapshots of how you've made a difference for people across our community, just recently:

- Katrina wears a laser pointer on her forehead, moving the light across a blank canvas from her wheelchair. A CATA Faculty Artist follows her direction with a paintbrush, acting as Katrina's hands. A stunning painting takes form, full of color and bold brushstrokes. Katrina's life and identity, her sense of confidence and self, have been shaped by this weekly adaptive painting program. Her paintings are a focal point of CATA art shows throughout the year.
- Dan, a CATA artist with Down syndrome, co-teaches a dance workshop for students with disabilities at a local high school, fulfilling his life-long goal to be a leader and teacher in the arts. A teen who had stayed on the sidelines lights up with enthusiasm, seeing someone with a disability in a leadership role—and he takes a new step forward in his own growth and goal-setting.

- A family new to the area searches for an outlet for their child with special needs and longs to connect with families like theirs. They find belonging in a CATA program designed just for them—making art and building a network of friendship and support. And the Berkshires opens its arms to show just how inclusive and welcoming we can be.

This is what a community looks like when all of us pull together.

When you support CATA, you are giving children, teens, and adults with disabilities an opportunity to grow and to thrive. You are supporting local families and caregivers. You are making our community a better place.

Without you, CATA's work would not be possible. We're so excited to share with you all you made happen in 2024. Please give me a call or send me an email if you have feedback or you'd like to get more involved. I would love to hear from you!

With deep gratitude,



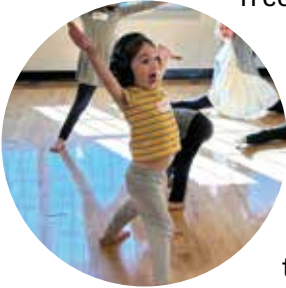
Margaret Keller
Executive Director



Your Impact on Children

You helped CATA launch NEW programs for local families and children with special needs.

Families and caregivers told us they were craving opportunities to connect and build community. With your support, we launched monthly “Art & Tea” programs where children with special needs and their siblings enjoy fun art activities while their families connect and share tips and resources—free of charge to all participants.

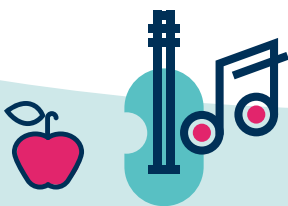


You helped CATA expand weekly programs in local schools to reach children in special education programs.

Thanks to you, children with disabilities in elementary school classrooms from Pittsfield to North Adams and beyond learned new skills and tapped into their talents.

“Our family has been looking to get more plugged into our community. Having a safe space at CATA for our kids to be creative and to feel free has been wonderful and so crucial.”

PARENT OF A CATA ARTIST



You CATA reach record numbers of children with disabilities in local schools through intensive, multi-week programs:

450
children & teens in
weekly CATA programs
a 28% increase over last year

1,011
workshops
in local schools
a 11% increase over last year



CATA brings music, dance, and arts programs to children in special education programs at local public schools—thanks to you!



“Seeing the excitement on my students’ faces when they have a day with CATA is priceless.”

**RON KIMBALL,
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER,
PITTSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL**

Charlie learns drumming techniques at CATA.

Your Impact on Teens

Your support brought CATA to 29 schools and classrooms so teens with disabilities could grow and thrive. For hundreds of teens in special education programs, CATA is a vital part of the school day. Because of you, students with disabilities across 9 school districts tapped into their talents and built important skills through weekly workshops in dance, comic illustration, music, juggling, and more.



Thanks to you, CATA didn't stop when the school year ended. Your support helped us partner with local schools to provide robust summer programs for hundreds of students with disabilities all summer long—helping students catch up academically, develop new skills, and maintain consistency in their learning.



