

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

KNOWLEDGE ★ REPRESENTATION ★ COMMUNITY

State Arts Agency Arts Education Managers & State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education

2017 Professional Development Institute

Speaker and Artist Bios



Ayanna Hudson
Director, Arts Education
National Endowment for the Arts

Opening Remarks

Ayanna N. Hudson is the director of Arts Education for the National Endowment for the Arts, where she presides over the grant portfolio devoted to arts education, works with national service organizations on policy initiatives, and serves as the spokesperson for arts education at the federal level.

The NEA's arts education program provides direct learning grants for projects that provide pre-K through 12th-grade students with opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in the arts both in and outside the classroom; professional development grants for projects that deepen knowledge and strengthen practice of educators and civic leaders; and collective impact grants for projects that use a systematic approach to provide arts education to students throughout a community, school, school district, and state.

Hudson was the director of arts education with the Los Angeles County Arts Commission for more than ten years. She developed and led the implementation of the Arts for All collaborative, ensuring equitable access to arts education for 1.6 million students in the county's 81 school districts, the largest educational system in the country. Arts for All was cited in 2008 by the RAND Corporation as among the top three collaborations nationwide in its study *Revitalizing Arts Education through Community-wide Coordination*. In 2011, Arts for All received the Arts Education Award from the national service organization Americans for the Arts.

Hudson is a sought-after expert in arts education having testified before the U.S. House of Representative's Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee and the Aspen Institute's Blue Ribbon Committee on the impact of No Child Left Behind.

Prior to her work in Los Angeles, Hudson managed the School Arts Program at the Fulton County Department of Arts and Culture in Atlanta, Georgia. She has a BA in psychology from Spelman College and a specialized master's degree in education in risk and prevention from Harvard University.

2017 PDI Speakers

(In alphabetical order)



Jennifer Allen-Barron
Arts Education Director
Oklahoma Arts Council

Jennifer Allen-Barron earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting and a Bachelor of Arts in French from the University of Oklahoma. Prior to joining the Oklahoma Arts Council, Allen-Barron served as Executive Director of the Paseo Arts Association and as Community Arts Program Director at the Arts Council of Oklahoma City. She is also a practicing visual artist, working primarily in acrylic paint. Allen-Barron works with arts education programs in public schools and arts learning programs across the state, as well as overseeing the Council's Teaching Artist Roster and the Oklahoma Arts and the Military Initiative.



Allen Bell
Arts Education Manager
Georgia Council for the Arts

Allen Bell is the arts education manager at Georgia Council for the Arts, where he oversees the arts education grants, teaching artist programs, and literary programs. He also produced the research report "Arts Education in Georgia" and managed the work of the Governor's Arts Learning Task Force. He previously served as program director for Arts Education & Research at South Arts, where he researched and authored "Arts Education in the South." Previously, he served for 9 years as executive director of Rome Area Council for the Arts in Rome, GA. He holds a BA from Berry College (GA) and a MA from Binghamton University (NY). Allen also completed the winter program in arts management through the Arts Extension Service at University of Massachusetts-Amherst. He has received the Berry College Outstanding Young Alumni Award, a Congressional Certificate of Recognition for service to the community through the arts, and the Lifetime Achievement Award from Georgia Arts Network.



Jane Best, Ph.D.
Director
Arts Education Partnership, Education Commission of the States

Jane R. Best is the Director of the Arts Education Partnership (AEP) at Education Commission of the States in Denver, CO. AEP is a national coalition of more than 100 education, arts, business, cultural, government, and philanthropic organizations with the goal of the arts being included in a well-rounded education. Dr. Best has extensive experience working among practitioners, policymakers and researchers. She previously held leadership positions at McREL International and Learning Point Associates (now American Institutes for Research) and the National Conference of State Legislatures. She started her career as a high school French and ESL teacher in Columbus, Ohio. Jane has served on the board of directors of Knowledge Alliance, the STEM Education Coalition, and the College of Education at The Ohio State

University. She teaches graduate courses at the University of Colorado School of Public Affairs. Jane holds a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University.



