



### From the President

Debi West

**Hello dear RAEA members! It's my hope that you've all had a most blessed holiday season.**

I planned on sharing an end of the year mentor article reminding all of us to be sure to dive deep into the ways that you can be the best mentor in small or big ways in 2026.

*But then, my mother passed away on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was unexpected and my heart is broken but a dear friend said why not dedicate this RAEA article to your first Mentor: Mom! And so here we are.*

When I think about the people who have shaped my life, my mother, my mama bear, stands at the very beginning of that list. She was my first mentor, the one who showed me, by quiet example and by bold action, what it means to live with purpose, compassion, and joy.

My mom was a beautifully balanced soul: a mathematician with an artist's heart. She could solve a complex equation one minute and paint something breathtaking the next. She taught both high school and college students, and it was impossible to miss the way her eyes lit up when she talked about "her kids", students who felt more like family. Teaching wasn't just a job for her; it was her gift to the world. She carried that same generosity into everything she did. In Tri Delta, in P.E.O., in every leadership role she stepped into, she lifted others up with grace, kindness, and a steady confidence. She loved life deeply and lived it fully, and that passion poured into everyone lucky enough to know her.

**As an art educator myself, I can trace so much of who I am back to her influence. My successes, my sense of wonder, my belief in the transformative power of creativity; those roots all lead back to her. She taught me to see beauty everywhere, to stay curious, and to give more than I take.**

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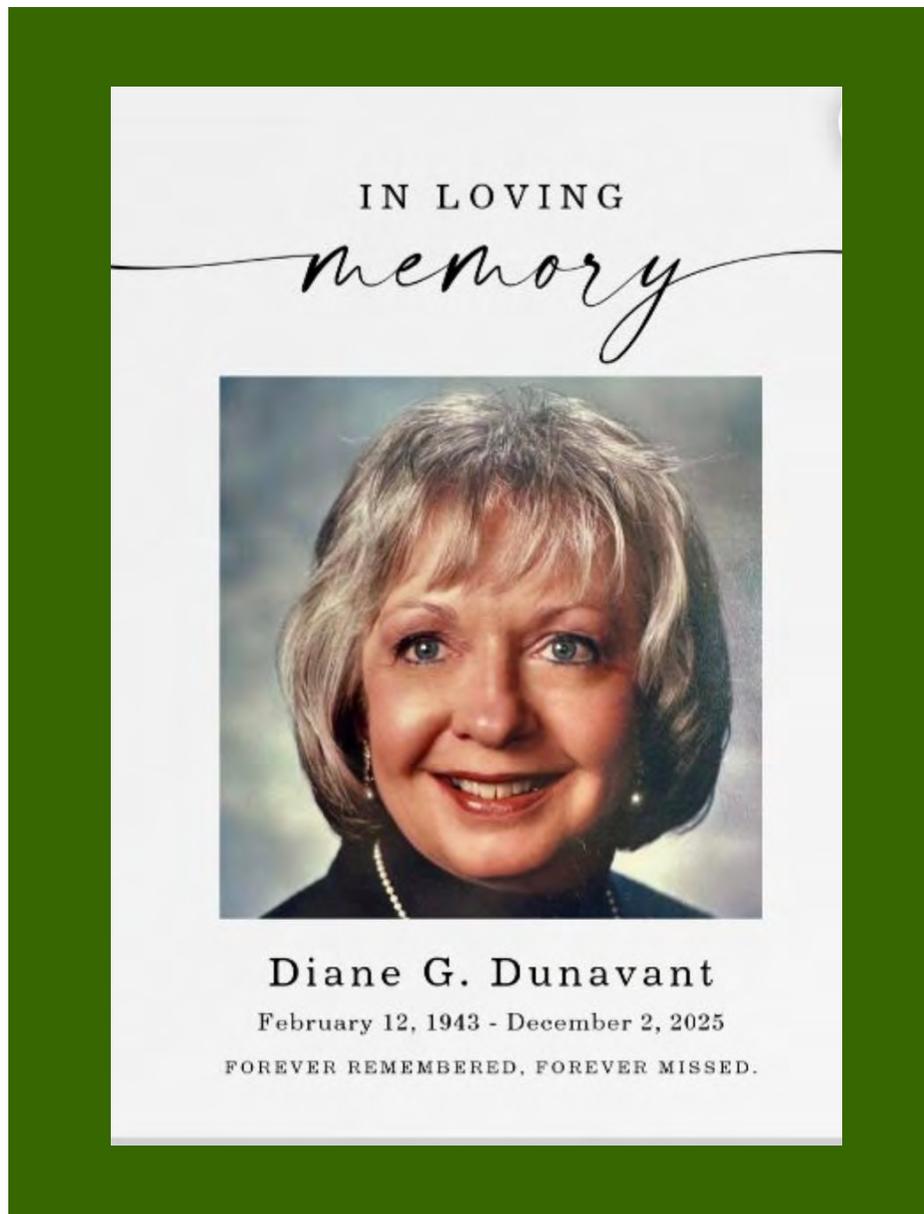
Diane Dunavant and Debi West with Janet Fish at the Albrecht Kemper Museum