You helped students build:

- Social skills**
- Confidence & self expression**
- Team work & communication**
- Social & emotional well-being**
- Stress relief**
- Belief in themselves**
- The realization that they can do cool & creative things!**



schools and classrooms participated in CATA programs

Berkshire Hills Regional School District
W.E.B. DuBois Middle School
Monument Mountain Regional High School

Central Berkshire Regional School District
Craneville Elementary School
Nessacus Regional Middle School
Wahconah Regional High School

Hoosac Valley Regional School District
Hoosac Valley Regional Middle & High School

Lee Public Schools
Lee High School

Lenox Public Schools
Lenox Memorial Middle & High School

North Adams Public Schools:
Colegrove Park Elementary School
Greenhouse Transitions Program
at Drury High School

Pittsfield Public Schools
Adolescent Support Program at PHS
Allendale Elementary School
Crosby Educational Academy
Crosby Elementary School
Eagle Educational Academy
Learning Lab at Pittsfield High School
Learning Lab at Reid Middle School
Pittsfield High School
Pittsfield High School Transitions Program
Positive Options Program
at Berkshire Community College
Reid Middle School

Taconic Hills Regional School District
Taconic Hills High School
Taconic Hills Middle School

Your Impact on Adults

You brought more programs to more adults with disabilities than ever before. Demand for CATA was at an all-time high in 2024: We received record calls from families and disability agencies asking us to expand programs for people in their care. YOU helped us meet that need, growing workshops by 17% to reach more people with disabilities in our community.



You helped launch innovative new pilot programs for CATA artists.

Thanks to you, CATA artists explored their talents in photography and filmmaking, costume and set design, comic illustrations and more. You also helped launch a new Supported Studio program, where CATA artists work independently to create paintings, sculptures, drawings, and other self-directed projects with the support of a CATA Faculty mentor.

You helped CATA artists step into paid leadership roles as Faculty Assistants, Curatorial Assistants, ambassadors at CATA events, camera operators, and more.

You helped us launch our new CATA Advisor & Ambassador Council, where CATA artists, families, caregivers, and program partners share feedback and ideas to guide our work in the community.



With your support, CATA provided

868

workshops in the CATA Studios

a 14% increase over last year

606

workshops in Day Programs, Residences, and Disability Agencies

a 22% increase over last year

Margaret (BCArc) develops her talents as a painter.

Opposite page: Ron (BFAIR) and Jeff (BCArc) explore new techniques in CATA workshops.



“We all hear buzz words about inclusion. Now here’s an organization that’s really doing it.”

PARENTS OF A CATA ARTIST



Residents at local Integritus nursing homes in Williamstown and Pittsfield share their life stories and talents.



Your Impact on Elders

“During CATA workshops, people’s eyes light up and their spirits come alive.”

DARYL BROOKE, CATA FACULTY

Because of you, elders in local nursing homes, including many with Alzheimer’s and dementia, shared their life stories and talents through CATA programs. Every week, CATA faculty visited nursing and eldercare settings across the Berkshires, traveling from room to room, uplifting and engaging residents through music, stories, and artwork.

“Doing CATA activities changes my attitude and sense of belonging.”

NURSING HOME RESIDENT

You helped bring the stories of local elders out to the whole community. “Turning Points,” a powerful original song at CATA’s Annual Performance, featured voices of elders reflecting on the turning points in their lives for an audience of 1,000 community members.



With your support, CATA provided:

192

workshops in eldercare and nursing homes

a 23% increase over last year

Your Impact on the wider community

PART 1!

You helped share the talents of artists with disabilities in vibrant art exhibits.

Annual Art Show

Thousands of people saw the work of artists with disabilities in CATA's Annual Art Show at the Clark Art Institute and the Lichtenstein Center for the Arts. More than 200 CATA artists exhibited artwork— thanks to you!

New Roles for CATA Artists: Curators & Exhibit Guides

Your support created new opportunities for CATA artists to learn about curating art exhibits— and help put together our big Annual Art Show! CATA artists also stepped into leadership roles as CATA Ambassadors, giving exhibit tours to students from local public schools.



