

**State Arts Agency Arts Education Managers
2021 Virtual Professional Development Institute**

Keynote Presenter



Eddie Torres
President & CEO
Grantmakers in the Arts

Edwin Torres serves as President & CEO of Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA), the only national association of both public and private arts and culture funders in the United States. Prior to joining GIA, Torres served as deputy commissioner of cultural Affairs for the City of New York. The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs is the largest local public cultural funding agency in the nation. Torres led the agency's work cultivating and celebrating diversity, inclusion and equity; supporting neighborhoods' integration of the creative community into community development efforts; and fostering collaborations with other agencies. Torres's projects included elements of the city's long-term sustainability plan, a study of and efforts to support the diversity of the city's cultural organizations and the development of New York City's first cultural plan. Prior to joining the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, he was a program officer with The Rockefeller Foundation, where he worked on the foundation's support for arts and culture, jobs access, and resilience. He has also served in the dean's office at Parsons the New School for Design, on the arts and culture team at The Ford Foundation as well as on the staff of the Bronx Council on the Arts. He holds a master of arts in art history from Hunter College and a master of science in management from The New School.

Speaker & Artist Bios
(in alphabetical order)



Judy Dow (Winooksi Abenaki)
Artist, Writer, Educator
Executive Director
Gedakina

Judy Dow is an artist, writer and educator. She is the executive director of Gedakina, a multigenerational endeavor to strengthen and revitalize the cultural knowledge and identity of Native American women and their families from across New England. Judy taught at the Vermont Governor's Institute for the Arts for 10 years and was the 2004 recipient of the Governor's Heritage Award for Outstanding Educator. Judy's basketry has been displayed in museums across the United States and Canada. As an independent education consultant and specialist, she has conducted classes for students in kindergarten through college. Using an interdisciplinary format, she integrates art with science, history, writing and mathematics. Currently Judy has felted wool tapestries on tour throughout Europe addressing anti-eugenics.



Elisa García-Radcliffe
Arts Learning Manager
Arizona Commission on the Arts

Elisa García-Radcliffe (they/them) is an arts administrator, educator and movement artist who lives in Phoenix, Arizona. Elisa has over 12 years of experience working as a dance educator in the Phoenix Union High School District. Through their involvement in public education, they've witnessed firsthand how important access to quality creative and cultural activities is for students. They have a strong belief that dance and art can and should be grounded in the community it serves. Elisa is currently the arts learning manager at the Arizona Commission on the Arts, overseeing the Arts Commission's comprehensive slate of arts learning grant making, programs, partnerships and strategic initiatives. They serve as a board member for RE:FRAME Youth Arts Center, a place for and by young folx to artistically resist the decentering of their power, rights and identities. Elisa is currently a performer in Liz Lerman's Wicked Bodies.



Tamar Krames
Program Manager, Arts in Education
Washington State Arts Commission

As ArtsWA's Arts in Education (AIE) program manager, Tamar oversees a variety of programs and partnerships with a focus on equitable access to quality arts learning. As an arts administrator, a national board certified teacher and a multimedia artist, supporting innovative, community based practices in schools has been at the core of her work for the past 20 years. Current projects include codirecting the Washington State Teaching Artist Training Lab, developing a new statewide arts and early learning program, providing ongoing support for teaching artists and preK-12 art teachers, and amplifying the creative practices of youth and educators.



Indi McCassey
Executive Director
Arts Education Alliance of the Bay Area

Indi McCassey believes in the power of joyful, intergenerational collaboration to foster social change. Indi is a white, queer, creative catalyst who has spent the past two decades working at the intersection of arts, education and community health. They currently partner with school districts and community arts organizations across the country to provide professional development, advocacy consultation and strategic planning. Indi also serves as the executive director of the Arts Education Alliance of the Bay Area, a regional hub that connects and supports arts education coalitions for a more just and creative San Francisco Bay Area. They hold a masters in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and are a former artist in residence at Harvard's Project Zero. As a member of the Creative Youth Development National Partnership, Indi integrates the partnership's three values of racial equity, youth voice, and collective action into all aspects of their work.



