



NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
SHAPING HUMAN POTENTIAL

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CONTACT:
Krista Brooke
kbrooke@arteducators.org

VISUAL ART EDUCATORS AFFIRM EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

ALEXANDRIA, VA — Dec. 3, 2019 — A national panel to lead equity, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I) initiatives in art education will hold its inaugural meeting Dec. 6-8 with a mandate to ensure that the National Art Education Association continues its work toward creating an inclusive art education professional community open to all.

“The innate potential of marginalized and underrepresented groups to lead and creatively contribute to the overall strength of the organization was always present,” said ED&I Commission Chair James H. Rolling Jr., NAEA president-elect. “And that potential needs to be valued, welcomed, and mentored.” Rolling, professor and chair of art education at Syracuse University, serves as director of diversity, equity, and inclusion at SU’s College of Visual and Performing Arts.

“The new ED&I Commission’s agenda will shape itself not only in the effort to operationalize the final recommendations of the NAEA ED&I Task Force that preceded it, but also in response to both previously unaddressed and newly emerging issues sent to our attention from NAEA members and the larger field of art, media, and museum education practice,” said Rolling.

The ED&I Task Force, led by art education scholar Wanda B. Knight, developed 16 recommendations for the NAEA Board, the first of which was to establish the standing commission.

Other recommendations include:

- Offer leadership development and mentoring opportunities to marginalized and underrepresented groups;
- Provide ongoing ED&I professional development to NAEA leadership; and
- Create programs to recruit underrepresented art education professionals into the field of art education.

The initiative was developed in part to help the organization’s 17,500 members better serve their students and support their colleagues—including those who are often marginalized, due to their race, class, gender, and more. “This work is critically important to achieving NAEA’s mission to advance visual arts education to fulfill human potential and promote global understanding,” said NAEA Executive Director Deborah B. Reeve.

The commission is expected to address two issues early on, the first of which is to create a cultural proficiency certification program, said NAEA Chief Learning Officer Dennis Inhulsen, staff liaison to the commission. The program—a pilot project—is expected to run until September 2020. The second project will address cultural appropriation in language, policies, and other forms, he said.

The National Endowment for the Arts awarded a grant to NAEA to explore diversity and inclusion within the profession as well as to explore implications for culturally competent teaching and professional leadership in art education.

In addition to Rolling, those named to the commission are:

- Elizabeth Barker, art educator, Lebanon High School, Lebanon, MO
- David Herman Jr., assistant professor, Tyler School of Art and Architecture, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
- Wanda Knight, associate professor of art education, African-American studies, and women's, gender, and sexuality studies; professor-in-charge of the art education program, Pennsylvania State University
- Pamela Harris Lawton, associate professor of art education, Virginia Commonwealth University
- Tiffany Lin, program manager, partner schools and network, Exploring the Arts, Brooklyn, NY
- Bella Merriam-Gourley, AT&T director of education, San Antonio Museum of Art
- Browning Neddeau, assistant professor, elementary teacher education and American Indian studies, California State University, Chico
- Anna Pilhoefer, visual arts educator, Santa Barbara Unified School District, CA
- Krissy Ponden, visual arts department chair, The Unquowa School, Fairfield, CT
- Vanessa Smart, instructional coach, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Founded in 1947, the [National Art Education Association](https://www.arteducators.org) is the leading professional membership organization exclusively for visual arts educators.

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901 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

T: 703-860-8000 | F: 703-860-2960 | E: info@arteducators.org | www.arteducators.org