in Perspective

ARIZONA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

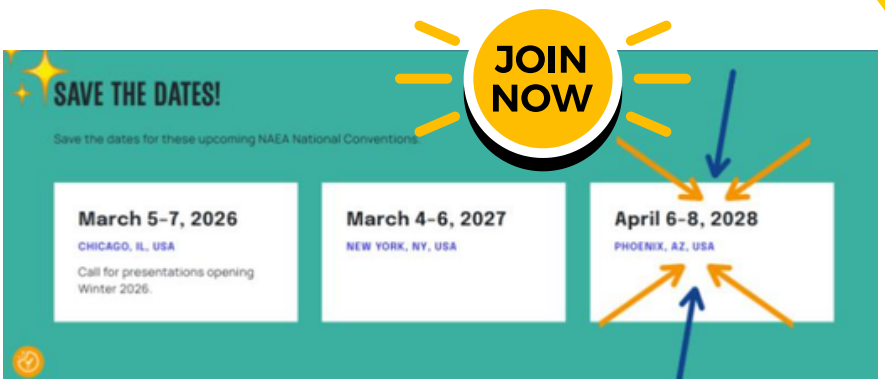
NEWSLETTER

Winter Edition 2026

Arizona Art Education Association

Our Mission

ARIZONA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION: A VIBRANT AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY THAT INSPIRES, SUPPORTS, AND ADVOCATES FOR INNOVATIVE LEARNING IN THE VISUAL ARTS.



FOLLOW US



SAVE the DATE

2026 UNPLUGGED CONFERENCE

UPCOMING EVENTS

VIRTUAL: BOARD & COUNCIL MEETINGS * ZOOM LINK WILL BE SENT OUT *

- 2/19 COUNCIL @ 6PM
- 3/19 COUNCIL @ 6PM
- 4/2 COUNCIL @ 6PM

PHOENIX AREA:

- YAM (STUDENT ART) MUSEUM EXHIBIT MARCH 28TH PRESENTED BY AAEA AT WESTERN SPIRIT SCOTTSDALE

REGIONAL:

- CUTTING IT OUT! WORKSHOP & LUNCH
  - MARCH 1ST
  - CONTACT CANDACE GREENE
  - AAEA.REGIONALEVENTSPD@GMAIL.COM



President's Voice

Dear AAEA Members, Educators, Artists, Professionals and Creators

Welcome Back, AAEA!

Happy New Year, art educators! Thank you to everyone who helped make our Hearts of Gold 50th Anniversary Conference such a memorable celebration of creativity, connection, and five decades of impact in art education. It was inspiring to gather, learn, and honor our shared history together.

We're excited to welcome our new Executive Board and look forward to the leadership and fresh ideas they'll bring in the year ahead. Be sure to watch for upcoming events, professional learning opportunities, and ways to connect with our AAEA community.

Here's to a year full of art, growth, and collaboration!

Jenni Feidler-Aguilar, President

Executive Board



President:
Jenni Feidler-Aguilar
aaea.president@gmail.com



President-Elect: Aaron Abbott
aaea.presidentelect@gmail.com



Acting Past President:
Candace Greene
aaea.pastpresident@gmail.com



Secretary: Ellen Merchant
aaea.secretary@gmail.com



Treasurer:
Dani Jensen
aaea.treasurer@gmail.com

ABOUT US

AAEA Council

Communication Chairs

Newsletter Chair: Jodi Biasiucci
aaea.newsletter@gmail.com
Social Media Chair: Jazlynn Do Le
aaea.socialmediachair@gmail.com
Youth Art Month Chairs: Panthea Begay & Kim Hintze
aaea.yam@gmail.com
Equity Diversity & Inclusion Liaison: Megan Driving Hawk
aaea.edchair@gmail.com
Website Chair: Courtney Darby
aaea.website@gmail.com
Arts Advocay Chair: Beth Maloney
aaea.ArtsAdvocacy@gmail.com

Regional Chairs

Regional Liaison: Candace Greene
aaea.regionaleventspd@gmail.com

Regions:

Central: Michelle Lindsay, Hailey Hatch & Jon Willyerd
aaea.centralregion@gmail.com
North/East: Laura Pontel
aaea.northeastregion@gmail.com
South: **OPEN Position**
West: Jodi Biasiucci
aaea.westregionalchair@gmail.com

