

# NASAA

San Juan, Puerto Rico  
October 23-26



Hosted by  
The Institute of Puerto Rican Culture

# 2024



LA FACTORÍA,  
OLD SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

IF YOU CAN HEAR  
THE MUSIC,  
YOU'RE INVITED  
TO DANCE.

LIVE  
**Boricua**

In Puerto Rico, music is life. Sometimes it's salsa. Sometimes it's plena. Sometimes it's reggaetón. No matter what rhythm is calling to you, when you hear it, it's always time to dance. Because in Puerto Rico, if you can hear the music, you're invited to the party. Let the Boricua spirit draw you into the heart of our culture and remind you why you travel in the first place. Plan now at [DiscoverPuertoRico.com/LiveBoricua](https://DiscoverPuertoRico.com/LiveBoricua)

DISCOVER  
**Puerto Rico**



# ¡BIENVENIDO A PUERTO RICO!

WELCOME TO PUERTO RICO!

The team at the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, founded in 1955, is thrilled to host NASAA Assembly 2024 in San Juan, the capital city of Puerto Rico and the oldest city in the United States.

San Juan celebrated its 500-year foundation in 2022, and in 2023 it was recognized by the Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities as San Juan Ibero-American Capital of Culture 2024. The award honors San Juan for a variety of characteristics that you will undoubtedly appreciate during your visit, such as music, crafts, tourism, gastronomy and the commitment to initiatives that highlight the importance of culture in sustainable development.

Old San Juan, home to our headquarters and just a short drive from the NASAA Assembly 2024 venue, harbors a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We encourage you to discover our architectural treasures, including Castillo San Felipe del Morro, Castillo San Cristóbal, the San Juan Gate, the city walls, la Fortaleza (the Governor's Mansion), Casa Blanca and Paseo de la Princesa, along with many other remarkable sites.

Puerto Rico is famous for its vibrant culture. Our rich history has given rise to diverse and original musical genres like bomba, salsa, plena and danza, as well as our cuisine, dance, unique cultural identity and influence across multiple art forms.

During your visit, we hope you gain and share resilience strategies and form meaningful collaborations. We have lined up distinctive local artists to inspire you throughout the Assembly,

and have arranged excursions to nearby communities that are using culture to address challenges.

We are delighted to have you here. Let's make NASAA Assembly 2024 the most exciting, productive and adventurous one ever. Get ready for an unforgettable experience!

**Carlos R. Ruiz Cortés, Ph.D.**  
Executive Director  
Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

HOTEL FLOOR PLAN	4
SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE	6
FROM THE CHAIR	8
SESSIONS & EVENTS	10
GENERAL INFORMATION	17
NASAA 2024 LEADERSHIP AWARDS	18
THANK YOU	24
SPONSORS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	26
BOARD & STAFF	28

Agenda & Sessions



Speakers & Artists



Peer Groups & Agendas



## HOTEL FLOOR PLAN

Sheraton Puerto Rico Hotel & Casino  
2nd Floor Meeting Rooms





### NASAA ASSEMBLY 2024

OCTOBER 23-26, 2024

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

We are proud to host you in Puerto Rico!



# SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE



Access NASAA Assembly 2024 speaker and session details at [conferences.nasaa-arts.org](https://conferences.nasaa-arts.org).

Sessions and events take place at the Sheraton Puerto Rico Hotel & Casino unless otherwise indicated.

Agenda & Sessions



Speakers & Artists



## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER

# 23

**12:30 – 6:30 p.m.**  
**Registration**  
*San Juan Foyer, 2nd Floor*

**6:30 – 9:00 p.m.**  
**Opening Reception**  
*Distrito T Mobile,  
250 Convention Blvd, San Juan,  
00907*

Communications Managers/PIOs  
*Laguna 1, 2nd Floor*

Community Development  
Coordinators  
*Bahia 1, 2nd Floor*

Folk and Traditional Arts Program  
Managers  
*Bahia 2, 2nd Floor*

Grants and Fiscal Officers  
*San Juan 8, 2nd Floor*

Public Art Managers  
*San Geronimo, 2nd Floor*

**10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**NEA Grants Staff Office Hours**  
*San Juan 7, 2nd Floor*  
See Sessions & Events to make an appointment.

**12:30 – 1:45 p.m.**  
**NASAA Leadership Awards Luncheon**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

**1:45 – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Shuttles depart for Culture and Community Sessions**  
*Sheraton Lobby*

**2:30 – 5:00 p.m.**  
**Culture and Community Sessions**  
*Navigating Climate Change  
El Portal de El Yunque, PR-191,  
Rio Grande, 00745*

**Bomba: Instrument of Resilience**  
*Casa Bacardi, 200 PR-165, Cataño,  
00962*

**Creative Placemaking and the Democratization of Art in Puerto Rico**  
*1220 Ave. Ponce de León Esq. R.H. Todd Pda 18, San Juan, 00907*

**Escuela de Oficios: Sustaining and Growing Cultural Traditions**  
*Casa Bacardi, 200 PR-165, Cataño,  
00962*

**Santurce’s El Gandul and Calle Cerra: A Cultural Landscape of Art and Resilience**

**5:00 p.m.**  
**Shuttles depart for hotel**

**6:00 – 8:00 p.m.**  
**People of Color Affinity Group Gathering and Happy Hour**  
*El Mirador Room and Terrace, 12th Floor*

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER

# 25

**8:00 – 9:00 a.m.**  
**Networking Breakfast**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

**8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Registration**  
*San Juan Foyer, 2nd Floor*

**9:15 – 10:15 a.m.**  
**Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña Plenary**  
*San Juan 1 – 3, 2nd Floor*