We all need people who motivate and inspire us throughout our lives. My list is long, but it all started with my mom. If I had to capture what her mentorship meant to me in a simple way, it would look like this:

**M.O.M. – my Model of Mentorship,  
she didn't just talk it, she walked it for 82 years.**

Thank you, Diane Dunavant, my mentor, my guide, my mother!  
May we all inspire authentically like she did. I miss you dearly!  
So Sincerely,  
Debi West, Ed.S, NBCT - [dewestudio@gmail.com](mailto:dewestudio@gmail.com)

**#togetherweART better**



# Trivia

## November Answer:

### Question:

What Florentine Renaissance painter was the first teacher and mentor to a young Michelangelo?

### Answer:

Domenico Ghirlandaio.  
Michelangelo was apprenticed in Ghirlandaio's workshop at the age of 13 and learned fresco painting techniques from him.



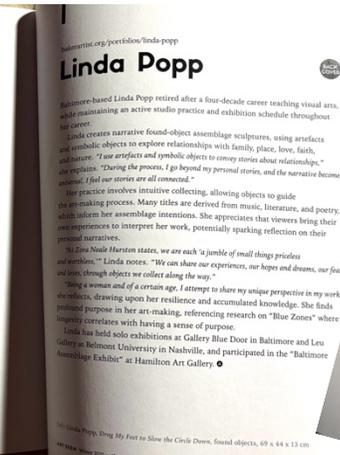
## January Question

What is the formal title of the famous 1871 painting popularly known as "Whistler's Mother," which depicts the artist's mother sitting in profile against a grey wall?

Send answers to Debi West,  
[dwestudio@gmail.com](mailto:dwestudio@gmail.com)

# Congratulations to Linda Popp

Congratulations to Linda Popp whose artwork, *Drag My Feet to Slow the Circle Down* and bio is featured in the Winter 2025 Issue of *Art Seen* magazine. Another of her artworks, *Colors Seem to Fade* was chosen for the back cover.





# In The Spotlight

**Dr. Anne Becker**

**Distinguished Service to the Profession - Illinois Art Education Association  
Chairperson of the Visitors Cultural Commission, St. Charles , Illinois  
Board Member of the Fine Line Art Center, St. Charles, Illinois**

Dr. Anne Becker has been an art educator for over five decades. After earning her doctorate in education from Aurora University she retired from West Aurora High School and joined the education department of Columbia College as the director of art education. She retired from Columbia College in 2015 and joined the art department of Eastern Illinois University. Currently she is an adjunct professor at Eastern Illinois University teaching in their online master's program.

She has been a member of the Illinois Art Education Association and the National Art Education since she was an undergrad student at Northern Illinois University. She was recently awarded by the Illinois Art Education Association as the recipient of their Distinguished Service to the Profession of Art Education.

Dr. Becker has been the chairperson of the Visitors Cultural Commission in St. Charles, Illinois. The Visitor's Commission is supported by the city of St. Charles to support the myriads of arts that thrive in her community. She is also on the board of the Fine Line Art Center in St. Charles; the center is an adult art center offering a variety of studio experiences.

Dr. Becker has a master's degree in art education with an emphasis on Sculpture. Over the years she has taught painting, drawing, digital photo and animation and lately she has been spending her art time creating colored pencil work. Three years ago, she presented a workshop with a group of colleagues entitled, the *Traveling Sketchbook*. Each participant creates a sketchbook, the sketchbook 'travels' to a group of artists in the state organization, the sketchbooks are returned to the original sketchbook owner at the state conference.