Art on Tour exhibits

CATA artists shared their talents in vibrant exhibits at the Berkshire Botanical Garden and Mass Audubon Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary.

**“I’m a heartfelt artist.
I put my heart and soul
into all of my paintings”**

JOHN, CATA ARTIST



128

CATA artists earned commissions for their paintings, drawings, sculptures, and photographs





204 Katherine Butler
October 2019
Mixed Media & Acrylic on Canvas
12" x 14"
\$100

205 Ashley Sullivan
October 2019
Mixed Media on Paper
12" x 14"
\$100

Katherine (UCP of Western Massachusetts) with her artwork in CATA's Annual Art Show.

Opposite page: Karen (UCP) and Maria (BCArc Transitions) share their art with the public.

Your Impact on the wider community

PART 2!

You helped share the talents of CATA artists in powerful performances.



Gala & Annual Performance

Your generosity fueled a vibrant, sold-out Annual Performance where CATA artists shared their creativity with the community. CATA artists shaped every part of the show: crafting performance pieces, costumes, set design, music and lyrics—even working back stage as camera operators. More than 40 artists with disabilities performed in tap dance, modern dance, singing, drumming, Shakespeare, comedy, and juggling for 1,000 cheering community members.

SAVE THE DATE:

2025 CATA GALA & ANNUAL PERFORMANCE!

May 10, 2025 (Gala)

May 11, 2025 (Matinee)

at Shakespeare & Company (Lenox, MA)



12,070+

community members
attended CATA performances,
exhibits, and readings

Community Sharings

Families, friends, and caregivers gathered to celebrate the talents of CATA artists at our CATA Sharings—dynamic community events where our artists share all they're exploring in our programs. This year, CATA artists stepped into new roles as co-leaders of drumming, acting, and dance performances in Sharings at MASS MoCA and Berkshire South Regional Community Center.

Poetry & Prose Readings

We welcomed a sold-out crowd to The Mount, Edith Wharton's Home, to celebrate the work of CATA writers with disabilities. Guest readers and local luminaries brought down the house with brilliant readings of poetry and short stories by the CATA Writers' Workshop.



A photograph of three performers on a stage. On the left, a young man with glasses and a dark shirt holds a large, colorful, textured ball. In the center, a woman with a red and black plaid scarf holds a large blue umbrella. On the right, an older woman with white hair and glasses, wearing a dark shirt and a colorful scarf, has her mouth open in an expressive performance. The background is dark with blue stage lighting.

“CATA makes people with disabilities feel as important and included as members of society as they should be. To have CATA recognize our daughter’s talents, to be part of something bigger and better, what an incredible opportunity. We’re watching her blossom right in front of us.”

CATA PARENT

Jeff (BCArc Transitions), Caroline (CATA Faculty), and Cindy (Cadmus) perform in our Annual Performance at Shakespeare & Company. Opposite: Jessica (BCArc) and Kambree bring their talents to the stage.

You bring CATA all across

Every day, your donations bring life-changing arts programs to children, teens, and adults with disabilities across our community. Take a peek into a day in the life of CATA:

North Adams: Sarah weaves a green strand of yarn over and under the threads of her loom. She pulls the thread through to the end and smiles. When it's finished, Sarah is excited to have her artwork featured in a CATA exhibit. "Everyone will see it. I hope it sells!"



Pittsfield: Children with disabilities at a local elementary school bend and stretch, releasing tension and practicing balance in a CATA yoga class.

Hudson: At a local day habilitation program, Cory dips his paintbrush into a watercolor palette and gently adds a stroke of yellow across a sheet of glass. When he finishes, he holds it up to the light to reveal a beautiful stained glass painting.

Great Barrington: In a new songwriting workshop, Terry plays an original piece of music on an adaptive string instrument— designed and built just for her by CATA Faculty.



our community!



Williamstown: A resident at a local nursing home recalls a memory from her childhood. Wes, a faculty artist, strums his guitar and together, they create a song based on her memory.