**9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**  
**Artist in Residence: Agua, Sol y Sereno**  
*Miramar 1, 2nd Floor*

**10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Community and Partnership Sessions**

**Centering Arts and Culture across Sectors: A Global Interactive Discussion**  
*Laguna 1, 2nd Floor*

**State Arts Agency Strategies for Addressing Artists’ Needs**  
*San Geronimo, 2nd Floor*

**AI and the Arts: Navigating Ethical and Effective Use for State Arts Agency Leaders**  
*San Felipe, 2nd Floor*

**State Creative Economy Strategies**  
*Laguna 2, 2nd Floor*

**Communicating Impact**  
*Bahia 2, 2nd Floor*

**10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**NEA Grants Staff Office Hours**  
*San Juan 7, 2nd Floor*  
See Sessions & Events to make an appointment.

**12:30 – 1:30 p.m.**  
**Networking Luncheon**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

**1:30 – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Artist in Residence Talk: Agua, Sol y Sereno**  
*San Juan 1 – 3, 2nd Floor*

**2:00 – 3:30 p.m.**  
**Strategy Sessions**  
*Arts Advocacy Tactics and Strategies That Work for 2025 and Beyond  
Laguna 2, 2nd Floor*

**(Re)Branding Your Agency**  
*San Geronimo, 2nd Floor*

**Deepening Engagement with Rural Communities**  
*Bahia 2, 2nd Floor*

**Programmatic Accessibility in the Arts**  
*Laguna 1, 2nd Floor*

**The Changing Legal Landscape for Grant Making**  
*San Felipe, 2nd Floor*

**3:45 – 4:00 p.m.**  
**Shuttles depart for NEA Plenary and Artist Showcase**  
*Sheraton Lobby*

**4:30 – 5:00 p.m.**  
**NEA Plenary**  
*Antiguo Casino de Puerto Rico,  
2nd Floor, Ave. Ponce de León, Esq.  
Norzagaray, San Juan, 00901*

**5:00 – 6:00 p.m.**  
**Artist Showcase Featuring Dr. William Cepeda**  
*Antiguo Casino de Puerto Rico, 2nd Floor*

**6:00 – 9:00 p.m.**  
**Puerto Rico Night**  
*Antiguo Casino de Puerto Rico,  
Garden*

**6:00 – 9:00 p.m.**  
**Shuttles depart for hotel**

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER

# 26

**8:30 – 9:30 a.m.**  
**Networking Breakfast**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Artist in Residence: Sandra I. Rodriguez**  
*Miramar 2, 2nd Floor*

**10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**  
**Strategy Sessions**

**Demographic Data Collection**  
*Laguna 1 – 2, 2nd Floor*

**Supporting a Sustainable Cultural Sector: The Mellon Foundation and Partners**  
*Miramar 2 – 3, 2nd Floor*

**Rx for the Arts**  
*San Felipe, 2nd Floor*

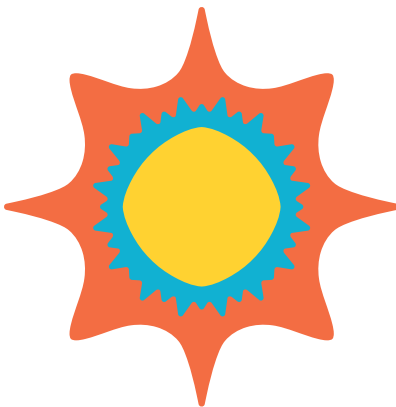
**Emergency Preparedness for State Arts Agencies**  
*Bahia 1 – 2, 2nd Floor*

**Strategies for Serving Tribal Communities**  
*San Juan 8, 2nd Floor*

**10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**NEA Grants Staff Office Hours**  
*San Juan 7, 2nd Floor*  
See Sessions & Events to make an appointment.

**11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.**  
**NASAA Business Session**  
*San Juan 1 – 3, 2nd Floor*

**12:45 – 3:00 p.m.**  
**Closing Celebration**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*





# FROM THE CHAIR



Dear colleagues and friends,

On behalf of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies board of directors, it is my pleasure to welcome you to NASAA Assembly 2024! Our time together promises to be a truly enriching experience set against the vibrant backdrop of San Juan.

As we gather for this momentous occasion, the NASAA staff, led by President and CEO Pam Breaux, have designed a conference to inspire, challenge, and equip us with the knowledge and tools essential for advancing the arts in all 56 states and jurisdictions.

This year's Assembly offers something for everyone! Diverse sessions tailored specifically for state arts agency staff and board leaders give you the opportunity to engage with thought leaders and experts on a variety of timely and relevant topics. These sessions will provide actionable insights and innovative solutions to the challenges and opportunities in the arts sector that you can take back home.

Throughout the Assembly, we'll have the chance to immerse ourselves in San Juan's rich culture and discover firsthand how the arts contribute to community building and drive the creative economy. Heartfelt thanks to our host, the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, for their warm welcome and the exciting surprises they've planned! I'm looking forward to every minute of our time together.

Adding to the festivities is NASAA's celebration of its 56th birthday with a special theme of 56 Years,

56 Strong. That's right, for 56 years NASAA has strengthened state arts agencies and protected public funding for the arts—so that everyone and every community benefits from the resilience and hope that the arts offer. As board chair, I hope you'll join me in making a gift today that will support NASAA's next 56 years! Gene Meneray and David Schmitz, this year's Development Committee cochairs, are available to help with your contribution, or you can go online right now to be among the first to give at NASAA Assembly 2024! (<https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/NASAA>) Thank you.

