

GUILD NOTES

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE **NATIONAL
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OF COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS OF THE ARTS

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Community Music Center (San Francisco)

GUILD NEWS

Guild Advocates for Members; Approaches New Administration

On behalf of our 400+ members, our Board of Directors, and our diverse constituency of staff, teaching artists, parents, students and volunteers, the Guild has presented an open letter to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) asking for its continued partnership to ensure that high quality arts instruction is accessible to all Americans throughout their lifetimes. We also represented the field at a recent meeting with President Obama's arts transition team to discuss your needs and have signed on with other leading national arts organizations to present *Arts Policy in the New Administration*, recommendations to the Office of Presidential Transition.

To download the Guild's *Open Letter to the NEA* and *Arts Policy in the New Administration*, go to: www.nationalguild.org/advocacy.htm

Guild Announces Members-Only Teleconference: "Hard Choices in Tough Times"

At 12:30 PM Eastern / 9:30 AM Pacific on February 13, the Guild will present "*Hard Choices in Tough Times: Making the Decisions that Can Sustain Your Organization through the Recession.*" This free, 90-minute teleconference will focus on strategies for keeping key programs alive while streamlining operations and increasing productivity. The

teleconference will be moderated by **John M. McCann**, Director of the Institute for Cultural Policy and Practice at Virginia Tech. He will be joined by a panel of three experienced community arts education leaders who will share their experiences and respond to questions: **Joyce M. Bonomini**, Director, Marcia P. Hoffman Performing Arts Institute at Ruth Eckard Hall, Clearwater, FL; **Stephanie Riven**, Executive Director, Center of Creative Arts, St. Louis, MO; and **Stephen R. Shapiro**, Executive Director, Community Music Center, San Francisco, CA.

The teleconference is intended for CEOs and other senior executives at Guild member organizations. Participation is free for Guild members; however, advance registration required. For details and registration, go to: <http://nationalguild.org/new/new.htm>

THE GUILD WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW TRUSTEES

The 2008 slate for the Guild's board of trustees was elected at the Conference for Community Arts Education in November. The slate included five candidates seeking a first term and eight candidates seeking re-election. Our new trustees are:

- **Rhonda Buckley**, Associate Dean for Outreach and Engagement, *Michigan State University College of Music* and Executive Director, *MSU Community Music School*
- **Dottie Currie** (Vero Beach, FL)
- **Aaron Dworkin**, Founder and Executive Director, *Sphinx Organization* (Detroit, MI)
- **Jeff Melanson**, Co-CEO and Executive Director, *Canada's National Ballet School* (Toronto)
- **José Ochoa**, Executive Director, *Chicago High School for the Arts* (Chicago, IL).



DePaul Community Music Division (Chicago)

GUILDNOTES

NATIONAL GUILD OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS OF THE ARTS

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The National Guild aims to make high quality arts education available to every interested child and adult in the United States.

The Guild's national network encompasses community arts education providers, professionals, volunteers and philanthropic supporters. In concert with this network, the Guild researches and promotes best practices, provides opportunities for professional development and dialogue, and advocates for broad access.

For information regarding Guild membership and programs visit www.nationalguild.org or email guildinfo@nationalguild.org.

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The Guild encourages submissions of editorial content. Email submissions to editor@nationalguild.org.

To advertise in **GUILDNOTES** please contact Heather Stickeler, heatherstickeler@nationalguild.org.

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GUILD NEWS (cont'd)

Creative Aging Program Sites Announced

The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts and MetLife Foundation have awarded technical assistance and seed grants to nine Guild members to enable them to design, implement and evaluate sustainable creative aging programs. The Creative Aging Program was initiated by MetLife Foundation and the National Guild in recognition of the rapid growth in the number of Americans aged 60+ and recent research demonstrating that participatory arts programs can produce significant health benefits for older adults. NAMM Foundation has provided additional support. The MetLife Foundation Creative Aging Program is designed to:

- Increase the capacity of community arts education providers to serve older adults
- Provide models of high quality creative aging programs to the field; and
- Raise public awareness about the benefits of creative aging programs.

Grants totaling \$60,000 were awarded to the following National Guild member organizations:

- **Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge**, Baton Rouge, LA (visual arts/watercolor)
- **Baltimore Clayworks, Inc.**, Baltimore, MD (visual arts/ceramics)
- **Harlem School of the Arts**, New York, NY (music)
- **Jack & Shirley Lubeznik Center for the Arts**, Michigan City, IN, (visual arts/ceramics)
- **Longy School of Music**, Cambridge, MA, (music)
- **MacPhail Center for Music**, Minneapolis, MN (music)
- **Main Line Art Center**, Haverford, PA (visual arts and movement)
- **Neighborhood Music School**, New Haven, CT (music); and
- **New Orleans Ballet Association**, New Orleans, LA (dance)

Each site will offer a minimum of 90 minutes of sequential, participatory instruction weekly to at least 20 adults aged 60 or older for 12 or more weeks between January and May 2009; participate in a series of training sessions designed to benefit their entire program team; and evaluate the impact of their program on older adult participants. The National Guild will issue a report on results and lessons learned in fall 2009.

Meet Your 2009 Peer Advisors

Get free advice from long-term leaders in the field. The **Peer Advisory Service** offers Full and Education Affiliate members the opportunity to consult with respected leaders in community arts education. In 30-minute phone consultations, peer advisors will answer your questions and provide advice in areas such as organizational development, financial management, fundraising and resource development, programs, partnerships, marketing and more.

This year's Peer Advisors include **Bob Capanna**, Executive Director, Settlement Music School (Philadelphia); **Cathy Fletcher**, Director, Herberger College Community School of the Arts at Arizona State University (Tempe, AZ); **Suzanne Hirsch**, Director of Education, New Orleans Ballet Association; **Meg Nodzon**, Director of Development, MacPhail Center for Music (Minneapolis); **Jeffrey Walker**, Executive Director, Community School of Music and Arts (Mountain View, CA); and others. For a list of advisors and information on how an advisor can help you, go to www.nationalguild.org/programs/Advisor.htm. Contact Jay Samios, program manager, at (212) 268-3337 ext. 12 to schedule a consultation.