Pittsfield: At a CATA art exhibit, Hannah takes on a role as a paid CATA Ambassador, greeting guests and sharing about the techniques and style she used in her painting.

Lee: At a day program for people with traumatic and acquired brain injuries, John uses innovative painting tools and adaptive brushes to apply paint to canvas, bringing his creative ideas to life.



Lee: Dan, a CATA artist, leads a class of high school students with special needs in a dance warm up— encouraging everyone to move along with the music. Every week, Dan works with CATA faculty as an assistant teacher to co-lead dance workshops at Lee High School. “It’s beautiful,” says Dan. “Like visiting my younger self at school.”



Great Barrington: On a Saturday morning, families and children with special needs gather for our Art & Tea program. Children and their siblings paint colorful Valentines cards while their parents connect with one another, sharing tips and resources.

Partner Organizations

Your support fuels CATA’s partnerships with 60 residences, schools, day programs, agencies, and nursing homes to reach people with disabilities across Berkshire and Columbia counties, including:

Baroco Corp
Berkshire County Arc (BCArc)
Berkshire Family & Individual Resources (BFAIR)
Berkshire Place
Berkshire Hills Regional School District
Blue Q
Cadmus Lifesharing Association
Central Berkshire Regional School District
College Internship Program
Columbia County Arc (Coarc)
ExtraSpecialTeas
Guidewire, Inc.
Hillcrest Educational Centers
High Spirit Community Farm
Hoosac Valley Regional School District
Integratus Healthcare
Laurel Ridge Senior Living
Leander House
Lee Middle & High School
Lenox Memorial Middle & High School
Meadow House
North Adams Public Schools
Nonotuck
Oakdale Residences
Oak Lodge
Pathlight
Pittsfield Public Schools
Riverbrook Residence
ServiceNet
Southern Berkshire Regional School District
Stanton Home
Taconic Hills Central School District
UCP of Western Massachusetts

Thank You for Supporting CATA Artists in 2024

This list includes supporters who gave to CATA from September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024

Please let us know of any errors or omissions.

Thank you also to those generous donors who gave after September 1, 2024—you'll be on our list next year!

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**Thank you,
loyal supporters!**

Boldfaced names indicate donors who have given to CATA for 5 or more fiscal years in a row.

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**“Through CATA, we get to see
parts of our daughter that we
might not have known.”**

—PARENTS OF A CATA ARTIST

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Mungy

“When you make a donation to CATA, you know exactly where and how your dollars are going to be used. You’ll feel good about yourself—and you’ll feel good about the world.”

DAVID ROSENTHAL, CATA DONOR

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My godson Kevin

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YOUR IMPACT

...Will go even further!

2024 was an especially exciting year for CATA. We applied for a grant in 2023 funded by **MacKenzie Scott: The Yield Giving Open Call**. Over 6,350 nonprofits from across the U.S. applied and were evaluated by national experts for the chance to receive a \$1 million grant to help improve the well-being of people in their communities.

After a rigorous, multi-phased and year-long review process, we received the exciting news in 2024 that CATA had been selected as an awardee of MacKenzie Scott's Yield Giving Open Call! And: Because CATA was among the highest-scoring applicants, the panel **DOUBLED** our award! We received a grant of \$2 million to support our innovative work serving people with disabilities through the arts.

We hope that YOU feel a profound sense of pride in this achievement as a CATA supporter! YOU have helped build a trailblazing organization that has profoundly impacted the lives of people with disabilities— one that stood out among thousands of others, nationally. We could not do this work without you!

How CATA will use the funding:

These funds are entirely separate from the fundraising CATA needs to support day-to-day programs for people with disabilities. Our Board of Directors has voted unanimously to hold these in a Board-Designated Reserve so that we can use this one-time only grant to seed and launch a CATA FOR ALL Capital Campaign to help more people with disabilities thrive through life-changing arts programs.