By Saturday afternoon you'll discover that networking is at the heart of the Assembly, and I encourage you to connect with your peers, share experiences and build lasting professional relationships. The strength of our field lies in our shared commitment and the collaborative spirit that drives our work forward. As we say in Ohio, the arts are better when we work together!

Warm regards,

**Donna S. Collins**  
Executive Director,  
Ohio Arts Council  
Chair, NASAA Board of  
Directors

DONATE NOW





# SESSIONS & EVENTS



Access NASAA Assembly 2024 speaker and session details at [conferences.nasaa-arts.org](https://conferences.nasaa-arts.org).

Sessions and events take place at the Sheraton Puerto Rico Hotel & Casino unless otherwise indicated.

Agenda & Sessions



Speakers & Artists



## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23

**12:30 – 6:30 p.m.**  
**Registration**  
*San Juan Foyer, 2nd Floor*

**6:30 – 9:00 p.m.**  
**Opening Reception**  
*Distrito T Mobile*  
*250 Convention Blvd, San Juan, 00907. An easy stroll across the Convention Center circle.*



Network with your colleagues and enjoy music from Pirulo y la Tribu—and salsa lessons!—from Rafa Cancel with the internationally known Cambio en Clave at one of Puerto Rico’s premier entertainment sites.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24

**7:30 – 8:30 a.m.**  
**Networking Breakfast**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

**8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Registration**  
*San Juan Foyer, 2nd Floor*

**8:45 – 10:15 a.m.**  
**Opening Session / Roll Call of the States and Jurisdictions**  
*San Juan 1 – 3, 2nd Floor*

Raise your voice and participate in a NASAA tradition: the Roll Call of the States and Jurisdictions! And that’s not all—we’ll end the celebration by presenting an executive director with the Luminary Award for Transformative Executive Leadership.

**10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Peer Sessions**

Peer Groups & Agendas



NASAA peer sessions offer state arts agency staff and council members the opportunity to network and exchange ideas within job-alike groups. The agenda development and discussions all are led by volunteers from the field.

**Chairs and Council Members**  
*San Cristobal, 2nd Floor*

**Executive Directors**  
*Miramar 1, 2nd Floor*

**Deputy/Assistant Directors**  
*Laguna 2, 2nd Floor*

**Arts Education Managers**  
*San Felipe, 2nd Floor*

**Communications Managers/PIOs**  
*Laguna 1, 2nd Floor*

**Community Development Coordinators**  
*Bahia 1, 2nd Floor*

**Folk and Traditional Arts Program Managers**  
*Bahia 2, 2nd Floor*

**Grants and Fiscal Officers**  
*San Juan 8, 2nd Floor*

**Public Art Managers**  
*San Geronimo, 2nd Floor*

**10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**NEA Grants Staff Office Hours**  
*San Juan 7, 2nd Floor*

**12:30 – 1:45 p.m.**  
**NASAA Leadership Awards Luncheon**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

Celebrate the outstanding work and exemplary leadership of our state arts agency field! Congratulations to the 2024 NASAA Leadership Awards winners: the Distinguished Public Service Award for a council member, and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Awards, one for an individual and one for an agency.

**1:45 – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Shuttles depart for Culture and Community Sessions**  
*Sheraton Lobby*

**2:30 – 5:00 p.m.**  
**Culture and Community Sessions**

Get out into San Juan and the surrounding areas to experience the culture and community of Puerto Rico!

**Navigating Climate Change**  
*El Portal de El Yunque, PR-191, Rio Grande, 00745*  
Join a panel of experts from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Vermont Arts Council for a discussion on how and why state arts agencies can support and implement climate change awareness and actions through partnerships and training. Participants will have time to explore the surrounding rain forest and purchase artwork by local artists.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** This session entails a 40-minute bus ride to El Portal and a 40-minute bus ride back to the hotel. This session is limited to 150 participants. Please see registration desk for availability.

**Bomba: Instrument of Resilience**  
*Casa Bacardi, 200 PR-165, Cataño, 00962*  
Join El Tambor Mayor Jesus Cepeda for an in-depth look at the creation of bomba drums and the history of bomba as both the foundation of salsa and the sound of the resiliency of Puerto Rico. Participants have a chance to interact with Jesus and the drums in their various stages of creation.

This session limited to 60 participants. Please see registration desk for availability.

**Creative Placemaking and the Democratization of Art in Puerto Rico**  
*1220 Ave. Ponce de León Esq. R.H. Todd Pda 18, San Juan, 00907*  
Head to the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico (MAC) for a presentation and discussion on creative placemaking, cross-sector civic engagement, and the democratization of art with MAC Executive Director and Chief Curator Marianne Ramírez Aponte and Andanza Executive and Artistic Director Maria D.

Villanúa (Lolita). Time is provided for a self-guided tour of MAC’s current exhibitions.

This session limited to 60 participants. Please see registration desk for availability.

**Escuela de Oficios: Sustaining and Growing Cultural Traditions**  
*Casa Bacardi, 200 PR-165, Cataño, 00962*  
Join artist Jorge González Santos and a network of collaborators for a collective learning experience based on the principles of the Escuela de Oficios (Trade School) platform. This practice is informed by close contact with knowledge holders from the artisanal community of Puerto Rico and involves learning about natural fibers and a traditional Puerto Rican lace technique called soles de Naranjito. This conversation-oriented session will be a space of connection, experience and memory, to delve into the sun-lace technique as a process to envision and develop relationships of care-kin-centered futures.

This session is limited to 40 participants. Please see registration desk for availability.

