



State Arts Agency Arts Education Managers 2025 Professional Development Institute

**September 16-18, 2025
Des Moines, Iowa**

Proceedings

For more than 30 years, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) have supported the Professional Development Institute (PDI) for state and jurisdiction arts agency arts education managers. The PDI provides meaningful leadership development and technical assistance for arts education managers, who come from diverse professional backgrounds and fulfill a wide range of roles and responsibilities within state government. The purpose of the PDI is to equip participants with skills necessary to succeed in their roles as state arts agency arts education managers. PDI attendees gain job-specific tools and knowledge that are relevant across a wide array of state needs and circumstances. As a result of the PDI, arts education managers are knowledgeable leaders in their field through a peer network that new and seasoned managers alike find invaluable.

The 2025 PDI took place in Des Moines, Iowa, from Tuesday, September 16, through Thursday, September 18.

Drawing inspiration from the capacity building strategies and relationships cultivated in Iowa, the 2025 Professional Development Institute explored topics and questions relevant to all 56 states and jurisdictions.

Guiding Question & Outcomes

How can arts education managers envision future-ready arts learning systems and resources that benefit students, educators, communities and workforces across their states and jurisdictions?

- **Learning Outcome 1:** Participants will explore how arts education can cultivate transferable, creative and technical skills that prepare learners for a variety of career pathways in their own states and jurisdictions.
- **Learning Outcome 2:** Participants will examine how rural arts education practices engage local leadership and build on each community's distinct strengths to develop impactful programs.
- **Learning Outcome 3:** Participants will review and synthesize local, state and regional resources and learning frameworks that promote the health, well-being and overall capacity of SAA arts education managers.

2025 PDI Speaker and Artist Biographies

Preconference Resource Materials

A [resource page](#) was distributed to PDI participants to familiarize them with arts organizations and venues that would be hosts or presenters during the conference. This resource offered a concise overview of each organization along with links to accompanying videos or web pages providing additional information.

Monday, September 15

Per tradition, before the official start of the 2025 Professional Development Institute, first-time conference attendees gathered for dinner with National Endowment for the Arts Arts Education Specialist Nancy Daugherty to share transformational stories of arts education in their lives. Following dinner, the Arts Education Working Group (AEWG) joined Nancy and the first-time attendees for additional networking. This event aimed to help new managers forge meaningful connections with colleagues and the NEA before the conference began.

Tuesday, September 16

Participants departed from the Surety Hotel by bus and arrived at Mainframe Studios for breakfast and the official start of the 2025 Professional Development Institute.

Welcome Remarks

The 2025 Professional Development Institute formally began with opening remarks from Arts Education Working Group leadership. AEWG Chair Kimberly Washburn Motte, deputy director at the South Carolina Arts Commission, and Cochair Samantha Clarke, program officer for Arts Education & Lifelong Learning at the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, extended welcome remarks to attendees. They acknowledged and thanked the Arts Education Working Group and the National Endowment for the Arts for both planning and supporting the 2025 PDI.

Jennie Knoebel, senior grants and programs manager at the Iowa Arts Council, a branch of the Iowa Economic Development Authority and PDI site host, welcomed participants to Iowa and introduced Libby Crimmings, community engagement coordinator at Mainframe Studios. Libby welcomed the group, sharing that the venue is the largest nonprofit, affordable art student building of its kind in the nation. It houses 180 artist and teaching artist studios in addition to dedicated spaces for workshops, exhibitions and public events.

Nancy Daugherty emphasized the value of peer-to-peer learning that takes place during the PDI. Concluding welcome remarks, Kimberly and Samantha presented the 2025 PDI Guiding Question and Learning Outcomes, noting the intentions and goals of the shared time together. They then provided an overview of the schedule and introduced Arts Education Working Group members.

Arts Education Peer Learning Working Session

Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA) Arts in Education Program Manager Tamar Krames facilitated an interactive session that brought together state arts agency

arts education managers to actively share and reflect on current trends, challenges and promising practices across the field. Participants first participated in a short activity to build rapport at their assigned tables, as they would return to these groups frequently throughout the course of the conference to engage in in-depth discussion of conference topics. Tamar then facilitated a sociometry exercise entitled Four Corners. This exercise provided insights into individual and collective strengths, areas of interest and opportunities for growth pertaining to tasks specific to state arts agency arts education managers.



PDI attendees participate in peer learning working session.