Drekkia Morning
Arts in Education Program Manager
Arkansas Arts Council

Drekkia Morning—the poet, the artist, the creator and energy curator! Author of the book "17 Mirrors" and arts in education program manager for the state of Arkansas. Graduate of the University of Central Arkansas. An active advocate for women empowerment. Recently appointed Little Rock School District Community Advisory Board member and candidate for the Little Rock School District School Board. Morning is an artist by nature and committed to keeping the arts alive!



Ty Muhammed
Transforming Artistic Collaborator
Rising Youth Theatre

Thameenah "Ty" Muhammad is a 20 year-old Black {Afro-Caribbean} queer artist and activist. Ty is a Transforming Artistic Collaborator with Rising Youth Theatre and a cofounder of RE:FRAME Youth Arts Center. They are a multidisciplinary artist whose main mediums include: acting, dancing, poetry/spoken word and visual art. She creates art about their past, present and future inspired by fantasy, social justice, Afro-futurism, sci-fi and memes. Ty's past accomplishments include collaborating with the ACLU of Arizona, receiving the 2018 Mayor's Arts Award for Young Artist, interning at the Arizona Commission on the Arts to create the 2018 Joint Arts Education Conference, and interning/performing with Urban Bush Woman in their Summer Leadership Institute. Her work reflects the fire in their heart; Ty aims to help the world the best they can, whether that's during a protest or by joking with everyone she meets.



Carrie Nath
Managing Director
The Ollie Webb Center, Inc.

Carrie A Nath is the managing director of The Art of Imagination program at The Ollie Webb Center, Inc., in Omaha, Nebraska. She has been working throughout the United States for 34 years in service of the arts and arts education. Nath has served as the executive director of The Kentucky Center Governor's School for the Arts, director of education at The Kentucky Arts Council, associate director of education for the Seattle Opera and Education Consultant for the Ford's Theater in D.C. A choreographer and director as well, her credits include: Manhattan School of Music, Cornish College of the Arts and in education departments at Actor's Theater of Louisville, the Washington National Opera, the Shakespeare Theater in D.C. and Seattle Repertory Theatre. Nath is on the Nebraska Arts Council (NAC) Teaching Artist Roster and has served on panels for the NAC and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Paula Yamilet Alvarado Ortega
Cofounder
RE:FRAME Youth Arts Center

My name is Paula Yamilet Alvarado Ortega (Ella/She.) I am a 21-year-old binational multidisciplinary artist from Phoenix, Arizona & Agua Prieta, Sonora. I am also cofounder and core team member at RE:FRAME Youth Arts Center. I work for Creative Youth Development as the national youth coordinator. I am a teaching artist at a high school with Rising Youth Theatre. I focus on completely shifting the way young people are included and valued. Alongside my peers, I ignite new norms where young people are recognized as leaders, are compensated for their time and work alongside adults equally.



Melissa Parke
Founder
Black Teaching Artist Lab

Melissa Parke founded Black Teaching Artist Lab, LLC, in 2020, with the mission to give Black teaching artists across the diaspora the opportunity to become better social and cultural leaders through educational workshops and international travel.



Chontay Standing Rock (Chippewa Cree)
Musician

Chontay Standing Rock is a Chippewa Cree hand drum champion, living on the Rocky Boys reservation of North Central Montana. Currently working as a security guard through the tribal office, Chontay will return to Montana State University in Bozeman in fall 2022 to complete his B.A. in music technology with a minor in Native American studies. Chontay previously achieved an A.A. liberal arts degree from Stone Child community college. The 7th oldest of 10 children in his family, Chontay was found to have a learning disability during his first year in elementary school, a label that he worked hard to overcome throughout his school years and into college. Despite learning challenges, education has always played a central role in his life, along with immersion and practice in his cultural traditions. Driving Chontay's determination to complete his education is his dedication and desire to be there for his indigenous people. Chontay Standing Rock is regularly invited to perform across the western United States, an in-demand recording artist with two albums out and a third album in the making. You can also find his work on YouTube and on Spotify.