**Santurce’s El Gandul and Calle Cerra: A Cultural Landscape of Art and Resilience**  
Discover Puerto Rico’s vibrant art scene with a guided tour through the artistic heart of Santurce. This experience takes you on an exploration of the El Gandul community and the historic Calle Cerra, both at the center of Santurce’s cultural renaissance.

As we walk through this bustling art district, you’ll be immersed in the richness and depth of Santurce’s cultural landscape. You’ll witness firsthand how art serves as a powerful tool for resilience and community empowerment, even as the area grapples with the stark contrasts brought by gentrification in recent years.

The journey begins with “LA RUTA,” a tour of Santurce’s alternative artist-run spaces. These unique galleries, operated by the artists themselves, play a crucial role in urban regeneration, offering a refreshing alternative to conventional public and private galleries. You’ll visit spaces like Recinto Cerra and El Lobi, where the latest exhibitions showcase the dynamic energy of Puerto Rico’s contemporary art scene.

The artwalk tour continues with a guided walk along Calle Cerra, renowned for its world-class street art. Each mural tells a story, featuring large-scale works by both local and international artists that reflect



SESSIONS & EVENTS

Thursday, continued

themes of resistance and cultural identity. This street art tour offers a deep dive into the creative spirit that makes Santurce a vital hub for artistic expression and cultural preservation. Join us to explore how art thrives in Santurce, transforming spaces and enriching the community.


**SPECIAL NOTE:** This session is a walking tour. Light clothing, comfortable walking shoes and sunscreen are highly recommended. This session is limited to 25 participants. Please see registration desk for availability.

**5:00 p.m.**  
**Shuttles depart for hotel**

**6:00 – 8:00 p.m.**  
**People of Color Affinity Group Gathering and Happy Hour**

*El Mirador Room and Terrace, 12th Floor*  
The People of Color Affinity Group is a NASAA members-led group open to all state and jurisdictional arts agency and regional arts organization staff and council members who identify as persons of color. If you identify as a person of color, please come unwind and connect with colleagues, old friends and a few new faces. We'll have drinks, heavy bites and plenty of good conversation. Whether you'd like to network or just relax, we'd love to see you!

Book an appointment



National Endowment for the Arts  
Office of Grants Management staff  
will be onsite (*San Juan 7, 2nd Floor*)  
to answer questions about managing  
your NEA Partnership Agreement  
awards.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25

**8:00 – 9:00 a.m.**  
**Networking Breakfast**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

**8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Registration**  
*San Juan Foyer, 2nd Floor*

**9:15 – 10:15 a.m.**  
**Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña Plenary**  
*San Juan 1 – 3, 2nd Floor*

**9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**  
**Artist in Residence: Agua, Sol y Sereno**  
*Miramar 1, 2nd Floor*



Agua, Sol y Sereno is in residence until 3:30 p.m., constructing a cabezudo (big head) in the tradition they employ for Carnival. Drop by any time to see how the work is going and talk with the creators.

**10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Community and Partnership Sessions**  
**Centering Arts and Culture across Sectors: A Global Interactive Discussion**  
*Laguna 1, 2nd Floor*  
Facilitating connections across the arts and cultural ecology is in the DNA of government arts agencies. Public engagement and community-driven practices bring diverse stakeholders to the table. This interactive session focuses on learning about a range of existing national and international cross-sector initiatives and actions, exchanging new ideas, and sharing with colleagues from across the United States, the

Caribbean and Latin America. The session is offered as a collaboration between the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies and the National Endowment for the Arts.

**State Arts Agency Strategies for Addressing Artists' Needs**  
*San Geronimo, 2nd Floor*  
Join a panel of your state arts agency peers for a review of their current strategies for addressing artists' needs in their states. Come ready to share your own experiences and ideas as the panel shifts into an engaging discussion on how state arts agencies can continue adapting to the evolving landscape and provide the support artists need moving forward.

**AI and the Arts: Navigating Ethical and Effective Use for State Arts Agency Leaders**  
*San Felipe, 2nd Floor*  
Artificial intelligence (AI) presents both exciting opportunities and complex challenges for state arts agencies and other government entities. As an arts-sector leader, you must guide your organization to embrace the technology in a way that moves forward your agency's mission and mitigates risk. This interactive workshop explores how responsible AI use can enhance the work of state arts agencies.

**State Creative Economy Strategies**  
*Laguna 2, 2nd Floor*  
To cultivate the creative sector as an economic catalyst, state arts agencies are collaborating with state economic development officials as well as private partners to develop strategic plans and policy agendas for the creative sector. Learn about exciting new initiatives designed to propel the growth of the creative economy at the state level from three states.

**Communicating Impact**  
*Bahia 2, 2nd Floor*  
The arts agency field collects a large volume of data, ranging from grant reports and economic studies to surveys and evaluations. It can be a challenge, however, to shape this information into effective communications that relay how the arts contribute to healthy and vibrant communities and a good return on investment. This session discusses ideas for using information as a communications asset for telling the story of what state arts agencies do and what the arts sector achieves.

**10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**NEA Grants Staff Office Hours**  
*San Juan 7, 2nd Floor*

**12:30 – 1:30 p.m.**  
**Networking Luncheon**  
*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

**1:30 – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Artist in Residence Talk: Agua, Sol y Sereno**  
*San Juan 1 – 3, 2nd Floor*  
Hear from Agua, Sol y Sereno (ASYS) about how their work in theatre and the community is centered on the democratization of art to all sectors of the population. Founded by Pedro Adorno and Cathy Vigo in 1993, ASYS is a theatre collective—now made up of eight artists—that embraces various artistic disciplines within the theatre, such as painting, dance, music and writing. Its creative workshops are aimed at exploring the concerns and imagination of people of all ages in all types of communities.