Des Moines Arts Education Community Panel, Part 1

Following a brief break, Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Arts Education Specialist Danica Rosengren facilitated the first part of a panel discussion featuring Des Moines based teaching artists and arts education organizations. Panelists included Christine Her, executive director of ArtForce Iowa; Seso Martenes, artist at Mainframe Studios; Joseph Parrish, cofounder and executive director of Adventures in Social Development; and Christina Smith, president and CEO of Community Support Advocates.

In this session, the panelists shared how their programs respond to local needs through hands-on practice, mentorship and creative learning experiences. Christina Smith from Momentum Arts, a division of Community Support Advocates, discussed the

organization's 20-year commitment to providing both arts and wraparound services for individuals with disabilities through a model centered on hope and resilience.



Des Moines Arts Education Community Panel

Christine Her provided insights on ArtForce's work training staff and volunteers in trauma-informed care and healing-centered practices. She discussed the importance of forming authentic relationships with the youth served. ArtForce uses self-determination theory in its work, which posits that three basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence and relatedness—are essential for individual motivation, growth and well-being. Annie from Adventures in Social Development emphasized their mission to empower neurodivergent individuals through performance based learning in order to teach social skills. They consider their program to be a "rehearsal for life." Finally, Sesó Martenes shared how he has worked both within Mainframe Studios and beyond to expand access to arts education opportunities to Latinx youth in Des Moines. Sesó believes in the power of mentorship to support youth who are finding their artistic voices. The panel discussion provided participants with ideas and frameworks to further advance opportunities that benefit students, educators, communities and the workforce in their own states and jurisdictions.

Des Moines Arts Education Community Panel, Part 2

Following lunch, participants visited teaching artists and arts education organizations featured on the panel, in addition to others housed in Mainframe Studios, in their respective working spaces. The panelists hosted small-group conversations, teaching artist demonstrations and hands-on experiences providing an interactive format for participants to dive more deeply into topics most transferable to their state or jurisdiction context.



PDI participants experience social drumming facilitated by Adventures in Social Development.

Afternoon Welcome Remarks

NASAA Community Learning Director Eric Giles provided welcoming remarks for the afternoon session and introduced NASAA President and CEO Pam Breaux, who offered remarks virtually. Pam opened by expressing deep gratitude—to the Iowa Arts Council for hosting, to the National Endowment for the Arts for its decades-long partnership, and to attendees, whose leadership ensures that every community benefits from strong arts education. She emphasized that in uncertain times, arts education remains a steadfast source of creativity, empathy and resilience. Pam celebrated the strong bipartisan support that helps ensure all students have access to high-quality arts learning.

Iowa Arts Council Director David Schmitz welcomed participants and shared fun facts about Iowa and a warm acknowledgment of Jennie Knoebel's contributions in bringing the PDI to the state. He underscored that arts education is woven into Iowa's identity, shaping vibrant communities and expanding opportunities for young people statewide.

Keynote Presentation: We Build with What We Carry

Akwi Nji delivered an inspiring keynote rooted in poetry, personal narrative and reflection on creative leadership in times of transformation. Drawing from her experience as an arts leader, communications strategist and community collaborator, she invited participants to examine what it means to lead with clarity, creativity and care. Akwi invited the audience into a reflective exploration of memory, story, and truth—revealing how early "art scars" or "education scars," when young people are told they can't or shouldn't create, can shape a lifetime, and why the work of arts education managers is so essential in rewriting those narratives.



Keynote speaker Akwi Nji invites arts education managers to celebrate their wins.

Akwi emphasized that meaningful change is collaborative and sometimes slow, rooted in seeds we plant that we may never see fully bloom. She then invited each table to share and celebrate their own wins, encouraging attendees to embrace resilience and recognize the impact of their work. The keynote resonated with the PDI's third learning outcome, which focuses on resources and frameworks that promote the health, well-being and overall capacity of SAA arts education managers.

SEEDS Student Presentation and Performance

Samantha Clarke facilitated a session featuring Dontreale Anderson, cofounder and executive director of SEEDS, along with youth participants from the organization. Through strategic partnerships including Ballet Des Moines, SEEDS cultivates the next

generation of curators, artists and community leaders while affirming the significance of Black creativity in shaping culture and history. During this session, youth shared how their experience with SEEDS has fostered a sense of empowerment and creative expression.