Conference Chairs

Conference Co-Chairs- Jenni Feidler-Aguilar
aaea.president@gmail.com
Aaron Abbott
aaea.presidentelect@gmail.com
Awards Chair- Tina Rey
aaea.awards@gmail.com
Vendor Chair- Xochitl Valdez
aaea.vendor@gmail.com
PDSF Chair- Laura Pontel & Kristen Broadbent
aaea.pdsf@gmail.com

Divisional Chairs

Elementary- Deb Adams
aaea.elementarychair@gmail.com
Middle Level- Hannah Nordmeyer
aaea.middlechair@gmail.com
Secondary- **OPEN Position**
Higher Ed- Andrew Tegarden
andrew.tegarden@nau.edu
Preservice- Jasmine Maldonado & Ivy Perrin
jimaldo1@asu.edu
irp46@nau.edu
Retired- **OPEN Position**
Museum- Wade Weber
aaea.museumchair@gmail.com
wweber@westernspirit.org
Department of Education Liaison- Mark Hodge
ArtsEd@azed.gov

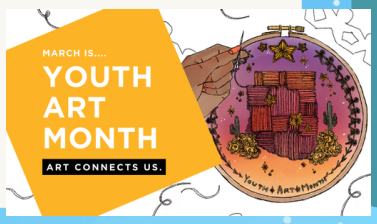
MARCH: YOUTH ARTS MONTH

PRESENTED BY AAEA

WHAT IT IS

Youth Art Month is a celebration of the visual arts in March!
The Council for Art Education (CFAE) administers Youth Art Month offsite link. Youth Art Month encourages support for quality school art programs, and promotes art material safety. The Council for Art Education (CFAE) administers the program at the national level. The program provides a medium for recognizing skills developed through visual arts experiences unlike any other curriculum subjects, including:

- Problem solving
- Creativity
- Observation
- Communication



DATES

FEB 13 — Submission Deadline Forms Close For AAEA YAM @Western Spirit

FEB 15 — Teachers notified of selected artwork for presentation

FEB 20 — Selected Artwork needs to be sent by this date

MAR 28 — YAM Show 2pm @ Western Spirit: Scottsdale Museum of the West (Artwork must be taken home)

WE NEED FLAG ART SUBMISSIONS FOR THIS YEAR!

Please contact our YAM Chairs Kim Hintz & Panthea Begay with any questions. Presentation and display of flag entries will also be featured at this year's 2026 Annual AAEA Conference in Prescott. More information will be included in our Spring Newsletter in April.

2025 YAM FLAG WINNER!



KIM HINTZ & PANTHEA BEGAY

Email:
aaea.yam@gmail.com

THE WORLD NEEDS ART

Winner

Overall Winner



Student: Carolina Rosado
School: Dream City Christian School
Art Teacher: Kim Hintze

The AAEA State Flag contest is an annual opportunity to showcase your students' artwork! Teachers were able to enter 2D or 3D student artwork with the theme "The World Needs Art" to enter into the 2025-26 school year contest. Artwork includes elements that help identify that the flag represents the state of Arizona.

Winners were chosen from each grade band: K-2nd, 3rd-5th, 6th-8th, and 9th-12th.

The winning entry has been turned into a flag and will be hung at the National Conference in the Spring of 2026! See the CFAE Website for more details.



Winner
K-2 Grade Band



Student: Glendon Nelson
School: Highland Park Elem
Art Teacher: Anne Schwaab

Winner
3-5 Grade Band



Student: Midna Castle
School: Miles ELC
Art Teacher: Laura Namerow

Winner

6-8 Grade Band



Student: Megan King
School: Zuni Hills Elementary
Art Teacher: Debra Adams

Winner

9-12 Grade Band



Student: Rama Al Hashimi
School: Desert Vista High School
Art Teacher: Samar Waterworth