**2:00 – 3:30 p.m.**  
**Strategy Sessions**  
**Arts Advocacy Tactics and Strategies That Work for 2025 and Beyond**  
*Laguna 2, 2nd Floor*  
Creative-sector advocates and state arts leaders are navigating a rapidly changing and unpredictable policy environment. As pandemic relief funds sunset, state budgets are under renewed stress, which can adversely impact arts funding. Simultaneously, 5,793 state legislative seats are up for election in November. That means legions of new lawmakers must be educated about the important impacts of the creative sector. How can advocates and arts leaders position the arts as an essential public investment? How can we cultivate new champions across the political spectrum? Exchange tactical strategies that work in this dialogue based session.

**(Re)Branding Your Agency**  
*San Geronimo, 2nd Floor*  
An effective branding strategy can help your agency stand out and allow your constituents to build more meaningful connections with you. Your brand communicates who you are and reflects the heart of your work, encapsulating why participants, partners and supporters should believe in you. This session explores why and how some of your state arts agency and regional arts organization peers decided to undertake the process of rebranding to better resonate with their goals and vision.  
**This session is sponsored by Creative West.**

Speakers & Artists



**Deepening Engagement with Rural Communities**

*Bahia 2, 2nd Floor*

Discover inspirational work across communities and networks and participate in a creative visioning exercise to imagine ways to deepen engagement and support with artists, cultural initiatives and institutions in rural communities. This highly interactive session will encourage participants to imagine ways for state arts agencies to deepen their commitment and engagement with rural America.

**Programmatic Accessibility in the Arts**

*Laguna 1, 2nd Floor*

For many years, structural access to arts facilities by people who use wheelchairs or have mobility impairments has been a well-known and generally accepted practice. Less understood is how the programs within a facility can be made accessible for people who are blind and/or deaf. Join a panel of experts for a discussion on how innovative and universal use of audio description, open captions and sign language interpretation can ensure that arts organizations can become models of inclusivity.

**The Changing Legal Landscape for Grant Making**

*San Felipe, 2nd Floor*

Recent lawsuits have successfully challenged federal government programs designed to support disadvantaged groups, and new court rulings are driving changes in funding practices. This session explores that evolving legal landscape and its potential implications for grant making and compliance. We'll begin with a legal briefing and then transition into a peer discussion about what state

arts agencies are experiencing and how we are navigating these issues at the state level.

**3:45 – 4:00 p.m.**

**Shuttles depart for NEA Plenary and Artist Showcase**

*Sheraton Lobby*

**4:30 – 5:00 p.m.**

**NEA Plenary**

*Antiguo Casino de Puerto Rico, 2nd Floor, Ave. Ponce de León, Esq. Norzagaray, San Juan, 00901*

Maria Rosario Jackson, Ph.D., chair of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), joins the Assembly to share the latest developments in the NEA's work to unlock new opportunities for American communities to thrive through the arts. The NEA is leading a major effort to engage federal agencies and activate cross-sector collaborations that lift up the arts and demonstrate how they contribute to improving public health, promote human development, grow a creative workforce, enliven public spaces, foster resiliency and strengthen our democracy. Chair Jackson discusses how this work connects with state policy. The session includes time for dialogue with the audience.



**5:00 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Artist Showcase Featuring Dr. William Cepeda**

*Antiguo Casino de Puerto Rico, 2nd Floor*



After the plenary, stay for a showcase performance featuring a whirlwind tour of the musical traditions of Puerto Rico: Bomba, Plena, La Danza and La Música Jíbara. Dr. William Cepeda, revolutionary founder of Afro-Rican Jazz and protégé of Dizzy Gillespie, is sure to leave you entertained and filled with wonder at the depth of Puerto Rico's influence on world music.

**6:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Puerto Rico Night**

*Antiguo Casino de Puerto Rico, Garden*

After a stirring artist showcase, stay a while to enjoy the festive spirit of Puerto Rican hospitality at an evening event full of live music, food and plenty of fun. And for our NASAA donors, we've got something extra special: an exclusive VIP lounge where you can take a break and unwind in style!

**6:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Shuttles depart for hotel**



**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26**

**8:30 – 9:30 a.m.**

**Networking Breakfast**

*San Juan 4 – 5, 2nd Floor*

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Artist in Residence: Sandra I. Rodriguez**

*Miramar 2, 2nd Floor*



Sandra I. Rodriguez, in residence until 12:00 p.m., demonstrates the traditional art of mundillo and lace making. Drop by any time to see how the work is going, talk with Sandra and see some of her finished products.

**10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**Strategy Sessions**

**Demographic Data Collection**

*Laguna 1 - 2, 2nd Floor*

Many state arts agencies collect demographic data from grantees, but how well is that information guiding planning or grant making? This session offers an opportunity for discussion on what data points state arts agencies are gathering, how that information is collected, whether it's reliable and how it's



being used. This is a facilitated peer conversation, so come prepared to share your own experiences and questions about the pros, cons and perplexities of collecting demographic information.

Supporting a Sustainable Cultural Sector: The Mellon Foundation and Partners

Miramar 2 – 3, 2nd Floor

The Mellon Foundation’s Puerto Rico initiative aims to sustain and enrich the archipelago’s vibrant cultural, knowledge and memory ecosystems and the individuals who work within them. Join representatives from the Mellon Foundation and their dedicated partners in Puerto Rico for a look at how their grant-making strategies are designed to redress past underfunding, address urgent needs, and build a sustainable artistic, educational, intellectual, cultural, and archival infrastructure for the future.

