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the NYSATA news

An Official Publication of the New York State Art Teachers Association

Volume 55 • No. 2 • Winter Digital 2026



Refresh & Grow

Over and Over the Edge

Lesson Plan for Grades K–5



Step 1: Create a stencil by drawing lines and cutting edges.



Step 2: Apply color from tempera stick onto and around stencil edge.



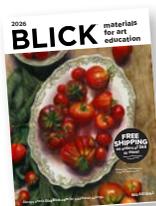
Step 3: Use a wet wipe to move color from stencil to paper. Repeat over and over, moving stencil each time, to create new patterns and colors.

Repeating lines create patterns, shapes, and a variety of colors with the help of an ordinary wet wipe!

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President's Message



Dear NYSATA Family,
As we trade in our conference badges for scarves and settle into the season of hot cocoa and perpetually missing gloves, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for making our November conference an inspiring, energizing, and downright successful gathering. Whether you attended every session with the enthusiasm of a first-year art student

discovering the power of a fresh sketchbook, or you simply survived on caffeine and camaraderie—your presence made it unforgettable. Thank you for showing up, sharing your expertise, and proving once again that art educators really are the paint that keeps this community vibrant.

As we move into winter and reflect on the conference theme, "Navigating the Waves," it feels fitting that this issue's focus invites us to "Refresh and Grow." After all, art educators are uniquely skilled at doing just that—often simultaneously, and sometimes with only a glue stick and an unreasonable number of student questions at our disposal.

At our core, people seek communities where we feel safe, understood, and appreciated. Fortunately for us, the art world—our world—is overflowing with these pockets of connection. Many of us have found that sense of belonging right here in NYSATA, surrounded by colleagues who not only understand our passion for the arts, but also understand the daily triumphs and trials that come with teaching them. (Including the mystery of disappearing scissors—surely the greatest unsolved case in education.)

As art educators, we know that inspiration does not always strike at convenient times. Sometimes it arrives in the middle of a gallery, sometimes in a cluttered studio, and occasionally right after we have finally fallen asleep. (If only we could earn professional development hours for the brilliant ideas we come up with at 2 a.m.)

One of the greatest gifts we have as artists and educators is access to an extended, ever-evolving art community—one that begins in our classrooms but stretches far beyond them into local galleries, museums, and creative organizations. These spaces do more than simply display artwork; they restore us, challenge us, and quietly whisper, "Yes, you *can* revamp that lesson plan again."

Connecting with the wider art world has profoundly shaped my own well-being, artwork, and teaching practice. Walking through a gallery not only resets my creativity—it reminds me *why* we do what we do. There is something deeply energizing about standing in front of an artwork and thinking, "My students would love this," followed by the equally honest thought, "...and I'm absolutely using this idea for Monday!"

Visiting museums and galleries has become an essential part of developing fresh, relevant lesson plans. These visits spark new approaches, help us expand our visual vocabulary, and keep our teaching grounded in contemporary practice. I have revised entire units after a single exhibition—much to the surprise of my students, who have learned to brace themselves whenever I return from a museum with that unmistakable "new-lesson-idea" glimmer in my eye.

Partnerships with galleries, museums, and local art groups have also opened doors to discovering new artists—artists who reflect our diverse student populations, challenge traditional narratives, and bring fresh perspectives to the classroom. Finding new artists through these partnerships has truly spearheaded my teaching; suddenly, discussions deepen, engagement heightens, and students begin making connections that go far beyond the page or canvas. (And if you have ever watched students excitedly debate which contemporary artist "would totally get them," you know that is the good stuff.)

Of course, we cannot talk about engaging with our art community without addressing the beloved, complicated tradition known as **the field trip**. Ah yes—the magical adventure where we attempt to transport dozens of students to a museum without losing a single one, all while pretending we are not sweating through our professional attire.

Field trips come with challenges: permission slips that vanish into backpacks, buses that run on their own mysterious timeline, and the sudden realization that the exhibit you planned to see has been temporarily closed "for maintenance." But despite these hurdles, field trips remain some of the most meaningful experiences we can offer. With thoughtful planning, clear communication, a generous sense of humor, and a calm acceptance that *something* unexpected will happen, they become unforgettable moments of learning. They are also the times when students see themselves as part of a broader artistic world—a moment worth every logistical headache.

At the heart of all of this is community.

Our art communities—local galleries, museums, artist collectives, and supportive colleagues—play a vital role in restoring and strengthening art education. They help us grow as educators, connect our students with real-world artistic experiences, and keep the arts alive in the world around us. In a time when creativity is needed more than ever, these partnerships remind us that we are not navigating this work alone.

...continued on page 6

About the News

The Association shall focus on the following purposes in support of its mission:

- Secure wider recognition of the importance of art education for all
- Develop and implement strategies for statewide advocacy
- Research, analyze, and inform the membership about current policy and practice, as well as social, legal, educational, health-related, and economic issues that affect art education
- Provide high quality professional growth opportunities for the membership
- Recognize the achievements of students and art educators in New York State
- Foster leadership among members of the Association and within the profession of art education
- Monitor and influence policies and legislation that affect art education at state and local levels
- Eliminate discrimination; cultivate values of equity, diversity and inclusion; promote equal access, opportunity, and voice across groups of people of diverse backgrounds and with diverse needs

NYSATA News Mission Statement

The *NYSATA News* desires to bring informative content in an easy to read and understand form to the art teaching professionals of our New York State Art Teachers Association membership.

Written by art teachers from pre-K to college level, this newsletter seeks to present meaningful and helpful narratives about the challenges, failures, and successes in art classrooms. The editors feel that there are valuable resources for educational theory and practice available elsewhere – and that this publication showcases authentic classroom experiences, where art teachers reveal their insights, frustrations, discoveries, mistakes, and triumphs – personal and instructional.

Our mission is to be a platform for teachers' voices. We believe that our pages are a valuable place to share experiences, and that the honest, informal quality of the writing provides realistic inspiration and a genuine sense of community in our profession.

The mission of NYSATA is to promote and advocate for excellence in art education throughout New York State.

The *NYSATA News* publishes official announcements for NYSATA as well as commentary and research on topics that are important to art educators. The opinions expressed in editorials and articles are those of the authors and do not represent NYSATA policies. The *NYSATA News* encourages an exchange of ideas and invites submission of news or articles for publication. Please label files with your last name and the date, example: smith4-15-26. To submit news or articles, please contact Editor Valerie Savage by email at nysatanews@nysata.org. Advertising inquiries should be sent to sponsorship@nysata.org.

The *NYSATA News* is published three times a year electronically and one time each year as a printed issue for the fall conference. Any inquires about receiving the *NYSATA News* should be sent to Membership Chair Terri Konu at tkonu@nysata.org. To change your address, please log into the NYSATA website and update your own address and contact info in your profile.

Photo Submissions: Graphics should be in jpeg, tiff, or pdf format, 150ppi. Photographs and print-ready art are always welcome in jpeg or pdf format. For purposes of accurate identification and acknowledgement, photos sent to the *NYSATA News* must be accompanied by the following information: your name, phone number, and e-mail; name and address of photographer; and first and last names of persons in the photo (in order from left to right, front to back). If artwork is presented, the artist's name, school name, teacher name, and NYSATA Region must be included. Additionally, any photos that depict students under 18 must have parental permission to be printed. If school district policies do not cover permission, NYSATA can provide the necessary form.

An award-winning publication, the *NYSATA News* has been named winner of the National Art Education Association State Newsletter Award Category 3 in 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2025, and 2026. Chosen by a panel of visual arts educators from across the nation, this award honors art education publications that demonstrate outstanding achievement and exemplary contributions to the field of art education.

Members of the 2025-2026 Contributors Board

NYSATA President.....Kelly Verdi

NYSATA Committee and Program Chairs..... names on the last page of the newsletter

Photographers.....Jen LaCava and Robert Wood

NYSATA members interested in serving on this board or contributing articles are encouraged to contact Valerie Savage at valhsav@gmail.com

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Cover art by Adelaide Janiak, 2026 NYS YAM Overall Flag Winner

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Editor's Message

Valerie Savage



As we navigate the depths of winter and look forward to the promise of spring, it is natural to reflect on our routines and practices. The transition between seasons provides an opportunity to rethink, reset, and adopt new perspectives. This aligns with the theme of this issue of the *NYSATA News*—"Refresh and Grow"—which encourages us to embrace change and to foster growth for both our students and in our personal lives.

This winter edition highlights the significance of building relationships with art communities that reach beyond school walls. By actively engaging with broader networks, we can enhance our own creativity and support a thriving artistic environment. These connections not only enrich individual experiences but also strengthen the collective spirit of the art community, making it more vibrant and supportive for all involved.

As you explore ways to "Refresh and Grow", I hope you will take time to sit back, relax and flip (scroll) through the pages of this issue. Consider the following questions as you read through the articles:

Will you find inspiration and schedule a field trip to a museum after reading the Museum Educator articles by Lindsay Kranz and Adam Koneman, and the article on the Region 8 Symposium (submitted by the Region 8 Chair and Committee)?

Will you find a local gallery to exhibit personal and student work? Inspiration can be found in Susan Rudy's article as she highlights the benefits?

Will you look beyond the resources in your classroom and consider using community resources such as makerspaces? Michelle Schroeder's and Pat Stork's articles provide ideas in how these spaces can inspire classroom instruction?

Will you consider connecting communities? Heather Hickel has connected with the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management to establish artist residencies, while Zach Rothman-Hicks has connected the art community with the LGBTQIA+ community through his work with *Gabbing with Gays*. Read their articles to learn of the benefits?

Will you look at how you have connected with an arts community in the past? Katie Chwazik shares how reflection can assist in growth?

Will you consider traveling abroad with students? Brandy Noody and Mackenzie Sheldon share their experience with international travel?

How will you choose to "Refresh and Grow"? Whether you select an idea from the article authors or choose to participate for the first time in one of the many NYSATA programs and initiatives outlined in this issue, I encourage you to remember that change and growth take time. Wishing you success as you plan your path of renewal and growth.

President's message cont...

As we continue to "Refresh and Grow" throughout the year, I encourage each of you to lean into these connections. Seek out exhibitions, reach out to local organizations, and allow yourself the space to be inspired. Your students will feel the ripple effects, and you might just rediscover a spark you did not realize had dimmed.

Thank you for continuing to champion creativity, community, and the ever-important reminder that art education matters—deeply, powerfully, and everywhere. Your insights not only

strengthen our collective practice, but also remind us why we do what we do: to nurture creativity, foster connection, and help our students find their place in a world that needs art now more than ever. May this winter season give you space to refresh, moments to grow, and perhaps even a chance to sit down with a warm drink before it gets too cold.

Colorfully yours,

Kelly Verdi
NYSATA President

Feeding the Availability Heuristic: Leveraging Assessment as Advocacy

Samantha Nolte-Yupari and Valerie Savage
Advocacy Co-Chairs

We all know that assessment done well is more than just a grade recorded for report cards. Effective assessment involves timely communication and rich feedback to students and, in turn, to parents, and even administrators, concerning the learning happening in the art classroom. Effective assessment can also serve as an integral component of your ongoing advocacy efforts. As we have discussed in previous newsletters the best advocacy practices are deployed as embedded components in your daily teaching and program administration. They work to highlight and emphasize the learning happening in the art room. In the past we have talked about how the art show advocates (Nolte-Yupari & Savage, 2023c), and about how consistent positive parent communication (e.g., example monthly/quarterly newsletters) (Nolte-Yupari and Savage, 2023a, 2023b) help us to make the learning of the art room highly visible and on embracing assessment as advocacy (Nolte-Yupari and Savage, 2025). In this article we extend this conversation and review why we should embrace assessment as an advocacy practice and address ways to navigate/remove the barriers we often encounter when trying to maintain consistent routines for timely assessment and thus timely advocacy.

Why Is Assessment Part of Advocacy?

Advocacy is the process of speaking up for a cause to create change. In art education, our advocacy efforts involve *ongoing discourse about the value and importance of maintaining consistent and regular access to high quality art experiences in the form of curriculum, contact time, and monetary support for curriculum*. In a standards-based assessment environment, consistent data on learning outcomes create powerful ongoing visibility. Unlike one-off advocacy efforts like lobbying a representative or even the art show (if you only have one/year), consistent assessment and communication of learning objectives and thus learning outcomes create a *persistent and regular message* centered on the growth, progress, and value in the art room.

For assessment to be used as an advocacy tool, art educators must recognize the challenges we face on the topic of assessment in the arts. First, there are many common misbeliefs and misconceptions that surround the assessment of art. Conversations with stakeholders that hold untrue beliefs regarding assessment can often leave us feeling attacked, defeated, and disempowered. The following are a few statements you have probably heard:

- Art is a gift or talent and cannot be taught.
- Everyone should receive an A in art.
- Art teachers look for an unachievable “wow” or “special something” in student work.
- Art is an “extra” and the grade should not count or bring down a student’s GPA.
- Art cannot be graded.
- Grades in art are subjective.

Secondly, many stakeholders do not understand the learning that takes place in the art classroom. Providing information on the NYS Standards for the Arts, Studio Habits of Mind and the NYS Portrait of a Graduate (discussed in the context of art education in our fall 2025 article (Savage and Nolte-Yupari, 2025)) are key to helping stakeholders understand student learning in the art classroom. Knowledge of these challenges can help art educators use assessment as an advocacy tool when they connect with stakeholders. Dialogue can be focused on what the student is doing well, what challenges the student overcame and what they learned. This leaves you, the art educator, feeling empowered—confident in the regular systems and routines that you have in place to capture student learning, and able to articulate how grades are earned in your classroom.

Leveraging the Availability Heuristic for Art Program Support

Timely and consistent assessment plus feedback to students and parents relating to the learning and progress is crucial and leverages the *availability heuristic* to our advantage. The concept of the *availability heuristic* reveals that when information is repeated our minds overestimate how much something is happening. For example, if a major car accident occurs and is reported by the news at 9AM, and then the same accident is discussed at the top of the hour over and over again by the news until 4PM, the *repetition is processed as increased frequency of multiple accidents rather than recurring information and updates one accident*. The repetition creates ease of recall, so we give more weight to the information. “By altering our

perception of probability, the availability heuristic significantly impacts our ability to make accurate judgments and assess risks in our daily lives” (The Decision Lab). The availability heuristic is often leveraged in conversations about risk. But the heuristic exists no matter what. It’s a mental shortcut, it means we make decisions on the most available and most easily recalled information. In a less dramatic example, if you are interested in minimalism and start liking minimalism posts on Instagram, the algorithm feeds you more of what you like. The ready availability of lots of posts on minimalism to you can trick you into thinking everyone else likes minimalism too. But it may mean that you miss that many are interested in maximalist design decisions. As an advocacy strategy, the availability heuristic means that stakeholders and decision makers will support content areas and programs for which they can easily access and recall information. So, if you are not regularly making your art program visible then it will not jump to mind when discussions about budgets and policies come up and when stakeholders get to that budget line, they will not be able to recall any particulars about art learning. The lack of available information creates bias against that particular topic (The Decision Lab). Therefore, regular and consistent assessment and feedback and regular and consistent communication of such reinforces what art educators already know: that learning is common and persistent rather than aberrant in the art room. Making art learning consistently visible counteracts the availability heuristic by positioning information about art learning as highly available and thus highly important. The net effect of the availability heuristic on our advocacy efforts increases as well—there is so much happening in the art room! We are always making, always creating, always thinking, always learning! Arts learning is implemented daily! (Not coincidentally).

Removing Assessment Barriers to Feed the Availability Heuristic

Since we need to assess students’ artwork, why not make it a priority for you, your students, and thus your program? While this sounds logical and, in some ways, easy, there are a number of barriers that often prevent us from implementing clear, consistent assessment practices. We often try too many different ways to assess—this is confusing to students and requires time we do not have. The recording and assessing process is often forgotten as we struggle to tackle daily classroom management tasks. We are left with nothing to display alongside finished work thus preventing us from informing parents and administration of the artistic learning process. We often find it challenging to implement time for student reflection and struggle with grading when students do not finish work at the same time. The accompanying chart identifies five keyways we should assess student growth, barriers we often face, how this affects our advocacy practices, and possible solutions to overcome these barriers. We hope while reading the chart, you can recognize the barriers you face regarding assessment and find the solutions you need to elevate the belief and understanding of the learning occurring in your art classroom.