We want this award to be a catalyst to inspire more people to support CATA so we can do more for our community. We know there is unmet need in our community— especially for people with disabilities who are struggling financially and for children with special needs— and we're working to grow to meet that need. Look out for more news in the coming weeks about our plans. Your support for CATA will go even further!



Colin (Berkshire Hills Regional School District) poses with his artwork at the Clark Art Institute. Colin's painting sold— and he received a commission check!



Josue (BFAIR)
explores new art-
making techniques
in a CATA workshop.

Your Impact... In Your Words

“Giving to CATA, we’re helping create the community that we want to live in.”

When CATA supporters David and Ashley Rice first discovered CATA over ten years ago and experienced the talents of CATA artists on stage, they knew they wanted to get involved.

“We were so blown away by the first performance we saw,” says Ashley. “We realized right away just how amazing CATA is, and how important it is as a resource for people with disabilities.”

“CATA gives so much to our entire community,” says David, Vice President of Investments at Park Square Financial Advisors of Raymond James. “It’s so moving to be at a CATA event, all different people together, different ages, backgrounds, and abilities, sharing in a common great experience. Anyone who gets involved with CATA is transformed by that experience.”

Now, over ten years later, David and Ashley are CATA superfans. They’ve become loyal donors, volunteered with the Gala committee, and David serves on the CATA board.

“We feel so blessed to have an organization like CATA that is modeling inclusion for our community,” says Ashley. “We get excited to invite friends to CATA events and share the work with them. And we love that our son Andrew gets to be a part of it, too.”

“By supporting CATA, we’re showing our son how to be inclusive with others— and showing him that every person has value,” says David.



Last year, their young son Andrew had the chance to buy his own piece of CATA artwork. “Andrew really resonated with a piece at CATA’s Annual Art Show that reminded him of *Starry Night*. It was eye opening for him— to see the work of artists with disabilities on the walls of the Clark Art Institute. And as a parent, it was so meaningful to see him embrace that.”

For David and Ashley, giving to CATA is a way of expressing their values.

“It’s really eye opening as a donor to support an organization where you can see the impact right away,” says Ashley. “It’s a good use of finances, and it’s a way to say what our values are. I think of CATA like a beacon of hope. And we get to be a part of that through our giving.”

“CATA sets a high bar for nonprofits, the way they put our gifts to work to make a big impact in our community,” says David. “We’ve watched the organization grow so much over the last 10 years. When we first got involved, CATA was reaching 300 people. Now, CATA is reaching over 1,000 people with disabilities! It’s just amazing.”

“Giving to CATA is a really rewarding way to be involved, especially on a local level, to make a difference right here in our backyard. We’re helping create the community that we want to live in,” says David.

FY2024 Financial Overview

2024 was a banner year for CATA! Fueled by your support, we grew CATA’s innovative programs for people with disabilities, carefully stewarding CATA’s finances and resources all the way. For over 10 years, CATA has met budget with no deficit, posting a modest surplus each year to support our continued financial stability. Last year, we strategically drew from Board-Designated Reserves specifically created to fund innovative pilots—allowing us to launch new programs to meet the needs of CATA artists.

CATA deepened our core commitment to financial accessibility, providing programs for significantly reduced costs or entirely free of charge to open the door for more people with disabilities to participate in the arts. Generous donors like you stepped forward to make CATA’s work possible: Donations made up 86% of our overall income. **Your gifts directly supported programs for low-income people with disabilities who crave and deserve creative outlets.**

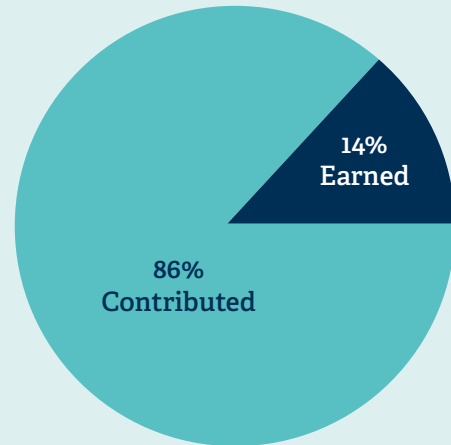
As always, programs serving artists with disabilities were our primary expense. Your generosity sustained workshops, exhibits, and performances that provide life-changing opportunities for CATA artists of all ages.

