

## Art Supports Science

A young Picasso or Mozart could become the next Edison, says an MSU researcher.



New MSU research finds a positive link between childhood participation in arts and crafts activities—especially music—to patents generated and businesses launched as adults. In the study, published in the journal *Economic Development Quarterly*, the research team studied a group of MSU Honors College graduates from 1990 to 1995 who majored in science, technology, engineering or mathematics—or STEM.

They found that those who own businesses or patents received up to eight times more exposure to the arts as children than the general public. “The most interesting finding was the importance of sustained participation in those activities,” says Rex LaMore, director of MSU’s Center for Community and Economic Development. “If you started as a young child and continued in your adult years, you’re more likely to be an inventor as measured by the number of patents generated, businesses formed or articles published. And that was something we were surprised to discover.” Why? Such activity fosters out-of-the-box thinking, the researchers say.

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