Should	Barrier	How it affects advocacy	Fix
Formatively assess regularly	-We try to change it up too much...or we forget to document	-All the little moments of learning that are amazing do not get captured -Students have a hard time seeing how one skill builds on another	-Create routines around formative assessment. 1-2 options for closure/exit slips. 1-2 ways for looking at/responding to work. Document conversations during critiques etc. (For help on routines such as these, we recommend Nolte-Yupari & Hanning, 2026) -Give graded guided practices back regularly so students can use it as a reference -Use guided practice in portfolios and the art show to illustrate learning -Document learning of the Studio Habits of Mind: develop craft, stretch and explore, engage and persist
Document in-progress work	-We forget, photos take time, we have SO many students, photos seem to take forever...	-We lose the growth and the changes as work moves through the messy middle—we miss the risks and the beauty of spontaneity	-Purchase a Chromebook and/or simple camera -Set up a documentation station and teach students to regularly document their progress -Use Artsonia to provide parents with a way to see and respond -Reference the Studio Habits of Mind: observe, reflect, engage and persist, understanding art worlds -Point out how the Create and Respond Art Standards are met

Featuring process as well as product in displays and the art show	-Additional work to track and to hang	-Viewers/stakeholders see finished work but not the sweat equity and learning that it took get there -They miss the point. Significant learning takes place during the process/journey -Students make creative choices, the art has a student aesthetic instead of an adult aesthetic—adults can lack an understanding of the learning	-Provide information on how art is created in a choice-based environment where the process reinforces the learning that occurs during the making -Show process examples, envision handouts during the show...even a sampling or a deep dive into one prompt/project -Provide student written reflection on their work
Provide timely feedback with explanations (not just a grade and not just when grades are due)	-Students do not finish at the same time -We dislike grading and it feels overwhelming	-Students may not understand the assignment, cannot make corrections, and may voice frustration to others -If artwork is not given back, the grade becomes the visual reference point and is seen as separate from the artwork -Parents may not understand the grade, students may not understand the grade, art is seen as subjective	-Provide rubrics for students with clear expectations and guidelines -Provide opportunities for discussion such as in-progress, group, and individual critiques -Use rubrics and criteria and have students self-assess their work -Involve students in critiques of artwork completed by established artists to help them learn vocabulary and how to discuss art
Give students time to reflect on their own work as part of the critique process or portfolio reflection	-Students protest "writing" in the art room -Making time for this feels like stealing from creating time	-Feedback and reflection feels "top down" from teachers or an expert rather than from the student -Minimizes/discards REFLECT as Studio Habit and RESPOND as an Arts Standard leaving gaps in learning -Students left unable to articulate the "why" or artmaking and creative processes	-Make a routine for "critique" and reflection -Actively have students reflect on the rubric and provide examples -Build reflection into the "artist statement" process -Leverage Studio Habits comprehension v. inclination

Conclusion

Assessment becomes a strong advocacy tool when standard based assessment practices on artistic learning outcomes are used purposefully as a tool for creating consistent and ongoing visibility. Timely communication and rich feedback to students, parents and administrators on the learning occurring in your art classroom can remove barriers and misbeliefs. Advocacy should not be a role we wait for others to do for us. When it comes to using assessment as an advocacy tool only you can take on the responsibility.

.....

The Decision Lab. *Why do we tend to think that things that happened recently are more likely to happen again? The availability heuristic explained.* The Decision Lab. <https://thedecisionlab.com/biases/availability-heuristic>.

Nolte-Yupari, S. T. & Hanning, K. (2026). *30 kids, 1 sink: The art teacher's complete guide to classroom choreography and materials management.* Teachers College Press.

Nolte-Yupari, S. T. & Savage, V. (2023a). Advocacy starts early: 5 Strategies to do NOW and all year long! *NYSATA News*, (52, 1), 10-12.

Nolte-Yupari, S. T. & Savage, V. (2023b). Proactive advocacy doesn't have to be hard: 30 effective ways to build your advocacy program. *NYSATA News*, (52, 4), 8-11.

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Savage, V. & Nolte-Yupari, S. T. (2025). Portrait of a graduate: The power of art, *NYSATA News* (55, 1), 24-28.

NYSATA 2025 Art Educator of the Year

Tim Needles

Award Speech from 2025 NYSATA Conference



Good evening, everyone. What a thrill and an honor it is to be here tonight. To the NYSATA board, the nominating committee, and the community of exceptional educators here in New York State—thank you! I want to especially thank Carol, who nominated me, and has shown terrific leadership these past years.

When I heard that I had won the Art Teacher of the Year award, my first reaction was excitement followed by unadulterated shock. I thought, “Wait, are you sure? I think I spent 90% of my time this week troubleshooting Google Classroom and teaching students how to use AI.” I started to feel a little unworthy, like I was a fraud winning this award. I questioned, “Am I still a ‘real’ art teacher, or just an EdTech specialist with a slightly obsessive marker collection?”

The reality is that I ended up in my current role almost by accident after getting my administrative degree. Like many of you may have experienced, I wanted to help lead but I found it frustrating that schools always seem to be looking for a music person to run art and music departments, even though I am also a musician. The pandemic led to a surge in educational technology tools, and I had been using many of them in my media art classes so I took, what was at first a temporary role, as a teacher on special assignment to support colleagues with technology. Teachers today now use an average of 50 tools, with students using around 45, and the average district using about 2,500 tools. My background in media and as someone who enjoyed playing with new technologies made me a commodity and I was excited about collaborating with teachers in different departments.

Honestly, I recommend this if you ever get the chance—take a role that no one has held before. It is fantastic because you get to help define the role. No one knows what you should do, and it gives you a lot of elasticity. Even though I am a tech person, I absolutely still want to teach students, so I co-

teach at least once a week. It has been a fantastic experience getting into other classrooms, like an English classroom doing a poetry unit or an elementary class learning about local history where I get to add technology, but also secretly add art and creativity. Whatever I am doing, I am bringing art to it, and as a result people still always see me as an art teacher.

One of the nice things about this role is that I get to collaborate regularly and share art all the time with audiences that might not naturally seek it out. When kids come to AP art class, you know they love art, it is an easy audience to work with. You are helping them find themselves, which is really powerful and rewarding. But when you get to work with students who do not really appreciate art yet, that is when it is really exciting. That is when you help them find a way to understand themselves, to communicate, and to connect with people.

And I feel like as teachers, the most important thing we do is connect. Forget about the curriculum—it is connection. When you have a kid that, 20 years later, stops you on the street or in the grocery store and says thank you, it is not because you taught them anything specific from the curriculum. It is because you connected with them, cared, and they felt heard. It matters and it makes a difference. As art teachers, we naturally do this. We are often the safe haven of every school, and that is a really important thing. In my current role, I get to not only advocate for art and creativity but also for art teachers. Now that I know the superintendents better, I can also show them some of the amazing things that are happening in the arts and why they matter, and they gain greater understanding.

In my new role I realized—once an art teacher, always an art teacher. Whether we are teaching composition with charcoal and paper or digital design in Adobe Express, we are still spreading creativity daily, and we are still showing students that the most important tool they have is their own imagination. I am still constantly taking on new creative ventures, making art, and hoarding creative materials like they are being discontinued.

I started my career teaching art in NYC, then moved to a school out on Long Island in Smithtown. When I began, I walked in and thought it was amazing: seven art teachers in the high school and a full film program with students doing college-level work. Over the next 25 years of teaching there, it started eroding because priorities changed and finances were not always there. We are now down to 1.5 teachers in the high school from seven. That is a terrible thing to witness, and I thought, "This is the wrong way to do a career." You want to start with nothing and then build, so you can leave and feel good about it. This is why advocating for the arts has become more important than ever.

The exciting thing about my role now with technology is that I am looking at things like AI, which is exploding, and I am exploring the creative uses of it—the brainstorming and the different ways you can make art. I know Nettrice Gaskins was a speaker here (NYSATA conference) last year and she is a great example. I had a chance to work with her years ago at Adobe when we first started teaching. She was doing amazing stuff then, and she is still doing it now. She helps show how you can use these tools in creative, interesting ways.

Another example are these Meta Ray Ban glasses I am wearing—they are the future. As a photographer, I love to be able to take photos anywhere at any time without even having to lift a camera. I had a chance to go to Meta headquarters and learn about new developments that are incredible—being able to create virtual worlds that you can explore is astounding. One of the coolest uses of technology that I have ever seen is being able to draw in virtual reality, essentially being inside the drawing as you are making it!

One of the best things about being an art teacher for many years is that you will have students who really succeed in interesting ways. I have had students who found fame and fortune and had gallery shows. I studied at the School of Visual Arts (SVA), and one of my teachers, Marilyn Minter, a fantastic artist and terrific teacher, brought some of my students into her gallery, and they went on to SVA and she helped them get gallery shows. It is amazing to see students succeed in the arts, but it can be even more amazing to see students who end up in the business world but still appreciate art doing watercolor or drawing on the side just because they love it.

The arts are a way to find yourself, to understand yourself, and to connect with other people. I once had the chance to meet one of my favorite writers of all time, Kurt Vonnegut. I was out on the east end of Long Island and Melissa, my partner of 25 years who is here with me tonight, was sitting on the park bench when I stepped out of a shop and she gestured, "Look who's next to me" and it was Kurt Vonnegut himself. Astoundingly, I happened to be reading his book at that very moment, so I ran back to the car to get him to sign it. It was actually a library book, I never returned it, but I did buy the library a new one. He said one of my favorite quotes about art:

"Practice any art—music, singing, dancing, acting, drawing, painting, sculpting, poetry, fiction, essays, reportage—no matter how well or badly, not to get money and fame, but to experience becoming, to find out what's inside you, to make your soul grow."

I think that is what we do as art teachers. We help students' souls grow. Art of any kind is good for you. For example, I was always too insecure to try karaoke, but it turns out, regardless of my skill level I really enjoy it. I began when I traveled to Japan through a special program with the Japan Society, and the 75-year-old grandfather I stayed with brought me to karaoke and decided to sing Whitney Houston. I thought, "If he's putting it all out there and singing Whitney Houston, there's no way I can't sing." It is not about how good or bad you are in the arts. It is not about your skill set. The arts feed your soul and thank you all for sharing that for all of the kids in New York. I think it is very special what art teachers are able to do. There is a reason we are often the favorite teachers in the school.

There is also no end to advocating for art, especially now. The good thing about the world of artificial intelligence and emerging media is that it actually puts a greater emphasis on creativity. You might not realize that right now because we are in the middle of a very strange transition, one that I know will get even stranger in the coming years. Even though AI has passed the Lovelace Test, the task to see if it could create something that looks like a person actually made it, it is really us that brings innovation and creative ideas to AI.

When people invented the photograph, they were afraid of what would happen to painting. I can assure you that painting is doing fine. I just saw the show here tonight, which was terrific, by the way, congratulations to all the artists. AI is just another tool, but it is the quickest-moving tool I have ever seen in my life. What happens even week to week is amazing. But it is a tool, and I think it is our role as creative people to model how to use it in creative, ethical, safe ways, and to help our students find ways to use this to make art and creative things.

I cannot tell you how much I appreciate this honor. It really means quite a bit to me. You know, I lost my dad shortly before I joined the NYSATA board, and while I was on the board, I lost my brother and my mom, so I have had a tough couple of years. As a result, this honor means even more, and I know they are here in spirit.

Thank you so much. I love you all.



2026 NAEA Awards

*YAM 2025
Claire Flanagan
Grand Award*

Tracy Berges

Patti Krakoff

*Marion Quin Dix
Leadership Award*

Thom Knab

Retired Art Educator

Buffalo, NY

*Newsletter Award
Category III*

NYSATA News

Valerie Savage, Editor

Alyssa Marchand, Design &
Layout Editor

These awards will be recognized at the 2026 NAEA National Convention in Chicago, IL



2026

March

March 5-7

March 13

March 21

March 25

April 1

April 25

April 30

May 1

May 1

May 3

May 15-22

May 20

May 29

July 19-25

July 25-31

August 1

Sept. 1

Oct. 22-23

Nov. 20-22

Youth Art Month, YAM (details page 22)

National Art Education Association (NAEA) Convention Chicago, IL

OVA Team Registration Deadline (details page 16)

State Leadership Nomination Deadline for Positions: President-Elect and Treasurer (details on page 20)

Legislative Exhibit Registration Deadline (details page 14)

Region Award Nominations Due to Region Chairs (details page 62)

Region 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 Leadership Nomination Deadline for (details on page 20)

OVA Event in Saratoga Springs

State Award Nominations Due to State Awards Chair (details page 62)

NYSATA Conference Workshop Proposal Deadline

NYSATA News Spring Deadline

Legislative Exhibit

Legislative Exhibit Opening Reception and Ceremony

Student Scholarship Application Deadline (details page 60)

NYSATA Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore (week 1)

NYSATA Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore (week 2)

NYSATA News Fall Deadline

NYSATA Conference Registration Opens

NYSATA-NYSSBA Student Art Exhibit

NYSATA Conference

NYSATA Annual Conference 2026



Awakening Awareness Through Artistic Practice

**NYSATA 78th Annual Conference
November 20-22, 2026
Crowne Plaza (The Desmond), Albany, NY**

Art has the power to unite thought, movement, and inner life—engaging the whole human experience.

This year's conference theme explores the integration of **mind** (critical thinking, perception, imagination), **body** (movement, material engagement, sensory awareness), and **spirit** (meaning, identity, purpose, connection). As classrooms evolve to address student wellness, cultural awareness, and holistic learning, art education remains uniquely positioned to nurture the full self.

Through artistic practice, educators and students alike can cultivate presence, empathy, resilience, and creative agency. This conference will serve as a space for reflection, renewal, and inspiration—honoring both the rigor and the restorative power of art-making.

**INSPIRING KEYNOTE SPEAKERS • COMMERCIAL & COLLEGE EXHIBITORS • OVER 100 WORKSHOPS
STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS • FRIDAY AFTER DARK EVENT • HANDS-ON STUDIO WORKSHOPS
NYSATA AWARDS EVENTS • PRESIDENT'S DINNER
MEMBERS' ART EXHIBIT & AUCTION • ARTISANS MARKET • WHOVA CONFERENCE APP • AND MORE!**

Call for Workshop Proposals

NYSATA seeks workshop proposals for the 2026 NYSATA Conference.

We invite art educators to explore teaching and learning as an embodied, mindful, and deeply human practice. Consider a proposal that centers on the interconnected relationship between mind, body, and spirit and the ways artistic practice can foster awareness, wellness, identity, and meaning—for both educators and students.

Proposals may address, but are not limited to:

- Studio practices that integrate mindfulness, body engagement, or personal meaning-making
- Art education approaches that support social-emotional learning and mental wellness
- Culturally responsive, reflective, or identity-centered art practices
- Movement, performance, and kinesthetic learning in visual art education
- Neuroscience, cognition, and creative thinking
- Healing, restorative, and trauma-informed art practices
- Sustainability, balance, and self-care for educators through creative practice
- Student-centered strategies that nurture voice, agency, and purpose
- Cross-disciplinary approaches connecting art with wellness, science, or humanities

Workshops may be 50 or 110 minutes and should offer hands-on engagement, practical strategies, and clear classroom or community applications. Proposals are welcome from educators at all levels—preK–12, higher education, museum education, and administration, as well as pre-service teachers and retired educators.

Let us awaken awareness, deepen connection, and honor our creative spirits as we learn together. Together, we will explore how art-making engages cognition, embodiment, emotional intelligence, cultural consciousness, and reflective practice across all learning environments.

Deadline for workshop proposals is May 1, 2026. More information at www.nysata.org/2026-conference.

Legislative Exhibit

The New York State Art Teachers Association Invites Members to Participate in the *36th Annual 2026 Legislative Exhibit*

The NYSATA Legislative Exhibit is the flagship event for Youth Art Month and NYSATA's largest public display of student artwork in a government building. The exhibit is co-sponsored by New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). Founded in 1990, this student art exhibit is held in the Legislative Office Building in Albany, New York, providing an exciting opportunity for students and their families to connect with their legislators.

Legislators from across the state are invited to recognize the artistic accomplishments of their aspiring artist constituents at a reception for students, parents, and teachers held on the 3rd Floor Terrace Level of the Legislative Office Building. Families may pre-arrange a meet-and-greet with the Assemblymember and/or Senator from their local district, which may include a photo session, office tour, and/or written correspondences with their Legislators. The reception concludes with an interactive and inspiring ceremony. With the return of artwork, each student entrant receives a Certificate of Participation from NYSATA and a copy of the Legislative Student Art Exhibit brochure.

The 2026 Legislative Exhibit will have both a virtual and in-person component. During March, a Virtual Edition of the Legislative Exhibit will launch, celebrating Youth Art Month. This digital platform is the preview of what visitors will see at the in-person exhibit in May. For the in-person exhibit, student artwork will go on display in the Legislative Office Building, Terrace Level 3rd Floor, Albany, New York May 15–22, 2026 with an Opening Reception on May 20. It is an honor for students to have their artwork selected to participate in this exhibit. Dignitaries from across the state will be present to compliment students on their artistic achievements.

Eligibility: Open to all students of NYSATA members in grades K–12

Number of Entries: Up to two student artworks, per teacher

Registration Deadline: March 25th <https://www.nysata.org/legislative-exhibit>

Registration fee: \$25

(The registration fee is used to assist with the cost of printing the postcards and programs, the catering of the reception and for the cost of return shipping of student artwork. This is a self-supportive NYSATA Program, therefore charging a registration fee is necessary.)

Shipping 2-D artwork: Directions on shipping student artwork will be emailed to registrants. Student artwork must be received by April 27, 2026.

Exhibit Dates: May 15–22, 2026

Opening Reception and Ceremony: Wednesday, May 20, 2026

YAM Bonus: All entries count towards NYSATA's Youth Art Month Program participation numbers! This year's theme is **The World Needs Art**. More information available at www.nysata.org/yam



**Hempstead
Union Free School District**
Superintendent: Ms. Susan Johnson

- ◆ NYS Senator:
The Honorable Siela Bynoe
- ◆ NYS Assembly Member:
The Honorable Noah Burroughs

Alverta B. Gray Schultz Middle School
Principal: **Lisaura Moreno**
Teacher: **Jordan White**, NYSATA Region 9
Student: **Daniel Flores**, gr. 8, *Electric Apple*



**McQuaid Jesuit High School
Rochester, NY**
Interim President: Mr. Peter Rodgers

- ◆ NYS Senator:
The Honorable Pamela Helming
- ◆ NYS Assembly Member:
The Honorable Stephen Hawley

McQuaid Jesuit
Principal: **John Serafine**
Teacher: **Greg Lendeck**, NYSATA Region Number 2
Student: **Paddy Flaherty**, gr. 9, *Self-Portrait Calavera*

NYSATA - NYSSBA Student Art Exhibition

NYSSBA Chair, Heather Mccutcheon

Each year, the New York State Art Teachers Association (NYSATA) joins forces with the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) to celebrate and showcase the incredible talents of young artists across the state. This collaboration highlights the importance of arts education and provides a platform for students to share their creativity and artistic achievements with a broader audience. The 2026 NYSATA-NYSSBA Student Art Exhibit continues this meaningful tradition, featuring exceptional artwork from K-12 art students throughout New York State. This event not only honors the artistic talents of our students but also emphasizes the vital role of arts in fostering creativity, critical thinking, and self-expression in education.