Guild Represents Members at Three National Arts Events

The Guild is raising awareness of the work being done by our members throughout the United States at the annual **NAMM (the National Association of Music Merchants) Show**, January 15-19 in Anaheim, CA; the **Arts Education Partnership National Forum**, February 12-13 in New Orleans, LA, and **Arts Advocacy Day 2009** (the annual arts action summit), March 30-31 in Washington, DC, where we will participate as a National Co-Sponsor. These opportunities allow the Guild to share your successes and needs with colleagues, funders and policy-makers; leverage support; and contribute to a national conversation on the future of arts learning in America.

Record Breaking Conference Attendance

"It is wonderful to come together with colleagues from across the country to gain the inspiration, perspective and new energy needed to face the challenges at hand."

— Paula Morgan, Director, Alia Lawson Pre-College Program

The National Guild's 71st annual Conference for Community Arts Education in Philadelphia drew 629 individuals this year (a 41% attendance increase over last year) representing 363 organizations in 40 states and three countries. The conference is the only national event tailored to address the specific interests and needs of community arts education providers.

The 2008 conference program focused on issues of quality, access, collaboration and sustainability in community arts education. The program also investigated how the arts are effectively employed in the fields of community development, youth development and creative aging. Sessions on these topics—and the critical issues of program development; assessment and evaluation; leadership and governance, and development and marketing—brought together delegates to address common challenges, share solutions and gain inspiration. Delegates also worked together in discipline- and topic-specific roundtable sessions, networking and setting action agendas for the coming year.

Featured speakers **Christine DeVita**, President of the Wallace Foundation, and **Josephine Ramirez**, President for Programming, Music Center of Los Angeles, addressed key strategies for broadening and sustaining access to quality arts education.

Major sponsors of the 2008 Conference for Community Arts Education included the National Endowment for the Arts, MetLife Foundation, The Wallace Foundation, The

William Penn Foundation, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, NAMM Foundation, and The Barthelmes Foundation, Inc.

By coming together to make new connections and exchange information and ideas, delegates strengthened their ability to provide quality arts education to all Americans throughout their lives. Thanks to everyone who helped make the 2008 Conference a great success. We look forward to our continued work in the months ahead and to seeing you in Minneapolis next November!

'08 Conference Resources Now Available Online

Presenters at the 2008 Conference have provided a variety of materials for the benefit of National Guild members and conference delegates. These resources will provide you valuable information on fundraising, marketing, community engagement, assessment and evaluation, governance and more. Log-in to the members-only Online Resource Center to access conference materials and other best practices resources. Forgot your username and password? Contact Jay Samios at (212) 268-3337 ext. 12. or jaysamios@nationalguild.org

Save the Date for 2009!

Next year's Conference for Community Arts Education will be presented at the Hyatt Regency in Minneapolis, MN, November 11-14, 2009. Visit www.nationalguild.org/national/conference.htm for details.

2009 Conference for Community Arts Education: Call for Session Proposals

The National Guild annually presents the Conference for Community Arts Education to provide essential networking and professional development opportunities for staff, faculty, teaching artists and trustees in the community arts education field.

The 2009 conference will feature professional development workshops, roundtables and program showcases organized into progressive tracks in Programming, Evaluation and Research, Partnership, Leadership and Governance, and Development and Marketing. If you are interested in presenting and would like to propose a session, download a proposal form at www.nationalguild.org/national/conference.htm.

PEOPLE AND SCHOOLS



Horner

Horner Appointed New Executive Vice President of Music Institute of Chicago

The **Music Institute of Chicago** appointed **Edward W. Horner, Jr.** to the newly created position of Executive Vice President. Mr. Horner has formerly held posts as Senior Vice President, of Strategic Initiatives at the Field Museum, and Executive Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Executive Vice President for Development and Public Affairs at The Art Institute of Chicago.



Scully

Scully Joins the Darlington Arts Center

The **Darlington Arts Center** (Garnet Valley, PA) appointed **Angela Scully** as its new Executive Director. Scully will replace Founder Diana Sophocles Hemmenway, who recently stepped down as Executive Director after 30 years at the helm. Scully was formerly Executive Director at Singing City in Philadelphia. She also has served as the Development Director for Friends School Haverford (Haverford, PA) and Executive Director of Strings for Schools (now **Musicopia**) in Philadelphia.

Sharron Miller's K-12 Partnership Spotlights in *Dance Teacher Magazine*



The partnership between **Sharron Miller's Academy for the Performing Arts** (Montclair, NJ) and Renaissance Middle School is the cover story in the December 2008 issue of *Dance Teacher Magazine*. The Montclair Board of Education fully funds and supports the program which has 6th, 7th and 8th graders coming to Sharron Miller's Academy during the school day for dance and drama. The program, which combines arts instruction with history and sociology, is a requirement for sixth graders and an elective for seventh and eighth graders. Miller was among those selected to serve on the advisory board that brought the middle school into being in 1997.

Lifetime Arts Announces Creative Aging Partnership with County Library System

Lifetime Arts, Inc. (Pelham, NY) has partnered with the Westchester Library System to launch Creative Aging in Our Communities: The Westchester Libraries Project. Funded by the Helen Andrus Benedict Foundation, the grants support collaborations between seven county libraries and professional teaching artists to develop and implement instructional programs that promote creativity in older adults and provide opportunities for meaningful social engagement.

Ballet Nouveau Colorado Named One to Watch



Ballet Nouveau Colorado

Dance Magazine—a major American trade publication for dance—recently selected **Ballet Nouveau Colorado** (Broomfield, CO) as one of its "25 to Watch" for 2009. "25 to Watch" is an annual list, naming the nation's leading young dancers, choreographers and dance companies, as well as trends in dance. Ballet Nouveau Colorado is the first honoree (individual or organization) in Colorado to be named to this prestigious list.