Chad Swan-Badgero
Arts Education Program Manager
Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs

Chad Swan-Badgero serves as the arts education program manager for the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs. In his off hours he is the founder and artistic director for Peppermint Creek Theatre Company, a small nonprofit theatre company based in Lansing. He is the proud husband to Matt and father to Sawyer and enjoys baking, running and the rabbit hole that is Randy Rainbow videos.



Jim Wolfe
Arts in Education Coordinator
West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History

Jim Wolfe is the arts in education coordinator at the West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History. He administers the Arts in Education, STEAM, and Mini-Grant programs, and is the state's Poetry Out Loud coordinator. He also hosts the agency's monthly television program. Jim has worked as an actor, director and voice-over artist and was a founding member of the Charleston Stage Company in Charleston, West Virginia. He has experience as a congressional staffer, VISTA worker, adult literacy educator, educational media producer and (briefly) as the manager of a bar/restaurant/theatre/live music venue. Jim graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a degree in American Studies.



Nina Woodruff-Walker
Board Cochair
Arts Education Alliance of the Bay Area,
Executive Director
Museum of Oakland Children's Art (MOCHA)

An Oakland native and MOCHA executive director, Nina Woodruff-Walker became a "MOCHA kid" in 1989 when connecting through the East Oakland Youth Development Center. When Oakland schools removed arts programming from the curriculum, MOCHA became an art-making refuge during her teenage years. She found delight in identifying different ways to use art to create, express, shape and influence, even getting an experience in giving back as a MOCHA youth board member. This cemented her passion for community service. Nina is a poet who loves visual arts and understands the value of providing a platform for children to express, create and teach.

2021 Arts Education Working Group



**Anne Alston, Mid-America Region Representative
Program Specialist
Nebraska Arts Council**

In her role as a program specialist for the Nebraska Arts Council (NAC), Anne works to ensure that all Nebraskans have opportunities for lifelong learning in the arts, including arts education in schools. She also oversees the Poetry Out Loud program for the state of Nebraska and manages special NAC initiatives to advance the arts

throughout the state. She currently serves on the Nebraskans for the Arts Education Committee and Poetry from the Plains website advisory committee. In 2018 the National Council of Teachers of English and the Nebraska Language Arts Council honored her with an Intellectual Freedom Award. Prior to NAC, Anne was a teaching specialist at Joslyn Art Museum and headed outreach programs at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.



**Precious Blake
Associate Consultant, Arts Aspire Consulting
Visual Journalist**

Precious Blake is a visual journalist, arts administrator and community organizer living in Baltimore, Maryland. Precious received her bachelor of fine arts in illustration with a concentration in printmaking at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). Precious makes pathways for equitable access to the arts by working with arts education advocates, leading workshops, curating conversations, and creating collaborations that combine her passion for journalism and illustration and highlighting historically marginalized voices. The latter work began with Creatives of Color, a visual journalism project that collected the stories of culturally diverse Baltimore arts figures through type and illustrations. In addition to her artistic practice, Precious has led or copresented at

numerous panels and been the recipient of several local, statewide, and national awards and fellowships, including the Starting Bloc Social Innovation Fellowship, Women of Color in the Arts Mentorship Program, Baltimore Corps, Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship and the MICA Sidney Lake Award. She has worked in several leadership capacities at arts organizations in the Baltimore and Washington, D.C., region. She is also a member of the design for well-being collective Black Womxn Flourish.



