



# Client Profile: Susan Montagna, Inspire Community Fine Art Center

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*Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life. ~ Pablo Picasso*

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Every day, we are touched by art: a child's drawing on the refrigerator, the pages of a book that whisk us away, architecture that envelops us, music that melts away the stress of the day.

Art brings us to life. It heals us. It connects us to our family, our community, our world.

[Inspire Community Fine Art Center](#) is dedicated to art education in San Antonio, and exists to help others find the healing power of art through their own imaginations.

“Art Education seems to be disappearing. At Inspire Community Fine Art Center, we focus on providing a resource for art education,” Executive Director Susan Montagna said. “We give people an opportunity to discover their own creativity. It’s what I’m passionate about.”

But sometimes passion can only take you so far.

The vision, when incorporated in 2005, was to bring art education to the community. “As it grew, as we developed our outreach programs and we had more people looking to us, it became evident that it was getting to be too much for one person,” Montagna said.

Quickly, classes started to fill, and opportunities came to light. Before long, Inspire had five [community outreach](#) programs in the city of San Antonio. Grants and private fundraising events were a main source of funds, but Inspire needed to take it a step further.

“We needed to figure out how to expand our development and fundraising to be more sustainable and generate more dependable income,” Susan said.

That was more than three years ago. Susan turned to Kathy MacNaughton and went through KMAC & Associates’ S.C.O.R.↔E.™ program. Soon after beginning the process, the wheels were in motion.

“Kathy helped us come up with a repeatable fundraising event that would be identified with Inspire.”

360 Degrees of Philanthropic Insight

That event – the Inspire on Fire Juried Art Competition – brings together student artists, amateurs and professional artists who create and display their work in a social atmosphere, through which the public can appreciate the works, and in some cases, buy those art pieces. Funds raised through the annual event help sustain Inspire’s community outreach programs.

As Inspire has grown, so too has its needs. After the organization completed the S.C.O.R. ⇄E.™ program, Susan decided to continue working with Kathy as her coach.

“She’s a great sounding board for me. A great person I can bounce ideas off of,” she said. “She has definitely stressed the importance of community collaboration and following through.”

And as she begins the new year, Susan Montagna looks toward a bright future filled with new opportunities. Inspire is moving its center to the Mahncke Park neighborhood, and with that new facility comes a chance to build new relationships.

“There are so many things around us, so many wonderful organizations and resources,” Susan said. “We want to be active in collaborating with community partners, while not losing track of the big picture.”