NEC Announces New Management Structure and Expansion Plans

New England Conservatory (Boston, MA) has announced a new management structure and expansion plans for its Preparatory School and School of Continuing Education (Prep/SCE). **Mark Churchill** will become Artistic Director and Dean of Prep/SCE and that **Hilary Field** will become Executive Director. Churchill has been dean of the schools for nearly 30 years. Field has been serving as Head of Operations and Institutional Planning for the college for the last year. In addition to building infrastructure and implementing strategic growth plans, "the team will be charged with oversight of institutional partnerships, with particular emphasis first on spearheading the development of Venezuela's El Sistema models in Boston and nationwide [NEC has had a decade-long partnership with El Sistema]," said President Tony Woodcock, "The third large area of the team's attention will be building joint programs and synergies with the College."



Churchill



Field

PEOPLE AND SCHOOLS (cont'd)

Guild Members Awarded NEA Grants

The following Guild members have been recognized for excellence by the National Endowment for the Arts in FY2009:

- **New Orleans Ballet Association** received a \$40,000 Access to Artistic Excellence grant to support the presentation of dance performances and related education and outreach programs throughout New Orleans
- **Old Town School of Folk Music** (Chicago) received a \$25,000 Access to Artistic Excellence grant to support Folk Masters in Residence, a program which offers extended teaching residencies for traditional musicians who perform at the school
- **Settlement Music School** (Philadelphia) is one of twelve recipients of the Creativity & Aging in America award, receiving \$25,000 to support a comprehensive music and performance program for seniors

Parent organizations of Guild divisional members were also honored: Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge (Baton Rouge, LA), Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Jazz at Lincoln Center (New York, NY), Nashville Ballet, and the Sphinx Organization (Detroit, MI).

Pasadena Conservatory Granted Accreditation

In 2008, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS) granted accreditation to the **Pasadena Conservatory of Music** (PCM). Executive Director Stephen McCurry commented, "The commission has established standards that have strengthened our field in general and the Conservatory in particular. We have created educational and operational models and review processes that will continue to strengthen our programs for years to come." PCM is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

[To learn more about the ACCPAS accreditation process, download the Guild's *Guide to Assessing Your Community Arts School: Questions for Internal Review and Reflection*, a new publication jointly developed with ACCPAS: www.nationalguild.org/publications.htm]

Conservatory Receives Grant from Public Schools Partnership Program

The **Wisconsin Conservatory of Music** has received a grant of \$55,700 from the Milwaukee Public Schools Partnerships in the Arts program to fund afterschool and summer music programming. The Conservatory will use the funds to support full student scholarships and to provide faculty assistance for its summer music program. In order to be eligible for Partnership for the Arts funding, the Conservatory must provide an equal dollar amount of programming to Milwaukee Public Schools. Funding for those school-day programs comes from a variety of private sources.

Multicultural Music Group Receives Union Square Arts Award

The **Multicultural Music Group** (MMG) and sixteen other New York City organizations were honored this December at the annual Union Square Awards celebration. MMG was one of ten organizations to receive the Union Square Arts Award and a \$35,000 grant in recognition of innovative work in the arts with youth and families in low-income communities. MMG joins 186 organizations that have previously received the Award since its founding in 1998. Awardees were recognized at a special ceremony at the historic Riverside Church in Manhattan.

Hunakai Studies Benefits of Visual Arts Instruction for Older Adults

Hunakai Studio of Fine Arts (Foxboro, MA) is currently involved in a partnership with the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth Memory and Cognition Studies Group to determine the long term benefits of visual arts study on seniors' cognition, memory, emotional and physical health. Hunakai Studio's successful track record in student retention allows university staff to take indicators from previous short term studies and apply them in their research of long term benefits. Community grants have allowed the studio to offer need-based financial assistance to participating seniors.

People's Light & Theatre Featured in Teaching Theatre

People's Light & Theatre (Malvern, PA) was the subject of one of five feature stories in a special issue of *Teaching Theatre* (Fall 2008) that looked at current and future trends in theatre education in the 21st century. The article examines the company's outreach theatre education programs and philosophy. People's Light's education department offers a robust program mix that includes classes, school residencies, a summer camp, subsidized performances for high school students, and the nationally recognized New Voices Ensemble. New Voices brings together teens from the city of Chester (known for its high poverty rate) and neighboring communities for long-term, intensive study that includes mainstage performance opportunities and the chance to create an original performance piece.



Interview with Jonathan Katz, Chief Executive Officer,
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

By Heather Ikemire

In January, we spoke with **Jonathan Katz**, Chief Executive Officer of the **National State Arts Agencies (NASAA)** and a former Guild trustee, about recent changes in our country's political and economic environments and what they mean for community arts education providers nationwide. Jonathan Katz has served as CEO of NASAA since 1985. Prior to that, he was professor of public policy and administration at the University of Illinois at Springfield, where he directed the graduate program in arts administration and established the Sangamon Institute in Arts Administration. He also served as executive director of the Kansas Arts Commission. Katz has consulted extensively in cultural policy planning, organizational development, and leadership and management training, and has authored numerous articles, plans and consultant reports.

Heather Ikemire: How do you feel the new administration and Congress will affect the nation's cultural policy landscape?

Jonathan Katz: The new administration is taking a real interest in the arts. For example, this is the first time we've had an Arts Policy Committee designed to advise the President-elect on major issues confronting the arts and to advise him on policy positions. In addition, representatives of the arts and humanities communities, including Jonathan Herman for the Guild and me for the state arts agencies, have had the opportunity to meet with, advise and submit written recommendations to the transition team. Now that President Obama has been inaugurated, we can follow up in the areas of initiative that were identified by the Arts Policy Committee. These include art education, cultural diplomacy, artist public service programs, and increased support for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The House version of the economic stimulus bill recognizes that the arts are an industry providing jobs and a broad range of public benefits. We hope, also, to see openness to the arts as a resource for sustaining and creating jobs in many ongoing federal agency programs. For instance, most people don't realize that the Department of Agriculture is not only about supporting farming, but also about supporting the economy and quality of life in agriculturally based communities. Funds from that agency can support cultural facilities in rural areas. The Department of Housing and Urban Development offers community development block grants that can also support the arts and cultural activities when they are integrated in local applications. Local arts communities need to take a new look at the full range of these opportunities.