Her extensive travels across the globe have given her wonderful resources for her colored pencil drawings. Aside from enjoying drawing for the 'traveling' sketchbook artists she is an avid tennis player and golfer. Art has always been an integral part of her life, not only does she continue to relish her long-time career teaching art, but she has also connected her passion to her community as well.



# NAEF Updates

Cris Guenter



*NAEF Board of Trustees at March 2025 NAEA Convention in Louisville, KY. (Left to right: Kathryn Hillyer, James Rollins, Jr., Deb Pylypiw, Elizabeth Willett, Cris Guenter, Frank Juárez, Pat Franklin, Bob Sabol, Lauren Correll, JaeHan Bae, and Libya Dolman. Lifetime NAEF Trustee Bob Curtis is on iPad. Not pictured, James Wells, Mario Rossero.)*

## Supporting Innovation in Art Education

The National Art Education Foundation (NAEF) is the philanthropic partner of the National Art Education Association (NAEA). Since 2011, NAEF has invested more than \$630,000 in NAEA initiatives—supporting innovative instructional practices, research, and leadership that strengthen visual arts education and directly benefit NAEA members nationwide.

## 40 for 40 Campaign: Help Us Finish Strong

In celebration of its **40th Anniversary**, NAEF is continuing the **40 for 40 Campaign**—with a goal of raising **\$40,000 by the close of the NAEA 2026 Convention**. We are close to reaching this milestone, and your support can help us cross the finish line.

You can participate by donating **\$4, \$40, \$400, or any amount** that feels right for you. Every contribution directly supports NAEF grants and services for NAEA members. All donations are **tax-deductible** and will be **recognized on the NAEF website**, making this anniversary year a meaningful time to give.

**DONATE TODAY** and be part of NAEF's next 40 years of impact.

## NAEF at the NAEA 2026 Convention

Each year, NAEF hosts presentations and events at the NAEA Annual Convention to raise funds and share the impact of its work. Join us in Chicago for engaging benefit events and informative sessions designed to inspire, connect, and empower art educators. **Tickets for the NAEF Benefit Event and the NAEF Benefit Workshop are available for purchase online now.**

## NAEF Benefit Events

### **The 15th Annual NAEF Benefit Event**

Saturday, March 7, 2026 | 10:45 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Hyatt Regency Chicago | Crystal B

Ticketed Event: \$60

This year's benefit event features keynote speaker William Estrada, a Chicago-based artist, presenting *Collective Dreaming: Practice Solidarity*. Estrada explores community-rooted and collaborative art practices, showing how participatory art education empowers communities, challenges traditional notions of authorship, and builds shared creativity and belonging.

### **Risograph Poster-Making Workshop**

Saturday, March 7, 2026 | 1:00–4:00 p.m.

NAEF Benefit Hands-On Workshop

Ticketed Event: \$60

Join William Estrada and the RADICAL Printshop Project for a collaborative Risograph poster-making experience centered on liberation, mutual learning, and collective dreaming. Participants will create prints that express shared visions and learn how art can be used as a tool for organizing, connection, and solidarity—ideas you can carry back into your own community and classroom.

## NAEF Open Sessions

### **Featured Grantee Projects Panel**

Friday, March 6, 2026 | 4:30–5:20 p.m.

Hyatt Regency Chicago | Crystal A

This panel highlights two outstanding NAEF-funded projects selected from final grant reports submitted in summer 2025. Presenters will share insights from their work, including classroom-based action research and formal research studies. This session offers a firsthand look at how NAEF grants support meaningful, member-driven innovation in art education.

## NAEF Grant Program Information Session

Saturday, March 7, 2026 | 8:00–8:50 a.m.

Hyatt Regency Chicago | Columbian

Learn about the NAEF Grant Program and five distinct grant opportunities supporting professional development, research, and leadership. This session walks through the application process, funding options, and includes an interactive Q&A to help NAEA members apply with confidence.



## **BIG NEWS! CHANGES TO THE 2026 RAEA SILENT AUCTION!!**

Don't forget to set aside your donations to the RAEA Silent Auction in Chicago! Remember, this is the fundraising activity that RAEA uses to raise money for awards and NAEF support. That being said, we can only accommodate smaller and a limited number of artworks.

