



2017 Conference Program Planning Meeting Notes

February 9 - Pasadena, CA

Presented by the National Guild for Community Arts Education

Hosted by Armory Center for the Arts

On February 9, 2017, the National Guild for Community Arts Education held a town hall-style meeting of arts education leaders and stakeholders in Pasadena, CA. Hosted by Armory Center for the Arts, the meeting was held to inform the programming of the **2017 Conference for Community Arts Education (Nov. 15 - 18) in San Francisco/Oakland**. Fifty-seven arts education leaders representing 40 organizations/agencies participated in a dialogue that identified a host of issues affecting the field—this document lists those issues. An additional planning meeting was held in San Francisco the day prior.

Among the key issues raised by participants that the conference might address were:

New Administration's Impact on Arts Education

- Leading your organization through unstable (financial, political, and social) times. The new administration could affect staffing, funding, policy, and advocacy. Potential loss of federal funding for the arts, for Title I, and for “sanctuary cities” under new administration.
- Sense of urgency to advocate for arts education. How does the arts community come together to advocate, tell a shared story, and form coalitions to increase its visibility and impact? How do we align the arts education “narrative” with national priorities, like safe communities? (See the work of the [Youth Policy Institute](#))
 - What are nonprofit organizations’ advocacy rights under the law? See [Alliance for Justice](#) and Annenberg Foundation.
- The recent election and current political climate has been severely divisive. As arts education leaders and educators, how do we facilitate positive and constructive conversations with our staff, communities, and students—who have diverse perspectives and backgrounds—to realize shared values, address differences, and create safe, supportive spaces for knowledge-sharing and new ideas?
- Many immigrant and refugee families are living in a “culture of fear” in our communities, and in some cases have withdrawn from receiving public services or from participating in arts and cultural programs. How can arts education organizations support students and families during these uncertain times? What policies and practices do we need to consider to safe guard students and families (e.g., ensuring that we won’t share emergency contact information, etc.)?
- Responding to a growing movement of youth activism in the country, how can arts organizations cultivate and support youth voice in meaningful ways? How can we help young people advocate and organize productively and use their art forms to communicate and inform? How do we educate youth on their legal rights when protesting/organizing? How can we foster safe, supportive, and brave environments in our studios and classrooms for all young people, with various political views and backgrounds, to express their opinions and ideas openly? How do we train our teaching artists to facilitate open conversations that honor a diversity of perspectives on social justice issues? (see Destiny Arts Center, Dance Brigade and Girls Brigade). “This is a time for artists—we are moving from shock to waking up.”
- Cultural diplomacy through the arts: How can we help get “Red” and “Blue” zones talking to each other?
- How is the current political climate catalyzing/re-activating a movement focused on the “art of resistance” (similar to works done by Lincoln Cushing and other artists in the past)? What implications does this have for arts organizations and the communities they serve?

- Possible speakers:
 - [Robert Reich](#), Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley and Senior Fellow at the Blum Center for Developing Economies.

Impact of Housing Crisis on Arts Education

The rising price of real estate has created a housing crisis---displacing families, staff, and teaching artists. Many families can no longer afford to live near cities where programs are being provided. This is an issue in cities across California (San Francisco, Oakland, and Los Angeles) as well as nationally. Artists and staff struggle to be able to afford to live near places of employment. Additionally, the rising cost of real estate is making it increasingly difficult for arts education organizations to find affordable space –and therefore harder for these organizations to serve their students. Organizations and individuals doing work to address this issue:

- [Art Space](#), a national organization with a mission to create, foster, and preserve affordable space for artists and arts organizations (property development, asset management, and consulting). [Teri Deaver](#) is a potential speaker.
- [CAST](#): Community Arts Stabilization Trust.
- [Policy Link](#)
- [John Arroyo](#), Ford Foundation Fellow, MIT Dept. of Urban Studies & Planning.
- Experts in creative placemaking: Roberto Bedoya, City of Oakland; and Maria Rosario Jackson.
- [Self Help Graphics & Art](#), community arts center in East Los Angeles.

Leadership Development

- Addressing lack of racial diversity at all levels within the organization (e.g., board, staff, faculty, and teaching artists). What implications does this have for leadership development as well as how we lead our organizations?
- Examining one's own hidden bias, power, and prejudice as a leader.
 - This is the 75th anniversary of Japanese internment (Potential speaker: David “Mas” Masumoto)
 - California is a border state. What are strategies for working across cultural divides?
- Identifying strategies for self-care so arts leaders can rejuvenate and renew in order to stay focused and effective
 - What kinds of cultural shifts can be made within an organization to better support staff, faculty, and teaching artists sustain their work and thrive?
 - How do we make the case to donor and trustees that investment in self-care and leadership development is an investment in productivity and innovation?
 - Possible speakers/resources in this area include:
 - Ken Saxon, [Leading from Within](#) (self-care)
 - [IDEO](#)—focus on how design thinking can transform organizations and inspire innovation
- Responding to generational culture shifts in the workplace. Younger generations are influenced by other industries who are rethinking work culture and leadership, emphasizing fulfilment. How might nonprofit arts organizations rethink their own notions of work culture and leadership, and adapt to trends in other industries, to retain younger leaders in the workplace? How do organizations best ensure the knowledge and perspectives of younger leaders are valued and shared within the work place? How can we best build the capacities of younger leaders to communicate effectively to senior leadership and trustees and “manage up”?
- There is a transition of leadership confronting our field with many executive leaders approaching retirement. What can organizations, as well as our field as a whole, do to create a more robust leadership pipeline?
- Interest in “working group” sessions for executive directors that enable leaders across the issue to address common issues and work together to move things forward.
- See also [Stanford Innovation Review](#).