Katrina L. Bledsoe, Ph.D.
Research Scientist & Program Evaluation Consultant

Katrina L. Bledsoe is a research scientist at Education Development Center and an independent consultant who resides in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. She is a trained evaluator, mixed methodologist, and social psychologist with 20 + years of evaluation experience at the local, state, and federal government levels. Her expertise is in community-based education and social services program evaluation, mixed methodology and methods, applied social psychology, and cultural contexts. Dr. Bledsoe has served as principal investigator, co-principal investigator, or project director on a variety of projects and has received grants and contracts for programs ranging from education to school-based health and mental health. She is a consultant and advisor to schools, universities, and community-based organizations and agencies such as the *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*, the *National Science Foundation*, *Annie E. Casey Foundation*. Bledsoe publishes articles in such periodicals as the *American Journal of Evaluation* and *Families in Societies* and publishes articles and recently published articles in the *Qualitative Inquiry in the Practice of Evaluation*, *Continuing the Journey to Reposition Culture and Cultural Context in Evaluation Theory and Practice*.



Pam Breaux
Chief Executive Officer
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Pam joined NASAA as CEO in 2015. As chief executive officer, she works in collaboration with the NASAA board of directors to advance NASAA's federal policy agenda. A native of Lafayette, Louisiana, Pam has held leadership positions at the local, state and national levels. She most recently was assistant secretary of the Office of Cultural Development at the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (CRT). She is a former secretary of CRT and was executive director of the Louisiana Division of the Arts. During her time at CRT, Pam led Louisiana's cultural economy initiative and spearheaded the state's attainment of UNESCO recognition of Poverty Point as a World Heritage site. Before working in state government, Pam managed southwest Louisiana's Decentralized Arts Funding Program and was executive director of the Arts and Humanities Council of Southwest Louisiana. She has served on the boards of NASAA, South Arts, the Louisiana Board of International Commerce and the U.S. Travel Association. Pam is a member of UNESCO's U.S. National Commission. She graduated from McNeese State University with a B.A. in English, and has an M.A. in English and folklore from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.



Ashley Brown
Arts Education Director
South Carolina Arts Commission

Ashley Brown is the Arts Education Director at the South Carolina Arts Commission where she works to ensure all students in South Carolina

have access to comprehensive arts education experiences. Before coming to the Arts Commission in January 2016, she served as the Education and Engagement Manager for Opening Nights Performing Arts at Florida State University. An accomplished teacher, she taught at Stone Academy of Communication Arts in Greenville, SC, and spent nearly a decade at Children's Theatre of Charlotte in Charlotte NC. She has worked throughout the Southeast with several companies, including Chickspeare Theatre Company, S.C. Children's Theatre, and Brevard Music Center. She received her BA in Theatre from Winthrop University and her MFA in Theatre Management from Florida State University.



Wanda Casillas
Specialist Master, Human Capital
Deloitte Consulting

Dr. Wanda Casillas is an evaluation specialist with 20 years of researching and assessing organizational and program performance focusing on culturally responsive practices. She is a rigorously-trained evaluation methodologist with a strong analytics background and the ability to facilitate organizational improvement through data-based decision-making.

Dr. Casillas has experience creating performance management strategies, data collection and measurement plans, process documentation, and improvement roadmaps in support of large healthcare clients, including the VHA, CDC, and MHS. Dr. Casillas supported two key entities within the VHA, the VA Medical Center in Augusta, GA and the Phoenix VA Healthcare System, with program evaluation activities by assessing organizational and business drivers influencing performance and building capacity among quality managers to understand, collect, and analyze patient data to drive process improvements. Dr. Casillas is a member of the American Evaluation Association and has a PhD in Developmental Psychology from Cornell University. Dr. Casillas has also worked extensively in program development and evaluation of STEM education programs directed at individuals across the lifespan.



Robert Duncan
Arts and Humanities Consultant
Kentucky Department of Education

Robert Duncan has been the Visual and Performing Arts Consultant at KDE since August, 2009. He came to the Department after 28 years as a high school visual art teacher; 11 in Tennessee and 17 in Kentucky. He received his BFA in studio art education and a MAEd in counseling from Murray State University as well completing course work in School

Administration and Leadership at Eastern Kentucky University. Duncan's primary studio area is photography, though he also works in paint, mixed media and sculpture. Along with his visual art, Duncan has experience in stage and film. He was extremely active in community theatre and most recently performed with feature roles in local independent films and television commercials and background work in feature films produced in Kentucky. In his free time, Duncan is a doting husband and Grandfather, currently sits as a City Commissioner for his community of Stamping Ground and sits on the Board of Directors or Bluegrass Tomorrow. He also remains active as a volunteer Captain for the Georgetown/Scott County Emergency Management Agency/Office of Homeland Security.