**All RAEA members are invited to donate their personally handmade artwork!**

This year, due to space limitations and fire codes in the hotel, we will have fewer tables than last year. We can accept the following:

- SMALL items (MAX 9X12 SIZE)
- 2-D artwork includes any framing or matting to a max 9 x 12 size (we do prefer submissions to be at least matted)
- Three-dimensional artwork must also fit in that same footprint.
- ONE SUBMISSION PER DONOR!

**This year we are asking for PRE-REGISTRATION for all donated works. Please fill out the**

**Google Form (<http://bit.ly/48JFE6r>) by FEBRUARY 15, 2026.**

**If you have any questions email: Kathryn Hillyer [kohillyer@gmail.com](mailto:kohillyer@gmail.com)**

The information sheet to accompany any donated pieces is included in this newsletter and can also be found at the RAEA site under RAEA Silent Auction. Please print it out and attach it to your artwork before you deliver it to the location (explained below).

**You must ALSO pre-register your piece online by February 15!**

Mail/Drop Off Options:

If you are NOT going to NAEA in Chicago, you can mail your artwork to Kathi Hillyer in Milwaukee, and she will transport it to Chicago. Please email her and let her know you are sending something, so she'll expect it. It must be received by **FEBRUARY 20!**

If you are bringing artwork to NAEA yourself you may drop it off at the Issues Group Hub, only on Thursday morning. You may also bring it to the Silent Auction table in the Artisan's Gallery area an hour before the Gallery opens, however we prefer to have it in advance.

**NON-PREREGISTERED WORK MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED!**

**We have very limited space and may not have room**

**for "walk-up" donations.**

**2026 RAEA Silent Auction  
Artist Information**

Please print clearly and neatly. Attach this to any artwork you are donating to the Silent Auction, one sheet per artwork. This is in ADDITION to pre-registering your piece at: <http://bit.ly/48JFE6r>

Artist Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Artist Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Artist Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Artwork: \_\_\_\_\_

Medium: \_\_\_\_\_

Retail Value: \_\_\_\_\_

Instant Purchase Price: \_\_\_\_\_ (this is an outright purchase of the work, no more bidding will be allowed)

Minimum Bid: \_\_\_\_\_

Mini Info Sheet for Bid sheets: Please also complete below. This will be attached to the actual Bid Sheet, as table space is so limited.

**RAEA Silent Auction 2026  
Artist Information**

Artist Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Artist Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Artist Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Retail Value \_\_\_\_\_

Minimum Bid \_\_\_\_\_

Instant Purchase: \_\_\_\_\_ (no more bidding allowed)

We are adding a new feature to the auction: **Instant Purchase** (this was piloted last year)! There will be a price stated for selected artworks. If someone bids the Instant Purchase price, they will receive that item and it will be removed from further bidding. Make sure you fill in that field on the Registration Form so bidders will know the amount if they wish to purchase it outright.

Thank you for your participation, support and understanding our confines at the 2026 Convention.

We hope to see you there!  
Kathryn Hillyer and Diane Scully



If needed, mail to:  
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Apt 11D  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
[kohillyer@gmail.com](mailto:kohillyer@gmail.com)  
847-477-8331



Questions:  
Diane Scully  
[dscully94@gmail.com](mailto:dscully94@gmail.com)  
612-834-6881

# WELCOME

## to our New NAEA Executive Director

**Laura L. Lott was selected as the new Executive Director of NAEA. She most recently served as administrator and chief operating officer at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.**

**Following is the official press release to give you more of her information. We look forward to meeting at the NAEA Conference in Chicago.**



## Laura L. Lott Named New Executive Director of the National Art Education Association

December 17, 2025

**ALEXANDRIA, VA** — The National Art Education Association (NAEA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Laura L. Lott to Executive Director. Lott brings cross-sector expertise in museums and K–12 education to enrich member learning, champion art education, and expand equitable access.

NAEA is the leading professional organization representing visual arts, design, and media-arts educators across the United States and internationally. When Lott assumes her new role, she will oversee all aspects of the organization, bringing her experience and insight to guide NAEA’s strategy advocacy; and policy work; research and professional learning—including a national convention in Chicago in March 2026. She will partner with art teachers, museum

educators, school leaders, researchers, policymakers, and allies across the arts sector to ensure access to high-quality art and design education for learners of all ages.