HI: What is the best way for our members to stay on top of what is unfolding?

JK: It's important for the Guild to be a resource for its members in this regard. As proposals roll through the House and Senate for the economic stimulus package, as well as for federal agency budgets, the Guild needs to alert its members and let them know what areas are relevant to the work they do. All the national service organizations, state arts agencies and local arts agencies will need to do this for their constituents. At the national level, service organizations are talking about creating

one toolbox, or guide to resources, that everyone can access. The key is to give a heads-up to members that a community development block grant, for example, is coming into their state and to identify which portion of it is going to state government and which to local government. Then it's important to encourage organizations to connect with their state arts agency and, if they have one, their local arts agency to find out how applications can be made and whether they're eligible.

HI: Given the changes in the country's political and economic environments, how can our members strategically make the case for their work when opportunities do present themselves?

JK: Most immediately, you have to make the case for your impact in terms of jobs and economic benefits to your community. Community schools employ many kinds of workers, catalyze many kinds of economic benefits, and impart skills to students that increase their employability in many ways.

Also, the word "community" can be an asset in this administration. When Michelle or Barack Obama describes their achievements they often talk about their community work. Guild members should explain what the "community" means in "community school of the arts." Many Guild members provide lifelong learning in the arts and are partnering with the public schools and other community organizations/agencies. These are important areas to highlight when seeking support. It's also important to highlight the ways in which arts instruction helps students build work place and diplomatic skills, in addition, of course, to improving their artistic and creative abilities.

Guild members should understand their relationship to economic stimulus. What's your economic impact? How many jobs do you account for? What is the significance of your presence in the community? In Philadelphia, for example, the Avenue of the Arts was created as part of an effort to maintain the vitality of the downtown. Arts organizations represent buildings occupied, rents paid, meals eaten in their vicinity, safety at night where they are open and active, and many more public benefits and revenues. If your organization can explain how it contributes to neighborhood vitality, that's pretty powerful stuff.

HI: How can our members work with state and local arts agencies and other groups to weather the current economic storm and leverage new opportunities and resources?

JK: I want to come at that question three different ways. One of them is to think about what crisis management means. In times of crisis, your organization needs to make immediate decisions in order to refocus. You might have to shift priorities, cut back on programs and expenses or invest more in some of the things that you're already doing. You should be clear about the results you hope to produce through these actions. Consultation with state and local colleagues can give you a wider perspective and a bigger pool of ideas to draw upon.

You want to establish and strengthen your relationships with potential partners and allies to maximize the impact of your programs, reduce costs and better leverage resources. Times of crisis can bring together organizations that may not have a common mission but share a common need. These are your allies. For example, a group of nonprofits may come together to share office space or advertising and marketing expenses, or to offer mutual discounts to members. Organizations with very different missions may share a common need to provide customers with child care, parking or transportation. A partner is somebody who is in alignment with your organization's mission and shares common goals. If one partner succeeds in the partnership, the other one succeeds. If the public school system and a Guild member make the case for the value of the arts in their community, they both benefit.

Which brings me to my third point: Guild members should think of their state and local arts agencies as natural partners.

Partnership is possible with these agencies if you position yourself as a resource to them rather than a grantee. The first thing to do is find out what the agency's goals are, identify the programs that match your objectives, find out who makes the decisions about the monies, and establish a working relationship with them based on direct experience. Make personal contact with the agency. Invite someone to see what you do and explain how your organization provides public benefits and matches the goals of their program. Tell them you want to participate in their success and ask how you can help their program in arts education, community development, etc. gain visibility and support within their agency and from the public. Offer them photos for their newsletters. Volunteer for a grant panel or council. Ask how to participate in their planning process. If you are invited to join a panel or the council, then you're a decision-maker who can use your knowledge of community arts education to inform and help shape the agency's policies. Your experience and contacts also make you a more valuable employee, trustee or volunteer for your community school.

HI: Do you feel agencies are receptive to this approach?

JK: Absolutely. Your alternative is to connect with them only when you ask for money and that's not the relationship you or they want. Frankly speaking, if you approach an agency as a partner, you're more likely to get money.

HI: How does the current economic downturn compare to others you've seen?

JK: I've seen two major economic downturns in my career, at the end of the '80s and at the end of the '90s. During those times, we lost public support for the arts at the federal, state,

and local levels, and saw individual, corporate and foundation giving decline. But this economy seems worse to me because the credit and mortgage crises are interlocked and the downturn is global in nature.

It's important to understand that the federal government can print money, so federal dollars for the arts may actually increase.

The arts include professions and small businesses and amateur activities, all of which represent jobs and commerce. I wouldn't be surprised to see the budget of the National Endowment for the Arts go up. Most state governments, however, have constitutions that require them to balance their budgets. When revenues decline, so must their expenditures. There's a lag between the economy, tax collection, and state budget impact—another lag before the full impact of an economy is felt locally. Decreases in state and local government spending may well continue over the next couple of years. And low expenditure levels

must be expected for a year or two after the economy recovers. Planning at the local level has to take this timing into consideration.

HI: So is there a silver lining? Is there any kind of opportunity in all of this for Guild members?

JK: Guild members have an advantage over many other businesses because they have personal relationships with the communities they serve. It's time to strengthen and deepen those relationships. Parents, partners and other supporters will rally around the causes and organizations they care for most, especially when they understand what the threat is and what is at stake for them.

It's also a time to advocate for your organization. Whether you are talking with your state and city government, a corporation, foundation or an individual donor, you should be clear about how your organization makes a difference. If you do, you won't go down so far. You will identify those people who want to protect you, who see the future of their relationship with you. The silver lining is that the relationships you forge now will stay with you once the economy turns around. ■

“The word “community” can be an asset in this administration. When Michelle or Barack Obama describes their achievements they often talk about their community work.”

TOOLKIT WEATHERING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

By Stephanie Golden

With the fundraising climate at its worst since 1998 (according to a December 2008 report by Indiana University's Center on Philanthropy), how can community arts education (CAE) organizations best meet the challenges of the economic downturn?