Rebecca Engelman
Arts in Education Director
North Dakota Council on the Arts

Rebecca J. Engelman is the Arts in Education Director for the ND Council on the Arts. In that capacity, she directs funding of Arts in Education programs and manages the Teacher Incentive, Artist in Residence, Teaching Artist, Arts in Education Collaboration, and Poetry Out Loud grant programs for the state. In addition to grants management, Engelman sits on the Board of Directors for both the ND STEM Network and ND Afterschool Alliance, and is actively involved with various statewide partnerships and organizations including: ND Department of Public Instruction's ESSA Committee on Innovation in Education, ChildCare Aware, ND Teacher Resource Coalition, and Turnaround Arts ND.



Sue Fish
Assistant to the Director of Administration and Operations
American Indian Cultural Center and Museum

Sue Fish, (Chickasaw/Choctaw) joined the staff as the Assistant to the Director of Administration and Operations in May 2007. She brings over 30 years' experience working with state, local, national, and international Native American organizations. Sue is Certified Procurement Officer (CPO) and member of Oklahoma Association of Public Procurement (OKAPP).

Upon receiving an Associate's Degree from East Central University, Sue worked for the Chickasaw Nation for 10 years and as Special Assistant to Governor Bill Anoatubby. In 1989, Sue and her family relocated from her hometown in Ada, Oklahoma, to Norman, Oklahoma where she served as Managerial Associate for the University of Oklahoma's American Indian Institute for 17 years. Sue has a passion for preserving Tribal languages and culture and is a member of the Oklahoma City Metro Chickasaw Community Council. Outside of her job, Sue wears many hats. She works alongside her husband of 36 years, Willie Fish (Muscogee Creek), who is a minister. They have 4 children and 2 grandchildren. In addition, for 15 years, Sue has served on the Indian Falls Creek Board, which organizes a yearly summer nation-wide Baptist Christian camp. She also volunteers for various Native American Christian boards and committees which promote unity and address pertinent spiritual challenges affecting Native Americans. Sue is also an accomplished Native American basket weaver and is a member of the Oklahoma Basket Weaver's Association and the Oklahoma Native American Basket Weaver's Association.



Albert GrayEagle
Musician & Storyteller
Oklahoma Arts Council

Albert Lujan GrayEagle is a US Army Vietnam Era Veteran as well as a member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho American Legion Post 401 color Guard. Albert has won multiple National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Gold medals multiple time in Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Video and Multi Media. Albert has volunteered for camps such as Camp Quality USA since 1998, using his Art to reach people is a major goal and with help from his niece Victoria Nevarez they have been able to reach many veterans with the assistance of The Oklahoma Arts Council, and the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs. Albert has also received the Oklahoma Symphony of

Service Award from the Department of Juvenile Justice and Human Services for work with foster home children and at risk youth. Albert has also volunteered his Art with multiple hospice groups and volunteered helping Heartline reach children with Suicide Prevention in public schools. Being of Cheyenne, Brule Sioux and Taos pueblo descent Albert also uses his heritage and ceremonies to help himself heal as a disabled veteran with many physical disabilities and suffering from Post-traumatic stress disorder. Albert has always said that without support from family and the arts he wouldn't be alive today. Hope, love, courage, generosity are the tools our creator gave us to earn character, respect, humility and wisdom. With all this comes faith in others and ourselves to part of making the world better.



Lucyann Harjo
Coordinator, Indian Education Program
Norman Public Schools

Lucyann is the Coordinator of Indian Education for Norman Public Schools. She is an advocate for American Indian children in Oklahoma and is currently the President of the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education and the Chairperson on the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education.



Joy Hofmeister
Superintendent
Oklahoma State Department of Education

On January 12, 2015, Joy Hofmeister of Tulsa was sworn in as Oklahoma's 14th State Superintendent of Public Instruction. In her first year and a half in office, Hofmeister has championed a host of education reforms, including a repeal of the federal education law known as No Child Left Behind, arguing against its "one-size-fits-all" approach to public education.