**Anastasia Freyermuth, Western Region Representative
Arts Education and Grants Coordinator
Arizona Arts Commission**

Anastasia Freyermuth is arts learning and evaluation coordinator at the Arizona Commission on the Arts, where they help oversee the agency's Arts Learning grant programs, coordinates the Poetry Out Loud program for the state of Arizona and conducts agencywide evaluation work. Anastasia's commitment to helping foster arts learning experiences for communities throughout Arizona comes from their own experience growing up in rural Arizona. Growing up in an area which saw change and challenge instilled the important role art plays in a person's sense of belonging to a community. These experiences have also shown Anastasia

that meaningful arts learning is integrally connected to continual personal learning, open dialogue and authentic engagement. Anastasia is honored to work alongside their colleagues in the national field of arts education. The collective thinking generated in this cohort helps Anastasia better understand where and how the Arizona Commission on the Arts enacts its mission of "imagine(ing) an Arizona where everyone can participate in and experience the arts."



**Alicia Fuss, Southern Region Representative
Director of Arts Education
Tennessee Arts Commission**

Alicia Lark Fuss joined the Tennessee Arts Commission in December 2020 and serves as the director of arts education. Prior to joining the Commission, Alicia worked for 11 years at Nashville Children's Theatre (NCT). As director of education, she was responsible for guiding the Drama School's robust lineup of camps and classes, training and supporting the roster of teaching artists, and designing programs to engage schools, families, and community organizations in NCT's work onstage and off. Alicia has also taught extensively as an adjunct instructor and guest director at Belmont and Lipscomb Universities, sharing her love of theatre for young audiences and arts education with preservice teachers and young adult artists. She holds a

bachelor's degree in theatre arts from Florida State University and a master of fine arts degree in theatre for young audiences from the University of Central Florida.



**Monica Grable, Western Region Representative
Arts Education Director
Montana Arts Council**

Monica Grable currently serves as arts education director for the Montana Arts Council, having joined the staff in February 2017 following more than 25 years as an arts educator and performing arts presenter. Monica holds a B.A. in art and an M.A. in education and has held secondary level visual art teaching positions in Minnesota and Montana, taught college level art methods courses for elementary educators, and throughout her career has engaged arts learners of all ages in a variety of community settings. In addition to background as a visual artist, Monica has maintained a lifelong interest in performing arts, a passion that ultimately led to her former position as founding executive director of

the Bitterroot Performing Arts Council, a community based multidisciplinary arts presenting organization in Montana's Bitterroot Valley.



**Stephanie Haines, Midwest Region Representative
Arts Education and Accessibility Manager
Indiana Arts Commission**

Stephanie Haines is the arts education & accessibility manager at the Indiana Arts Commission (IAC). Stephanie oversees the IAC's arts education program PACE (Partnering Arts, Communities, and Education) as well as Poetry Out Loud, Indiana State Poet Laureate program, and Regional Operating and Project grant program; she is also the agency's accessibility coordinator. Stephanie earned a master of arts degree in arts administration from Indiana University, and a bachelor of science degree in visual art education from the University of Indianapolis. She has more than 10 years of experience working with teaching artists and arts integration programming, with specialties in

professional development and artist lesson planning. Stephanie is a visual artist primarily in the mediums of painting and drawing.



**Troy Hickman, New England Region Representative
Arts Education Programs Manager
Vermont Arts Council**

Troy Hickman is the arts education programs manager at the Vermont Arts Council. Leveraging collaborations with artists, teachers, and statewide partners, he advocates for learning in, about and through the arts. Since 2017, he has administered the Council's education related grant programs, which include the Artist in Schools and Head Start Arts Integration programs. During this time, he has managed Vermont Poetry Out Loud and the Council's Teaching Artist Roster. Troy's creative background includes literacy and writing instruction. He has published poetry and has exhibited photography and nonfunctional ceramic forms.