In responses from experienced nonprofit professionals, two themes stand out: first, rigorously and realistically evaluate every program and analyze every line in your budget to see what's really needed and what isn't; and second, stay true to your mission. "During tough times, go back to your mission and the core service you provide that will drive revenues," says **Karen Prasser**, Executive Director of **Solon Center for the Arts** in Solon, Ohio. "Forget about the nice stuff you like to do but that doesn't bring in the dollars."

The most effective response is holistic, encompassing fundraising, cost-cutting, programming, and marketing.

Fundraising: take a new look at individual donors

Foundations will have less money to give in the next few years. This year's portfolio losses will reduce the three-year average on which they base distributions; next year they will spend much less and the year after, less still, explains **Nancy Burd**, a consultant who helps nonprofits with strategic and business planning.

Nevertheless, stay in touch with all your donors. Let even those who have reduced or eliminated their contributions know how you're responding to the crisis, and remind them of the value of your work. "This year, I made an extra effort," says **Stephen R. Shapiro**, Executive Director of San Francisco's **Community Music Center** (CMC). "I wrote 400 notecards to past donors, saying, 'Now more than ever we need music in our community.' The response in our fall campaign was heartening, typifying the national picture—that for arts organizations, individual fundraising as a whole isn't down, but fewer donors give more."

Be creative about developing new funding sources, focusing on individual donors. "This is a wonderful time to cultivate new donors," notes Burd. CAE providers have built-in audiences—students and parents who come to your programs, whom you may not have sought funding from before. Invite them—and also foundations and corporations—to performances and exhibitions. "Once the crisis lifts, you'll have all these new friends who appreciate what you do."

One of two supporters of a core Solon public-school program could not fund it this year and Prasser is considering several possibilities: finding additional funders who believe in its mission, who would each give less than the lost funder; asking the schools to underwrite part of the cost; or, instead of free admission, asking each child to pay \$1.

Build up your earned income. CMC plans to increase tuition modestly, though "we have to respect that people in our community don't have a lot of money to spend on piano lessons," says Shapiro. Your faculty is a great asset that will continue to attract people to the arts. "In this climate people

are looking for activity that's nourishing emotionally, intellectually, and creatively," explains **Thora Jacobson**, Chief Operating Officer of Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program (MAP) and National Guild trustee. An extraordinary idea that captures the public imagination can be the foundation for programming that brings in additional tuition.

Cost cutting: put contingency plans in place

The arts are a business, and a smart business plan is critical, says Prasser. Plan for several levels of contingency. What would you do if you had to cut your budget by 10, 20, or even 30 percent? If Solon loses 10 percent of its city subsidy, for example, Prasser would "look at reduction of hours, probably skimming down programs that may be driving a lesser level of revenue."

Before deciding anything, do a thorough cost analysis, advises Burd. Figure out what each program costs, including associated overhead such as rent. Then determine where the money comes from to support that program. Is it breaking even, earning money, or being subsidized by other programs?

Based on this information, do a "mission match" analysis. Decide what programs are core to the mission, may lose money but must be maintained, and which use up resources and aren't mission oriented. If one program is draining you, and you have a shortfall, that's the first one to cut. "Really understand the core of what you do and make sure it's cost effective, efficient, consistent with the mission, and as exemplary as possible," summarizes Jacobson. "Squeeze out the excess" in your budget. Examine every single line, decide whether it represents money you need to spend, and if so, make sure your staff is spending it responsibly. Look for redundancies and any area where you can save money: producing fewer newsletters or putting them online; reducing hours; using public transportation instead of renting a car; giving cell phones only to staff with demonstrated need. Be sure your invoices go out, and follow up on those that aren't paid.

Because CMC's mission is accessibility to all, it relies heavily on contributed income and cannot reduce financial aid without changing the mission. Instead, Shapiro says he's considering where to save, possibly by cutting free programs. Fortunately, a grant from the Taproot Foundation will help CMC learn more about its donors, current students, competition, and potential new students; this information will inform fundraising and recruitment.

Take a look at the ratio between restricted and unrestricted funds, and consider requesting that a funder forgo a specific program outcome in favor of general operating support. Foundations will appreciate that you understand your budget well enough to know exactly what you can produce with those unrestricted funds, Jacobson says. Through it all, she cautions, be sure to sustain relationships, not just with funders but with all stakeholders, including community groups and sponsors, so when the economic climate warms up, they'll be ready to hear from you.

Programming: be efficient and flexible

Part of replanning is figuring out operational changes to make your organization more efficient and effective. Merging programs and partnering with another organization can lower administrative and purchasing costs. Clarifying lines of communication and decision making responsibilities enables staff to work more efficiently. Most important, says Jacobson, make sure your internal structure enables you to hold on to key staff and programs. Redouble your management coaching skills so these staff feel valued and won't emerge from the crisis so exhausted that they leave.

Find "the right niche, exactly what's going to serve the community," advises Prasser. Solon's theatre, music, and art programs are deliberately designed to provide what public schools can't, due to time and curriculum constraints. To discover what was needed, she invited teachers to the arts center to tell her. The resulting programs "created the ties that are our foundation and bring in the revenue."

Don't stop marketing

"When any nonprofit loses money, the first thing it wants to do is reduce marketing costs," says Burd. "But that's counterproductive. You need to get more people in the door." The trick is to market strategically. Just as with programming, "review your marketing strategies and be honest about what works and what doesn't." Make sure that what you do spend is cost effective.

Word of mouth has always been a basic marketing tool of CSA providers: "keeping communication lines open to the people who are your bread and butter," as Prasser puts it. Now the Internet offers viral marketing, costing little but adding an exponential multiplier effect. A great example, Burd notes, is the Philadelphia Fringe Festival. Festival supporters use Facebook and other social networking sites to tell their friends about performances right after seeing them. A community has developed of Fringe attendees, who wait for that email every morning to decide what to go see that day. "This really builds audience," Burd says. "You can transfer the same idea to your programs or to an upcoming exhibition opening." Don't forget social networking by your artists, who have connections within their various disciplines. Your board too can be ambassadors for the organization, talking it up and bringing friends to events.