Those efforts were successful in December 2015, when Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), returning much of the authority for developing education policy to states and local districts. In February 2016, Hofmeister was one of four, and the only state education chief, invited to testify on ESSA before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, advocating for strengthened state accountability for student academic performance without excessive and unnecessary federal overreach. In addition, she is a stalwart advocate for increased teacher pay and increased time for teaching and learning for Oklahoma schoolchildren. In her first month in office, she proposed the #OKHigh5 plan to increase teacher compensation to the regional average and days of instruction to the national average.

Hofmeister is a former public school teacher and small business owner. As an appointee of Gov. Mary Fallin, she served on the Oklahoma State Board of Education from January 2012 through April 2013. In the private sector, Hofmeister spent 15 years as a business owner of Kumon Math & Reading Centers, which utilize parent partnerships to ensure high academic achievement for children. At Kumon, she personally worked with more than 4,000 students to improve their educational outcomes.

Hofmeister serves on dozens of commissions and state boards, chairs the State Board of Education and State Board of Career and Technology Education, is a regent for the Regional

University System of Oklahoma (RUSO) and serves the Board of Equalization, Commission of the Land Office, Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics, and Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness/Smart Start Oklahoma, among others.

The mother of four graduates of Oklahoma's public school system, Hofmeister maintains a residence in Tulsa with her husband of 31 years, the Honorable Gerald L. Hofmeister.



Joyce Huser
Fine Arts Education Consultant
Kansas State Department of Education

Joyce Huser joined the Kansas Department of Education in 2002 where she provides educational resources and guidance at both the state and national level to promote excellence in arts education. Her work has included working with National Coalition for Core Art Standards (NCCAS) to revise the national fine arts standards, assisted Partnership for 12th Century Skills (P21) to develop the 21st Century Arts Skills Map and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to revise National Course Code Descriptors. An art teacher for 15 years, which included receiving National Board Teaching Certification in Early/Middle Childhood Art and NAEA's 2003 Western Region Elementary Art Teacher of the Year award. She's been adjunct instructor for University of Kansas and Washburn University. Joyce is president of SEADAE.



Jean Irwin
Arts Education Program Manager
Utah Division of Arts and Museums

Jean, a native of Japan, is a naturalized American citizen and holds a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Texas (Permian Basin). Since 1991, she has served as the Arts Education Program Manager for the Utah Division of Arts and Museums. In 2011, she assumed additional responsibility for the Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts and supervision of the Literature and Folk Arts Programs as part of the "do more with less" program. She carves out time for her family and friends and making mixed media assemblages and visual journals. She wistfully remembers the days when she actually created work for exhibitions such as the 2002 Cultural Olympiad featuring 20 works by Utah women and the Year of the Rabbit exhibition in October of 2011. In 2010 she was appointed to the board of the National Parent Teachers Association and in 2012 she received the Mayor's Award for Service to the Field. She is a serial fondler of books but loves her Kindle because it carries tons of titles and allows her to instantly look up words like panegyric and coppices. She is an independent world cinema addict, and also loves cooking foreign foods with unknown and squiggly ingredients. Finally, she abhors bottled water in plastic. Don't offer her any.



Cathy Jensen
Fine Arts Content Specialist
Utah State Office of Education

Cathy Jensen has served as an educational specialist at the Utah State Office of Education since July of 2010. She facilitates fine arts endorsements and core standards for Utah's public schools. She coordinates the Professional Outreach Program in the Schools (POPS) which is a partnership with ten professional performing and visual arts organizations in the state. Utah Symphony/Utah Opera and Ballet West are two of the organizations in this program which provides learning experiences for school children with professional arts groups. She is also the program specialist for the Beverley Taylor Sorenson Arts Learning Program, a legislatively funded, integrated arts program in the elementary schools. Cathy spent thirty-two years in public schools as a secondary school principal and as a music teacher in elementary and middle level schools. She is most passionate about arts integrated learning opportunities for children and has recently reignited her own learning by starting harp lessons.



Sandra Kent
Executive Director
Oklahoma A+ Schools

Sandra is responsible for the development of the state network, as well as national and international partnerships. She was Oklahoma's National Distinguished Principal in 2008 and has been an active participant and leading advocate for OKA+ Schools since she brought the first of three schools into the network in 2003. Sandy has no peer in her experience and commitment to the OKA+ Schools' philosophy and practice.