Participating in the NYSATA-NYSSBA Student Art Exhibition is a fantastic opportunity for students to showcase their artwork and gain visibility with some of the most influential people in a school district: the School Board members. Funding, programming, and budget decisions all go through the Board of Education and its members. Participation provides educators with a way to make sure their Board knows that district students are actively participating in arts showcases. Highlighting student participation in such prominent events can help advocate for increased support and funding for arts programs, demonstrating the value of arts education in developing well-rounded, creative, and confident students. It also encourages greater community engagement and awareness of the importance of arts within the school's overall educational mission.

Last year, over 500 works were displayed both virtually on the NYSATA website and virtually on screens at the NYSSBA Annual Convention. This year, we aim to have even more student artwork on display. Start planning now to participate in 2026! The NYSSBA Annual Convention and Education Expo will be held in Buffalo from October 22-24, 2026. **The NYSATA-NYSSBA Students Art Exhibit will be displayed on Thursday, October 22nd and Friday, October 23rd during expo hours.**

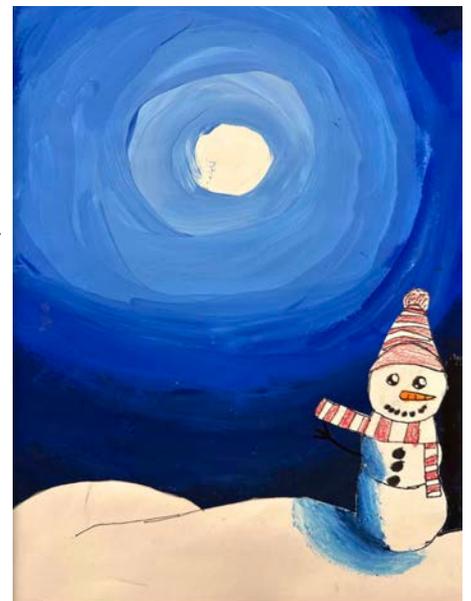
Art Teachers will be submitting artwork for the NYSATA-NYSSBA Student Art Exhibit in the same way as last year, digitally via Google Slides, by the end of June. This streamlined process allows for easy and efficient submission. Teachers are encouraged to select their best pieces and ensure that the images of the artwork are high-resolution, clear, and accurately represent the **students'** work. More

information will be shared about the NYSATA-NYSSBA Student Art Exhibit in the upcoming months. Keep an eye out in your inbox for updates and be sure to check the NYSSBA link on the NYSATA website for additional details and resources as the event approaches. We look forward to seeing the incredible talent of our students showcased this year!

Here are eight compelling reasons to participate in the NYSATA-NYSSBA 2026 Student Art Exhibit:

- Showcase Student Talent: Highlight the creative achievements of their students on a larger platform.
- Networking Opportunities: Connect with other educators, artists, and industry professionals.
- Promote Art Education: Advocate for the importance of arts in the curriculum.
- Personal Recognition: Receive acknowledgment for your dedication and teaching excellence.
- Community Engagement: Foster a sense of community and pride within their school and district.
- Inspire Students: Motivate students by demonstrating real-world opportunities in showcasing art.
- Digital Literacy Promotion: Support the development of digital skills necessary for modern careers.
- Contribute to the Arts Community: Support and participate in statewide arts initiatives and events.

Did you know that NYSSBA selects a student artwork each year to feature on their holiday card for the following year? This year's winning piece has just been chosen: congratulations to artist Cali Chance for their artwork titled "Snowman at Night." The piece was created under the guidance of art teacher Leighanne Jaronczyk from William L. Buck School in Valley Stream.



Olympics of the Visual Arts

Anne Manzella, OVA Chair

Let the Creative Games Begin...The OVA Torch Is Lit



Sure, the world is watching athletes chase medals this year... but in art rooms across the state, *our* students are training for events that require just as much focus, stamina, and creative courage. The **Olympics of the Visual Arts (OVA)** is where imagination goes for the gold.

The newsletter theme, **Refresh and Grow**, could not be a better fit. NYSATA's OVA event is a place where students stretch beyond their comfort zones, try new mediums, meet like-minded peers, and discover that they belong to a vibrant statewide creative community. For many young artists, this event is the moment they realize, "*There are other kids like me.*" That sense of connection is powerful—and lasting.

Just like the athletic Olympics, this celebration does not happen without dedicated coaches and event volunteers. Now is the time to **register your student teams** and consider **volunteering** to help run the big day. Every helping hand makes a difference. On the OVA page of the NYSATA website you will find the link to

register your district teams and sign up to volunteer. Guideline documents are available to help you navigate the process, and once registered, districts will receive communications to support successful participation in the event.

A few important dates for the 2026 event include:

OVA Event in Saratoga Springs is April 30. Registration Deadline for teams is March 13. Submission of your design entry slide and photography is due April 23. We welcome volunteers who are members and non-members of NYSATA alike, and we are especially excited to partner with professionals from fields related to the design categories. Online orientation will be provided in the weeks preceding the event.

2026 OVA Theme: Natural Connections

This year's event theme relates directly to growth and resilience by drawing inspiration from the extraordinary **Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation** at the American Museum of Natural History. With architecture shaped like a flowing canyon, immersive exhibits revealing hidden ecosystems, and spaces that physically connect across the museum campus, the building is a work of art in itself.

Students are invited to explore the visible and invisible systems that connect life—from cellular structures to geological formations, from scientific observation to imaginative design. Art becomes the bridge between **nature, science, and creativity**. Teams are encouraged to use the inspiring Gilder Center not just as a backdrop, but as a conceptual springboard for their OVA design solutions. Whether drawing the fractal beauty of insect wings, designing flowing structures inspired by erosion, or capturing contrast through light and shadow, **Natural Connections** can guide your vision toward artwork that echoes the living landscape of science, art, and innovation.



2026 Design Challenges

Drawing — *Patterns of Life*

Students will create a drawing that reveals the rhythms and repeating structures found in nature. Inspiration may come from magnified cellular forms, crystalline structures, leaf veins, insect wings, or large-scale patterns like flocking birds or rippling dunes. Artists should think carefully about how line quality, texture, contrast, and composition can suggest motion and balance. Whether abstract or representational, the drawing should feel alive with natural energy and visual flow.

Painting — *Canyon of Light*

This challenge centers on how light transforms environments. Students may depict a real landscape or invent an imagined space where light defines mood and structure. They should explore how color temperature, shadow, atmosphere, and time of day influence emotional tone. The goal is not just to show a place, but to capture a *moment* shaped by changing light.

Illustration — *Moonlight Magic*

Inspired by *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen, students illustrate a quiet winter scene filled with stillness and subtle emotion. This is a storytelling challenge where composition, texture, and value guide the viewer's eye. Artists should focus on mood, spatial depth, and the gentle relationship between figures and environment, creating an original interpretation rather than copying existing artwork.

Sculpture — *Insects Inside*

Sculptors take inspiration from the intricate forms of insects and arthropods. Students might explore exoskeleton textures, segmented forms, wings, or magnified anatomical details. Work can focus on exterior beauty, interior structures, or even imaginative hybrids inspired by real biological systems. Emphasis should be placed on craftsmanship, dimensional thinking, and expressive use of materials to bring these tiny but mighty life forms into bold three-dimensional presence.

Fashion — *Aquatic Threads*

Designers will construct a wearable piece using **paper-based materials** inspired by aquatic environments. Students should study how water moves, how marine life is structured, and how light filters through underwater spaces. Pleating, layering, cutting, folding, and sculpting paper can mimic waves, fins, shells, coral, or flowing plant life. Successful designs will balance structural stability with visual movement, transforming simple paper into garments that feel fluid and alive.

Architecture — *Biomorphic School*

Students design a learning environment inspired by organic natural systems. They might model buildings after canyon curves, honeycomb grids, spiraling shells, branching roots, or river pathways. Considerations should include who uses the space, how people move through it, how light enters, and how form supports function. Designs should demonstrate how architecture can nurture creativity and well-being by reflecting the intelligence and beauty of nature.

Photography — *Shifting Perspective*

Photographers create a pair or series of images that work together to tell a deeper story through contrast. Students might juxtapose scale, motion, light, or viewpoint—such as extreme close-ups versus sweeping landscapes, or stillness versus movement. The goal is to show how perspective shapes meaning and how multiple viewpoints reveal richer narratives.

Design — *Natural Setting*

Designers imagine hosting a nature-inspired gathering and create a detailed tablescape. This includes arrangement of tableware, textiles, and a centerpiece that enhances conversation rather than blocking it. Students should think like both artists and designers, considering color harmony, texture contrast, repetition, and balance. Found natural objects, handmade elements, or artist-inspired motifs can help capture the feeling of a forest floor, ocean tide pool, desert sunset, or seasonal shift. The final design should feel immersive, intentional, and welcoming.

NYSATA's **Olympics of the Visual Arts** is more than an art competition event—it is where young artists grow in confidence, connect with peers, and discover the power of their creative voice. Please join us in supporting young learners with this opportunity. The OVA committee encourages participants to carefully read through the program material. There are some programmatic changes this year that we hope will enhance the experience for everyone. Our Fashion teams will participate in the on-demand design challenge along with all the other team categories, and the program will include a fashion parade for all to enjoy.

It is not too late. Register your elementary, middle, and high school level teams now. Volunteer to support OVA 2026. And let the Creative Games begin!

[Guidelines Document Link](#) - [Information Packet Link](#)



Portfolio Project 2.0



Portfolio Project 2.0 Introduces Prestigious All-State Honors for Outstanding Student Artists

Portfolio Project 2.0 is proud to announce the introduction of All-State Honors, a new recognition celebrating exceptional achievement among Portfolio Project participants. This distinction acknowledges students who demonstrate the highest level of artistic skill, creativity, and dedication through their portfolio submissions.

To be considered for All-State Honors, students participate in the Portfolio Project through the traditional enrollment process and regional adjudication. Upon receiving their final evaluation, any student earning a **perfect score—or within one point of perfection—**will be awarded this elite recognition.

Receiving All-State Honors represents a remarkable accomplishment for emerging artists across the state. In addition to this distinction, honorees will be showcased in a statewide digital All-State Exhibition featured on the NYSATA Portfolio Project webpage, providing an inspiring platform to share their work and celebrate their artistic growth.

This new honor highlights the commitment of art educators and students alike, reinforcing the Portfolio Project's mission to nurture creativity and excellence in visual arts education.

NYSATA Portfolio Project 2.0 Training Classroom

Since 1997, the Portfolio Project has inspired young artists across New York State—helping them grow, reflect, and showcase their creative voices. Now reimagined as Portfolio Project 2.0, this statewide initiative continues its mission to celebrate artistic achievement and authentic learning in the visual arts.

Developed by the New York State Art Teachers Association (NYSATA) in partnership with the New York State Education Department, the program has been updated to align with the 2017 *New York State Learning Standards for the Visual Arts*. Through regional adjudication events, students present their art portfolios in a professional setting—gaining valuable experience, personalized feedback, and recognition for their artistic growth. Portfolios serve as powerful evidence of student understanding, creativity, and achievement, while also providing meaningful insights for families, schools, and communities.

Join a statewide tradition that honors student voice, showcases artistic excellence, and nurtures the next generation of New York artists. Participate in the NYSATA Portfolio Project!

This asynchronous training classroom is designed to introduce its participants to the new Portfolio Project 2.0. Included are two offerings including general knowledge and adjudicator training. Learn the ins and outs of the program, how to get students involved, and implications of how it can be used to drive curriculum. It also trains current and future adjudicators of the project for region judging. Participants will receive 3.0 hours of CTLE credit after completing the general knowledge coursework. And 1.0 hour of CTLE credit after completing the adjudicator coursework.

To access and register for course- enroll through google classroom using code- mjhcn5au or using link <https://classroom.google.com/c/ODA1NjM1MDYwNjk2?cjc=mjhcn5au>

Jennifer Grasso Moise, NYSATA ED&I Committee Co-Chair

Reflecting on Black History Month

February invites us to pause, reflect, and listen more deeply.

As we honored Black History Month, we were reminded that this work is not about a single unit, lesson, or calendar month, it is about how we intentionally build learning spaces all year long. When we reflect on the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., we are reminded that education is not neutral. It shapes how students see themselves, how they understand others, and how they imagine their place in the world.

Dr. King believed that education should develop both critical thinking and character. That belief lives powerfully in the art room. Art is not only about technique or product, it is about inquiry, reflection, and voice. When students create, they are making meaning. When they study artists, they are learning how people respond to the world around them through visual language.

I recently released a Black Artists PowerPoint Slide Deck that can be found on NYSATA ED&I page as a resource for all art educators designed to support this work in meaningful, accessible ways. The deck highlights influential Black artists across history and contemporary practice and is intended to spark discussion, inspire lessons, and support culturally responsive teaching throughout the month and beyond.

When students study artists like Augusta Savage, they learn that art can be an act of resilience, advocacy, and service. Savage was not only a powerful sculptor but also a dedicated educator who believed deeply in access, mentorship, and nurturing young artists. Her story opens conversations about perseverance, representation, and the responsibility artists have to their communities.

Exploring the work of Amy Sherald allows students to see how these conversations continue today. Sherald's portraits challenge traditional narratives of representation and invite viewers to slow down, look closely, and reconsider whose stories are centered in art history. Her work connects naturally to lessons on portraiture, identity, symbolism, and storytelling, encouraging students to think intentionally about how they choose to represent themselves and others.

In practice, this means embedding Black artists and voices intentionally into our curriculum, not only in February, but throughout the year. A portrait lesson becomes an exploration of identity and dignity. A sculpture unit becomes a study of form, purpose, and legacy. A symbolism project becomes a way for students to communicate values, experiences, and hopes through visual choices.

Artmaking gives students space to process complex ideas in developmentally appropriate ways. Through color, line, material, and composition, students learn to express what matters to them. They learn that their voices belong in the classroom and that their stories deserve to be heard.

Honoring Black history cannot be confined to a single month. The work of equity, representation, and meaningful learning must be woven into our curriculum and classroom culture all year long. When students consistently encounter diverse artists, narratives, and perspectives, they begin to understand that history is living, ongoing, and connected to their own lives.

This is not seasonal work, it is foundational work and it matters every day.

Retiree Corner News

The Retiree Committee is happy to share that we are making progress reaching out to the retirement community. Having a presence at this year's NYSATA Conference offered opportunity, conversation, and entertainment.

Those who came to our table enjoyed creating little masterpieces, signing up for opportunities and visiting with the "unofficial" NYSATA pups Reggie, Ruby, and Tulip.

We are pleased to announce a relaunching of Art Explorers. Art Explorers is our intended Zoom community group. Art Explorers will be meeting on the 4th Thursday of every month beginning February 26 at 7pm. Our topic of discussion will be "Making Art in Retirement". Participants are encouraged to bring their sketchbooks, journals, knitting, crocheting, any current art making.

All retirees are welcome to chat with us for an hour.
We also encourage retirees to make art, any kind, and lots of it!

Kathlee Hallam-Bushek
Geraldine Link

2026 NYSATA Elections

NYSATA is made up of [10 Regions](#). Members include preschool through university level art educators, art administrators, museum educators, school administrators, school districts, commercial representatives, friends and benefactors. Elected representatives from the ten regions and five elected state-level officers form the Board of Trustees, which is the decision-making body for NYSATA. Members are encouraged to vote and to consider becoming involved regionally and at the state level. Descriptions of leadership positions can be found at <https://www.nysata.org/election-2026>.

State Elections

This year, state elections are for the President-Elect and Treasurer.
Nominations Due: March 21, 2026
Voting Ends: April 17, 2026
Announcement: May 1, 2026

Region Elections

Elections are held for odd-numbered regions in odd-numbered years, and even-numbered regions in even-numbered years. This year, region elections include Regions 2, 4, 6, 8, 10.
Nominations Due: April 25, 2026
Voting Ends: May 23, 2026
Announcement: June 13, 2026

Questions?
Contact the NYSATA Elections Chair at elections@nysata.org.

Lauren Ramich, Higher Education Chair



Patricia H. Groves Past President Scholarship

The New York State Art Teachers Association BOT is pleased to announce the establishment of a scholarship honoring the life and legacy of Patricia H. Groves, a deeply respected educator, leader, and friend to the art education community across New York State.

Patricia (Pat) Groves of North Chili, New York, devoted her career to advancing art education and supporting those who teach it. She served NYSATA with distinction as President for two years, Conference Coordinator, Layout and Design Editor for *NYSATA News*, and Promotions Chair. Pat completed her undergraduate studies in art education at Buffalo State College. She was an art teacher and department chair for 32 years in the Brockport Central School District and also taught in the Genesee Valley BOCES, Alexander Central School District, and Elba Central School District.

In addition to her work in K–12 education, Pat was deeply committed to the preparation of future art educators. She served as an adjunct professor and student teaching supervisor in art education programs—one year at Rochester Institute of Technology and nine years at Nazareth University, where she also earned her master’s degree. At Nazareth, she especially enjoyed teaching graduate electives in Visual Bookmaking and Watercolor Painting.

Pat was a mentor, advocate, and trusted guide to countless art teachers, students, and community organizations. She was known for her accessibility, generosity of spirit, and unwavering willingness to support others. Pat held a particular passion for art education students, recognizing their vital role in carrying forward NYSATA’s mission. In recognition of her outstanding leadership and service, she received the Marion Quin Dix Leadership Award from the National Art Education Association (NAEA) in 2016, following nomination by NYSATA educators and leaders.