Look for other cost-effective marketing tools. In northeast Ohio, the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture's Community Events Calendar lists every organization's programs and activities on a single web page, for a minimal annual fee. Burd reports that small businesses will often do twofers: attend a concert or take a class and get a discounted dinner or lunch at a nearby café; or get a discount at a music store when you enroll at the local community music school.

Negotiate advertising deals with local papers, offering to use their logo as a media sponsor. Burd also suggests group ads, presenting a common message and sponsored by a list of local centers. Such ads raise your profile and educate people about the role a CAE provider can play in their lives. Partnering on specific projects with other organizations extends your reach. A photography competition exhibit that Solon held with three other arts centers doubled the number of competitors who paid \$10 per photo to enter and created broader awareness of Solon's other programs.

In difficult times, says Shapiro, "what's most important is finding ways to maintain economic viability so we can continue our service to the community, because what we do is so important and so special!" CMC's current message on its website is, "There's never been a better time to make music."

"Never say die," Prasser concludes. "Never stop thinking about ways to deal with the problem. There is a solution—while always staying true to the mission."

Resources

Nancy Burd, Founder and President, The Burd Group, nancy@theburdgroup.com, 215-694-3724.

Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, "Nonprofits Say Overall Climate For Charitable Fundraising Worst Since 1998," December 2008, www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/News/2008/pr-PGIDecember2008.aspx

Americans for the Arts, Arts Funding Response and Readiness Kit, www.artsusa.org/information_services/toolkit/default.asp. See especially "Talking Points."

The Bridgespan Group, "Managing in Tough Times: 7 Steps," www.bridgespan.org/LearningCenter/ResourceDetail.aspx?id=2638.

Governance Matters, "How To Survive in a Difficult Economy," www.governancematters.org/index.cfm?organization_id=56§ion_id=779&page_id=7531.

Nonprofit Finance Fund, NFF News, "As the Nonprofit Sector Faces Recession, NFF Outlines 5 Recommendations to Prepare for Economic Downturn," www.nonprofitfinancefund.org/news.php?autoID=113.

Illinois Arts Alliance, ongoing list of resources about the economic downturn on the online bookmarking site delicious: <http://delicious.com/tag/artsrecession>. ■

About the Author

Stephanie Golden writes grants, reports, and other copy for nonprofits, especially in the field of arts and education. She can be reached at stephanie@stephaniegolden.net.

During tough economic times, community arts education organizations must make critical budgetary, staffing and programmatic decisions in order to continue to offer high quality arts instruction programs. We recently polled Guild members to gain insight into how some are responding to the economic crisis in ways that will enable them to sustain their programs over the long term.

What are you starting to do in response to the current economic downturn?

Marketing/Development

- "We have increased our grass roots and internet marketing...we also are targeting families that have pulled their children from private/parochial schools and are seeking enrichment." —**Joyce Bonomini**, *The Marcia P. Hoffman Performing Arts Institute at Ruth Eckerd Hall* (Clearwater, FL)
- "We are embarking on a 'campaign to retain': contacting (via email, mail and phone) students that did not re-register this year and encouraging them to rejoin, providing more counseling to students who are ready to move up a level or try other programs and enhancing our communication with faculty and parents." —**Igal Kesselman**, *Lucy Moses School at Kaufman Center* (New York, NY)
- "We are developing creative marketing strategies that do not incur cost on our part, like utilizing community performances as a means of attracting more interest in our school. —**Catherine Ratliff**, *Nashville Ballet* (Nashville, TN)
- "We are strategically combining programs/events so that we can focus all available funds towards marketing. We aim to have one hugely successful event rather than several mildly/moderately successful ones." —**Rachel Robinson**, *Baltimore Clayworks* (Baltimore, MD)
- "Our Board is raising a pool of funds (\$5,000) for us to fund additional scholarships for students who would otherwise have to withdraw from the school due to financial circumstances." —**George Tepping**, *Wausau Conservatory of Music* (Wausau, WI)
- "We are no longer requesting sponsorships for performances and instead asking funders to sponsor scholarship students and outreach programs, which are more on target with our mission and better received by grant panels at this time." —**Katie Smythe Thinnes**, *New Ballet Ensemble and School* (Memphis, TN)

Programming

- "We are increasing the number of group lessons for the summer and fall since they are more profitable for us than private lessons. The bulk of our fees for private lessons go towards teaching salaries. So if our income goes down in this area, so do our expenses." —**Susan Forte**, *Community Music School* (Centerbrook, CT)
- "We are offering fewer classes and enrolling more students in each class." —**Edwina French**, *Community Music School of Collegeville* (Trappe, PA)

Collaboration/Partnership/Community Engagement

- "We are convening a series of brown bag lunches with directors of like-sized local community arts centers to share challenges, strategies and resources." —**Abigail Norman**, *The Eliot School of Fine & Applied Arts* (Jamaica Plain, MA)
- "We continue to seek out partners who can strengthen our programs without duplication or competition." —**Charles D. Lawrence**, *The Cleveland Music School Settlement* (Cleveland, OH)
- "We have been working with other community arts and education nonprofits on the concept of forming a community center that would provide appropriate office space at less-than-market prices to ease the burden faced by our organizations." —**Bonnie Tatterson**, *The Music Academy* (State College, PA)

What are you deciding to cut, if anything?