Phyllis Kennedy
Arts Program Coordinator
New Mexico Arts

Phyllis Kennedy began her job at the state arts agency in May 2014. She is the New Mexico Arts Program Coordinator responsible for grants in the categories of Arts Learning in Community and Arts Learning in Schools, Arts in Social Service, and Colleges, Universities & Government Entities. She is the state coordinator for both Poetry Out Loud and the New Mexico Arts and the Military initiative. Her degrees are in the visual arts—a BFA in printmaking from Rochester Institute of Technology and an MA in photography from New York University. She likes to ponder arts and education policy questions and work with others to get all the arts to all the students in our public schools.



Rebecca McLaughlin
Director of Gifted Education, Advanced Placement and Arts in Education
Oklahoma State Department of Education

Rebecca McLaughlin is the Arts in Education Director for the Oklahoma State Department of Education (as well as the Director of Gifted Education, AVID, and Advanced Placement). Immediately prior to her position at the state department, she served as the Gifted Education and Fine Arts Coordinator for a large Oklahoma school district. She is a member of SEADAE, the National Arts Education Association, the Oklahoma Art Education Association, and the Oklahoma Alliance for Art Education. Honors that are particularly meaningful to her include: The Oklahoma Fine Arts Administrator of the Year, presented at the Superintendent's Art Awards, and The Oklahoma Service Award, presented by the Oklahoma Association for Gifted, Creative and Talented.



Josy Miller
Arts Program Specialist
California Arts Council

Josy Miller is the Arts Education Programs Specialist for the California Arts Council. At the CAC, Miller manages six grant programs including JUMP StArts, the agency's program that supports arts residencies for system-engaged youth. She also sits on the Arts Education Working Group for the National Association of State Arts Agencies. A theatre director and scholar, she received her Ph.D. in Performance Studies from the University of California, Davis. Miller is a recipient of the Center for Cultural Innovation's Emerging Arts Leader Award, the Mellon Foundation Teaching/Research Fellowship in Early Modern Studies and the University of California Institute for Research in the Arts's Major Grant Award (for her production of *The Dogs of War* at the 2014 Edinburgh Fringe Festival). Her article "Performing Collective Trauma: 9/11 and the Reconstruction of American Identity" appears in the collection *History, Memory, Performance*, published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2015. She is co-editor, with Peter Lichtenfels, of *Shakespeare and Realism: On the Politics of Style*, forthcoming from Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.



Julie Palkowski
Fine Arts and Creativity Education Consultant
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Dr. Julie A. Palkowski is the Fine Arts and Creativity Education Consultant for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. She has previously served as an arts administrator with school districts in Rockford, Illinois and Madison, Wisconsin. In her current position, she is a liaison to various boards including the Wisconsin School Music Association, Wisconsin Art Education Association, the Alliance for Wisconsin Theatre Education, and the Wisconsin Dance Council. Julie has facilitated arts education sessions focused on pedagogy, program development and promotion, disciplinary literacy, and technology throughout Wisconsin. Prior to these positions and activities, Dr. Palkowski worked as a Title I Instructional Supervisor, a K4-8th Grade Principal, Music Teacher, and Summer Enrichment Coordinator. She has led multiple standards reviews as a Fine Arts Administrator with two school districts and as a Principal. Additional research experiences include serving as a doctoral chair and mentor for graduate

and doctoral students, and as an external research team member for the Madison Metropolitan School District. She served as a content reviewer for the Colorado and Nebraska Arts Standards in preparation for their respective state standards reviews. She has worked as a collaborator to the National Core Arts Standards Dance Leadership Writing Team. National work includes Dr. Palkowski's service as President to the State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education, where she has also been supporting the Arts Education Data Project as a Co-Chair, has served as a member to the National Coalition of Core Arts Standards, and has been a session panelist and reviewer for organizations such as the Arts Education Partnership and National Endowment for the Arts.



Kimberly Rodriguez
Muscogee Creek, Lakota Sioux, Mexican
Communications and Graphic Assistant
American Indian Cultural Center and Museum

Kimberly has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography from the University of North Texas, Denton. She has been featured as a fine artist in several group shows including: Back to Basics, City Arts Center, OKC, OK, 2006, OklaDaDa's 2007 "Current Realities: A Dialogue with the People,"

Individual Artist of Oklahoma Gallery, OKC, OK, "Looking Indian," Untitled Artspace, 2007, OKC, OK and participated in the "Capturing Culture Through Photography" Exhibition, Seminole, OK 2008. Freelance Work: Project Imagery, The American Indian Cultural Center and Museum, 2005-2006, Online Art Auction and Website Assistant, The American Indian Cultural Center and Museum, 2005-2006, Calm Waters Annual Golf Tournament, Calm Waters, 2006, Café City Arts Annual Fundraiser, City Arts Center, 2001-2005, Annual Fairy Tale Ball, Oklahoma Children's Theatre, 2001-2004, and Art Studio Tour, Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition, 2002.