Rx for the Arts

San Felipe, 2nd Floor

Arts on prescription programs allow health care providers and social service agencies to prescribe arts activities and cultural engagement experiences to support positive physical, mental and behavioral health outcomes while improving well-being and quality of life. Learn how the Massachusetts Cultural Council is taking this idea to scale at the state level through innovative policy partnerships and compelling research.

Emergency Preparedness for State Arts Agencies

Bahia 1 – 2, 2nd Floor

Join the National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response and other emergency preparedness experts for a highly interactive and entertaining session aimed at helping state arts agencies understand how they, arts organizations and artists in their states are vital components in community recovery. This session focuses on state arts agency roles and responsibilities in both the preparation and recovery phases.

Strategies for Serving Tribal Communities

San Juan 8, 2nd Floor

Every state and U.S. jurisdiction is home to Indigenous artists, Native organizations or tribes. Many state arts agencies are seeking meaningful relationships with these constituents. How can outreach begin, and what strategies can lead to success? This session features approaches adopted by state arts agencies in varied cultural and geographic settings. Hear what’s worked for them—and share what’s worked for you—in this exchange of insights and lessons learned.

10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

NEA Grants Staff Office Hours

San Juan 7, 2nd Floor

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

NASAA Business Session

San Juan 1 – 3, 2nd Floor

Join your colleagues for the annual NASAA business meeting, including the NASAA board chair’s report, before our Closing Celebration. And don’t miss the chance to win two free registrations to NASAA Assembly 2026! You must be present to win.

12:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Closing Celebration

San Juan 4 –5, 2nd Floor

Join your colleagues for a celebration of the field, delicious hors d’oeuvres, and a final chance to network with your peers as we say, «¡Adiós, hasta la próxima!» to colleagues and our friends in Puerto Rico. A special performance by percussionist Giovanni Hidalgo and his quintet is not to be missed.



Speakers & Artists



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## NAME BADGES

Your name badge is your “admission ticket” to conference sessions and special events. Be sure to wear it during all conference functions. If you lose or misplace your badge, you may replace it at the NASAA Staff Office. Ribbons attached to name badges are identified at right.

NASAA STAFF	SPEAKER, PANELIST OR FACILITATOR	ARTIST
NASAA BOARD		
INSTITUTE OF PUERTO RICAN CULTURE	DONOR OR SPONSOR	NASAA LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

## REGISTRATION DESK

San Juan Foyer, 2nd Floor

The Assembly 2024 registration desk is open during these times:

Wednesday, October 23, 12:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.  
Thursday, October 24, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Friday, October 25, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

If you miss registration, please visit the NASAA Staff Office.

## NASAA STAFF OFFICE

Luna Boardroom, 2nd Floor

If you missed registration, lost your badge or have a question concerning the meeting, stop by the NASAA Staff Office.

## MEETING SITE

Unless otherwise indicated, all meetings take place at:

Sheraton Puerto Rico Hotel & Casino  
200 Convention Boulevard  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00907  
787-993-3500

## DOCUMENTATION

NASAA uses a variety of media (including photography and video and audio recording) to capture conference proceedings. NASAA may disseminate selected material, images or recordings for documentation, education and promotion purposes.

## PHOTO CREDITS

Page 9: Photo courtesy of Discover Puerto Rico

Page 14: Photo by Aaron Jay Young

Page 20: Four generations of the Pocomoke Indian Nation gathered at Shad Landing State Park Discovery Center in Snow Hill, Maryland. Photo courtesy of the Maryland State Arts Council



Your feedback helps us improve. We want to know what you think! At the end of the Assembly, please fill out this survey.

# NASAA 2024 LEADERSHIP AWARDS

NASAA's leadership awards showcase best practices of state arts agencies and regional arts organizations, recognize exemplary leadership, and demonstrate how government creatively, effectively and efficiently serves the public through the arts.

## LUMINARY AWARD FOR TRANSFORMATIVE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

This award recognizes an executive director who makes a significant contribution to public support for the arts at the state, regional and national levels. Awardees exhibit remarkable qualifications such as exemplary and inspirational leadership, innovative thinking and dedication to diverse artistic expression. The Luminary Award is inspired by Gary Young, an early leader in the state arts agency field.

**Carlos R. Ruiz Cortés, Ph.D.**  
Executive Director, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña

Carlos Ruiz Cortés was appointed in January 2017 as executive director of the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña (ICP) to implement and oversee public policy for arts, culture and heritage. He manages 200+ employees and contractors, over 35 historic buildings (including two theatres), the National Art Collection, the General Archive and the National Library. Dr. Ruiz Cortés supervises 18 divisions of the state, including Archaeology and Built Heritage.

Dr. Ruiz Cortés is renowned for advancing ICP's mission and vision through many challenges, including severe budget cuts (90%) in 2017, followed by devastating hurricanes Irma and María the same year, earthquakes in 2020, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Under his leadership, ICP has established long-term partnerships that benefit its constituents and increase access to Puerto Rico's heritage. Activities include internships, digitization projects, the annual celebration of multiple cultural festivals, and active relationships with the Puerto Rican diaspora.

During Dr. Ruiz Cortés's tenure, folk arts traditions were recorded and distributed online, as well as on local television, resulting in two Emmy Awards. ICP was honored as a guardian of Puerto Rican heritage with the 2023 National Ceiba Award, presented by the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts & Culture. Other recipients of this award include Ricky Martin, Jimmy Smits and Rita Moreno, among others.