MARCH: YOUTH ARTS MONTH





Western Spirit
SCOTTSDALE'S MUSEUM OF THE WEST

Smithsonian
Affiliate

PRESENTED BY AAEA

YOUTH ART MONTH EXHIBIT

Arizona Art Education Association





ARTIST RECEPTION

SATURDAY MARCH 28

2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

WESTERN SPIRIT: SCOTTSDALE'S MUSEUM OF THE WEST

3830 N Marshall Way, Scottsdale, AZ 85251

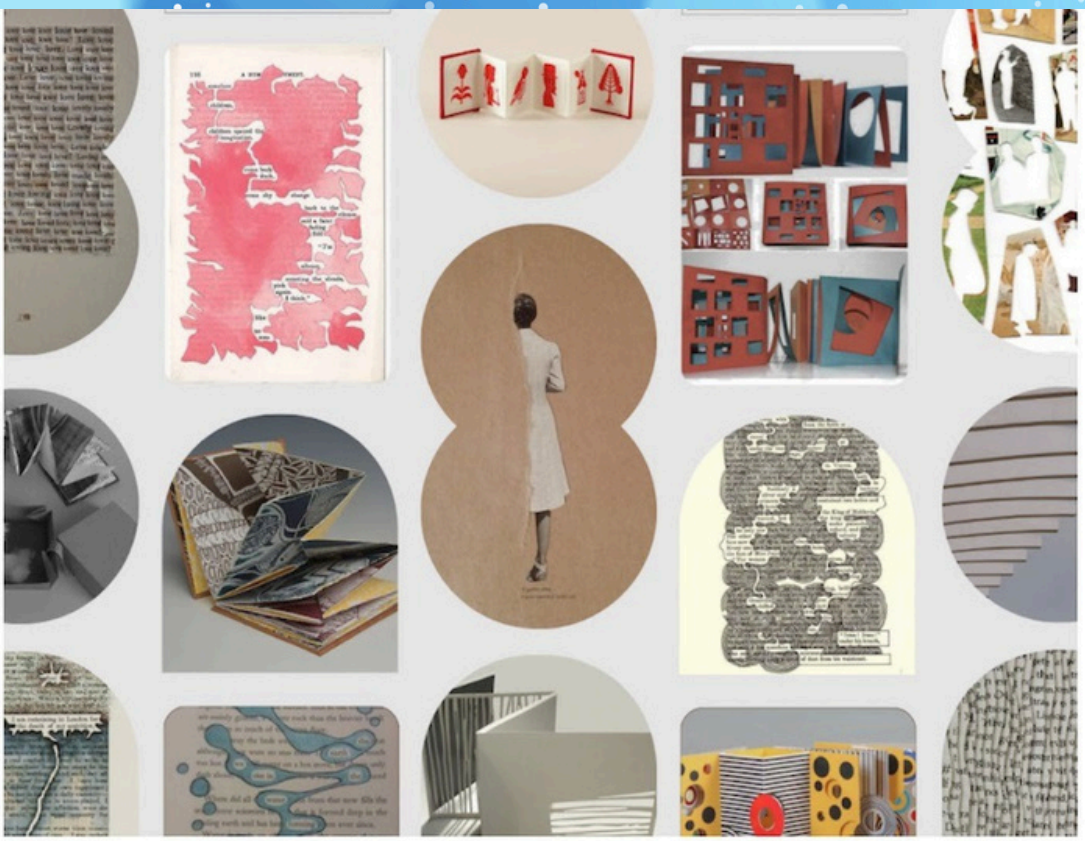
Reserve your FREE entry

ADMIT ONE

FREE ENTRY

ADMIT ONE

REGIONAL WORKSHOP!



Cut It Out – A Collage Workshop

Get ready to cut, snip, and rethink collage! In this hands-on workshop, we'll dive into subtraction—cutting shapes out instead of building them up—and discover how negative space can become the star of the artwork.

We'll look at artists who use cutting and removal in creative ways, then play with prompts and simple techniques using ephemera and found materials. Everything is designed to be easy to adapt to your classrooms.

Participants will leave with a toolbox of classroom-ready exercises, access to a curated Pinterest board, and a list of inspiring artists and photographers to share with students.

NOTE – Time is 10:00am -1:00pm (includes lunchtime). New date – March 1st

pay here

MEMBER NEWS!

INTERESTED IN AN AAEA POSITION??



We have open Chair positions! Do you like to lead, inspire and guide others?? If so,

WE NEED YOU!

CHAIR OPENINGS

- Secondary Division Chair
- Retired Service Chair
- Membership Chair
- Advertising Chair
- contact Ellen Merchant aaea.secretary@gmail.com if interested

WELCOME NEW WINTER MEMBERS!

NOVEMBER

- Jessica Fox
- Mathhew Harrington
- Kerriann Schmoldt
- Molly Brown
- Myra Rivera

DECEMBER

- Akkusib Kee
- Lucia Laughlin
- Anita Oas
- Mabre Lencho-Armstrong

JANUARY

- Lillian Schmal
- Andrew Julo
- Kaitlyn Kingston



REMINDERS

NAEA Membership Link:

- JOIN NOW!