Amber Sharples
Executive Director
Oklahoma Arts Council

Amber Sharples has served as executive director of the Oklahoma Arts Council since 2013. As the agency's CEO, Sharples is responsible for the development and administration of the policies, programs and procedures of the state agency for the arts. Sharples' career at the Council began in 2006, when she joined the agency as visual arts director and collections manager for the Capitol artwork. She has managed other areas of the agency such as her role as assistant director, where she spearheaded the agency's strategic planning process, managed staff evaluations, and developed agency policies and procedures. Prior to working for the Council, she served as the Communications and Public Affairs Coordinator at the U.S.-Mexico Foundation for Culture in Mexico City. She has served on numerous boards both in Oklahoma and nationally, including Mid-America Arts Alliance in Kansas City, and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies in Washington, D.C. Sharples holds a Master of Arts in Art History from the University of Oklahoma and a graduate certificate in museum collections management and care from The George Washington University.



Ken Skrzysz
Coordinator of Fine Arts
Maryland State Department of Education

Ken Skrzysz is the Coordinator of Fine Arts for the Maryland State Department of Education, where he shares his vision of creativity and collaboration as the driving forces of success for all students. Ken has designed and implemented arts education and professional development programs in numerous locations through standards development, curriculum writing, and assessment. His knowledge of all art forms, with a special emphasis of developing the creative and collaborative processes, has allowed him to create successful community partnerships, donor development campaigns, and student recruitment with a special emphasis on serving economically challenged and culturally underserved populations. Ken is an active master teacher of acting and dance throughout the United States. He has served as the Performing and Visual Arts Magnet Teacher Specialist for Anne Arundel County Public Schools, the Executive Director of the Clear Space Theatre Company and Kinetics Dance Theatre, and the Director of Student Life for the School of American Ballet. Long-term teaching posts include the Carver Center for Arts and Technology, Goucher College, Southwest Missouri State University, and the University of North Carolina. Ken's former students have appeared on television (MAD MEN, SCANDAL, WILL AND GRACE), Broadway (MAMMA, MIA!, CHICAGO, THE WILD PARTY, SOUTH PACIFIC, THE LION KING, HAIRSPRAY, THE BOOK OF MORMON), and appear in numerous professional regional theatre and dance companies, movies, and national tours. Ken has danced, sung, acted, choreographed and directed both nationally and internationally. He earned his Master of Fine Arts in dance from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro where he performed with the dance, opera, and theatre departments. He is a native Baltimorean where he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Towson State University. Ken's recognitions include the Baltimore Mayor's Award for Distinguished Service in the Arts, distinguished alumni awards from Towson State University and from the University of North Carolina, a choreography commission from the National Endowment of the Arts, and multiple choreography awards from the Maryland State Arts Council. Ken is a member of Actors Equity Association and the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers. In 2016, Ken received the National Dance Education Association's Outstanding Advocate and Champion of Dance Education award and was appointed as its Advisory Director of Standards in 2017. In 2017 Ken received the Performing Arts Advocate of the Year award from the Scarborough Foundation and became Vice President of the State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education.



Ryan Stubbs
Research Director
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Ryan Stubbs oversees NASAA's data collection and research services. In this role, Ryan directs NASAA's tracking of public funding for the arts and its work as the national repository of state arts agency grant-making data. He assists NASAA members with customized research, including creative economy programs, place-making initiatives and assessment of cultural district programs. Ryan represents state arts agencies and NASAA at state, regional and NASAA research forums and is NASAA's primary research liaison to federal agencies, foundations, consultants and scholars conducting research on public support for the arts. In his prior position, Ryan served as director of research for the Western States Arts Federation, where he conducted analysis of arts-related economic data and implemented web-based research tools. He has analyzed capital construction projects for

the Colorado Department of Higher Education and has managed economic development programs in Adams County, Colorado. He holds master's degrees in public administration and urban and regional planning from the University of Colorado, Denver. In his free time, Ryan enjoys creating and supporting music and visual art in Washington, D.C.