Fiscal Year 2024: September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024

INCOME:

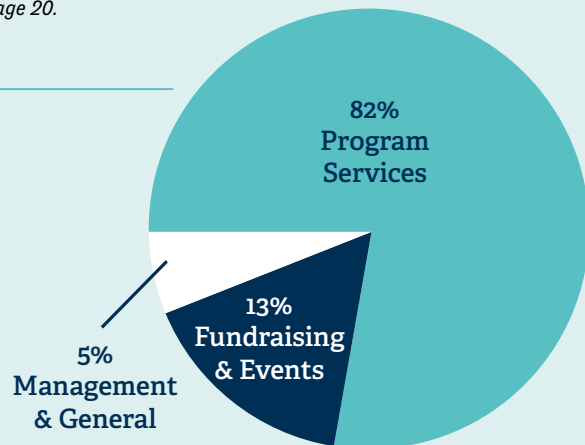
Contributed:	\$2,100,364
Individual:	\$1,449,393
Corporations:	\$116,771
Grants/Foundation:	\$534,200*
Earned	\$ 373,190
<i>including program fees and art sales</i>	
Released net assets from Board Designated “Program Innovation” Fund:	\$200,000
Total Income:	\$2,673,554
<i>including released net assets</i>	

*Does not include MacKenzie Scott Yield Giving Grant. See page 20.



EXPENSES:

Program Services:	\$2,148,590
Fundraising & Events:	\$335,995
Management & General:	\$144,373
Total Expenses:	\$2,628,958





Hannah expresses joy in a CATA dance workshop. Your support makes it happen!

CATA STAFF

Margaret Keller, *Executive Director*

PROGRAM

Jeff Gagnon, *Program Director (School Programs)*

Kelly Galvin, *Program Director (Agency Programs)*

Kara Smith, *Program Director (Studio Programs)*

Courtney Maxwell, *Program Coordinator*

Shawn Mille, *Program Associate*

Wes Buckley, *Resident Music Faculty & Music Coordinator*

Beth Liebowitz, *Resident Dance Faculty & Performance Manager*

Caroline Calkins, *Resident Theater Arts Faculty*

Adam Gudeon, *Resident Visual Arts Faculty*

Katie Herbst, *Resident Music Faculty*

Lauren Levato Coyne, *Resident Visual Arts Faculty*

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Nina Boutsikaris, *Grants & Communications Coordinator*

Jeremy Lovelett, *Communications Associate*

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Bailey Girvan, *Associate Director of Development*

Chaya Schneider, *Development Coordinator*

David Dashiell, *Development Associate*

ADMINISTRATIVE

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Caroline Calkins*

Kelly Galvin

Diane Prusha

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Janet Reich Elsbach

DANCE

Beth Liebowitz*

Olivia Martin

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Gregory Boover

Jill Fleming

Maddy Magio

Roger Reed

Ryan Winkles

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Daryl Brooke

Wes Buckley*

Aimée Gelinias

Katie Herbst*

JoAnne Spies

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Jeff Gagnon

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Lauren Levato Coyne*

Marlene Marshall

Courtney Maxwell

Janice Shields

Kara Smith

Hilary VanWright

YOGA

Paula Boyajian

Pam Levin

A.R.T. TRACKERS & ADAPTIVE PAINTING

Adam Gudeon*

Lauren Levato Coyne*

Stefanie Weber

*Resident Faculty Artists

community access



Community Access to the Arts (CATA) nurtures and celebrates the creativity of people with disabilities.

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On the cover: Sandra develops her talents in CATA programs—thanks to you!