Would you like to be featured in our seasonal newsletter? If so, email: aaea.newsletter@gmail.com with a quick intro, some career highlights and 3 interesting facts about yourself.

QUOTE OF THE SEASON

"Art is not what you see, but what you help others see." — Edgar Degas

2025 Conference Highlights

November 15-18th
Tempe, Arizona

What it is.

The AAEA Conference is a multi-day experience where you attend classes, meals and collaborative events with Art Educators and Professionals from across the State of Arizona! When you register, there is a difference between lectures and workshops. A workshop will be longer and you will be creating a hands-on activity, whereas a lecture is shorter and will be more focused on information such as strategies.

Recap of Events

Where: Hilton, Tempe
Thursday 15: Meet & Greet- Early Check In- Name tags, Workshops & Social Hour
Friday 16: Breakfast, SESSIONS, lunch, YAM, Artist's Market, pictures, dinner, awards presentation & pdsf basket raffle even #'s.
Saturday 17: breakfast & social, final workshops, lunch, pdsf basket raffle odd #'s, board meeting.



PDSF RAFFLE SCHOLARSHIP

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Do you need help with conference fees? We have a PDSF scholarship available, which is funded through the Professional Development Scholarship Fund raffle that we hold every year at the conference!

contact: Laura Pontel
aaea.pdsf@gmail.com

2025 WINNERS

The Arizona Art Education Association

IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

AAEA 2025 AWARD-WINNERS



Arizona Art Educator of the Year

RYAN WILLIAMS

Desert Edge High School -
Agua Fria Union High School District



Elementary Division Outstanding Art Educator

KECIA SWEENEY

Island's Elementary -
Gilbert Public Schools



Middle Division Outstanding Art Educator

ALICIA MARRANO

Emily Gray Junior High -
Tanque Verde Unified School District

2025 WINNERS



Secondary Division Outstanding Art Educator

TARA KRATZNER-BILLS

Central High School -
Phoenix Union High School District



Supervision/Administration Division Outstanding Art Educator

COURTNEY DARBY

Fine Arts Coordinator -
Tempe Elementary School District



Outstanding New Professional Art Educator

TINA REY

Settler's Point Elementary -
Gilbert Public Schools



Outstanding Emeritus Art Educator

PAT BURDETTE

Retired Art Educator -
Art Resource Center Volunteer

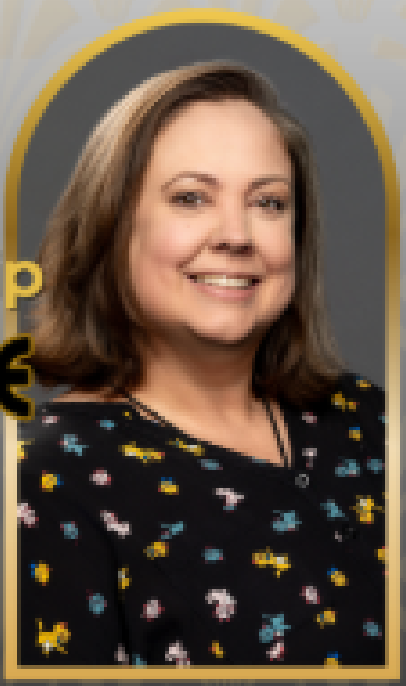
2025 WINNERS



Distinguished Service Within the Profession

BETH MALONEY

Act one -
Statewide Nonprofit



Outstanding Leadership

CANDACE GREENE

Sevilla West Middle School -
Alhambra School District



Agent of Change in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

MEGAN DRIVING HAWK

Arizona ED&I Liaison -
National Art Education Association

2026 NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN!

WHO MAY NOMINATE?

ONLY CURRENT MEMBERS OF AAEA/NAEA ARE ALLOWED TO BE NOMINATED FOR AWARDS. ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS FOR NOMINATION SUBMISSIONS PLEASE CONTACT AAEA.AWARDS@GMAIL.COM

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

AAEA MEMBERS WHO MEET THE ESTABLISHED CRITERIA ARE ELIGIBLE TO BE NOMINATED FOR AWARDS. HOWEVER, MEMBERSHIP IS NOT REQUIRED FOR THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OUTSIDE THE PROFESSION AWARD.