Trauma-Informed Practice

- Understanding how trauma is impacting learning and human development. How does trauma impact our students, teaching artists, and staff? How can the arts promote hope and healing? How can artists and administrators working on the “frontlines” heal and take care of self? What kind of professional development and support (e.g., social workers on staff) is needed? How might a deeper understanding of trauma change the way we teach?
- How do arts education providers do trauma-related work in ways that we are qualified? Where do we get support from the social service sector or mental health field? How do we better understand the regulations and responsibilities of this work? How do we provide structures and parameters for staff and teaching artists?
- Organizations and individuals who are experts in this area include:
 - Matt Bennett, [Coldspring Center](#)
 - [Jeremy Hunter](#) (brain response research, mindfulness/wellness in leadership)
 - [Judith Greer Essex, Expressive Arts Therapy](#) (restorative practice)
 - Marianne Diaz (assists agencies and communities that connect with asset-based services that build on the strengths of communities, cultures, and individuals)
 - [UCLArts and Healing](#); [Ping Ho](#), Founding Director (working at the intersections of clinical practices, community building, and social service; see [Expressive Therapies Summit](#) in Los Angeles)
 - [A Thousand Joys](#)
 - Mendez High School in Boyle Heights (model program in restorative justice)

Partnership & Collaboration

- How do we build equitable partnerships especially between predominately white-led institutions and culturally specific institutions? What do equitable partnerships look like (e.g., models, effective practices, etc.)?
- What incentivizes adjacent sectors (e.g., workforce development, youth development, health, aging services, etc) to partner with the arts education field? How can we better understand the goals of adjacent sectors so we can align our work towards a common agenda? How can the arts community take the lead in these partnerships so that creativity/arts remain central (i.e., move away from being a contracted service partner)? What are exemplary models of, and best practices for, building and sustaining cross-sector partnerships? How do we identify the ecosystem that we impact (see [Rosten Woo](#), designer/educator/urbanist)?
- How do art organizations collaborate and work towards collective impact on a local level? What are best practices/models in developing local networks?
- Developing urban-rural partnerships to increase access to, and investment in, arts education in rural areas. What are effective practices/models, especially if there is a lack of infrastructure in some rural areas? MacPhail Center for Music doing exemplary work in this area in Minnesota.
- Partnerships that increase access to lifelong learning opportunities in the arts. Potential speakers: Aroha Philanthropies and [Tim Carpenter/EngAGE](#).
- Partnering with higher education to 1) further research on the impact of arts education on creativity and innovation and to help different research centers talk to one another to amplify what we are learning (e.g., Steve Seidel/Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard Institute on Creativity and Learning); and 2) develop strong college/career pathways for young artists (Potential speakers: [Posse Foundation](#); SOKA).
- Developing high-impact arts education partnerships with K-12 schools:
 - How do we continue to make the case for arts education to school administrators? How can we play a greater role in influencing budget decisions at the superintendent level?
 - How do we create more equitable partnerships with public schools (e.g., working together to apply for grants)?

Making the Case for Arts Education

- How do we engage local politicians to increase knowledge of the value of community arts education and provide them tools to advocate for our work? What are effective communication strategies that enable diverse community

leaders to bring their whole selves to these collaborations without the need to code-switch? Possible speakers: [Gavin Newsom](#), [Tom Finkelpearl](#), and [Ted Lieu](#).

- What are some concrete practices and tools for documenting and communicating the impact of our work both within and beyond the arts sector? What kind of research and mapping will help to boldly communicate the impact of arts learning on communities and illustrate a system for arts education delivery? How do complement data/metrics with rich storytelling?
- How can the arts education community coordinate its advocacy efforts by identifying a list of key stakeholders that arts education leaders can intentionally work with to increase support and investment?

Fundraising

- How do we incentivize corporations and the entertainment industry to invest in the arts education community and advocate for community arts education broadly (beyond supporting an individual organization or program)? How can we work with our trustees to advocate on our behalf to major corporations? Potential speakers: [Rory Pullens](#) (working with studio heads to fund arts education), [Janice Pober](#) (Sony), and [Dana Gioia](#) (poet and former General Food executive)
- What are effective models of “coalition fundraising” that might help to make smaller, nonprofit arts organizations more competitive for grants?
- What are effective practices for increasing individual giving? (Deep dive workshop for executive directors and development teams.)
- How do leaders approach a variety of funders without compromising the organization’s core values? (See [SoCAP: Social Capital - The Intersection between Money and Meaning](#); host an annual convening.)
- How will the current funding ambiguities on the federal level affect private funders? What can we do to prepare for a possible loss of federal arts funding?

Diversity/Inclusion

- Ensuring that high quality education and the arts are accessible to all and meet the learning needs of diverse cultures and communities, including people with special needs, older adults, incarcerated or formerly incarcerated people and their families, etc. See [Creative Growth Art Center](#) (Oakland); [Ryan Smith](#), E.D, Ed Trust-West and trustee of Create CA; [Jeff Chang](#), E.D., Institute for Diversity in the Arts/culturally responsive education.