Above all, Pat was cherished for her kindness, humility, sense of humor, and genuine care for others. She was a joy to work with and a true friend to many.

Pat’s legacy lives on through the Patricia H. Groves Past Presidents’ Scholarship, created to assist a deserving undergraduate or graduate art education student with the cost of New York State Education Department (NYSED) certification exams.

Eligible applicants must be current NYSATA student members, enrolled in a New York State college or university art education program, and be either a graduating senior or a graduate student. Each fall, the NYSATA Board of Trustees will issue a call for applications and select a candidate who demonstrates a strong commitment to teaching art through academic achievement, field experiences, and professional goals. Preference will be given to students actively involved in art education–related activities, organizations, or professional development—values that Pat strongly championed throughout her career.

Additional details will be announced later this spring. Applications will open in Fall 2026.



Youth Art Month



Dear New York State Art Teachers,

We are thrilled to share that the judges have officially completed their review of the 2026 Youth Art Month (YAM) Flag Design Contest—and the results are in!

The judges were truly inspired by the incredible creativity and talent on display. With participation from over 111 teachers and almost double the number of student submissions compared to last year, this contest was a powerful celebration of art education across New York State. Every entry demonstrated outstanding effort, and we are immensely proud of both teachers and students for your dedication and creativity.

Please review the results, presentation here:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1PrF_m4CwliiGGYZdULHSHEZH6NM4hisa4HhvqZ0qggc/edit?usp=sharing

2026 YAM Flag Design Contest Winners



Overall Winner

Adelaide Janiak, Grade 8
Student of Heather Heckel
Carrie Palmer Weber Middle School
Port Washington Union Free School District

Adelaide's winning design, "YAM Tastes Good", will be transformed into the official New York State YAM flag and proudly displayed in Chicago during the NAEA conference in March.

Grade-Level Winners



High School Winner: *Katie Chu*,
Grade 11
Student of Craig Mateyumas
Hicksville High School, Hicksville
Public Schools



Middle School Winner: *Alexandra Coyne*,
Grade 8
Student of Heather Heckel
Carrie Palmer Weber Middle School, Port
Washington UFSD



Elementary School Winner: *Bailey Wang*,
Grade 5
Student of Jeffrey Shanzer
Jackson Elementary School, Jericho
Union Free School District

Regional Recognition: A shout out to all 10 regions!! We had student submissions from every region in NYS!

- Region 9: Most teachers submitting designs
- Region 7: Highest number of student submissions
- Regions 5 & 8: Representation from their region this year!

Thank You and Special Recognition

We are deeply grateful to our diverse panel of judges for their time and expertise, and to our generous sponsors for donating prizes for our student winners:

Winsor & Newton, The Art of Education, Liquitex, Nasco Education, Blick Art Materials, and Wacom.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this contest an unforgettable celebration of student creativity.



New York State Wins the Claire Flanagan Grand Award!

We are proud to announce that NYSATA's Youth Art Month Program has been awarded the 2025 Claire Flanagan Grand Award by the Council for Art Education!

This marks New York's second time receiving this prestigious honor—made possible by the tremendous participation across the state last March.

We are excited to accept this award in person at the NAEA Conference in Chicago this March. Thank you to every educator who contributed to this incredible achievement!

Now let us keep the momentum going as we plan for Youth Art Month 2026!

Get Involved with Youth Art Month 2026!

Whether you are new to YAM or a seasoned participant, there are many ways to get involved:

New to YAM?

Try a statewide event such as:

- The Legislative Art Exhibit
- YAM Spirit Week

You can also take an event you already do and simply move it to March 2026—no need to reinvent the wheel!

Experienced participants:

- Consider securing a proclamation or endorsement from an elected official
- Volunteer with the YAM Committee—we are always looking for new voices and ideas

Not sure where to start? No worries—we have you covered! Your YAM Team is here to help every step of the way. Check out the complete planning guide at: <https://www.nysata.org/youth-art-month>



Helpful YAM Resources

Visit the NYSATA Website for all Youth Art Month information, including:

- YAM Planning Guide
- NYS Flag Design Guide
- Legislative Exhibit details
- Lesson plans
- YAM Spirit Week ideas
- Proclamation writing tips
- NEW**Illuminate NY Program
- Updated**Bulletin board resources
- NEW**Digital endorsements from community members and businesses

Thank you to all New York State art teachers for the passion, commitment, and encouragement you bring to your students every day. Your work does not go unnoticed—and we could not be prouder of you and the remarkable artists you support.

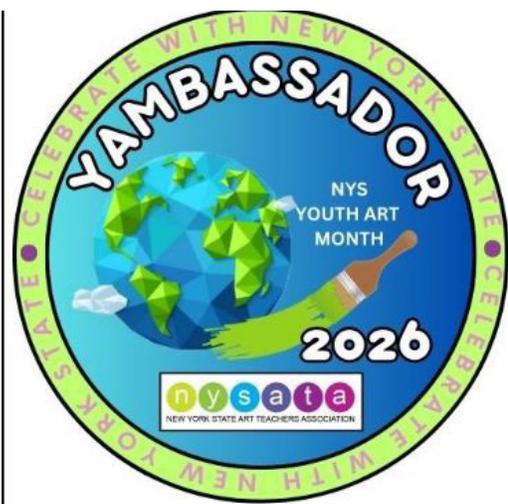
With gratitude and excitement,

The Youth Art Month Team

Co-Chairs, Barbara Imperiale-Sanders and Patti Krakoff

Please find upcoming social media postings in this folder:

https://bufsd-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/person/legan_bufsd_org/IgBcHjWhfEaeSleYz8RywG7EAZN5Q9d32Yft5X6EiuRwNgc?e=mjW8Pg



ILLUMINATE

FOR YOUTH ART MONTH

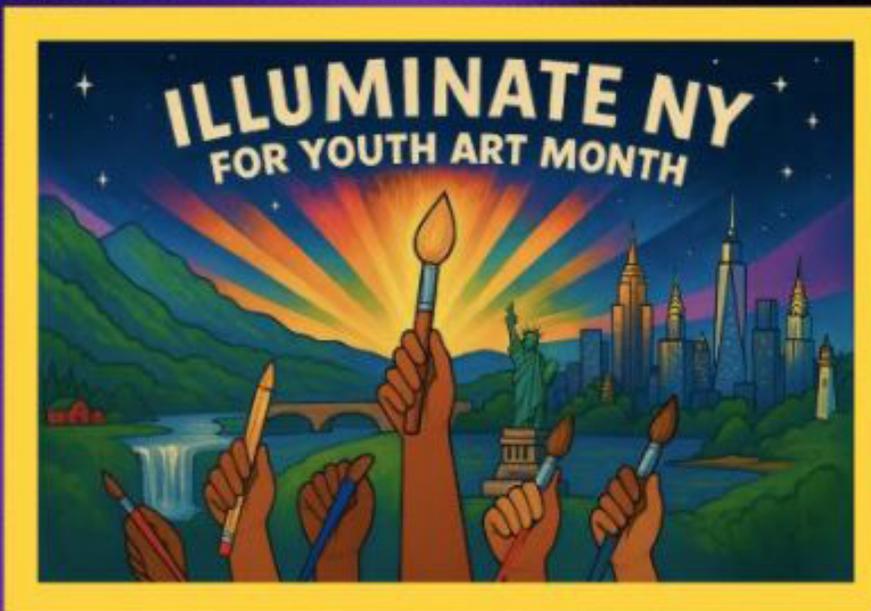
New York

NYSATA Youth Art Month Committee is happy to launch a **NEW** creative initiative, **Illuminate New York For Youth Art Month**. Bringing to the light the power of art to communicate and uplift while recognizing how the natural light of art can shine in everyone lives.

Please join with art educators through out the state of **NEW YORK** and our local communities to **ILLUMINATE** community; buildings such as; art museums, galleries, schools & colleges, in purple and yellow light during **YAM** (March 2026). Please help us to show the world how brightly we can shine!



If you would like a pdf copy of the Illuminate New York mural for YAM, create at this years' NYSATA conference please scan the QR code



Introducing the NYSATA Vision Endorsement: A New Statewide Advocacy Tool

Janis Boremski and Lisa Federici, Vision Co-Chairs

The New York State Art Teachers Association (NYSATA) is pleased to present the VISION Award.

V - Visual Arts

I - Instruction by certified art educators

S - Sequential, standards-based curriculum

I - Inclusivity, equity & accessibility

O - Opportunities

N - Next-generation artists

This award offers two distinctions:

Community of Excellence in Visual Arts (CEVA) Endorsement for school districts

School of Excellence in Visual Arts

(SEVA) Endorsement for schools

This year, NYSATA proudly launched the VISION Endorsement, a new statewide recognition designed to elevate and advocate for strong visual arts programs across New York State. In its inaugural year, the response has been both encouraging and affirming: 67 school districts applied, representing nearly every NYSATA region.

The VISION Endorsement was created as an advocacy-focused tool—one that highlights the vital role of visual arts education within districts while providing tangible language and recognition that can be shared with administrators, school boards, and communities. Rather than ranking programs against one another, the endorsement celebrates districts that demonstrate commitment to access, instructional quality, resources, and alignment with state learning standards.

Participation from across the state underscores a shared belief among art educators that visibility matters. From urban to suburban to rural districts, applicants reflected the diversity of programs, students, and communities served by NYSATA members. The breadth of submissions also revealed a common goal: strengthening the position of visual arts education within the larger educational landscape.

Applications are currently being reviewed through a jurying process led by volunteer art educators from each NYSATA region, ensuring regional representation and peer-based evaluation. This collaborative approach reinforces the endorsement's purpose—not as a top-down award, but as a collective effort to uplift and advocate for quality art education statewide.

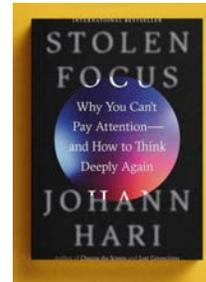
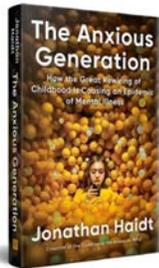
As the VISION Endorsement moves forward, NYSATA hopes it will continue to grow as a meaningful advocacy resource—one that empowers educators to showcase their programs, validate their work, and amplify the importance of visual arts education for all students.

More information about endorsed programs and future opportunities to participate will be shared in upcoming NYSATA communications.

Be on the lookout for NYSATA Communities of Excellence in the Visual Arts and NYSATA Schools of Excellence in the Visual Arts this spring, once the PR Toolkits are released!

Interested in learning more? Visit the VISION Endorsement page <https://www.nysata.org/vision-endorsement>

Book Review



The Anxious Generation

by Jonathan Haidt

I chose to read *The Anxious Generation*, by Jonathan Haidt, because I have heard many others talk about it. My husband, who is a graphic designer, listened to the audiobook, so I felt it was finally time for me to dive into this book myself. This is definitely an interesting read if you are curious about how our students' brains—and some of our brains, especially those in their early 20s (Gen Z)—function. It explores the reasons behind shifts in anxiety and attention, delving into the impact of technology, full internet use, smartphones, and social media on brain development.

The Anxious Generation highlights how these factors influence the way children's and teenagers' brains develop, given that their brains are still in the process of maturing. The book presents a wealth of concrete facts, supported by graphics and images that illustrate specific topics such as the effects of teen suicide, how girls perceive themselves, and how boys respond to social media.

This is a great book to read on your own, but it is even more valuable when read with friends or colleagues. Discussing it with others provides an opportunity to reflect on the points raised and helps you realize you are not alone in your thoughts. It encourages reflection on whether you are a member of Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Millennials (1981-1996), Gen Z (1997-2009), and how your phone and social media use impact you.

I found myself not only considering my students, their anxiety, and patterns of technology addiction, but also reflecting on my own habits, my children's behaviors (a late Gen Z and Generation Alpha), and how all of this affects those around us. As someone who grew up without a cell phone (yes, I am an early Millennial), yet loves technology, I often feel conflicted. We need to become better at using technology for good, learning how technology truly affects us and how we can harness technology positively, such as in a creative manner rather than just as consumers.

Stolen Focus

by Johann Hari

Last year, I attended a conference where the presenter discussed why students often skip school. We spent the entire day exploring the reasons behind the problem, aiming to find solutions. The presenter mentioned that there are two key books for anyone wanting to understand student mindsets in this area. She recommended *The Anxious Generation* and *Stolen Focus*. I had heard about *The Anxious Generation* online and from others, but *Stolen Focus* was new to me. She strongly suggested I read it, so I started with that one. Out of the two books, I found *Stolen Focus*, by author, Johann Hari to be more engaging.

Stolen Focus explores the impact of technology on our world, with a particular focus on how it affects students and other deep-rooted causes of diminished focus across all generations. The author highlights numerous factors, including the myth of multitasking (yikes, I love to do this, or at least I thought I did), sleep deprivation, poor nutrition, and the effects of screens on children's development. The book examines how these issues influence education, workplace culture, and our capacity for meaningful thought. It also offers solutions, practical strategies, and deeper insights into how our ability to focus has changed over the past 10–20 years.

I highly recommend reading *Stolen Focus* if you have already read *The Anxious Generation*. If you have not, it is also a great starting point. Both books delve into what distracts us from our families, school, work, and other important aspects of life. They remind us of the importance of focusing on ourselves and being truly present in the moment.

- Reviews by Heather McCutcheon



The Woman Who Painted the Seasons

by Penny Fields-Schneider

"The Woman Who Painted the Seasons," by Penny Fields-Schneider is written as fiction, with conversations and scenes grounded in historical records and actual accounts. The book came highly recommended by fellow NYSATA member, Cindy Wells, a terrific resource for literature

I am a fan of biographies, and this fictionalized life of Lee Krasner felt like one. It traces her upbringing, training, and the path she carved in the visual arts. I learned so much—I had not known the Women's Art School at Cooper Union or the National Academy of Design existed. Free art schools! I knew that artists were once supported by programs like the Works Progress Administration, and yet women still struggled for recognition. The book left me emotionally conflicted on whether I would want to be an artist in her era.

People are fascinating. I remember being introduced to Jackson Pollock in college and seeing Lee Krasner mentioned only in passing as "his wife." That sidelining stung.

I often wonder what might have happened if Krasner had not met Pollock. If she had promoted her work with the same single-minded energy she later devoted to his career, could she have eclipsed his fame? What stands out is her relentless insistence on being seen as an artist—not merely a "woman artist." She was a fierce advocate for equality in the art world.

Her commitment to constant evolution is inspiring. When she hit creative blocks, she tore apart canvases and reimaged them—a brave, radical act of reinvention. I like to think that in today's world she would be an "Artner": a strong, influential, experimental trailblazer whose voice would shape contemporary conversations about art and gender.

This book offered more than a portrait of Krasner; it renewed my admiration for artists who demand recognition on their own terms and reminded me how vital it is to revisit—and correct—the stories we tell about creative lives.

- Review by Michelle Schroeder

Call for Book Reviews

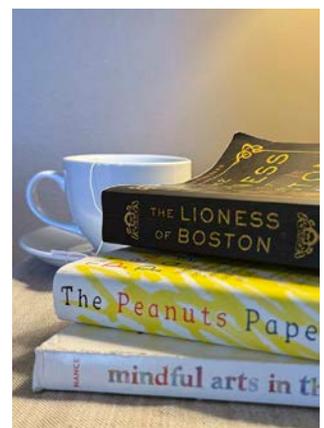
NYSATA News invites members to contribute book reviews for upcoming editions. Whether you read for pleasure, seek inspiration, or aim to enhance your instructional practice, we welcome your reviews of art-themed books. These selections can be fiction or nonfiction, ranging from relaxing, enjoyable reads to challenging, educational works.

Guidelines for Submitting Reviews

When writing your review, begin by explaining why you chose the book. Provide a brief description of the book's theme and share your thoughts on why others might benefit from or enjoy reading your selection.

Submission Details

- Book reviews should be concise and easy to read, staying under 300 words.
- Include a photo of the book in .JPG format, at least 5 x 7 inches.
- Send your review to nysatanews@nysata.org.
- The deadline for submissions is May 3rd, but early submissions are encouraged.
- Selected reviews will be published in the Spring/Summer Edition of the NYSATA News.



Resources Available From the National Art Education Association (NAEA)

NYSATA President and the (President-Elect) or Immediate Past-President represent NYSATA and serve as delegates on the NAEA Delegates Assembly. This assembly makes recommendations as they relate to legislative and policy, to the NAEA Board of Directors. Delegates play an active role in the review of NAEA position statements. In turn, NAEA encourages the sharing of position statements with state association members.

In this issue of the *NYSATA News* we highlight the “NAEA Position Statement on Field Trips or Field-Based Learning”. We encourage you to use position statements as Advocacy Tools. <https://www.arteducators.org/resources/platform-and-position-statements/>



NATIONAL
ART EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

Position Statement on Field Trips or Field-Based Learning [Adopted March 2016; Reviewed and Revised March 2019; April 2024]

NAEA believes visual arts field trips (learning extended beyond the classroom are part of a comprehensive arts education.

- Real-world applications and experiences can include:
 - Internships
 - Artmaking in the community
 - Mentoring
 - Interacting with the artistic community

- Engagement with art in artistic environments can include:
 - museums,
 - galleries,
 - artists' studios,
 - nature centers
 - colleges and universities
 - community art spaces
 - events.