From 2018-2023, Dr. Ruiz Cortés served simultaneously as the executive director of the Corporación de las Artes Musicales, the public corporation of the Symphony Orchestra of Puerto Rico. He holds a Ph.D. in history from the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico. He is a board member of Mid Atlantic Arts.



### Previous Luminary Award Recipients

- 2022 Margaret Hunt, Colorado
- 2020 Gary Gibbs, Texas
- 2018 Suzanne Wise, Nebraska
- 2016 Randall Rosenbaum, Rhode Island
- 2014 Rich Boyd, Tennessee
- 2012 Christine D'Arcy, Oregon
- 2010 Arlynn (Arni) Fishbaugh, Montana
- 2008 Suzette Surkamer, South Carolina
- 2007 David Fraher, Minnesota
- 2006 Robert Booker, Arizona
- 2005 Philip Horn, Pennsylvania
- 2004 Dennis Holub, South Dakota
- 2003 Barbara Fulton Moran, New Jersey
- 2002 John Paul Batiste, Texas
- 2001 James Backas, Maryland
- 2000 Betty Price, Oklahoma
- 1999 Peggy Baggett, Virginia
- 1998 Al Head, Alabama
- 1997 Bennett Tarleton, Tennessee
- 1996 Shelley Cohn, Arizona
- 1995 Mary Hays, New York
- 1994 Wayne Lawson, Ohio
- 1993 Alden C. Wilson, Maine
- 1992 David Nelson, Montana
- 1991 Mary Regan, North Carolina

### Previous Distinguished Public Service Award Recipients

- 2022 Cyndy Andrus, Montana
- 2020 Nola Ruth, Missouri
- 2018 Molly Leach Pratt, Tennessee
- 2016 Bruce Richardson, Wyoming
- 2014 Bobby Kadis, North Carolina
- 2012 Dorothy Pierce McSweeney, District of Columbia
- 2010 Lucius (Lu) Ellsworth, Virginia
- 2008 Margaret "Peggy" Kannenstine, Vermont
- 2007 David "White Thunder" Trottier, North Dakota
- 2006 Delores C. Fery, Idaho
- 2005 Margaret "Tog" Newman, North Carolina
- 2004 William Davis, West Virginia
- 2003 Judith Ann Rapanos, Michigan
- 2002 Dr. Oscar E. Remick, Michigan, Pennsylvania and New York
- 2001 Barbara S. Robinson, Ohio
- 2000 Carol Brown, Pennsylvania

## DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

This award honors a chair or council member whose outstanding service, creative thinking and exemplary leadership significantly impact public support for the arts at the state level and across the country.

**Geraldine B. "Ginger" Warner**  
Chair, Ohio Arts Council

Ginger Warner is a retired attorney who practiced private and corporate law in New York, Maryland, California and the District of Columbia. Since moving to Ohio in 1983, Ginger has devoted much of her life to her passion for the arts and, in doing so, empowered others to pursue their creative potential and access arts and cultural experiences in diverse settings. She currently serves as chair of the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), a position she has held since 2016, previously serving as vice-chair from 2011-2016. She began her OAC board service in 1997 and has since been appointed by five consecutive Ohio governors spanning the political spectrum.

Ginger's board and volunteer service reaches across Ohio, including service to the National First Ladies Library and Museum in Canton and the Cleveland Orchestra. In the Greater Cincinnati area, she has served with the Taft Museum of Art, Ensemble Theatre, May Festival, Madisonville Education and Assistance League, Children's Hospital Medical Center, University of Cincinnati, Hamilton County Park District, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Opera, and Greenacres Foundation. She is a founder of The Harmony Project at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) and Books for Lunch at Seven Hills School. Ginger also established the Warner Fellowship in Law and Women's Studies at the University of Cincinnati and the May Festival Fellowship in Choral Conducting at CCM. Ginger is a member of the University of Cincinnati's Circle of Honor Benefactors.





DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AGENCY AWARD

This award recognizes the policies, practices and programs of state arts agencies or regional arts organizations that embrace and advance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at the state or regional level. Awardees demonstrate innovative and exceptional efforts to be diverse, equitable and inclusive in their work.



Maryland State Arts Council

The Land Acknowledgement Project of the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is a collection of resources centering the experiences of Indigenous people in the place now known as Maryland. The project includes a statewide Indigenous land acknowledgement statement read aloud at the beginning of all MSAC public meetings, a resource guide with an overview of land acknowledgement statements and how arts agencies and artists can ethically create their own, recommendations for how non-Indigenous people may move toward positive change led by tribal peoples, and maps and resources on tribal histories. The project was developed in consultation with the Accohannock Indian Tribe, Assateague People's Tribe, Choptico Band of Indians of the Piscataway Conoy Tribe, Nause-Waiwash Band of Indians, Piscataway Indian Nation, Pocomoke Indian Nation, Susquehannock Indians and Youghiogheny River Band of Shawnee, in response to ongoing constituent requests. At MSAC, project efforts were led by Folklife Specialist Ryan Koons.



Since its release in 2022, the project has consistently fulfilled its intended purpose of combating Indigenous erasure, building networks that promote Indigenous sovereignty, and beginning to facilitate the development of ethical relationships between settler institutions and tribal peoples. In addition to spurring more than 24 requests for presentations, the project has led to convenings and collaborations among state agencies, private organizations and tribal leadership resulting in tools raising the visibility of Indigenous people via the Maryland State Archives, curriculum development increasing Indigenous perspectives in Maryland public schools, and efforts to connect tribal peoples with the resources of arts organizations and higher education institutions. Revisions that keep the Land Acknowledgement Project updated, accessible, and as accurate as possible are ongoing at MSAC.