HOW DO I SUBMIT A NOMINATION?

WRITE A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION/NOMINATION THAT EXPRESSES WHY OR HOW AN INDIVIDUAL SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED WITH AN AAEA AWARD (SUBMITTED THROUGH OUR ONLINE FORM). COMPLETE THE ONLINE FORM BEFORE JULY 31ST.

DESCRIPTIONS OF AWARDS



EACH YEAR THE ARIZONA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION RECOGNIZES THOSE WHO HAVE GONE ABOVE AND BEYOND IN THEIR SERVICE TO THE FIELD OF ART EDUCATION. THESE AWARD RECIPIENTS ARE ANNOUNCED AND HONORED AT OUR ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE. AAEA WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO NOMINATE AN INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION FOR THESE PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS IN ORDER FOR THEM TO BE RECOGNIZED AND HONORED.

WINNERS OF AWARDS WILL BE NOTIFIED PRIOR TO THE ANNUAL AAEA CONFERENCE. UPON NOTIFICATION, EACH AWARD RECIPIENT IS ASKED TO ATTEND THE AWARDS BANQUET AT OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO BE HONORED AND RECEIVE HIS OR HER AWARD.

KEYNOTES

ARIZONA DEPT OF EDUCATION

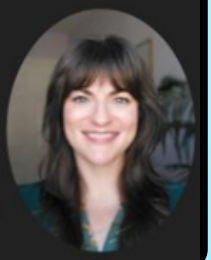
MARK HODGE

Mark Hodge is the Arts Education Director for the Arizona Department of Education, where he passionately advocates for the integration of arts into the educational framework. With 28 years of experience as a successful high school band director, Mark has dedicated his career to inspiring young musicians and fostering a love for the arts in his students. His commitment to excellence in education has been recognized with the Teacher of the Year award on two occasions, showcasing his talent for creating impactful learning experiences. Mark continues to shape the future of arts education in Arizona, ensuring that creativity and expression remain vital components of the school curriculum.



KELLY MONTAÑO

Kelly Montaño is the Title IV-A Arts Education Specialist at the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). As a former educator, instructional coach, and curriculum specialist, Kelly is an enthusiastic advocate of well-rounded learning experiences for every child. She has developed K-12 programming and curriculum for a variety of content areas including fine and performing arts, physical education, social and emotional learning, and gifted education. Kelly is committed to providing relevant and impactful professional development and instructional support for teachers and school leaders to ensure that every student has access to high-quality arts education.



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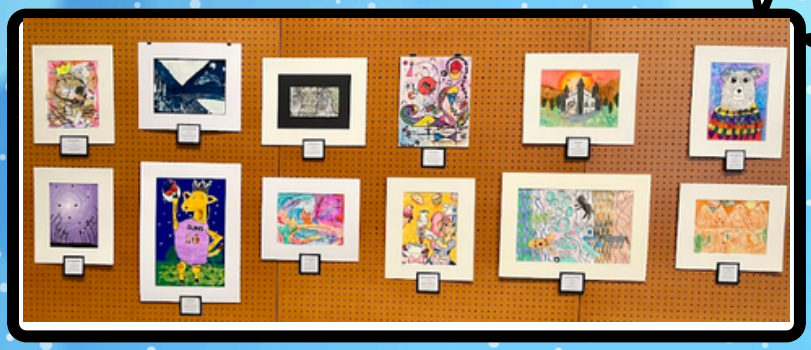
Heard Museum
CANARY
Marjon Ceramics & Arizona School of Fired Arts
Postmates