NAEA Board of Directors President Cindy Todd expressed enthusiasm over the recent announcement. “As we welcome Laura Lott as our new Executive Director, I am filled with excitement and optimism for the future of NAEA and the communities we serve. Laura’s leadership, vision, and deep commitment align powerfully with our mission to champion creative growth and innovation for all learners. This moment marks an exciting new chapter for NAEA. Together we will strengthen our programs, deepen our partnerships, and broaden our impact. I look forward to working together as we continue building a vibrant future through visual arts, design, and media arts.”

With a distinguished career in arts, education, and nonprofit leadership and advocacy, Lott most recently served as administrator and chief operating officer at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. Additionally, Lott previously made history as the first female president and chief executive officer of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). At AAM, Lott led dramatic growth in membership, strengthened financial sustainability, expanded national advocacy, and championed groundbreaking diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion initiatives to reshape national standards and practices across the museum community. Lott began her career at the National Geographic Society and MCI Foundation igniting her lifelong passion for supporting innovative K–12 education programs.



"I am honored to join NAEA and support the educators who help students think, feel, and see in new ways," said Lott. "Art education builds confidence, fosters empathy, and helps young people make sense of the world. We will lift up teachers, widen access, and spark creative paths for every learner."

Following a nationwide search guided by the Arts Consulting Group, the NAEA Board of Directors appointed Lott to Executive Director as a reflection of her experience in transformational leadership; inclusive organizational development; effective advocacy and fundraising efforts; and strategic operations and financial management across the arts and education sectors.

Lott steps into this new role during a time when the demand for creative learning and support for educators has intensified. With research supporting creative activities that boost confidence and lower stress in young learners, the need for arts learning in schools and communities is urgent. With this in mind, Lott's early priorities will include listening to members, investing in timely professional learning, and strengthening partnerships across K-12, higher education, and museums.

"NAEA will amplify the voices of art educators and make a clear case for arts learning in every community," Lott added.

## **ABOUT THE NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

Founded in 1947, the National Art Education Association is the leading professional membership organization exclusively for visual arts, design, and media arts educators. NAEA supports thousands of members—including pre-K through high school teachers, college and university educators, museum educators, media artists, teaching artists, and preservice teachers—with advocacy, professional learning, publications, and community-building opportunities. Additionally, NAEA supports thousands of visual arts students through the National Art Honor Societies programs.

### **CONTACT:**

Krista Brooke  
NAEA Chief Strategy and Communications Officer  
[kbrooke@arteducators.org](mailto:kbrooke@arteducators.org)

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NATIONAL  
ART EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION

901 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314  
[www.arteducators.org](http://www.arteducators.org)

2026 NAEA NATIONAL CONVENTION | MARCH 5-7



## CONTACT INFORMATION

### RAEA BOARD 2025

President: **Debi West**, South Carolina, dewestudio@gmail.com

Past President: **Nancy Walkup**, New Mexico, nancywalkup@mac.com

President-Elect: **Melody Weintraub**, Tennessee, melodyweintraub@gmail.com

Emeritus E-Bulletin Co-Editors:

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**Flowerree McDonough**, Tennessee, flowerree@mac.com

Secretary: **Becky Blaine**, Illinois, beckyblaine@gmail.com

Treasurer: **Richard Siegesmund**, Illinois, richard.siegesmund@gmail.com

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Silent Auction Co-Chairs:

**Kathryn Hillyer**, Wisconsin, kathioh@aol.com

**Diane Scully**, Minnesota, dscully94@gmail.com

Membership Chair: **Denise Tullier-Holly**, Louisiana, dtholly52@gmail.com

Liason/Chair RAEA/Preservice Initiative: **Linda Willis Fisher**, Illinois, lmwfis@ilstu.edu

Parliamentarian: **Lorraine Poling**, Delaware, elseapea@yahoo.com

Social Media Chair: **Betsy Logan**, Alabama, rbjlogan@bellsouth.net

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## RAEA MISSION STATEMENT

The purposes shall be to define and establish the role of the retired art educators as an interest group of NAEA; to conduct programs of professional activities for state and national events; to encourage continued personal involvement and development in art education; to inform State Associations and NAEA of concerns relevant to members of long-standing; and to encourage and support, as well as provide mentorship for student members of the NAEA.

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