Human Resources

- "We have frozen spending on programs, professional development and all non-essential items and have administered a 5% pay cut to all full time salaried faculty/staff and a 3% cut to all part-timers. We opted for this rather than lay-offs, although we anticipate that possibility in our next budget year." —**Kathy Czerny**, *South Shore Conservatory of Music* (Hingham, MA)
- "We decided to eliminate one full time and one part-time position. This was balanced against 1) cutting staff hours and risking a decrease in efficiency, customer service and the ability to complete our work, and 2) decreasing everyone's wages by a percentage and thereby negatively affecting morale organization-wide." —**Michael Havay**, *Indian Hill Music School* (Littleton, MA)
- "All full-time staff has had to take a one-week unpaid leave and senior staff has been given a temporary 10% pay cut." —**Kathym Humphreys**, *Hubbard Street Dance Chicago*
- "Our Board is determining whether or not we should change our health insurance plan to allow for larger employee deductibles and how much we should contribute to those plans. They are also deciding if we can continue to provide matching funds to employee retirement accounts." —**Tracy Wilson**, *The Berkshire Music School* (Pittsfield, MA)

Programs

- "We are assessing each program and class based on the amount of time and resources it takes to keep it going well. If the outcome does not match or surpass the input, we are cutting it." —**Joyce Bonomini**
- "We are offering only those classes that have sustained a strong following for at least two years or have a wait list for registration." —**Pamela Dusek**, *City of Yuma Arts & Culture Division* (Yuma, AZ)

- “We are refraining from starting any new initiatives and will consider eliminating programs/activities that are not core to our mission. These decisions will be made by our senior staff and Executive Committee” —**Lee Koonce**, *Third Street Music School Settlement* (New York, NY)

Paper

- “We are ‘going green’ (or paperless) which means cutting back almost entirely on printing.” —**Rachel Robinson**

What questions are you asking to make these decisions?

- What gives us an edge and sets us apart from organizations doing similar work?
- What are the core programs that sustain our organization?
- What does our community want?
- Does this program have a history of financial and community support?
- Who benefits from this program? Is it who we aim to serve?
- Are our programs worth the costs?
- How can we maximize return on investments?
- How do cutbacks affect our mission?
- What can we cut without affecting quality?
- Can we provide our usual level of customer service without this and does cutting it limit our potential growth?
- Is our staffing structure as efficient as it could be?
- Which staff positions/responsibilities can most readily be re-assigned to other staff members?
- How will cutting back affect our organization’s identity and is it in the best interest of our strategic plan and mission?
- How can we secure new funding or think outside the box to raise money?
- How can we collaborate more effectively?
- How can we maintain our position so that we can rebound effectively when things turn around?

Do you see any opportunity in all of this? If so, what is it?

Collaboration

- “Collaboration among nonprofits can lower expenses, as well as bring down barriers that keep us from seeing our commonalities. We need to talk with each other to get through this.” —**Michael Ibrahim**, *All Newton Music School* (West Newton, MA)
- “Through new partnerships in the community, we can involve citizens who may not have explored arts learning opportunities before.” —**Pamela Dusek**
- “We have found ways to turn our large, sophisticated school back into a grassroots organization where staff, faculty and trustees are working together at every level to keep our school thriving.” —**Kathy Czerny**

New Funding Opportunities

- “The real opportunity is to show funders and those we serve that we are capable of weathering the storm through a deep commitment to our mission and smart leadership” —**Anne Trickey**, *Performing Arts Workshop* (San Francisco, CA)
- “Some funders may see more of a need to provide emergency funding to programs that serve disadvantaged populations.” —**Diane Jacobowitz**, *Dancewave* (Brooklyn, NY)
- “We are keeping a close eye on the new economic stimulus plan to see whether there may be an alignment with our activities.” —**Duffie Adelson**, *Merit School of Music* (Chicago, IL)

Maximizing Impact

- “Working smarter and harder is better than just working hard. When the economy recovers, the ‘savings’ can be put toward core programs to increase their effectiveness.” —**Lee Koonce**
- “It forces us to deliberately examine our mission, future and relevance to the community.” —**Bonnie Tatterson**
- “This is a chance to become more mission-focused and further brand our program to distinguish it from others.” —**Katie Smythe Thinnes**
- “This is an opportunity to put our operations under a microscope, to define what is essential, to repair what is broken, and to revise or discard what is non-essential. We are also deepening our relationships with our constituents as we work together to keep our organization alive.” —**Michael Havay**

Expanding our Base

- “People are taking advantage of activities/resources closer to home.” —**Diane Labelle**, *Goggleworks Center for the Arts* (Reading, PA)
- “This is an opportunity to develop our volunteer base.” —**Nancy Brown**, *Community Music School of the Music Center of South Central Michigan* (Battle Creek, MI)
- “As other local centers close, we are seeing not only the warning but also the opportunity to attract some of their students to provide what’s been lost.” —**Abigail Norman**

Final Thoughts

- “It’s tough to make hard decisions at any time. In challenging times, the imperative gives some clarity and actually helps build consensus.” —**Jeffry Walker**, *Community School of Music and Arts at Finn Center* (Mountain View, CA)
- “This is an opportunity to learn from each other and from the people we serve.” —**Joyce Bonomini**
- “During difficult times, people pay more attention to the things that matter in their lives and the lives of others. The arts are always near the top. The competition and distractions tend to fall away and strong, resilient organizations come to the fore in people’s minds.” —**Charles D. Lawrence** ■

When asked, most of you were delighted to sit on the Board of a dynamic community arts education organization. While financial resources were in short supply, the vision and activities of your organization were inspiring and you looked forward to making a significant contribution. In fact, you were amazed that an organization with such limited financial and human resources could accomplish so much. You believed in your organization's mission to transform lives through fostering active participation in art making. Life was good.

As your organization boldly stepped towards its future, the market and economic conditions suddenly and dramatically changed. How will the global economic downturn effect your organization? What should you expect of your management team and staff? What role should you play to ensure your organization not only survives, but thrives in this economic context? Perhaps most importantly, how can you ensure your organization continues to transform lives and our communities during this period of economic uncertainty?

How will the global economic downturn effect your organization?

Simply put, the current economic downturn has the potential to impact all not-for-profit organizations in every possible way.

In terms of financial impact, most of your revenue lines may be vulnerable. Earned revenue may decline, as your students/customers' capacity to pay for arts education and other ancillary products or services is constrained. Fundraising income may be severely challenged as foundations, corporations and individuals struggle to maintain their philanthropic and marketing investments. Government funding may be steady—or could be slashed dramatically—but this source of funding makes up only a small portion of annual revenue for most community arts education organizations, the exceptions being those with significant programs in public schools.