SEEDS student dance performance

Day 1 Wrap-Up

AEWG Chair Kimberly Washburn Motte and Cochair Samantha Clarke facilitated closing reflections on Day 1. They facilitated an exercise entitled "Gots and Wants," which invited participants to anonymously share what they took away from the day and what they hope for in coming days. Participants then boarded buses to return to the Surety Hotel, with the evening free for dinner on their own.

Day 1 Agenda Overview

All times are Central Daylight Time.

8:30 a.m. Bus departs hotel for Mainframe Studios

*Surety Hotel
206 6th Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309*

8:45 – 9:45 a.m. **Arrival and Breakfast** (provided)

*Mainframe Studios
900 Keosauqua Way
Des Moines, IA 50309*

9:45 – 10:15 a.m. **Welcome Remarks**

Kimberly Washburn Motte, Chair, Arts Education Working Group (AEWG); Deputy Director, South Carolina Arts Commission

Samantha Clarke, Cochair, AEWG; Program Officer, Arts Education & Lifelong Learning, New Jersey State Council on the Arts; Jennie Knoebel, Site Host, AEWG; Senior Grants and Programs Manager, Iowa Arts Council, Iowa Economic Development Authority

Libby Crimmings, Community Engagement Coordinator, Mainframe Studios

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

Arts Education Working Group: Matthew Anderson, Arts Education Director, North Dakota Council on the Arts; Nancy Daugherty, Arts Education Specialist, National Endowment for the Arts; Tamar Krames, Arts in Education Program Manager, Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA); Meghan McFerrin, Arts Education Project Manager, NASAA; Martha Piscuskas, Program Director, Maine Arts Commission; Danica Rosengren, Arts Education Specialist, Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts; Jenni Ryan, Arts Education Program Specialist, Missouri Arts Council

- 10:15 – 11:15 a.m.** **Arts Education Peer Learning Working Session**
- Session Facilitator:* Tamar Krames, Arts in Education Program Manager, ArtsWA
- 11:15 – 11:30 a.m. Break
- 11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.** **Des Moines Arts Education Community Panel, Part 1**
- Session Facilitator:* Danica Rosengren, Arts Education Specialist, Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts
- Christine Her, Executive Director, ArtForce Iowa; Seso Martenes, Artist, Mainframe Studios; Joseph Parrish, Cofounder and Executive Director, Adventures in Social Development; Christina Smith, President/CEO, Community Support Advocates
- 12:15 – 1:00 p.m.** **Lunch (provided)**
- 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.** **Des Moines Arts Education Community Panel, Part 2**
- Christine Her, Executive Director, ArtForce Iowa; Seso Martenes, Artist, Mainframe Studios; Joseph Parrish, Cofounder and Executive Director, Adventures in Social Development; Christina Smith, President/CEO, Community Support Advocates
- 2:00 – 2:15 p.m.** **Afternoon Welcome Remarks**
- Eric Giles, Community Learning Director, NASAA
- Pam Breaux, President and CEO, NASAA (virtual)
- David Schmitz, Director, Iowa Arts Council
- 2:15 – 4:00 p.m.** **Keynote Presentation: We Build with What We Carry**
- Akwi Nji, Artist
- 4:00 – 4:15 p.m. Break

4:15 – 4:45 p.m.

SEEDS Student Presentation and Performance

Session Facilitator: Samantha Clarke, Cochair, AEWG;
Program Officer, Arts Education & Lifelong Learning, New
Jersey State Council on the Arts

Dontreale Anderson, Cofounder and Executive Director,
SEEDS

4:45 – 5:15 p.m.

Day 1 Wrap-Up

Kimberly Washburn Motte, Chair, AEWG; Samantha Clarke,
Cochair, AEWG

5:15 p.m.

Bus departs for hotel

Close of Day 1 / Dinner on your own

Wednesday, September 17

On the second day of the PDI, participants departed from the Surety Hotel by bus with breakfast provided on board. The day focused on rural arts education practices, with sessions taking place in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

Day 2 Welcome Remarks

Participants arrived at the George Daily Auditorium in Oskaloosa. AEWG Chair Kimberly Washburn Motte, AEWG Cochair Samantha Clarke, and site host Jennie Knoebel provided welcoming remarks, including an overview of the day's schedule and a review of the "Gots and Wants" from the prior day. Some highlights included the following:

"Gots":

- The keynote was powerful, relatable, and deeply inspiring, particularly resonating with the reminder that "making is an act of hope."
- Participants reflected on "art scars" and the importance of creating spaces where young people hear a resounding YES.
- Attendees celebrated personal wins, felt affirmed and drew encouragement from their peers.
- Participants fostered new connections, strengthened networks and reinforced the value of collaboration and partnerships.
- There was time for play, creativity and reflection, allowing participants to recharge and think outside the box.
- Conversations with arts educators and arts organizations provided fresh insights and inspiration.

"Wants":

- Attendees requested more time for connection and conversation with colleagues for the remainder of the conference.
- Several participants wanted structured time for topic sharing and collaborative solution brainstorming.
- Some attendees asked that communication tools like chat groups or community boards be available during the conference.
- Many wanted strategies to strengthen collective impact and share arts education stories before the conference concludes.

George Daily Auditorium Executive Director Andy McGuire welcomed participants to the venue and to Oskaloosa. He highlighted the theater's internal and external programming and their process based approach to student education that emphasizes participation, communication, collaboration, creativity and positive citizenship. He also thanked students from William Penn University who assisted with the set-up of the day and were in attendance.

Oskaloosa Mayor Dave Krutzfeldt extended a warm welcome to PDI participants and highlighted the city's long-standing commitment to arts and culture, from the historic bandstand tradition to public sculptures and murals. He highlighted partnerships with the local arts community, including creative projects like designing a new water tower, and spoke to the importance of the arts in preparing young people to engage meaningfully with the world.

Oskaloosa Community Panel

Jennie Knoebel facilitated a panel discussion featuring leaders from various sectors in Oskaloosa who collaboratively support arts education as an integral part of the community. Panelists included Andy McGuire, executive director of George Daily Auditorium; Allison McGuire, community engagement & education director at George Daily Auditorium; Kristen McMains, talent acquisition specialist at Musco Lighting; Deeann DeGroot, executive director of Mahaska Chamber & Development Group; and Mike Fisher, superintendent of Oskaloosa Community School District.



Oskaloosa community panelists

In Oskaloosa, arts education is supported by schools, arts organizations, industry, local government and residents who recognize its value. The panel highlighted partnerships that leverage local assets and discussed how theater education in Oskaloosa is positioned to develop transferable skills aligned with local career opportunities.

Panelists highlighted community engagement efforts that extend beyond traditional spaces into preschools, youth organizations and other local institutions, creating a "community swell" of participation. They shared the need to embrace a new mindset for students. Students need to be more than just creative problem solvers; they need to be creative consumers, advocates and creators. His panel emphasized the importance of messaging the benefits of arts participation using language that resonates with constituents, such as economics and employability.



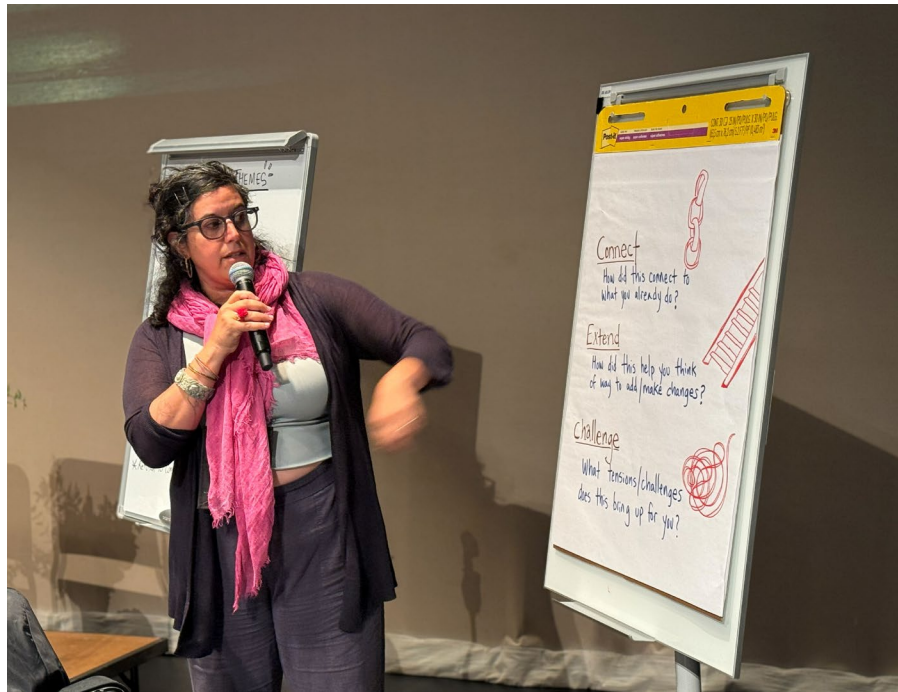
Participants discuss application of the panel discussion within their own states and jurisdictions.