Previous DEI Agency Award Recipients

- 2022 Mass Cultural Council
- 2020 Colorado Creative Industries

Previous DEI Individual Award Recipients

- 2022 Jean Tokuda Irwin, Utah
- 2020 Carla Du Pree, Maryland and Deonté Griffin-Quick, New Jersey

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION INDIVIDUAL AWARD

This award honors an individual who serves as a catalyst for change, exhibiting outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in addressing and raising awareness about issues of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at the state or regional level.

Ayanna Lalia Kiburi (she/her), MPH  
Deputy Director, California Arts Council



Ayanna Lalia Kiburi serves as the deputy director of the California Arts Council (CAC). A self-proclaimed “artist,” she is known for her transformative leadership in the arts and public health sectors. In her 20+ year career in public service, Ayanna has created more equitable and inclusive work environments, advanced policies that promote progressive institutional change, and championed creativity as the way to build and nurture sustainable systems. As a public health expert, she has advocated for addressing health disparities within historically disinvested communities. Her approach to DEI is grounded in a deep understanding of systemic inequities and a commitment to fostering practices that result in individuals and communities thriving—living unencumbered by entrenched systemic racial inequities.

For the past eight years, Ayanna has overseen several complex DEI and operational initiatives at the CAC, including implementation of the CAC’s 2020-2027 Strategic Framework. The Framework is grounded in addressing racial inequity root causes, establishing policy, and using the Decision Support Tool (DST), which has been shared statewide and nationally. She led a change management initiative called Ways of Working that centers workplace psychological safety and belonging and facilitates a process that counters standard work practices grounded in White supremacy. She established the first race equity manager and equity measures and evaluation manager positions at the agency. Her appointment to Gov. Gavin Newsom’s San Quentin Transformational Advisory Council in 2023 was thanks to her exceptional leadership in the CAC Arts in Corrections Program.

Ayanna has an M.A. in public health and a B.A. in sociology and African American studies. She is the creative director of a readers theatre ensemble called Authentic Voices that explores racial trauma, healing and belonging through personal stories and music. She enjoys exploring life and art with her wife, son and fur baby in Sacramento.

2024 NATIONAL AWARDS TASK FORCE

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Colorado Creative Industries



Thank you,  
Teresa Bonner!

We are delighted to share the news that Ellen Michelson has made a generous gift to NASAA in honor of Teresa Bonner and her remarkable work on behalf of creative aging.

This gift especially recognizes Teresa’s strategic leadership in introducing E.A. Michelson Philanthropy to NASAA. Thanks to this introduction, Ellen, NASAA and state arts agencies now stand proudly at the forefront of creative aging. Today, 36 states (and counting!) are harnessing the power of the arts to combat isolation, celebrate life and create pathways for older adults to flourish.

Teresa’s unwavering perseverance, keen insight, devoted advocacy and passionate enthusiasm helped shape two national initiatives, build momentum for creative aging, and expand networks and relationships for NASAA and state arts agencies.

NASAA is grateful to have had the opportunity to work in partnership with Teresa. We thank Ellen for making this possible and for her visionary commitment to creative aging and generous support.



# THANK YOU

It is with deep gratitude that we recognize our donors and partners, who generously support NASAA's work. Your gifts empower state arts agencies with the knowledge, representation and community they need to keep doing the incredible work they do every day—for the arts and through the arts. Thank you!

This list acknowledges 2023 and 2024 contributions. The number after each name identifies the number of years giving, and the categories reflect the most recent level of giving. This list is current as of October 10, 2024. If you would like to join this list or report any corrections, please contact Katie Hughes at 202-347-7067.

\*2024 NASAA Board Member

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In honor of Kelly Barsdate,  
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In honor of Kelly Barsdate  
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In honor of Kelly Barsdate  
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Molly Pratt

In honor of Teresa Bonner,  
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In honor of Pam Breaux,  
made by Loie Fecteau

In honor of Donna Collins at  
the Ohio Arts Council, made  
by Justin Nigro

In honor of Donna Collins,  
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In honor of Theresa Colvin,  
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In honor of Margaret Hunt,  
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In honor of Dr. Elliot Knight,  
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In honor of Kim Konikow,  
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Laflamme-Childs, made by  
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In honor of Laura Smith  
and Bradley Bizzell and in  
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In honor of NASAA, made by  
John Bracey

In honor of NASAA staff,  
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In honor of NASAA staff,  
made by Ginnie Lupi

In honor of NASAA staff,  
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In honor of NASAA staff and  
their support of state folk  
& traditional arts programs  
and coordinators, made by  
Lisa Higgins

In honor of the Nebraska  
Arts Council, made by  
Suzanne Wise

In honor of the North Dakota  
Council on the Arts, made by  
John Geyerman

In honor of William Oban,  
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In honor of the Board and  
Staff of the Ohio Arts  
Council, made by Donna  
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In honor of Julie Vigeland,  
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In memory of FZ, made by  
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# SPONSORS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



## SPECIAL THANKS

The work of NASAA and this Assembly are supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). State arts agencies and NASAA are grateful for the NEA's

support of travel stipends and preconference convenings for arts education managers and folk and traditional arts program managers.



50 Unforgettable  
Years

# WESTAF



Our Next Era of  
50 More



# Creative West

Explore Our  
New Identity



Credit: Legend (2020). By Nathan Pierce.  
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# NASAA ASSEMBLY 2024


## NASAA

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Join NASAA virtually via Zoom for the  
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All state arts agency staff and council members are welcome!

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