

**Name:** Shannon Kelly

### **Supporting Small Artists**

Art is crucial to society. It's an outlet for those who choose to create it, and extremely fulfilling to watch a project grow from start to finish. Art takes so many different forms, and yet when presented as a career, the idea is often shot down. The piece of advice "Do what you love and you'll never work a day in your life", is often thrown around, but when a child or teenager investigates the idea of entering an artistic career, the support can be less than overwhelming.

As a high school student looking towards a career in the arts, I believe that young artists deserve more encouragement and support from schools and peers when pursuing their dreams. I want to tear down the idea that art is something that is meant to just be a hobby, and lift up small artists with the platform I have. By sharing creations, projects, and even small local businesses, I believe that I can use my platform and my voice to remind young artists of their talent and importance to our community.

One of the best things about supporting these young artists is that a little recognition goes a long way. Social media is a huge game changer, and even just a couple posts promoting an artist's work can validate them and show them that their passion is worth pursuing. There are so many local small businesses that I believe would love to be approached by a bigger organization such as MAO to potentially become a sponsor.

As Miss Vermont's Outstanding Teen, I could use the larger platform to truly shine a light on the importance of supporting young artists and helping out small businesses. To generate interest in artistic careers and help artists support their dreams by supporting their small businesses would be fulfilling not only a personal mission of mine, but a community need.

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Signature/Date