**Christine Leahy, Mid-Atlantic Region Representative
Program Director, Arts in Education
New York State Council on the Arts**

Christine Leahy is a program director at the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), in charge of the Arts Education and Facilities programs. Initiatives started under her tenure include the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Orchestras and Classical Music (DinO) collaboration with the Music program, the New York State Creative Aging Pilot and the NYS Youth Media Symposium. In previous positions at NYSCA she served in the agency's Literature, Visual Arts, Museum, Architecture + Design, and Folk Arts programs. Christine formerly worked for the artist Jenny Holzer and in the education department at the Williams College Museum of Art, and has written for *The New York Times* and National Public Radio. She is a graduate of Williams College.



Elizabeth Shapiro, Executive Director Representative Director of Arts, Preservation and Museums Connecticut Office of the Arts

Elizabeth Shapiro has had the pleasure of serving as the director of arts, preservation and museums since August 2018. In this position, she directs and coordinates the work of the Connecticut Office of the Arts, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the four historic sites and museums operated by the SHPO; the Henry Whitfield State Museum (Guilford), the Prudence Crandall Museum (Canterbury), the Eric Sloane Museum (Kent) and Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine (East Granby). Prior to her position with the state, Liz spent six years as the executive director of the Connecticut League of History Organizations, the professional networking and support organization for volunteers and professionals working in public history in Connecticut. Liz served as executive

director of The Sharon (CT) Historical Society for 20 years and has worked as a consultant to nonprofit organizations in the areas of governance and strategic planning. She has worked in various capacities at The Museums and Gallery at Babson College, Wellesley, Massachusetts, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. Liz is a former board member and president of the Connecticut League of History Organizations and the Light Opera Company of Salisbury (Connecticut) and currently serves as a board and/or steering committee member for Connecticut History Illustrated, the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, New England Foundation for the Arts and the Connecticut Digital Archives. Liz attended Haverford College and received a masters' degree in history museum studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program.



**Nancy Daugherty
Arts Education Specialist
National Endowment for the Arts**

Nancy Daugherty has been an arts education specialist for the National Endowment for the Arts since June 2000. Through the agency's arts education program she has worked with applicants in all arts fields and disciplines, and is currently focused in the disciplines of dance, literature, theatre and musical theatre. She also advises the Arts Education Working Group, which designs professional development for state arts agency arts education managers; serves on the Advisory Committee of the Arts Education Partnership; and is part of the intergovernmental team that manages the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. From 2004 through 2007 she managed the agency's Summer Schools in the Arts program, a national initiative

designed to assess student learning and offer potential models of rigorous, standards based arts education. Prior to her federal service, she was the arts education coordinator for the West Virginia Commission on the Arts, where she also served as the coordinator for the Governor's Task Force on Arts in Basic Education. For the Center for Economic Options she developed training and marketing opportunities for sector-specific microenterprise

networks, such as the Appalachian Flower Network. She has served as a facilitator, presenter, consultant, panelist and conference planner for many state and national arts organizations. She is a graduate of West Virginia University with a degree in sociology and anthropology.



Susan Oetgen
Arts Learning Projects Director
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Susan Oetgen is the arts learning projects director for the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. In addition to managing the Professional Development Institute (PDI), her consulting portfolio currently includes codesigning and managing NASAA's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Mentorship pilot program; and serving as project director for the Young Audiences National Residency Teaching Artist Credential project. Prior to joining the NASAA staff, Susan served as an arts manager, educator and facilitator with a variety of performing arts organizations, including The Field, Stamford Symphony Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra and Tribeca Performing Arts Center. She also has served as a teaching artist/coach with the Everyday Arts

for Special Education (EASE) program, coaching New York City special education teachers and paraprofessionals on EASE's unique arts-integration curriculum for children with autism and emotional disturbance. Born and raised in the Washington, D.C., area, Susan holds a B.A. in theology from Georgetown University, an M.M. in classical vocal performance from the Catholic University of America, and a certificate in conflict analysis and resolution from George Mason University.