These opportunities enhance students' experiences with and enrich knowledge of art and artifacts beyond what can be taught in a classroom. Through the sensory and kinesthetic learning that takes place in artistic environments, students develop a deeper comprehension of the world and the intricate intersections of art with diverse academic subjects through practical applications

Field trips are a vital part of the learning process. The nature of these experiences nurtures a series of skills and capacities for learning among interrelated cognitive, affective, social-emotional, and academic domains.

NAEA supports field trips embedded within the curriculum. These experiences should be provided for all learners regardless of socio-economic status, academic level, behavioral development, artistic ability, physical or cognitive abilities, or geographic factors.

This Position Statement was formerly titled: Position Statement on Field Trips/Field Based Learning. [Adopted March 2015; Reviewed and Revised March 2019 when it was also retitled as part of the rewriting.]

Resources

NAEA Museum Division and AAMD (Association of Art Museum Directors) field trips study: <https://www.arteducators.org/research/articles/377-naea-aamd-research-study-impact-of-artmuseum-program-on-k-12-students>

901 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

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

YAM

Spirit Week 2026

March 9-13

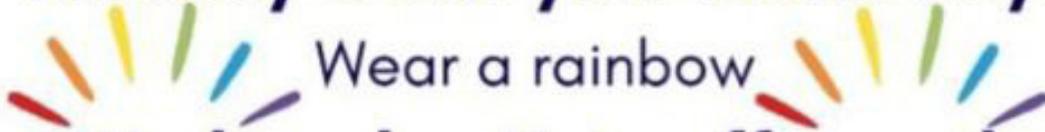
Monday-Wear your world day!



Dress from head to toe in
Blue & Green



Tuesday-Color your world day!



Wear a rainbow

Wednesday-Hats off to art!

Wear your favorite hat to celebrate!

Thursday-Tie Dye your world!



Wear tie dye



Friday-Artist of the world day:



Dress like an artist!



#nysYAM2026

So, You Want to Visit a Museum—Creating Inspirational Student Museum Visits

Lindsay Kranz

Editor's Note: In this article, NYSATA Museum Educator Co-Chair, Lindsay Kranz provides insight into how collaborative efforts between museums and educators play a vital role in nurturing social emotional skills, creativity, artistic growth and an enduring appreciation of art among students.



Two yellow school buses from a local suburb pull up to the entrance of the Buffalo AKG Art Museum. I am sitting underneath a canopy of mirrors and windows in the museum's Town Square, surrounded by my team of Gallery Teachers. This wonderful group of part-timers is made up of educators, artists, and historians. "They are here! They are here!" exclaims Stephanie, whose smile and enthusiasm never fails. In comes a swarm of 2nd graders, engulfed in their big winter coats (sprinkled with Bills gear, of course, this is Buffalo!), and excited giggles. As they take off their winter gear and organize into their groups, I welcome them and review the rules. After 16 years at the museum, this is

one of the very few things that has not changed. We keep our hands to ourselves, use our inside voices, walk through the galleries, and stay together as a group. The adults are welcome to take photos without flash and must not bring in their morning coffee or emotional-support water bottle into the galleries. Once everyone is ready to go, my team and I spread throughout the galleries to begin our tours.

We have been welcoming school groups at the Buffalo AKG since 1922. Our museum is committed to providing [free school tours](#) to over 20K participants yearly and we are fortunate that we have sponsors who help with the

transportation costs. Students enter the museum to engage with the works on display to help build their visual literacy and creative thinking skills. However, they do not know that—they are just here to get out of school and see some cool art. (The #1 question we get asked: “Is the Mona Lisa here?” I always answer: No, she lives across the ocean in Paris, France.)

During my tour with the 2nd graders, we find a dachshund running super-fast, a man “walking” super slow, some weird looking food, and all our favorite colors, shapes, and lines. We transform pipe cleaners into creatures and draw imaginary worlds. While “gallery-safe” materials are quite limited, they allow students to engage beyond discussion and open-ended inquiry. On these types of tours, the students give such insight to what they see and what they think with robust enthusiasm and thoughtfulness. Our hope as museum educators is that this one-hour tour can spark their curiosity and that they encounter something extraordinary on their visit.

I often hear that we are the only field trip that a school can take because of what our school tour program, Art’scool, can offer. However, providing free admission and helping to pay for the bus is not always the magic solution for getting schools to the museum. We understand that bus driver and substitute shortages are a real concern, and sometimes convincing your administration that this is a worthwhile trip proves to be difficult. This is where Museum Educators can help! Personally, I love to brainstorm ways our Fine Art Collection can connect to curriculums and to activities in the classroom, and which NYS Learning Standards can be reached during a museum visit. I always suggest reaching out directly to your local museum educator if you ever need support or brainstorm help. I see myself as a resource for my local WNY Educator community, and I know that many museum educators throughout New York State feel the same way.

The 2nd grade tours are now wrapping up, and we are all making our way back to the Town Square. As I fist bump each student to say goodbye, I hear “thank you”, “that was so fun”, and “can we come back?”. My heart swells, knowing that they had fun. My team and I gather after they leave and take in the little bit of quiet before the next group comes in. We share what went well, what could have gone better, and just how adorable our groups were. One line of thought throughout our discussion was that the students were prepared. They knew the rules, used age-appropriate vocabulary, and asked insightful questions.

This brings me to what teachers can do to help make their visit to the local art museum, gallery, or mural, successful.

- Review the rules prior and let them know what to expect. (We at the AKG are in the process of creating a video for this specific purpose!)
- Explain the “why” for the visit. This is especially helpful with middle and high school students.



- Encourage your students to ask questions and to be curious!
- Encourage them to give rationale or evidence for why they think something about a work of art (Practice by asking, “what do you see that makes you say that?”).
- If you know seeing works with nudes might trigger or shock your students, have that conversation with them ahead of time.
- Show them a couple works that are on display in the classroom before the trip. When students see a work of art “in-person” that they had only seen a reproduction of, they get visibly excited. The gasps, the oohs, the ahhs—it is so fun!

And what do we do on our end?

- We review what was requested prior to the tour—the tour topic, the goals for the visit, and how a tour can connect to your curriculum. Keeping all this in mind, we develop a route and theme that is age appropriate.
- We aim to set up clear expectations and goals for the tour. We tell the students what type of tour they are receiving and review that we will be asking lots of questions.
- Throughout the tour, Gallery Teachers model correct museum behavior, share their own insights when appropriate, and ask lots of questions.
- At the AKG, we often use hands-on activities at every age level since students process and learn in various modalities. These types of activities can help students have a deeper connection to the art on display.
- We aim to acknowledge when students ask questions in a very positive way, which often prompts others to ask more questions, as well.
- Additionally, I encourage my team to use open and welcoming body language. This could look like open arms, getting closer to whomever is speaking, kneeling to eye level of younger students, and/or sit on the floor with students when appropriate.

At the AKG, our goal is to help build social-emotional skills by connecting students with art and to each other. When connections are made between classroom learning and



museum experiences, students can increase their visual literacy, critical thinking, and communication skills. In a letter of support for the program, a high school art teacher shared the following:

"For many students, the hands-on activities and guided tours have provided an emotional outlet and a safe space to reflect, process, and connect with their peers. Through their visits, they gain not only an appreciation for art but also the opportunity to build resilience and confidence. The peaceful environment of the museum offers them a much-needed respite from the pressures they may face at school or at home. It is remarkable to see how this program has fostered a sense of calm and focus among students, helping them navigate their personal challenges with a renewed sense of hope and creativity."

Additionally, scheduling time for students to self-guide after a tour can help round out the experience. In a letter of support for the program, an elementary art teacher shared:

"After our tour, my students spent a lot of time exploring the special exhibition on display, as well as time sketching on the glass bridge. This experience allowed them time to mentally engage and unwind. They gathered their thoughts in their sketchbooks, drawing and writing the names of pieces they liked. This way they could research more at home and school. For many of my students this was their first time in an art museum."

On a different cold, sunny day, I am in our Creative Commons space (aka the "Lego" room), breaking up small Lego sculptures that were left on display. I struck up a conversation with a mom who told me that she just received a "tour" from her son. He had visited a few weeks prior with his school, and he excitedly showed her the route they took and the works they saw. He asked her very open-ended questions—such as what did she see and what did she think about art. The mom was absolutely stunned and was excited to share this anecdote with me. She was beaming with pride, as so was I. I joked that her son "was after my job!!" At the

end of the day, how much kids retain from their one-time visit to the AKG is usually unknown. Our goal is that they leave feeling welcomed and hopefully feel inspired.

Many museums may offer additional opportunities beyond guided tours. This is all dependent on funding, staffing, and the mission and vision of the institution. Additionally, most museum websites offer resources for educators—lesson plans, activity guides, information about their Collection, etc.—often for free and readily available. At the AKG, we offer quarterly on-site educator workshops and offer private workshops and/or tours for schools, districts, and organizations.

Let this be an encouragement to use your local art museum—it might just inspire a future artist! If you are seeking help or additional information on how to take advantage of museum tours in your area or at the AKG feel free to reach out directly to me: Lindsay Kranz, lkranz@buffaloakg.org; (716) 270-8276.

Lindsay A. Kranz, Manager of School & Tour Programs, Buffalo AKG Art Museum & NYSATA Museum Education Co-Chair



Lindsay A. Kranz is the Manager of School & Tour Programs for the Buffalo AKG Art Museum's Learning & Creativity Department. Lindsay has over 20 years of experience working with grades K-12 in the visual arts, focusing on promoting creativity and open-mindedness. She oversees an amazing team of Gallery Teachers and works to bring in an average of 20,000 visitors through the school tour program,

Art'scool. She leads the docent volunteer program, connecting all ages to the museum's world-renowned art collection. Her passion for art education is evident through her programs for educators, including CTLE certified professional development workshops—she is also the Museum Education Co-Chair for NYSATA. Prior to joining museum education, Lindsay was a public-school elementary art educator. When she is not at the museum, you will find her building a self-sustainable farm south of Buffalo with her husband, pets, chickens, rabbits, and goats!

NYSATA News Sketchbook Challenge



Thank you to Corynn English for completing the Winter NYSATA News sketchbook challenge "Winter Comfort". Ink and watercolor were used to complete this inviting sketch. Corynn is a Region 2 member and teaches in the Rochester City Schools.

"Creativity takes courage." —Henri Matisse

Theme: "Creative Courage"

For the spring issue of the *NYSATA News*, we are seeking sketches on the theme, "Creative Courage." Sometimes, courage is demonstrated simply by taking steps to create. In other instances, courage reveals itself in more complex ways—perhaps by taking risks with an unfamiliar medium or by experimenting with materials in innovative ways. Even following through with an idea can be difficult, and sharing your work with others often requires its own kind of bravery. We encourage you to reflect on aspects of creative courage as you consider your submission for this issue.

Submission Details

- Take a photo of the page (send in .JPG format, at least 5 x 7 inches).
- Title the image with your last name (ex. Young.jpg).
- Send your entry to nysatanews@nysata.org.
- The deadline for submissions is May 3, but early submissions are encouraged.

Connecting Educators and Students to the MAG

Adam Koneman

"A visit to a museum can be a life-changing event for a young person, where a passion for the arts and appreciation for their community can be fostered."

Adam Koneman

The Memorial Art Gallery's (MAG) mission statement is "Through art, MAG connects people, inspires fun, and ignites discovery" and the Academic and Community Programs department knows that for many people in Rochester, their first experience with the museum is on a school tour organized by a dedicated teacher. As the Senior Museum Educator for School and Community Partnerships and a former classroom teacher, I also know the challenges teachers continue to face and strive to ensure that taking a field trip to MAG is low on stress when it comes to logistics and high on engagement when it comes to seeing to over 5,000 years of art on a tour.



Thanks to generous community support and the commitment of senior leadership, school tours are free for all public, private, and home school groups and transportation funding is available for qualifying schools. In addition to the very real obstacles that finances and transportation can pose, we are also dedicated to creating high quality materials to support preparation for the visits, including a Social Story developed in partnership with AutismUp and a comic designed by our Creative Workshop registrar featuring his unique characters on their own visit to the museum. These resources (along with chaperone guidelines, school tour request form, and field trip check list!) were also vetted by the dedicated members of our Teacher Advisory Council who provide valuable feedback throughout the year.

Our department has identified three pillars we strive to infuse into all our program offerings:

creativity, curiosity, and connection. On a school tour, we hope students are inspired by a classmate's inventive interpretation of a work of art that may differ from their own, wonder how an artist combined specific materials or techniques to express an idea or emotion, and feel a sense of belonging as they see themselves and their community reflected in the stories told at the museum. These same pillars are also hallmarks of Especially for Educators, our teacher professional development series that is free thanks to generous community support as well. At these workshops, teachers collectively explore specific artworks and exhibitions with the guidance of a museum educator and Artful Thinking Routines, which can then be turn-keyed back in the classroom with their own students or on a future school tour. We also provide an art-making experience led by a Teaching Artist that encourages the same risk-taking and growth mindset we encourage in students. In addition to the community building and networking that is inherent in every workshop, we also think we have some tasty snacks to round out the experience!

A visit to a museum can be a life-changing event for a young person, where a passion for the arts and appreciation for their community can be fostered. At



MAG, we take our role in this process seriously and have made it a priority to partner with schools and teachers to ensure the programs we offer are responsive and empower them to continue the important work they do with students, families, and communities. We hope that our museum enriches the way all visitors see themselves and the world around us and that if your first experience with us is on a school tour as a student, that it will not be your last.



Adam Koneman joined The University of Rochester's Memorial Art Gallery in 2022 and currently serves as the Senior Museum Educator for School and Community Partnerships. In his role, he oversees PreK-12 programs for students and teachers and strives to ensure the museum's offerings are aligned with the needs and priorities of the region's local schools. Before transitioning to the world of museum education, he spent 18 years as a classroom teacher and school leader across a variety of school settings and grade levels in Boston, Brooklyn, and Los Angeles. He received his M.Ed. in Moderate Special Needs from UMASS Boston and his B.A. in Philosophy and Human Development from Boston College.



TEACHING ART IS AN ART IN ITSELF

NAZARETH UNIVERSITY
4245 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14618 • admissions@naz.edu • 585-389-2860

Teacher > Artist / Artist > Teacher, a Symposium

Melissa Birnbaum, Karen Rosner, Kendra Waldan Brown, and Louise Butler—Region 8 Chair Committee

Editors Note:

A focus on balance—making time for personal artistic practices—while managing the demands of the classroom—was full and center during the Region 8's Inaugural Winter Symposium.



NYSATA Members begin to gather in MoMA's Bartos Theater

On January 10, 2026, a very rainy Saturday, over 75 visual art teachers, student volunteers, workshop leaders, and Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) education staff came together for Region 8's Inaugural Winter Symposium. After hosting gallery crawls, meet-ups, and smaller workshops over the last few years and connecting with art educators at events throughout the city, we realized there was an enormous need to spend more time together to nourish and grow professionally in a non-evaluative setting. When we reflected on what we most wanted to connect around, balance emerged as a frequent theme. Making time for our own visual arts practice while managing the demands of classroom teaching can be a real struggle. From these conversations, our symposium theme *Teacher > Artist / Artist > Teacher* was born. We wanted to explore this tension and claim it for ourselves.

We approached the educational staff at MoMA, whose Cullman Education Center hosts wonderfully welcoming programming for teachers and is supported by a highly collaborative team eager to bring visual art educators through the museum's doors. All systems were go! Upon sharing our theme, we learned that a major retrospective of Ruth Asawa—the ultimate teacher-artist would be on view during our event. What serendipity! Ruth Asawa embodies

the Teacher > Artist ethos: a mother of six, an elementary school art educator, and an incredibly prolific, groundbreaking artist.

Our day began with a plenary session led by Syd Abady, an accomplished artist and educator who worked with children at MoMA to create a clay scene inspired by Ruth Asawa. This work was featured in the retrospective alongside Asawa's lesson plans and artifacts from her teaching practice. Attendees were inspired by Syd's deep love of art education and her prolific artistic practice, especially as she had recently returned from Chile as a Fulbright Scholar.

Attendees then rotated through three sessions: a guided tour of the Ruth Asawa exhibition and two art-making workshops led by members of the Pratt Institute Art Education faculty who are former NYC visual arts teachers. Katherine Huala reinforced the educator side of the theme as participants explored deconstructed self-portraiture by artists for classroom application. Borinquen Gallo focused on nourishing our own artist practice, guiding workshop participants as they created woven tapestries from sustainable materials inspired by her work.



MoMA Tour Guide Marco Hermosillo takes members through Ruth Asawa: Retrospective while sharing intimate photos of Ruth Asawa's life.

Art National Honor Society students from Brooklyn Amity School supported the flow of the workshops and documented the event, while Region 8 volunteers Lara Tyson, Mustafa Yasar, Curtis Widern, and Linda Smith worked behind the scenes to ensure a smooth day. The NYSATA mission—to advocate for excellence in our profession—was truly coursing through our veins, and we look forward to hosting many more symposiums in the future.