**Shoshana Wasserman
(Thlopthlocco Tribal Town, Muscogee Creek)
Director of Communications and Cultural Tourism
American Indian Cultural Center and Museum**

Shoshana has a Masters of Arts degree in Business Communications (specializing in Organizational Development) from Jones International University and is a University of Oklahoma Alumni with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education (minor in Multicultural Studies).

Shoshana was hired as the Director of Marketing and Public Relations for The American Indian Cultural Center and Museum March 1, 2007 and previously served as the Program Planning Consultant for The Center from October 1, 2005 – March 1, 2007. Prior to her role with the museum, she served as the Development Director for City Arts Center and Oklahoma Children's Theatre for one year and then continued as the Public Relations Director for eleven years. As the Public Relations/Artistic Director for the Great American Indian Dance Company from 1989-1995, her experience coordinating touring logistics served as the perfect practicum for audience development and event planning. The Great American Indian Dance Company served as ambassadors for the State of Oklahoma. Her public relations efforts attracted tourism revenue, stimulated media attention internationally and nationally for both the dance company and the State of Oklahoma. Shoshana's wide range of skills include: strategic planning, arts promotion and institutional development. She is a board member for the Mvskoke Arts Association and the Oklahoma City Muscogee Creek Association. She is also an Oklahoma Arts Council, Leadership Arts Class X member and previously served on the Board of Directors for the American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Oklahoma City.

2017 Arts Education Working Group



**Laura Forbes, Chair
Arts Education Program Director
Alaska State Council on the Arts**

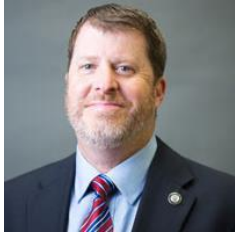
Laura Forbes has been the Arts Education Program Director at the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) since fall of 2011. Laura's duties at ASCA include administering grants, the development of networks, facilitation of Alaska Poetry Out loud, supporting the field of presenting and touring performing arts and visual art exhibition, and technical services for artists, educators, arts organizations and all Alaska's citizens. Laura graduated from the University of Alaska, Anchorage with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre. After graduating from UAA, she worked throughout Alaska and in Chicago, Illinois as a teaching artist, director, designer, and administrator for community arts organizations, with a focus and special interest in Theatre for Young Audiences/Youth Theatre. While living in Chicago, Laura worked with such organizations as Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Vittum Theatre (now Adventure Stage Chicago), and a variety of Chicago's storefront theaters. Returning to Alaska in 2007, Laura became the Director of Programs and Exhibits at the Kenai Visitors and Cultural Center, working to preserve and promote the arts, culture and history of Kenai and Alaska. In 2012, she earned an M.Ed. in Integrated Teaching through the Arts from Lesley University.



**Chiquita Mullins-Lee, Cochair
Arts Learning Program Coordinator
Ohio Arts Council**

Chiquita Mullins Lee is the Ohio Arts Council's (OAC) Arts Learning coordinator. She oversees the Arts Partnership and Artist in Residence, Artist Express, and Big Yellow School Bus programs that support quality arts experiences with an educational focus. She previously coordinated Ohio's Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest and was a teaching artist for OAC's Artist-in-Residence program. She cultivated OAC's Artful Aging initiative, contributed to the selection process for Ohio's first poet laureate, and served on grant review panels for the National Endowment for the Arts, Arkansas Arts Council, and Kentucky Arts Council. Chiquita won individual artist/excellence awards from the Greater Columbus Arts Council and OAC, and was an OAC summer writer-in-residence at the Fine Arts Work Center, Provincetown, Massachusetts. Raised in Atlanta, Chiquita earned her B.A. from Vassar College and masters' degrees from Ohio University and Ohio State. A member of New Covenant Believers Church, Chiquita supports the worship arts ministry. She hosted Traditions - Ohio Heritage Fellows produced by Dayton's Think-TV, which won a 2015 Emmy for Best Human Interest Program. She performed onstage in Twelve Hours by Dave Carley and Lost Lake by David Auburn, and she writes and performs with Columbus-based Wild Women Writing. Her critically-acclaimed play, Pierce to the Soul, premiered at Contemporary American Theatre Company, Columbus' professional equity theater and toured central Ohio with A Portable Theatre Company.