Small-Group Discussions: Connect, Extend, Challenge

Following a brief break, Tamar Krames facilitated small-group discussions using the "Connect, Extend, Challenge" protocol. Building on the panel discussion, participants worked in small groups to explore how the strategies from Oskaloosa can be adapted to build on the unique strengths of rural communities in their own states and jurisdictions. The Connect portion asked participants to consider how the Oskaloosa model connected to their existing knowledge and work. The Extend portion invited participants to think about how these ideas extended their thinking or pushed their practice in new directions. The Challenge portion prompted participants to identify questions, tensions or difficulties raised by the discussion.

Before the group boarded the bus, Arts Education Partnership Policy Analyst Daizha Brown briefly shared information about the Artist Rest and Rejuvenation Playbook, a

resource that outlines strategies that situate rest as a necessity in collective and creative work.



Tamar Krames facilitates the Connect, Extend, Challenge discussion prompt.

Lunch in Downtown Oskaloosa

Participants boarded buses for a short trip to downtown Oskaloosa, where lunch was provided at Penn Central Mall. This gave participants an opportunity to experience the downtown community and continue informal conversations with colleagues.

Afternoon Session Welcome and Energizer

Following the return to George Daily Auditorium, Missouri Arts Council Arts Education Program Specialist Jenni Ryan led a welcome back to the afternoon session and facilitated an energizer activity.

Art + Community: The How Matters

North Dakota Council on the Arts Arts Education Director Matthew Anderson introduced Jennifer Drinkwater, community arts specialist and artist at Iowa State University, and Brant Bollman, artist and puppet maker at Uplifting Puppet Co.

During this workshop, participants explored a framework of best practices for engaging and building trust with communities of different sizes and scales through arts education programming and initiatives. Participants examined examples from across rural

America, including puppet parades, murals, film workshops, literary projects and community festivals, and were invited to identify local assets in their own states and jurisdictions. Presenters clarified the difference between bonding and bridging when building relationships in the arts community. Bonding is the feeling of belonging among people with similar life experiences, while bridging builds connections between people with varied backgrounds. Focusing on each of these leads to shared understanding and alignment of purpose and goals.

AEWG Wrap-Up

AEWG Chair Kimberly Washburn Motte, Cochair Samantha Clarke, and site host Jennie Knoebel provided closing remarks for Day 2.

Participants then boarded buses for the return trip to Des Moines and the Surety Hotel, completing the daily "Gots and Wants" activity while on the bus. They had the evening free for dinner on their own.



Arts Education Working Group with Jennifer Drinkwater, Brant Bollman and partners from George Daily Auditorium

Day 2 Agenda Overview

All times are Central Daylight Time.

- 8:00 a.m. Bus departs hotel for George Daily Auditorium
- 9:30 – 10:00 a.m. Arrival**
- George Daily Auditorium
1800 N 3rd St #2
Oskaloosa, IA 52577*
- 10:00 – 10:30 a.m. Day 2 Welcome Remarks**
- Kimberly Washburn Motte, Chair, AEWG; Samantha Clarke, Cochair, AEWG; Jennie Knoebel, Site Host, AEWG
Andy McGuire, Executive Director, George Daily Auditorium
- Dave Krutzfeldt, Mayor, Oskaloosa City Council
- 10:30 – 11:25 a.m. Oskaloosa Community Panel**
- Session Facilitator: Jennie Knoebel, Site Host, AEWG; Senior Grants and Programs Manager, Iowa Arts Council, Iowa Economic Development Authority*
- Andy McGuire, Executive Director, George Daily Auditorium; Allison McGuire, Community Engagement & Education Director, George Daily Auditorium; Kristen McMains, Talent Acquisition Specialist, Musco Lighting; Deeann DeGroot, Executive Director, Mahaska Chamber & Development Group; Mike Fisher, Superintendent, Oskaloosa Community School District
- 11:25 – 11:40 a.m. Break
- 11:40 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Small-Group Discussions: Connect, Extend, Challenge**
- Session Facilitator: Tamar Krames, Arts in Education Program Manager, ArtsWA*
- 12:20 p.m. Bus departs for Downtown Oskaloosa

- 12:30 – 2:15 p.m.** **Lunch (provided)**
- Penn Central Mall
200 High Ave W
Oskaloosa, IA 52577*
- 2:15 p.m. Bus departs for George Daily Auditorium
- 2:30 – 2:45 p.m.** **Afternoon Session Welcome and Energizer**
- Jenni Ryan, Arts Education Program Specialist, Missouri Arts Council
- 2:45 – 4:15 p.m.** **Art + Community: The How Matters**
- Session Facilitator:* Matthew Anderson, Arts Education Director, North Dakota Council on the Arts
- Jennifer Drinkwater, Community Arts Specialist and Artist, Iowa State University; Brant Bollman, Artist and Puppet Maker, Uplifting Puppet Co.
- 4:15 – 4:30 p.m.** **AEWG Wrap-Up**
- Kimberly Washburn Motte, Chair, AEWG; Samantha Clarke, Cochair, AEWG; Jennie Knoebel, Site Host, AEWG
- 4:45 p.m. Bus Departs for Surety Hotel
Close of Day 2 / Dinner on your own

Thursday, September 18

The final day of the PDI began with regional breakfast meetings. Arts Education Working Group regional representatives led discussions on topics relevant to their region, oriented new managers and discussed leadership succession where applicable.

Day 3 Welcome Remarks

AEWG Chair Kimberly Washburn Motte, Cochair Samantha Clarke and site host Jennie Knoebel provided welcoming remarks and an overview of the final day's programming. They reviewed the "Gots and Wants" from the previous day. Highlights include:

"Gots":

- The bonding vs. bridging framework resonated strongly, giving participants concrete language and strategies for building relationships in rural communities.
- Participants appreciated practical insights into the "how" of arts engagement, including showing up, communicating effectively and fostering trust before expanding outreach.
- There was an appreciation for the opportunity to learn from leaders in a rural community.
- Participants enjoyed having access to art materials throughout the day.

"Wants":

- There is interest in additional time for networking with both presenters and peers.
- Some attendees expressed desire for more time while others expressed desire for shorter days.
- Many attendees were interested in seeing the puppets created by presenter Brant Bollman in person.
- Several people offered no suggestions, noting words of appreciation for the day.

Iowa Economic Development Authority Chief Operating Officer Molly Lopez welcomed participants to the venue and spoke about what it means to lead from the middle. She recommend that those leading from the middle do the following:

- Begin by being a bridge to connect ideas, people and possibilities.
- Listen deeply, advocate thoughtfully.
- Find allies.
- Be curious, ask questions and challenge assumptions.
- Own their own impact.

Molly concluded her remarks by sharing that arts and creativity strengthen community vitality. She encouraged arts education managers to continue to show up, speak up and make an impact.



Molly Lopez provides welcome remarks on behalf of Iowa Economic Development Authority.

Flashes of Inspiration Presentations and Panel

National Endowment for the Arts Arts Education Specialist Nancy Daugherty moderated a series of brief presentations featuring case studies of how fellow state arts agency arts education managers use their unique roles to reimagine and build enduring arts education ecosystems in their states and jurisdictions.

New York State Council on the Arts Program Officer for Arts Education and Special Arts Services Kavie Barnes shared her journey of telling the stories of seven community based organizations operating across New York State through community based leaders interviews. This brief discussion highlighted the topics covered in the conversations and offered useful takeaways for arts managers who might be interested in conducting similar interviews to showcase standout organizations' impact on the field.

Arkansas Arts Council Arts in Education Program Manager Matthew Boyce shared his experience with Arts Across Arkansas, a program that encourages and rewards high school students for original creative work. Matthew's session highlighted how the program nurtures artistic skills, personal expression and creative thinking.

Illinois Arts Council Program Director Jerome Grand provided an overview of the significant changes the Illinois Arts Council has made to its programs and operations in

the past few years, starting with a NASAA study on their General Operating Support program, which guided many significant changes. The presentation covered the broader changes and their impetus and the changes to arts education programs.

Utah Division of Arts & Museums Arts Education Program Manager Reilly Jensen shared a series of inspiring insights that Utah's arts education team received at the Western states gathering of arts education program managers in Washington in August 2025. This flash of inspiration offered a view of how Utah is progressing arts education learning opportunities through the lens of the most recent state administrative strategic plan.

Alabama State Council on the Arts Arts in Education Program Manager Kaci Norman discussed the arts council's launch of a new student art exhibition that will present over 200 works of student art in the state capitol during the legislative session and will employ almost two dozen teaching artists.

South Carolina Arts Commission Arts Learning and Accessibility Director Amanda Noyes presented on Creative Careers Studio, a virtual and programmatic platform designed with both parents and students in mind to empower youth to pursue creative fields with confidence. She explained that career opportunities in the arts are often underrepresented at college and career fairs, leaving students interested in creative or artistic fields feeling left out. The Arts Commission is developing partnerships and communication strategies to share this resource statewide.

Following the presentations, Nancy facilitated a panel discussion with all presenters, allowing participants to ask questions and explore connections between the various state approaches.

Prioritizing Well-Being, Health and Personal Capacity

Following a brief break, Maine Arts Commission Program Director Martha Piscuskas introduced Akwi Nji, whose closing presentation focused on personal well-being in arts education and administration. Akwi shared that her work with the Iowa Arts Council keeps her in the state. She reminded participants that making is an act of hope, and invited them to conclude their time at the PDI by reflecting on the following question: What is most meaningful?

Closing Remarks

AEWG Chair Kimberly Washburn Motte, Cochair Samantha Clarke and site host Jennie Knoebel thanked members of the AEWG, all presenters and partners throughout the three days, and all participants for their engagement.

Nancy Daugherty provided closing remarks and acknowledged the work of the AEWG leadership team and outgoing AEWG members.

Following closing remarks, lunch was provided, concluding the 2025 Professional Development Institute.



2025 Arts Education Professional Development Institute participants at Mainframe Studios on Day 1

Day 3 Agenda Overview

All times are Central Daylight Time.

8:00 a.m. Bus departs for Iowa Economic Development Authority

*Iowa Economic Development Authority
1963 Bell Ave
Des Moines, IA 50315*

8:15 – 9:30 a.m. Regional Groups Breakfast (provided)

Mid-America Region: AR, KS, MO, NE, OK, TX
AEWG representative: Jenni Ryan, Missouri Arts Council

Mid Atlantic Region: DC, DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA, PR, VA, VI, WV
AEWG representative: Samanta Clarke, New Jersey State Council on the Arts

Midwest Region: IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, ND, OH, SD, WI
AEWG representative: Matthew Anderson, North Dakota Council on the Arts

New England Region: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
AEWG representative: Martha Piscuskas, Maine Arts Commission

Southern Region: AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN
AEWG representative: Kimberly Washburn Motte, South Carolina Arts Commission

Western Region: AK, American Samoa, AZ, CA, CO, GU, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, Northern Marianas, OR, UT, WA, WY
AEWG representatives: Tamar Krames, ArtsWA; Danica Rosengren, Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

9:30 – 9:45 a.m. Day 3 Welcome Remarks

Kimberly Washburn Motte, Chair, AEWG; Samantha Clarke, Cochair, AEWG; Jennie Knoebel, Site Host, AEWG

Molly Lopez, Chief Operating Officer, Iowa Economic Development Authority

9:45 – 10:35 a.m.

Flashes of Inspiration Presentations and Panel

Session Moderator: Nancy Daugherty, Arts Education Specialist, National Endowment for the Arts

Kavie Barnes, Program Officer, Arts Education and Special Arts Services, New York State Council on the Arts; Matthew Boyce, Arts in Education Program Manager, Arkansas Arts Council; Jerome Grand, Program Director, Illinois Arts Council; Reilly Jensen, Arts Education Program Manager, Utah Division of Arts & Museums; Kaci Norman, Arts in Education Program Manager, Alabama State Council on the Arts; Amanda Noyes, Arts Learning and Accessibility Director, South Carolina Arts Commission

10:35 – 10:45 a.m.

Break

10:45 – 11:15 a.m.

Prioritizing Well-Being, Health and Personal Capacity

Session Facilitator: Martha Piscuskas, Program Director, Maine Arts Commission

Akwi Nji, Artist

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks

Kimberly Washburn Motte, Chair, AEWG; Samantha Clarke, Cochair, AEWG; Jennie Knoebel, Site Host, AEWG

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

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Lunch (provided)

12:15 p.m.

First bus returns to hotel

1:00 p.m.

Final bus returns to hotel

End of 2025 PDI