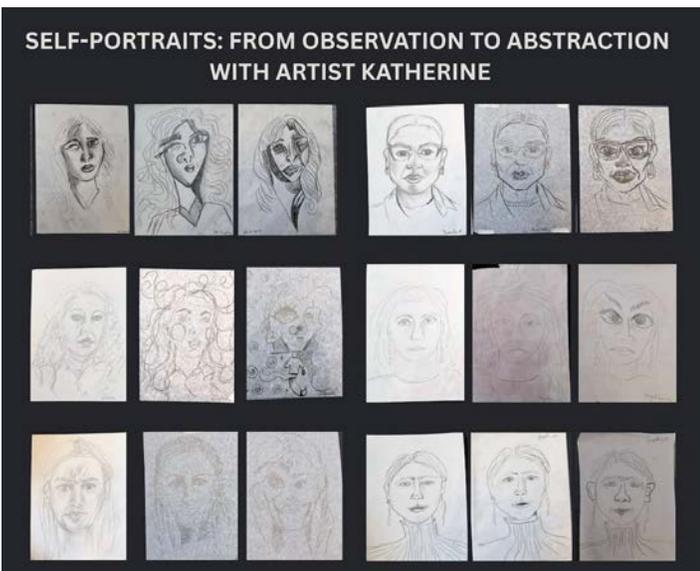
Region 8 Chair and Vice Chair Melissa Birnbaum and Karen Rosner with Region 8 Member Mustafa Yasar from Brooklyn Amity School with his national art honor society students



Shared Artist Wisdom From Borinquen Gallo



Photo Credits: Brooklyn Amity School Volunteers, NYSATA member Janet Gomez



Refresh and Grow Through Community: Connecting Students ... and Ourselves ... to the Art World Beyond the Classroom

Susan Rudy

"Staying actively engaged in my own creative practice keeps my teaching fresh, reflective, and responsive. It reminds me what it feels like to take creative risks, interpret themes, meet deadlines, and put work out into the world, the same experiences my students are navigating."

Connection and belonging matter deeply for both artists and learners. As art educators, we have the opportunity to nurture these experiences not only within our classrooms, but through meaningful relationships with the wider arts community. Teaching photography in the Rochester City School District, I have seen how sustained partnerships with local art organizations allow both my students and me to refresh and grow as artists, educators, and members of a creative community.

For the past seven years, I have entered my photography students into the *Through the Student Lens* exhibition at Image City Photography Gallery. This annual exhibition showcases student work from high schools across Monroe County and surrounding areas and is connected to Rochester's First Friday art scene. Students experience the full process of participating in a professional exhibition, selecting work, preparing digital files, meeting deadlines, and seeing their photographs printed and displayed in a public gallery. These steps become powerful teachable moments that mirror real-world artistic practice and extend learning far beyond a traditional classroom assignment.

For many students, this is their first opportunity to share work with an authentic audience. Seeing their photographs displayed in a professional space validates their ideas and builds confidence in ways that grades alone cannot. Attending the opening reception and viewing their work alongside peers from other schools helps students recognize that they are part of a broader creative community where their voices and perspectives can be celebrated.

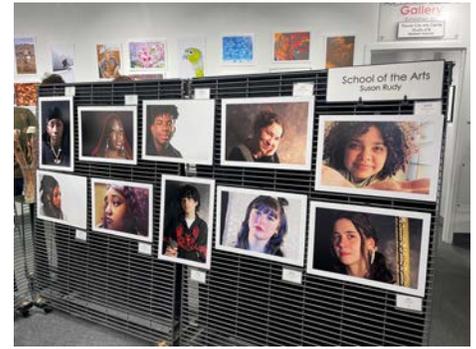
Participating in community exhibitions also allows me to model what it means to be a practicing artist. In recent years, I have submitted my own work to the adjacent teacher gallery for *Through the Student Lens* and regularly participate in Image City's annual *RED* show. I intentionally enter these exhibitions as a teaching artist. Staying actively engaged in my own creative practice keeps my teaching fresh, reflective, and responsive. It reminds me what it feels like to take creative risks, interpret themes, meet deadlines, and put work out into the world, the same experiences my students are navigating.

Participating alongside students in these exhibitions creates meaningful opportunities to talk openly about artistic process and professional practice. Preparing work for public display requires thoughtful decision-making, refinement, and reflection, skills that are essential for artists at any stage. When students see their teacher working through similar expectations, it normalizes the vulnerability and risk-taking that come with creative work. These shared experiences strengthen classroom



conversations around growth, resilience, and creative problem-solving, reinforcing that becoming an artist is an ongoing process rather than a finished outcome.

Entering students into community exhibitions, while continuing to participate myself, creates authentic learning experiences grounded in real-world practice. These opportunities build student confidence, support professional skills, and help young artists envision themselves as contributors to creative communities beyond school. At the same time, they reinvigorate my own identity as an artist-educator. Through partnerships with galleries such as the Image City Photography Gallery, I am reminded that art education is most powerful when it is connected, visible, and rooted in community, and that we all grow most when we continue learning together.



Susan Rudy is a Visual Arts Educator for the Virtual Academy of Rochester, where she teaches AP Art History, Art History, and dual-credit courses in Digital Photography and Studio Art. She has been part of the Virtual Academy since its launch in 2013 and now works full time to grow the art program and support students across the district. With over 20 years of experience teaching Visual Arts in RCSD, including at School of the Arts, Susan is passionate about student-centered arts education and creating authentic learning experiences through exhibitions, community partnerships, and real-world artistic practice.



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Artist Residencies: A Way to Connect, Grow, and Refresh Through Volunteerism

Heather Heckel

*"This is one of the reasons why I teach, to spread interest and knowledge of interdisciplinary subject matter to my students while they learn something new through the creative process."
Heather Heckel*

To benefit our personal well-being they say you need a "third place" that is not your home (your first place), or work (your second place), to promote social interactions and a feeling of belonging to a community. My home is my art-filled apartment in Manhattan with my two dozen house plants, my work is a public middle school art classroom on Long Island, and my third place is on our collectively shared public lands. My third place allows me to connect, grow, and refresh within an extended art community through National Park Service (NPS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Connect

I volunteer as an artist-in-residence through National Park Service (NPS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). These artist residencies traditionally provide housing in exchange for the artist donating site-specific artwork and conducting a public program. I draw and paint in public at these park sites so that I can chat with visitors and demonstrate my artistic vision of our parks' interpretive themes. Additionally, I conduct artist talks and hands-on workshops to further contribute to the NPS mission, which is to "preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations" (National Park Service, 2025), and the BLM mission, which is similarly to "sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations" (Bureau of Land Management, 2025). These connections with park rangers, staff, fellow volunteers, and visitors contribute to my ever-widening extended art community. I consider myself an artistic advocate for our public lands, and these volunteer experiences help to spread the word of their value and importance.

During the school year the park sites are local to me in Manhattan. This past fall I volunteered as an artist-in-residence at Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site which I traveled to via the subway. During breaks from school, I volunteer at park sites all over our country. This past summer I was awarded artist residencies at Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site in Massachusetts, and Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area in Florida.

The connections I have forged through my decade of completing more than two dozen residencies has allowed me to continue my volunteerism momentum. Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site and Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site do not have artist residency programs, but I befriended rangers during previous residencies who work at multiple park sites, and they extended the opportunity to these locations as well. Since housing was not provided in Massachusetts, I asked the historic Hawthorne Hotel in Salem to host me. They have now provided me with a place to stay for two summer residencies, since I was creating local art in the area. Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area, a Bureau of Land Management site, was not currently running their artist residency program, but I approached them with the request and after they saw my almost 400 pieces of previous residency artwork on my website, they made the park housing happen. Thankfully, work begets work. If you would like to volunteer, just ask, you might be pleasantly surprised with the positive response you receive.

Grow

To grow as an artist, I need time and space to work on my self-directed visual storytelling projects. I was trained in illustration and in painting and desire to continue to refine my skills. To grow as an art educator, I need practice and experience creating art myself so I can be better informed for my students. Artist residencies provide both of these opportunities. During my residencies I begin with research by talking to rangers, going on tours, reading park literature, and exploring the park

grounds. Then I spend whole days drawing and painting. I find myself in a flow state where I have no sense of time passing since I am so engrossed in the creative process. I prefer to create a series of artwork rather than a single piece because it better captures the breadth of my site-specific experience. My three most recent residencies show what I learned while spending time on site.

Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site preserves the location and structures of the first incorporated iron works in North America, which operated from 1646 to approximately 1670. For this series I illustrated all eight buildings on the grounds, the Appleton-Taylor-Mansfield House, blast furnace, forge, slitting mill, blacksmith shop, finished goods warehouse, Junior Ranger building, and museum building. I used silver glitter paper to represent the iron ore that was mined from surrounding bogs, Musou black acrylic paint for the sky to mimic soot, and metallic watercolor to create a molten drop shadow representing the immense heat of 3000°F emitted from the blast furnace. For the buildings I used alcohol-based Copic markers on aqua board to create a dry watercolor effect. When an audience views this series, I want them to think of the metal, heat, power, and knowledge required to forge iron more than 100 years before we ourselves were incorporated as a country.



Appleton-Taylor-Mansfield House, Acrylic, watercolor, and marker on board, 9" x 12", 2025



Finished Goods Warehouse, Acrylic, watercolor, and marker on board, 9" x 12", 2025



Junior Ranger Building, Acrylic, watercolor, and marker on board, 9" x 12", 2025



Forge, Acrylic, watercolor, and marker on board, 9" x 12", 2025



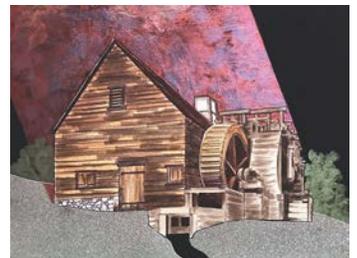
Blacksmith Shop, Acrylic, watercolor, and marker on board, 9" x 12", 2025



Blast Furnace, Acrylic, watercolor, and marker on board, 9" x 12", 2025



Museum, Acrylic, watercolor, and marker on board, 9" x 12", 2025



Slitting Mill, Acrylic, watercolor, and marker on board, 9" x 12", 2025

Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area protects and maintains the 108-foot-tall lighthouse which was erected in 1860, a collection of historic buildings, and land that was used for over 5,000 years by indigenous people. For this series I was impressed by how the structures had been used for different purposes including by the military, and how it is now used for park offices, housing, and a museum. Despite the background of changing seasons, weather conditions, and uses, the lighthouse and its surrounding land and physical structures of the buildings remain a constant. I illustrated all 10 structures on the grounds, the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse, Keeper's Workshop, Naval Married Men's Quarters, Oil House and Staircase, Radio Beacon Building, Seminole Chickee, Three Bay Garage, Tindall House, United States Coast Guard Housing Unit A, and Washroom. I painted and drew on adhesive wallpaper with tropical designs as the backgrounds and chose different colorways to show the changing conditions of the time of day, season, year, and weather.



Naval Married Men's Quarters, Acrylic and marker on wallpaper board, 8" x 40" Quadriptych, 2025



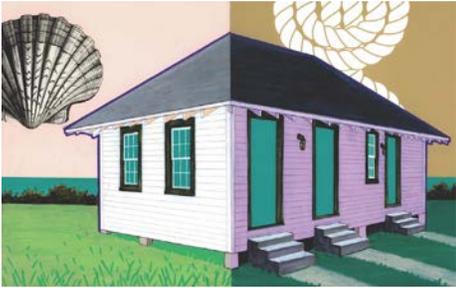
USCG LORAN-C Housing Unit A, Acrylic and marker on wallpaper board, 8" x 30" Triptych, 2025



Tindall House, Acrylic and marker on wallpaper board, 10" x 16" Diptych, 2025



Seminole Chickee, Acrylic and marker on wallpaper board, 10" x 16", Diptych, 2025



Keeper's Workshop, Acrylic and marker on wallpaper board, 10" x 16" Diptych, 2025



Radio Beacon Building, Acrylic and marker on wallpaper board, 10" x 16" Diptych, 2025



Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse, Acrylic and marker on wallpaper board, 24" x 10" Triptych, 2025

Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site tells the story of the Manhattan townhouse where Teddy Roosevelt was born and lived for his first 14 years. For this series I illustrated the exterior of the building and all seven rooms in the home: the dining room, foyer, library, master bedroom, nursery, office, and the parlor. Roosevelt is a Dutch name that means "field for roses." The concept of the rose inspired me to create radially symmetrical designs using silhouettes that I created in Adobe Illustrator of the ornate furnishings found throughout the home, then I filled these tessellations with the patterns found on the flooring and wallpaper of each room. Next, I used markers to illustrate hunting trophies that Teddy taxidermied surrounded by the floral patterns painted on the family's dinnerware. Ultimately, I wanted this series to be viewed as a bouquet, just as a home is assembled out of a collection of rooms.



Dining Room with Lion, marker and digital silhouettes on paper, 12" x 12", 2025



Foyer with Bear, marker and digital silhouettes on paper, 12" x 12", 2025



Library with Mountain Sheep, marker and digital silhouettes on paper, 12" x 12", 2025



Master Bedroom with Deer, marker and digital silhouettes on paper, 12" x 12", 2025

Refresh

To refresh as an art educator, I need time off from teaching to recharge between school years, and getting out of my apartment and normal routine is rejuvenating. Thinking of ways to illustrate history, culture, and abstract concepts allows me to grow, and my style shifts with each residency because of the new content I am investigating. I also need inspiration from traveling to better be able to teach creativity to others through new stimuli. I gain this by introducing myself to new people, places, and things through residencies, and then sharing what I have learned with my professional community of fellow artists and art educators.

I showcase my artwork on my website (HeatherHeckel.com), my creative process on Instagram (@HeatherHeckelArt), and promote NPS and BLM artist residencies at artist talks, conferences, and through writing articles like this one for the NYSATA News. Most recently I presented at my alma mater the Ringling College of Art and Design, and at the Balanced Mind Conference on Long Island. This spring I will be the keynote speaker at the River to Reef Art Festival in Jupiter, FL, where I will be sharing the series of artwork that I created there, and discussing the importance of artist residencies. I am most excited about my upcoming retrospective solo art exhibit which will celebrate our country's semiquincentennial. It is titled *10 Summers and 250 Years: Documenting Our Public Lands Through 30 Artist Residencies*, and will be showcased in historic jail cells at the Gateway National Recreation Area—Sandy Hook Unit on the Jersey Shore. I am reminded of a quote by the environmental historian Alfred Runte, "in no small measure, artists saved [the National Parks] by making them unforgettable. The parks themselves were never enough" (Poster House, 2025).

My travels inspire National Park art lessons for my students, who enjoy seeing the work that I have been creating as part of the lesson introductions. The NPS and BLM missions reference inspiration and enjoyment of current and future generations, which requires education about the environment, history, and culture that these federal organizations preserve and protect. This is one of the reasons why I teach, to spread interest and knowledge of interdisciplinary subject matter to my students while they learn something new through the creative process. I model for them new and various ways of interpreting stories to leave their visual mark. I discuss ways that connection can lead to growth, and I am already looking forward to using my park ranger contacts to secure residencies for this upcoming summer.

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Dr. Heather Heckel, EdD is an artist/art educator living in New York City and teaching on Long Island. Her award-winning artwork has been shown internationally, is in several national permanent collections, and is featured regularly in the Park Slope Reader. She is a lifelong learner who loves to travel, and has been awarded 29 artist residencies through the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management. She is in her 13th year of teaching public school art, and has taught at the college, and middle/high school levels. She earned her BFA in Illustration from the Ringling College of Art and Design, her MAT in Art Education from the School of Visual Arts, her MFA in Painting from the Savannah College of Art and Design, and her EdD in Educational Leadership from the University of the Cumberlands. Her research investigated the relationships between art education, leadership, and creativity. She lives with her two dozen houseplants and loves going to the movies and trying new vegan restaurants.

Weaving a TikTok Craze into Arts Education: A Collaboration with Stitch Buffalo

Michelle Schroeder

Editor's Note: Looking to grow patrons of the arts? In this article, Michelle Schroeder shares her surprising and rewarding experience.



You know how you have a friend who you never see and you say, “we should get together” and that never happens? This was one of those serendipitous moments that turned into so much more than catching up with a friend. Let me start out by telling you about the resource and then I will tell you how they helped yarn literally explode in my classroom!

About Stitch Buffalo

Stitch Buffalo is a dynamic makerspace and arts collective based in Buffalo, New York, dedicated to fostering creativity, innovation, and community engagement. Their mission is to empower refugee and immigrant women through handcrafted textile art by selling their creations, inspire community through education in textile arts, and steward the environment by reusing textile supplies. Not to mention they have a space called “Second Stitch” where they sell gently used and new fibers donations. (I may or may not have an addiction to drastically discounted sewing supplies.) Legit, this place is an artist’s dream workspace and store!

I knew about Second Stitch, but I did not take the time to look at their workshop offerings. Thankfully a friend saw a tufting class and said, “Let’s do it!” To say I was captivated by the materials, tools, and craft of rug tufting is a complete understatement. This hands-on experience opened my eyes to a tactile and expressive art form that engages students in design, texture, and color in a unique way ... and the workspace is an absolute dream to work in!

Anyone who knows me knows that I get excited easily! On the drive home from the workshop, I tried to mastermind how to afford all the supplies to do this project with my students. In reality, I was trying to figure out how to buy it all without my husband seeing the Amazon boxes or the checking account balance. In sincere gratitude, I applied for the Allentown Art Grant, a funding opportunity exclusively available to Buffalo Public Schools art teachers. (The Allentown Art Society is a not-for-profit organization that raises funds from the annual art festival to support student and educator scholarships.) The grant provided the resources needed to bring tufting supplies into my

classroom, enabling students to create their own rugs. It helped that TikTok exploded with tufting clips that are mesmerizing. This project went beyond building skills; it fostered patience, creativity, and pride in making tangible art. I cannot begin to tell you the amount of student involvement, yarn, and excitement that followed this project. My room literally exploded with energy like a beehive. (CAUTION: This project attracts hordes of students who appear at the art door and ask to participate.)

Stitch Buffalo plays a vital role in this ecosystem, connecting educators with innovative art forms, professional expertise, and community artists. I cannot express how powerful it is to see the art of various cultures being showcased and celebrated. The women who work within Stitch Buffalo are a beautiful representation for my students of how connected we are through our crafts, cultures, and contributions.