**Jennifer Allen-Barron
Arts Education Director
Oklahoma Arts Council**



Danny Belanger
Director of Arts Education and Accessibility
Louisiana Division of the Arts

Danny Belanger has been working in the arts and non-profits in Louisiana for over 18 years. He has served in several capacities for the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the Office of Cultural Development. Prior to joining the Louisiana Division of the Arts as Deputy Director in 2007, Danny was the Director of Development for LSU College of Art & Design. During his nine-year tenure, he raised over \$12 million dollars for the College and University. Danny serves on the Hospice of Baton Rouge Board of Directors and as United Way Community Investment Manager. He is a native of Morgan City, LA and received his Master's Degree in Public Administration from Louisiana State University.

Cathy Jensen
Fine Arts Content Specialist
Utah State Office of Education



Bonnie Koba
Arts in Education Program Manager
Director, HOT Schools Program
Department of Economic & Community Development, Connecticut
Office of the Arts

Working in education, creative programming, and arts learning for over 20 years, Bonnie is COA's Arts in Education Program Manager and Director of Connecticut's nationally recognized Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Schools Program. As Director of HOT Schools Bonnie oversees all aspects of program design, implementation, activities, professional development and outreach, and she is currently focused on developing and implementing program partnerships and expansion plans. She collaborates with participating schools and school districts and works with local arts leaders as well as the CT State Department of Education and nationally recognized consultants to design professional development and innovative programming for teachers, teaching artists, parents and administrators, interested in school change and school improvement through arts learning and arts integration, and she consults nationally on these topics. In her leadership portfolio at COA Bonnie has developed and managed CT's Directory of Teaching and Performing Artists; CT State Troubadour program, Poetry Out Loud; Artist, School & State Museum Partnerships; CT Freedom Trail Project; and several grants programs including Arts Learning, Creative Placemaking, Early Learning, Underserved Youth, and Creative Collaborations, and she works closely with the state's nine Regional Service Organizations. Bonnie represents Connecticut on regional and national arts in education consortiums including New England Consortium of Artist Educator Professionals (NECAP), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). She served on NASAA's Arts Learning Advisory Group, the New England Foundation for the Arts' (NEFA) Touring Program and serves as State Captain for Americans for the Arts. She currently represents the New England Region and is a past chair of the Arts Education Work Group (AEWG), the arts education leadership body representing the NASAA/NEA partnership. Bonnie has also served as a Connecticut Humanities Programs Advisory Committee member, advisor to Hartford Performs, Bridgeport Turnaround Arts Schools, and is a former executive director of Connecticut Odyssey of the Mind.

Josy Miller
Arts Program Specialist
California Arts Council



Casey Polczynski
Arts in Education Coordinator
Virginia Commission for the Arts

Casey Polczynski joined the Virginia Commission for the Arts as the Arts in Education Coordinator in July 2014 where she coordinates grant funding for educational projects and Poetry Out Loud for the Commonwealth. She earned her Doctorate in Education from Walden University in 2013. Her doctoral thesis examined the teacher efficacy and pupil control beliefs of elementary art educators across Virginia exploring the teaching context and its possible impact on efficacy beliefs. Casey has been a visual arts educator teaching preK-12 students both nationally and internationally for over 15 years. Before coming to the commission, she worked at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in various educational roles expanding her knowledge and skills in museum education and community outreach. She makes the time weekly to take voice lessons to learn Gregorian chant and occasionally can be found repairing religious statuary.

Amber Sharples
Executive Director
Oklahoma Arts Council



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, theater and musical theater. 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 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 WV 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 micro enterprise 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 & Anthropology.

Susan Oetgen
Professional Development Institute Manager,
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

2017 Joint Leadership Committee

**Jennifer Allen-Barron
Arts Education Director
Oklahoma Arts Council**

**Rebecca McLaughlin
Director of Gifted Education,
Advanced Placement and Arts in
Education
Oklahoma State Department of
Education**

**Laura Forbes, AEWG Chair
Arts Education Program Director
Alaska State Council on the Arts**

**Julie Palkowski, SEADAE Past
President
Fine Arts and Creativity Education
Consultant
Wisconsin Department of Public
Instruction**

**Chiquita Mullins-Lee, AEWG Cochair
Arts Learning Program Coordinator
Ohio Arts Council**

**Cathy Jensen
Fine Arts Content Specialist
Utah State Office of Education**

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

**Susan Oetgen
Professional Development Institute Manager,
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies**