

**Assembly 2007
Peer Session Report**

**Arts Education Managers
Professional Development Institute
December 4 – 8, 2007
Baltimore, MD**

Professional Development Institute (PDI) Goal

The professional development institute will provide essential education, arts experience, networking and leadership opportunities for state arts agencies (SAA) arts education (AE) managers.

Background Information

The Baltimore PDI sessions built on the work from the previous two institutes in Idaho and New Mexico, which focused on three of the SAA arts education managers' 13 skill domains: 1) Evaluation and Assessment; 2) Policy Formulation, Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation; and 3) Advocacy. Feedback from the evaluations for the last two institutes indicated interest in continued work in these skill domains with deeper immersion during the workshop sessions. Also, more time for reflection throughout the institute had been strongly suggested thus the journal periods scheduled were an attempt to address this request.

Tuesday, December 4, 2007

New AE Managers' Orientation

Orientation activities for new AE managers occurred. This is the first opportunity for the new AE managers to come together as a group, and for most, the first opportunity to meet their mentor and other AE managers in person. Carmen Boston provides the initial orientation to a new AE manager soon after he/she begins employment with their SAA.

The goal of this orientation is to clarify and share new information about the major components of the AE managers' professional development program such as the professional development fund and individual professional development plan. In addition it is an opportunity for new AE managers to network with other managers so they will begin to feel part of the group as soon as possible and for veteran managers to learn the issues of concern for the new managers.

Challenges for new managers include:

- How to do this job
- Funding
- Managing priorities
- Balancing politics and content
- Finding passions among priorities

Examples of issues they faced and handled:

- Re-establish trust by having meetings with people
- Adopting content to fit artists and teachers
- Applicant complaints re: grants

One thing you want to learn at the PDI:

- What are the best practices with limited funding
- Make application process user friendly
- Data/research done with drop-out rates
- New ideas to raise consciousness about arts education
- How to work in correction facilities
- Move more constituents “up” to qualify for NEA grants
- Training teaching artists

Welcome Dinner

The welcome dinner and opening programs are an opportunity for all AE managers to network and begin their focus on the learning goals of the PDI. Dr. Sarah Bainter Cunningham, NEA Director of Arts Education, was scheduled to be the keynote speaker for the opening event, but due to illness was not able to attend. Many SAAs support out-of-school and after-school activities, and the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities gave a presentation on Coming Up Taller, a national initiative that recognizes and supports out-of-school and after-school arts and humanities youth programs. Deborah Ott (Georgia Council on the Arts), David Marshall (Massachusetts Cultural Council), and Catherine O’Brian (New Hampshire State Council on the Arts) spoke about Coming Up Taller in relation to programs in their state and how the award can be used to leverage more opportunities and resources for these types of programs.

Benjamin the Magnificent aka John Benjamin (Kentucky Arts Council) provided his last official insight into the world of arts education administration with the assistance of Nancy Daugherty (NEA Program Specialist). After this presentation, Daugherty led the group in a tribute to John Benjamin who will be retiring from the Kentucky Arts Council before the next PDI scheduled for the fall.

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Artist Workshop with Margot Greenlee (Liz Lerman Dance Exchange Dancer) at the American Visionary Museum

Margot Greenlee began the workshop with a brief description of Liz Lerman Dance Exchange and their latest work which includes a focus on things sacred. Greenlee asked the group to think about a sacred act, action, and object and then discuss it in small groups. She also asked the group to think about:

- 1) when and where they experience assessment; and
- 2) what makes for good feedback/what are the characteristics of good feedback?

From the large feedback of the sacred act discussion, Greenlee solicited gestures which were combined into a shared movement phrase. The group then practiced this phrase and worked in pairs to hone and edit the phrase using an adapted version of the Critical Response Process (CRP).

The end of the dance session was a discussion of the experience. The group reviewed the original criteria for good feedback generated in the opening discussion, and discussed whether the critical response technique met those criteria. Greenlee shared the Dance Exchange's definition of good feedback: "helps the creator do their best work". She reviewed the teaching process for the company when it uses the CRP technique with groups they work with: 1. What works? 2. Watch me do this (specific thing I'm working on) 3. Partner says "Try this" 4. Teacher's Choice--point at which educator gets to have input (What do you still want students to experience?) 5. Next steps--How will it change what I will do in the future?

Information about the process can be found at www.toolbox.danceexchange.org

Artist Workshop with five artists of Baltimore Clayworks at Baltimore Clayworks

Thursday, December 6, 2007

Regional Meetings

Each region met individually over breakfast to discuss matters pertinent to their region.

Advocacy Workshop at Reginald F. Lewis Museum

Tom Birch, NASAA Legislative Counsel provided a brief federal legislation update before sharing with the group suggestions for how they can become more active in advocacy efforts.

Camellia El-Antably (Wyoming Arts Council) and Mary Campbell-Zopf (Ohio) introduced the tool kit and the history of its evolution. Sherry Brown (Rhode Island State Arts Council), co-chair of the Research Based Tool Kit Committee, discussed the survey results for this project and provided a "walk-through" of the Tool Kit which is hidden on NASAA's Web site under the Arts and Learning page. It is scheduled to be launched the beginning of the new year. The three major sections include:

- 1) The Arts and the Creative Workforce;
- 2) The Arts and Literacy Development; and
- 3) The Arts, Cognition, and Social Development.

A component of the tool kit includes ArtFacts Cards and the tool kit Web page will be set-up for people to access the images from the cards to make or order their own cards. A few samples of the cards were given out to everyone, and instructions for how to order and access them was provided.

John L. Ceschini, Executive Director of Arts Education for Maryland Schools (AEMS) and Mary Ann E. Mears, Board Member of AEMS, provided the local perspective for

advocacy by sharing information about AEMS history, goals and current work. They also shared their most recent video, which will be available spring 2008 from their Web site.

Saturday, December 8, 2007

Dr. Cunningham led the group in a reflection exercise with a series of questions as outlined below.

Deborah Ott recommended *Proust Was a Neuroscientist* by Jonah Lehrer.

Questions

- What was the funniest thing you ever heard?
- Describe the nastiest thing you ever spelled?
- Describe the most rebellious thing you ever done?
- Describe the most obedient act you have ever done?
- If given a million dollars for science research, how would you spend it?
- How would you describe beauty?
- What is the principle you live your life by?

PERSONAL

- If you were to think of your personal life in the last year what movie or novel title would you chose?
- What is the first line of this story/movie you're going to tell?
- What is the last line of the story/movie representation of your last year?

ARTS EDUCATION

- What has the last year been like for you as an arts education manager? And what would the movie/novel title be?
- What is the first line of this story/movie you're going to tell?
- What is the last line of the story/movie representation of your last year?

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- What are the five rules that you try to follow?
 - Which one would you possibly break? Or why do you feel good about your rules?

If you were to create new rules/guidelines for the next year or the future for your work as an arts education manager what would they be? (Can start with the personnel if you want to.)

Are your colleagues aware of the rules that you set for yourself? Maybe you share one of those rules with them. Would it be helpful to share those rules or one of those rules with them?

Think about a personal question you would like to think about for the next year. What question would stimulate your thinking for the next year?

As an arts education manager, what is a leading question that you may carry with you for the next six months or year?

Is there a question as arts education managers that we should take with us for the next year?

The question answers included:

- How do we continue to think about quality?
- Do we have system to encourage another artistic genius?
- How can we help children to be the best that they can be?
- What has changed and how can we make the most of it?
- Can we move ourselves/agenda to move the well-being of the student forward?
- Does what we do matter? What really matters?
 - The impulse to create will always be there – so it doesn't matter whether its in-school or out-of-school
 - So let us let go of our anxiety about how to _____
- Why does it matter for 18 yrs to graduate without arts?
 - It's an injustice; we don't know whether they like or not? They need the opportunity to decide whether they like arts or not.
- Can we marshal personal strength to _____change?
- How can make sure that the work that we do has that swing?

Journal Time

Journal Time was scheduled at the end of each session. Although the timing provided at the end of each session was not always available as planned, participants were encourage to take time to write their thoughts and impressions on what they learned. Each participant was provided with a journal and handout — “Journal Practice Overview & Guide” to help them with this task.