For visual art educators seeking new inspiration and community connection, exploring partnerships with organizations like Stitch Buffalo can open doors to exciting creative possibilities. **This collaboration is a symbiotic relationship—fostering inspiration in our classrooms and growing patrons of arts organizations.**

So, what did we learn?

- Make those dates with friends.
- Be open to new workshops and opportunities.
- Find ways to bring exciting opportunities to your students.
- Lock your classroom door when large amounts of students discover the TikTok project happening in your room.
- Never stop learning!

Full circle moment—after this project was complete, we were invited by Lindsay Kranz from the AKG to participate in one of their public art initiatives. Our students gained the opportunity to work with a local artist to paint panels of a mural to be installed in Buffalo. Remarkably, that mural happens to be for Stitch Buffalo!



Michelle is proud to say that she is a NYSATA past president, co-chair of the Summer Institute at Sagamore, a NYSATA Conference Committee member, and a NYSATA Region 1 member. She has 26 years of teaching under her belt. She teaches high school media and animation in the Buffalo Public Schools and identifies as a mixed-media printmaker. Michelle hosts Artners—a weekly online gathering for current, retired, and wanna-be art educators. When she is not teaching or

creating, she is likely camping (with at least a queen mattress that is not on the ground and a crockpot) She loves cooking and hosting friends—sometimes family. She lives for swimming like there is no care in the world. And if she is not with her crazy, big, Polish family, she is making art or living life with her amazing Artners.



3D Printing and the Power of Community Connections

Patricia Stork

“A key part of my mission is helping students become active participants in the art community. I encourage them to use local libraries not only as places for research, but as creative spaces where they can access technology, learn new skills, and meet like-minded peers.” Pat Stork



Funky Figures: Students 3D print a base figure and enhance it with paint and model magic to practice sculpting and painting.



Printing on Fabric: This lesson combines 3D printing and textiles—students learn to pause prints and sew materials together for new creations.



Puzzle Pieces: Each student designs a bas-relief puzzle piece themed around school interests, adding related objects or words; all pieces are displayed together.

Art programs thrive when they adapt, drawing energy from innovative technologies and ongoing connections with the broader art world. Over the past few years, introducing 3D printing into my classroom has not only transformed my curriculum but has also deepened my ties with the extended art community—a factor that has profoundly impacted my well-being, my personal art practice, and my approach to teaching. In the evolving landscape of art education, these relationships and experiences are just as vital as the tools we use.

As I first ventured into 3D printing, I quickly realized the importance of connecting with fellow educators, artists, and technologists. My journey began with a MakerBot 3D printer gifted by our IT chair, but the real growth happened when I sought out others who shared my curiosity. I joined multiple Facebook groups like “The 3D Printing Community” and “Women & Girls 3D Printing,” and attended NYSATA workshops, where meaningful collaborations blossomed. These networks have become an invaluable source of encouragement and practical advice, helping me overcome moments of doubt and burnout. Engaging with this extended community is not just about new ideas—it is a wellspring of support that has reinvigorated my passion for teaching and personal artistic exploration.

Visiting local libraries and museums has also played a significant role in shaping my teaching. For instance, when I was struggling to find accessible 3D printing resources, my local library’s makerspace provided both tools and inspiration—even if, in the beginning, it was as simple as making keychains. These visits not only gave me practical skills but also sparked lesson ideas that I adapted for my students. While attending a NYSATA conference workshop, I learned that a fellow art teacher was 3D printing stamps with her students. They were pressing them into clay projects. After that workshop I returned to my classroom with renewed enthusiasm and a concrete plan for integrating 3D printing into my curriculum. These experiences reinforced the value of stepping outside my immediate school environment to gather new perspectives, which, in turn, invigorated my teaching.

In the classroom I started small, the students and I learned how to use Tinkercad, which is a basic platform for creating 3D designs. There we learned the basics of how to put together simple shapes; they then moved toward designing more creative designs. This curiosity is precisely why 3D printing is such a powerful addition. It encourages students to think in three dimensions, pay attention to materials, and make design decisions that have real effects on structure. With 3D printing, students were able to sculpt digitally and manifest their creations physically, and create prototype jewelry, miniatures, masks, or sculptural components. They also combined digital and traditional media—for example, adding hand-painted surfaces to printed forms. This hands-on process builds artistic confidence and broadens students' understanding of what art can be.

A great resource that I found was a book "The Art of Digital Fabrication, STEAM projects for the Makerspace and Art Studio" by Erin E. Riley. This book is filled with some great ideas for projects that use not only 3D printing, but also laser cutting and engraving. It has become a great resource and has really inspired me to try things that I have always had an interest in, but never really had the knowledge.

I have started using 3D printing in my own artwork. The three pieces that I put into the NYSATA members show at the conference each had pieces that I created with my 3D printer. I am presently working on printing on fabric and cannot wait to have students try digital printed textiles.

A key part of my mission is helping students become active participants in the art community. I encourage them to use local libraries not only as places for research, but as creative spaces where they can access technology, learn new skills, and meet like-minded peers. By guiding students to attend workshops, join art club meetings, and even display their work in community venues, I aim to help them build networks that will support their growth beyond high school. These efforts, combined with our classroom explorations of 3D printing, give students a toolkit for engaging with art in meaningful, future-focused ways.

Integrating 3D printing into art education is more than just adopting a new medium—it is about forging connections, both technological and human. My own journey has been shaped by persistent learning, the encouragement of peers and mentors, and the inspiration found in libraries, galleries, and museums. By reaching out, collaborating, and embracing new opportunities, we can energize our programs, nurture our students, and prepare them for a world where art and technology walk hand in hand. My advice to fellow educators, be persistent, stay curious, and never underestimate the power of community in shaping both your teaching and your students' futures.



Earrings/Jewelry: Students design and 3D print jewelry, which can also be used for fundraising.

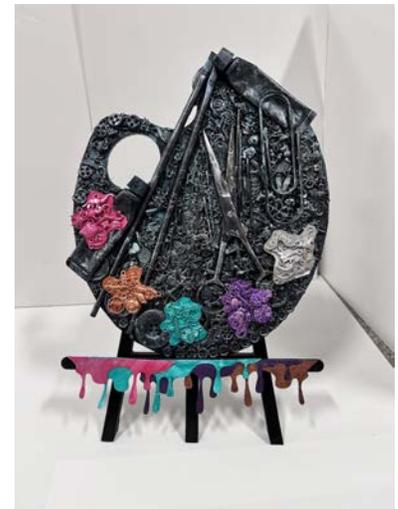


Image above and below are personal artwork that I entered into the Members Show at NYSATA conference. All have some sort of 3D printing incorporated into them.



Patricia Stork has devoted more than 22 years to teaching art, working in a range of K-12 positions. She is currently employed at the Jr/Sr High School in Babylon. Since 2003, Patricia has been an active member of NYSATA. For the past 18 years, she has served as an adjudicator, mentored students, and instructed fellow educators.

Patricia is the treasurer for Region 10 and is actively involved in supporting professional development initiatives.

Patricia is passionate about sculpture, printmaking, and creative crafts. She has a strong interest in digital art, sewing, 3D printing, and laser etching and cutting. Traveling and sharing a love of art with her family—which includes her husband, three children, daughter and son-in-law, and two grandchildren—are among her greatest joys.

Wanderlust—International Travel with Students

Brandy Noody and Mackenzie Sheldon

Editor's Note: Brandy Noody and Mackenzie Sheldon embrace the concept of building student experiences with the art community. In this article they share how they connect students to the art community beyond the borders of our country.



Over spring break of 2025, we had the incredible opportunity to bring a group of 22 high school students on an art focused educational trip to France and Spain. Preparations for this trip started two years prior, when I signed up to lead my first International trip with EF Tours. There were hurdles to overcome to make this dream trip a reality for our students including, requesting Board of Education approval, hosting many parent/traveler informational meetings, and organizing and running fundraisers. As our bags were packed and our departure date arrived, we felt confident that students were going to have a great time on our trip. What we were not prepared for was how profound an experience this tour would end up being for our students and for us.

Some of the highlights of our 11-day “Artists of France & Spain” tour included exploring The Louvre in Paris, visiting Monet’s Garden in Giverny, taking a Van Gogh walking tour in Arles, a guided tour of The Dali Theater Museum in Figueres, an interior tour of Antoni Gaudi’s Sagrada Familia, followed by a journey through Park Guell in Barcelona. In addition to these highlights, we also visited a number of other museums, notable historical sites, and engaged in artmaking activities.

For many of our student travelers, this trip was their first time on an airplane, and most had never left the country. What they knew of the world was quite small, and nestled in our hometown, in the Southwestern corner of New York State. Some had previously taken field trips with us to local art museums or galleries, but the art they saw was frequently out of context. This experience allowed both of us, as educators, and our students to experience art that we had previously viewed in different ways. Being able to physically walk in the same places and see where the creation happened, versus just reading about it in a textbook or discussing it in class, allowed us to understand the connections between the artist and what was created. Walking through Monet’s Garden, standing outside Le Café La Nuit and seeing Van Gogh’s perspective, and walking through the Sagrada Familia and experiencing the environment that Gaudi imagined were all life altering experiences.

“I remember scrolling through social media and seeing a painting I loved that Monet had created of his house. Traveling allowed me to physically stand in the spot that Monet stood in when he created his

painting. It was a surreal experience walking through Monet's home filled with his belongings. The experience was like taking a walk-through history." -Bryleigh Wicks, student

"I didn't really know that much about Dali before going to the Dali Theater Museum. It was like walking into a funhouse of art! The work I experienced there had to be viewed from different angles. As my positioning changed, so did my perspective on the work; entirely new images could be seen. This was a phenomenon you could only experience in person." -Brooklyn Smith, student

The impacts of this trip continue to be felt within our District. We have two upcoming trips planned for the next two years (Italy and Greece in 2027 and Scotland and Ireland in 2028) and multiple repeat travelers coming with us on our next trip. What started as a dream to take students on the trip of a lifetime has turned into an International Travel Program within our District.



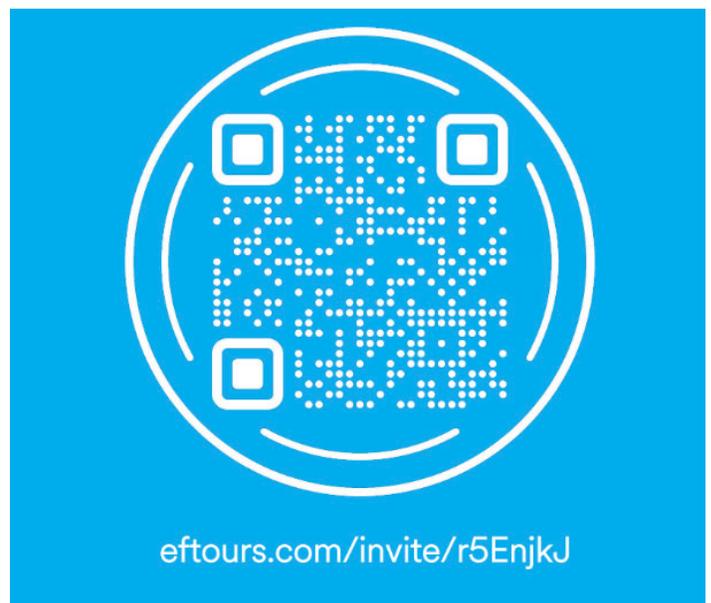
Mackenzie Sheldon is a Region 1 art educator & artist from Fredonia, New York. She has taught middle school art at the Fredonia Central School District for eight years. In addition, she is the Art Department Instructional Leader, Middle School Art Club Advisor and an International Trip Chaperone/Leader. In her free time, she enjoys reading, spending time with her dogs, attending concerts, and whatever creative

obsessions have her focus. Oil pastels, Procreate, and metal music are the current hyper-fixations.



Brandy Noody is a Region 1 art educator & artist from Fredonia, New York. She has taught art at the Fredonia Central School District for 26 years, spending most of her career at the High School level.

Brandy co-advises the Fredonia Chapter of the National Art Honor Society, advises the Thread Heads, Fiber Art Club and is an International Trip Leader/Chaperone. In her free time, Brandy loves to travel, adventure with her family, and create art in her home studio. You can find her on Instagram @roxyroad79.



Reflecting as a Means to Refresh and Grow

Katie Chwazik



“Refresh and grow” fits the forward outlook of late winter and early spring, but I was recently reminded of the value of looking back. Reflecting is not only beneficial for classroom practice, but also for review of my creative accomplishments. A recent experience with this idea brought me a bit of optimism.

My art department hosted a Creative Careers Night for families in our district. Our director, Sara, was able to organize representatives from colleges and local arts organizations as well as creative professionals in a range of fields and careers. I set up a table to share my printmaking. The event had me gathering a few samples of my work—things I had not seen in a few years and that took some digging to find. In the process I stumbled across business cards and old show postcards from exhibitions I had participated in. I found prints and plates from bodies of work I had nearly forgotten—and some of it had aged surprisingly well.

Burnout has been tough in recent years, and I have been feeling guilty for not making art. Seeing the work I had already created and being reminded of all of my past shows and community connections helped ease some of my guilt.

I looked back at my creation of Smallbany Gallery in the early days of Covid. Building and curating the gallery was a lot of work but it still reminds me that ideas do not have to be physically impressive to pack a punch. Smallbany Gallery is/was a miniature gallery and installation space that focused on Capital Region artists. The space is 1/12 scale, meaning one inch looks like one foot when photographed. Shows were physically installed but virtually attended through these photos—a product of Covid’s social distancing. It was a way for artists to experiment and to “work small, think big”.

Finding exhibition postcards brought back my memories of my personal projects and reminded me of exciting artists I had shown alongside. It had me feeling like getting back into creative practice was doable—because I had already done so before. Revisiting some work reminded me of ideas and processes I had not considered in some time and brought up ideas I am excited to explore further, like sketches for a piece combining images of the State Education Building with forests and flames. Burnout has not just come from teaching; current events are too hard to ignore to not make art about them.



NYSATA’s “refresh and grow” prompt probably made most people think of making new work, getting out of the classroom, and reconnecting with the broader art community, but I found reassurance and motivation in a more introspective look back at my past successes. **As art educators, we reflect constantly on our teaching with a constructive lens, but it does not hurt to remind ourselves as artists of what we can—and have—accomplished as a means to move forward renewed.**



Katie Chwazik is a mixed media artist, curator, and art educator living and working in New York’s Capital Region. She is a NYSATA Region 6 member and teaches in the Niskayuna Central School District. Katie studied art and art education at The College of Saint Rose, created Smallbany Gallery in 2020, and strives to teach middle schoolers that anyone can be an artist.



Filling My Cup—with the Extended Art Community

Zach Rothman-Hicks

Editor's Note: The isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic led to the creation of Gabbing with Gays. Author Zach Rothman-Hicks describes how his involvement in this project fulfilled his need for community.

I connect to the extended arts community through *Gabbing with Gays*, an interdisciplinary oral history project, featuring an intergenerational group of LGBTQIA+ people from around the world. *Gabbing with Gays* was initiated during April 2020 while I was a student in the Performance Interactive Media program at Brooklyn College. The project, which consisted of weekly facilitated discussion on Zoom, was a response to the extreme isolation and fear wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is currently a biannual series, with in-person events occurring during Pride Month and on National Coming Out Day. This project has allowed me to fill my metaphorical cup as an artist and connect to both the extended arts community and the LGBTQIA+ community in Queens, NY.



Currently, the process begins by searching for locations of interest to the LGBTQIA+ community. We use the NYC LGBT Sites Project as a starting point, because they have a map of important locations for the LGBTQIA+ community which are located throughout New York City. Next, a team of three artists and myself interview people of different ages about Pride or the process of Coming Out (some people prefer to call this coming into oneself), as well as their connection to the location of interest. To find people we reach out to Queens Community House, where we have interviewed senior citizens, the LGBT Network in Astoria, as well as placing open calls on social media and on various listservs. Afterwards, we listen to the interviews and choose a 1-2-minute beat from each. These beats are edited together

into a 15-20-minute soundwalk. Two of the artists on the team use interactive software to send the soundwalk to radio waves, and on the day of the presentation we walk around the neighborhood visiting the important locations, listening to the soundwalk on transistor radios. As one participant described, "we are walking in the footsteps of our ancestors". After the soundwalk, we have a facilitated discussion about the work as well as providing space for people to share their experiences or those of close community members. Having this space to share creates an important opportunity for people to unpack important parts of their identity in a supportive environment. Facilitating these discussions has taught me about the enormous power of empathetic listening. Reflecting on the challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ people of previous generations who fought for equal rights and respect in hostile environments, such as Daniel Dromm and Ed Sederbaum, inspires me as an artist and teacher to speak up and advocate for those who are more vulnerable than myself.

The project is community-generated and supported by a myriad of organizations in Queens. This network of support allows *Gabbing with Gays* to interview a wide range of people and publicize our events to a diverse audience, because we strive to be inclusive. One of our most important supporters are the Jackson Heights and Astoria/Steinway branches of Queens Public Library. These branches generously donate the space for us to present our work. In addition to the financial importance of having access to free space, presenting our work in a library makes the piece



accessible to all. Not everyone who attends our presentations has fully Come Out or into themselves. They will not arouse suspicion from others by attending our event, since libraries are attended by people of all races, ages, and sexual orientations. Libraries are places of learning, discussion, and community, and this energy is central to the work. The artistic team hopes that by attending the show that people will make connections, learn from each other, and honor our LGBTQIA+ ancestors.