Perhaps you could cut costs to save the day? Sorry, that's probably not the answer. Your organization is likely already a lean operation, as is the case with most arts organizations. It is very unlikely that you will find significant inefficiencies or excessive spending on the expense side of the organization. In fact, most arts organizations err on the side of spending too little on artistic programs, staff and marketing. Further cuts to these areas will diminish your organization's role in your community, artistic impact and brand value. Ultimately, further reductions will lead to revenue problems down the road, as a diminished organization struggles to excite and attract potential students and donors.

On the balance sheet of the organization, you will have seen significant reductions in the value of investments and you may also face line of credit challenges as your bankers experience their own liquidity challenges.

Morale will likely be challenged, as small staff teams struggle to cope with these financial challenges and try to remain focused on the organization's exciting vision and mandate. Staff retention should not be a huge issue, but ensuring your organization's staff maintains its creative energy will be a challenge.

What should you expect of your management team and staff?

As always, it is critical that a trustee remember that their role is to support, encourage and help constructively redirect management. It is not your job to step in and run the organization, but to make sure management is on the right strategic path to ensure the continued success and ongoing vitality of the organization.

As a trustee with fiduciary responsibility, you should expect management to be working closely with your finance committee to explore all financial scenarios and opportunities. If you do not have a finance committee, it would be advisable to add a board sub-committee with the mandate to work with management on all financial matters through this economic downturn and beyond.

Management should be asked to prepare various scenarios for both the budget and cash-flow going forward, assuming outcomes ranging from status quo down to fairly catastrophic. Ideally, these scenarios should be constructed around easy to understand assumptions and show the impact at 12, 24, and 36 months.

Upon the completion of the financial scenario analysis, management should prepare a financial plan for the board that covers the next three year period. In my experience, it has really paid off to plan for the catastrophic scenario and construct a plan to cover the shortfall through increased revenue generated by impassioned fundraising.

You should also insist that management continue to dream and to establish audacious goals for the institution. Your organization needs to keep its eyes focused on its goals and objectives. In the midst of this economic downturn, you cannot afford to lose sight of the essential role you play in your communities and of the hope for what is yet to come for your organization.

Finally, you should expect management to ask you for increased contributions to support the life of the organization. If management cannot rely on its trustees for additional support in hard times, whom can they count on?

What role should you play to ensure your organization not only survives, but thrives in this economic context?

As a trustee of a community arts education organization, you are first and foremost the "Super Cheerleader" for the organization and its management. Yes, you are there for your analytical insights, charm and beauty, but you must

ensure that your organization's staff feels supported through these difficult times. Arts management is a tough gig in good days, but the hours are longer and the financial pressures are more intense now than ever.

Now for the analytical aspect: your organization needs you to understand the financial circumstances and what can be done to resolve the current challenges. You need to support management as it crafts its financial plan going forward and to help support any and all revenue enhancement initiatives. On cost cutting, you have to ensure that expense reductions do not hobble the artistic reputation, quality or brand of your organization. Short-sighted cost cutting will severely impair the organization's performance far into the future. If cost cutting is a requirement, start by looking closely at overhead expenses and exploring opportunities to share costs with other organizations.

As trustee donors, you need to give serious consideration to increasing your support for your organization. Trustees should also consider accelerating pledge inflow to their organizations. This acceleration can really help the cash-flow situation.

As for your charm and beauty, senior management of your organization needs your help in reaching out to more

potential donors to the institution. Your current donor base is likely challenged and future growth will be dependent on expanding your base. Scan your contacts lists and look for any opportunity to share your passion for community arts education with friends, colleagues, and business associates. Consider any financial shortfall, divide it by the number of trustees and take ownership of trying to find that amount in new or increased donations to your organization. Remember: you are charming and beautiful, people want to support you!

How can you ensure your organization continues to transform lives and our communities during this period of economic uncertainty?

This is not a time to retreat. Our organizations create better communities and citizens through offering many varied opportunities for active participation in art making. This is important work and a reduction in our programs and services will deprive our society of the many benefits delivered every day in our organizations. We create dynamic platforms for fostering creativity, innovation and imagination—these are non-negotiable elements for success in today's world.


As a trustee, you have to be both savvy and bold through this next period. Savvy enough to ensure the financial planning for the organization is sound and bold enough to ensure your organization does not lose ground in delivering against its mission and vision. Our society cannot afford for your organization to lose.

Many art theorists would assert that some of our most enduring art was created in periods of uncertainty and challenge. This next period will be a time for active reflection on our values. I believe we will see some incredible new art and art forms emerge.


In conclusion, I would encourage all trustees of community arts education organizations to support your management team, ensure sound financial planning and governance, donate (and donate BIG), and actively engage in attracting new funders to your organization. Beyond these points, I would encourage you to sing, to dance, to act, to paint, to write, etc. The real benefit is in the making of the art and you are all artists. Walk the talk and live the vision of your organization personally. ■

About the Author

Jeff Melanson is Executive Director & Co-CEO of Canada's National Ballet School and a Trustee for the National Guild of Community Schools for the Arts. He also serves as a consultant and guest speaker on topics related to arts management and organizational change.



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- **Cleveland Avenue Creative Arts Branch Y.M.C.A**, Montgomery, AL. The Creative Arts Branch of Cleveland Avenue Y.M.C.A offers dance, music and visual arts instruction, as well as summer camp programs.
- **The Community Music School at Southwestern College**, Winfield, KS. The Community Music School at Southwestern College provides music instruction to people of all ages throughout South Central Kansas and North Central Oklahoma.
- **Creative Arts Workshop**, New Haven, CT. Creative Arts Workshop is regional center for education in the visual arts that has served the Greater New Haven area since 1961.
- **Danceworks, Inc.**, Milwaukee, WI. Danceworks' mission is to enhance the joy, health and creativity of the community through performances, class and outreach activities integrating dance and other art forms.
- **Island Music Guild**, Bainbridge Island, WA. Island Music Guild is a community music academy and resource center offering music lessons, group music instruction, music camps, informal music workshops, live performance and recording services.
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- **Minnesota Performing Arts/Stage Coach Theater Arts**, Minnetonka, MN. Stage Coach offers instruction in dance, theater and singing to youth ages 4-18.
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