Gabbing with Gays offers a valuable opportunity for me to connect with the extended arts and LGBTQIA+ communities by exploring topics of interest and importance. This project is an important part of reclaiming and celebrating parts of my identity which I am not always comfortable embracing in all aspects of my life. It also provides an opportunity to reclaim histories and stories which may have otherwise been erased or forgotten. I am grateful for everyone who I have been able to work with and who have attended our events. I look forward to expanding this project so it can reach more people. For more information about this project, please follow us on Instagram: @gabbing_with_gays



Zach Rothman-Hicks is an educator and multimedia conceptual artist who creates intergenerational LGBTQIA+ performances and oral history projects. He is the creator and producer of Gabbing with Gays, an interactive, multidisciplinary community arts project which was initiated in 2021 and whose aim is to explore and refine tools which enable profound connections through the creation of a shared liminal space.



NYSATA News Advertising Details

Ad sizes

- Quarter page printed program (free to all exhibitors): 3.5" w x 4.75" h, 150ppi JPG, PNG, or PDF
- Half page: 7.5" w x 4.75" h, 150ppi JPG, PNG, or PDF
- Full page: 7.5" w x 10" h, 150 pixels per inch JPG, PNG, or PDF
- Logo for NYSATA website (sponsors): recommended 285px x 165px JPG or PNG
- Whova app banner (upgrade): recommended 700px x 210px (max 1000px x 1000px) JPG or PNG

Publication/Submission Deadlines (bear in mind, we love early birds!):

- NYSATA News FALL (Digital, Printed Conference Promo) – Aug 15 (published Sept/Oct)
- Conference Printed Program – Oct 15 (published early Nov)
- NYSATA News WINTER (Digital) – Feb 1 (published Feb/Mar)
- NYSATA News SPRING/Summer (Digital) – May 15 (published June)

Pricing

- \$50 Digital issue quarter page
- \$75 Digital issue half page
- \$100 Digital issue full page
- \$75 Fall print issue/conference program quarter page
- \$125 Fall print issue or conference program half page
- \$200 Print issue/conference program full page
- \$100 Logo and link on website (one year)
- \$100 Whova conference app banner ad (non-conference exhibitor)

Publication Details:

Conference program ads and printed issue ads appear in B/W (except inside front cover and inside back cover). All exhibitors registered by August 15 are eligible for a free additional ¼ page ad in the NYSATA News Fall Conference Promo edition (print) which appears in B/W.

Digital issue ads appear in full color if you provide a full color ad. For best results, please provide a color and B/W version of your ad.



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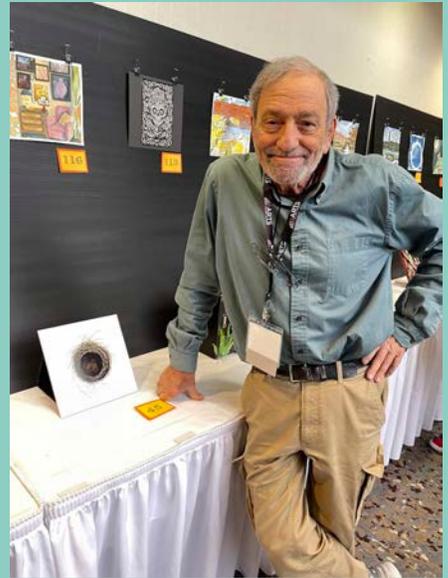


navigating the waves

NYSATA 77th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

November 21-23, 2025 | Binghamton NY











NYSATA Awards

REGIONAL ART EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Region 1: Dan Lynch | Region 6: Debra Anderson |
| Region 2: Amanda Measer | Region 7: Kelley Hedin |
| Region 3: Melissa Kirk | Region 8: Melissa Birnbaum |
| Region 4: Eric Adolf | Region 9: Marissa Sondo |
| Region 5: Kristen Larkin | Region 10: Jennifer Grasso-Moise |

SPECIAL CITATION MEMBER

Martin Merchant, Region 7

SPECIAL CITATION BUSINESS/INSTITUTION AWARD

Grace Meibohm, Meibohm Fine Arts, Region 1

SPECIAL CITATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT/UNIVERSITY

Villa Maria College, Region 1

RAY HENRY AWARD

Cheri Ehrlich, Region 7
Cristina Calvano, Region 10

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD AT THE TIME OF RETIREMENT

Shannon Elliott, Region 6

PAST PRESIDENT

Carol Pinkans, Region 6

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

ZARA B. KIMMEY AWARD \$1000

Alyssa Huang
Syosset High School, Syosset, NY
Planning to attend University of Virginia
Nominating Teacher—Tiffany Holtje

Trinity Ramdin
Valley Stream Central High School
District, Valley Stream, NY
Planning to attend Pratt Institute
Nominating Teacher—Mario Bakalov

BILL MILLIKEN AWARD \$500

Katie Kun
Syosset High School, Syosset, NY
Planning to attend Boston University
Nominating Teacher—Michael Carolan

THE JESSICA BAYER SCHOLARSHIP (2 scholarships at \$500 each)

Athena Wang
Lindenhurst High School,
Lindenhurst, NY
Planning to attend University of Florida
Nominating Teacher—Carmela Bode

AIDA SNOW and ELAINE GOLDMAN AWARDS, \$500 EACH

Mary Kate Gomez
Orchard Park Central Schools,
Orchard Park, NY
Planning to attend State University of
New York at Buffalo
Nominating Teacher—Daniella Perla

Mark Heeralall
Western Suffolk BOCES: Wilson
Technological Center, Northport, NY
Planning to attend Savannah College of
Art and Design
Nominating Teacher—Cheryl Manzella



NYSATA Student Scholarships 2026

If you are a NYSATA member who teaches high school seniors, do not miss out on the opportunity for your students to apply for a scholarship from NYSATA!

The following five scholarships are available to high school seniors who have been accepted to a college or university art program for next year:

The Zara B. Kimmey Scholarship (\$1000)

Zara B. Kimmey was the founder of NYSATA and the first Art Education Associate in the New York State Education Department.

The Bill Milliken Scholarship (\$500)

Bill Milliken was a long-time representative of Binney and Smith and a Vendors' representative on the NYSATA board. He encouraged generous support for art education from the manufacturers and distributors of art materials.

The Elaine Goldman and Aida Snow Scholarships (2 scholarships at \$500 each)

Together, Elaine Goldman and Aida Snow established a generous endowment for NYSATA to help visual art students in New York State pursue their dreams.

The Jessica Bayer Scholarship (2 scholarships at \$500 each)

Jessica Bayer began the NYSATA Portfolio Project in 1997. These scholarships recognize our Portfolio Project participants who received a distinguished level in their recent Portfolio Project with a big thank you to Jessica Bayer's daughters, Tracey and Eve, who are helping to fund this scholarship.

All scholarship applications must be digitally uploaded by May 29, 2026. Only students of NYSATA members are eligible. See www.nysata.org/student-scholarships for details.

Questions? Please contact NYSATA Scholarship Committee Chairs: Christina Coogan and Amanda Harris scholarships@nysata.org.

Highlight on the 2025 Zara B. Kimmey Award recipient Alyssa Huang

High School: Syosset High School, Syosset, NY
Nominating Teacher: Tiffany Holtje
Attending: University of Virginia

The accompanying artwork is part of Alyssa's portfolio along with two quotes submitted as part of the application.

"My work aims to understand my perception of myself, how I wish for others to perceive me and my consequential relationship with my self-worth and desire for validation. I have explored the beauty of having multiple facets to my identity that change as I navigate school, my friendships or just being alone."

"Exploring my inner psyche ridden with insecurities and unanswerable questions pushed me to find alternative and obscure means to visualize my abstract anxieties."



The things we carry
11x15"
Watercolor and oil on paper



Ecstasy
14x11"
Watercolor on paper



Panorama
22x15"
Pencils, charcoal, oil



Glass Study
14x11"
Colored pencil on paper



Feeling sonder at the gas station
24x18"
Acrylic on canvas



Headshot through these noisy thoughts
14x11.75"
Oil on paper



Last Stop
16x10"
Acrylic and oil on paper



The Spirit of Evolution
22x15"
Watercolor, oil, paint tool SAI



Nothing holds the answers to everything
22x15"
Ink, watercolor and oil on paper



Monument Mythos
14x11"
Graphite pencils and oil on paper



Call for Awards Nominations!

NYSATA rewards commitment to excellence in art education among members and supporters of the art education community with a series of awards that are presented annually at the state conference.

Regional Art Educator of the Year

Each of NYSATA's ten regions choose one outstanding art educator to be awarded a plaque at the annual conference. Each region's nominee must be a NYSATA member in good standing. Criteria include outstanding contributions to the field of art education and service to the regional and state organization. Region Art Educator of the Year nominations are due to the Region Chair by April 1st. Region Chairs must forward to the State Award Chair by May 1st.

Outstanding Service Award Retiree

Awarded at the time of retirement for outstanding service to NYSATA. Nominee must be an active or associate member for at least 15 years prior to retirement. Regions may choose to select a Regional awardee to honor within their region. Each Region may submit one candidate to the state awards committee for consideration for the State Outstanding Service Retiree Award, to be recognized at the annual conference. Nominations are due to State Awards Chair, Elisa LaFay, by May 1st.

Special Citations for Member, Non-Member, Institution, or School District Member

Awarded to a member, non-member, institution/corporation, or school district/university that has made a significant contribution to art education. Recipients are presented with a plaque at the annual conference. Nominations are due to State Awards Chair, Elisa LaFay, by May 1st.

Grant Opportunities

The Raymond C. Henry Award: A grant of \$500 is awarded annually to a NYSATA member to aid in the development of a specialized art education project or study that meets the criteria for this award. Qualifying projects must fall under one of the following categories:

Curriculum Development

- Development of instructional curriculum resources that will enhance student learning related to innovation, creativity, and critical thinking skills.
- Innovative curriculum design or development of units of study that enhance student learning through visual art.

Research

- Educational travel that results in the development of activities related to the instructional process, student learning, or student assessment.
- Advocacy or research projects that are intended to advance the field of visual art education.

Interdisciplinary or Multi-Cultural Teaching

- Individual projects that promote art education as an integral part of the curriculum and improve understanding across disciplines or cultures.

All proposals should demonstrate how this project benefits the individual and in turn members of the art education profession. This award may not be granted to a NYSATA Region for any purpose.

About Raymond C. Henry.

A graduate of Pratt Institute in 1929, Raymond C. Henry received certification for a permanent teacher's license from the State College for Teachers and a bachelor's and master's degree in education from the New York University School of Education. He taught for 39 years. His career included teaching at Vincentian High School in Albany, the Schenectady City Schools, and Waterford High School, where he became art supervisor. Other teaching contributions included work at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, art classes for children at the Troy YMCA, and courses for adults at Russell Sage College.

The Raymond C. Henry Award was established at the 35th annual NYSATA conference to honor Mr. Henry for the following achievements: being a founding member of NYSATA, his life-long tenure as NYSATA treasurer and instatement as

Treasurer Emeritus, his life-long interest in art education, and his artistic contributions. A check for the grant will be presented to the awardee at the annual state conference. Notification must be sent to the State Awards Chair upon completion of the grant project. The recipient of this award must share their grant project with the NYSATA membership either through the presentation of a workshop at the annual conference or through an article for the NYSATA News. All application materials for the Ray Henry Award are due to State Awards Chair, Elisa LaFay, by May 1st. More information on awards can be found at: <https://www.nysata.org/awards-and-honors> or email the Committee Chair at awards@nysata.org

Barry Hopkins Art Educator Scholarship for the Summer Institute at Sagamore

The Barry Hopkins Art Educator Scholarship was established to honor an outstanding art educator. Barry Hopkins was a teacher of art in the Catskill Central School District for 37 years. He had a passion for teaching and for sharing his love of the Hudson River School of Art and the Catskill Mountains. He was known for his connection to earth and nature, and he taught his students to honor and celebrate the natural world through their art. An active and contributing NYSATA member for many years, Barry gave endless numbers of workshops, chaired conferences, and contributed to and participated in the NYSATA Summer Institute since its inception. His positive influence in the art world lives on through the many lives he touched and will also continue through this scholarship.

The scholarship provides financial support to enable a NYSATA member art educator who has never attended the NYSATA Summer Institute to attend the Great Camp Sagamore. The scholarship includes registration fees, lodging, instruction, some materials, meals, and certificate of participation.

***Thanks to matching funds from the Great Camp Sagamore, a second scholarship will be awarded to a runner-up. The runner-up will receive a 50% discount on the registration fee for the institute. While the deadline for summer 2026 has closed, we encourage you to keep this opportunity in mind for the summer of 2027.

The NYSATA State Art Educator of the Year Award



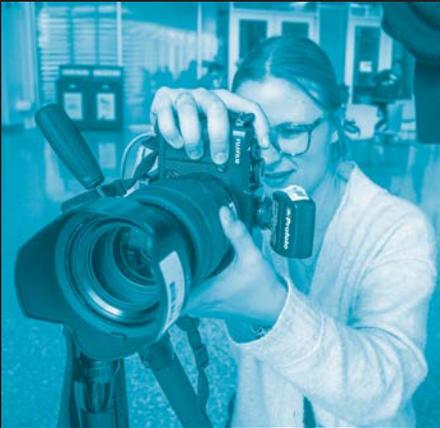
Nominations are open to any individual member who meets the specific criteria for this most prestigious award. Past Region awardees must be nominated separately for this award. Candidates for nomination must be members in good standing who have demonstrated commitment and dedication to the field of art education and to NYSATA over an extended period of years. These individuals must have practiced exemplary teaching, strong advocacy, and have made an impact on those around them,

both in their schools and in the organization. Through their devotion, compassion and helpfulness to students and colleagues, they exemplify what it means to be the New York State Art Educator of the Year. Specific criteria for this esteemed award will be listed on the NYSATA website: <https://www.nysata.org/awards-and-honors>. Nominations for State Art Educator of the Year are due to the Region Chair by April 1st. Region Chairs must forward to the State Award Chair by May 1st. The recipient of this award will be recognized by NAEA at the annual NAEA Convention.

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the NYSATA news

Winner of the 2012,
2013, 2015, 2016, 2017,
2018, 2019, 2021, 2022,
2025, 2026
NAEA State Newsletter
Award!

Call for Contributions

Calling for Contributors to the Spring/Summer 2026 NYSATA News

Creativity—Moving Beyond the Idea
"Creativity takes courage." —Henri Matisse

This issue of the NYSATA News will go online early June 2026

Deadline for content submission is May 3rd.

The art studio/classroom serves as an environment where artists can find encouragement to brainstorm and develop new and imaginative ideas. It acts as a creative space where ideas and imaginations are transformed into tangible artworks. Creativity is shown when this step is taken and the artist transforms an idea into a painting, or other selected media. While this appears simple, generating an idea and bringing the idea to life as a finished piece of artwork can be challenging. Barriers often exist such as a fear of failure, a lack of confidence or a lack of control. Insecurity can cause artists to second guess ideas and even prevent ideas from evolving into finished artwork.

As creatives, we strive to overcome the difficulties. In the classroom, we design engaging lessons and create inviting spaces. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) practices have become part of our work as we help students learn the skills needed to deal with feelings of insecurity or failure. In turn, outside of our work environments, we seek creative spaces for ourselves and turn to fellow artists for encouragement. We know the struggles of creativity are worth the rewards.

For the Spring/Summer Edition of the *NYSATA News* please consider sharing how you approach creativity in the classroom and/or in your personal art practice.

The following questions may be helpful as you consider an approach to the theme:

- How do you help students overcome the myth that you must be born special and talented to be creative? Is it possible to teach creativity? What does this look like?
- How do you assist students in idea generation and through stages for finished artwork?
- How do you help students overcome a lack of confidence and a sense of uncertainty? How have you overcome road-blocks and barriers to creativity in your personal artwork?
- How do you create a climate for creativity, in your classroom or in your personal art setting? Have you experienced an artistic space where everyone is motivated to freely create?
- What does creativity look like in your classroom? What story can you share?
- How does creativity relate to the "NYS Portrait of a Graduate" or workforce needs?

Articles (around 500 words) and features (around 2000 words) should address the theme, *Creativity—Moving Beyond the Idea*, in some manner. There is no specific length required. Early submission is encouraged to allow us to assist and help you. Please submit articles as Word.doc to allow for smooth and clear communication and proofreading. Please label files with your last name and the date, example: smith4-15-26.

You can use prior issues for reference, <https://www.nysata.org/nysata-news>. Images are welcomed and encouraged. Signed permission slips for student artwork/classroom activities with students' faces are required. Check with school policy and/or request a form. Images should be .jpg format / a minimum of 5"x7" at 150 ppi.

We appreciate the time and effort you will put into your work for the newsletter—your article will enrich and inform readers. Submit articles and photos by email to nysatanews@nysata.org. Valerie Savage NYSATA News Editor and Alyssa Marchand Design & Layout Editor

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Christina Coogan

SUPERVISION &
ADMINISTRATION
Tracie Glazer

WEBSITE
Cindy Henry-Wood

YAM
Patti Krakoff
Barbara Imperiale-
Sanders

**CONTRACTED
POSITIONS**
MEMBERSHIP
ACCOUNTS
RECEIVABLE
CONF. REGISTRAR
Terri Konu

FINANCIAL ADVISOR
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
Leslie Midgley

NYSATA Region Counties

Region	Region Name	Counties Included in Each Region
1	Western	Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, Wyoming
2	Finger Lakes	Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Wayne, Seneca, Steuben, Yates
3	Central	Cayuga, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, St. Lawrence
4	Southern	Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, Schuylar, Tioga, Tompkins
5	Adirondack	Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton
6	Capital Eastern	Schoharie, Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington
7	Southeastern	Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester
8	New York City	New York, Bronx, Kings, Queens, Richmond
9	LI Nassau	Nassau
10	LI Suffolk	Suffolk