2025 HEARTS OF GOLD GALLERY







Hearts of Gold- Sessions & Locations

	Thursday #1 Workshop 4:00–5:50	Friday #2 Workshop 1:15–3:00	Friday #3 Lecture 3:30–4:00	Saturday #4 Workshop 9:10–11:00	Saturday #5 Divisional Meetings 11:10–12:00	Saturday #6 Workshop 1:45–3:30	Saturday #7 Workshop 3:45–5:30
Coronado Wet Studio (WC)	Felting: A Storytelling Journey — Michelle Lindsay — ALL LEVELS	Mixed Media Upcycled Journals — Colleen Collins — MIDDLE, SECONDARY	Streamlining Curriculum Adoption and Professional Development — Dagmar Alicea — ALL LEVELS	Punk Scrapping — Andrew Tegarden — MIDDLE, SECONDARY	Middle	Dreamscapes, Crazy Cars, and Sunsations — Elisa Wiedeman — SECONDARY	The Language of Things – An Assemblage Workshop — Delia Adams — ALL LEVELS
Tempe Wet Studio (WC)	Blueprints & Beyond: Exploring Mixed Media Cyanotypes — Aaron Abbott — ALL LEVELS	Make Your 'Magic Mountain' Rock Totem — Yolanda Nussdorfer — MIDDLE, SECONDARY	The Artistry of Advocacy — Dustin Loehr — ALL LEVELS	Unified Art – Working with ESS in Art — Spencer Brown — SECONDARY	X	Portrait of a Soul: Exploring Identity with Symbols — Dana DeLuca — MIDDLE, SECONDARY	Gelli Prints — Amanda McGlothern — ALL LEVELS
Fiesta 3 Dry Studio (DR)	Painterly Subtractive Drawing on Polyester — Jessi Kent — SECONDARY	Construction Paper Masterpieces — Ellen Merchant — MIDDLE	Jewelry Making Fun! — Ellen Merchant — SECONDARY	Activities to Build Their Creative Muscle through Low Risk Failure — Courtney Darby — ALL LEVELS	Elementary	Field Trip to The Art Resource Center — Pat Burdette — ALL LEVELS	Fiber Arts 101 — Tina Rey — ALL LEVELS
Bedrock Wet Studio (WC)	Rockin' Around the Clock! — Tina Rey — ALL LEVELS	Hinged Clay Boxes — Cameron Kahle — SECONDARY	Empowering Understanding of Sustainable Clay Architecture — Mary Stakoski — ALL LEVELS	Tea Bag Art — Travis Waldron — MIDDLE, SECONDARY	Secondary	Smoothed Coil Candle (votive) Insider — Stacy Manko — MIDDLE, SECONDARY	Solar Impressions: A Triptych of Light and Shadow — Dawn Chamberlain — SECONDARY
Exec Bd Rm Dry Studio (DR)	Superhero Perspective — Christa Knox — MIDDLE, SECONDARY	Reimagining the Field Trip Experience with Act One — Emanuel Class — ALL LEVELS	Existential Roundtable — Colleen Collins — ALL LEVELS	Reimagining the Field Trip Experience with Act One — Emanuel Class — ALL LEVELS	Museum/ Other, Admin & Higher Ed	Reimagining the Field Trip Experience with Act One — Emanuel Class — ALL LEVELS	Breakfast at Tiffany's — Kim Hintze — ALL LEVELS







HEARTS OF GOLD!



















HAPPY 50TH AAEA!

















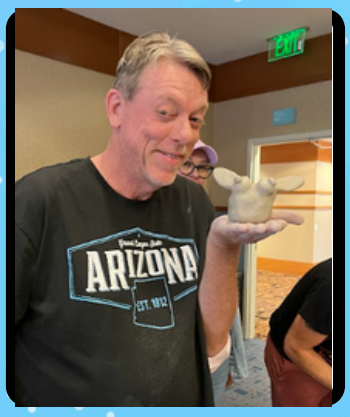


HAPPY 50TH AAEA!



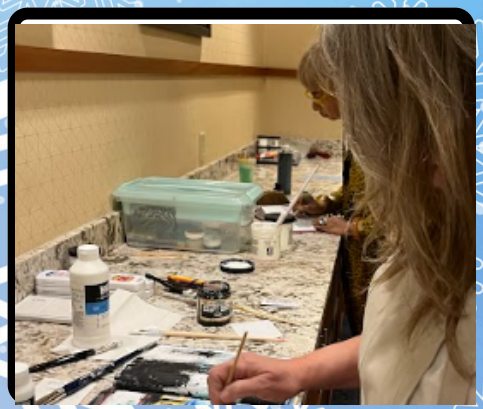










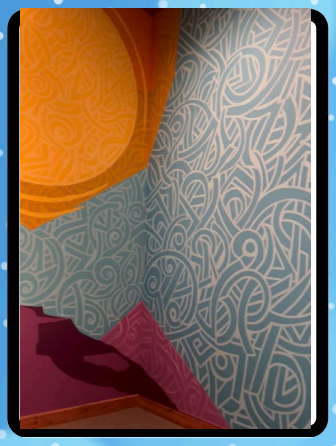


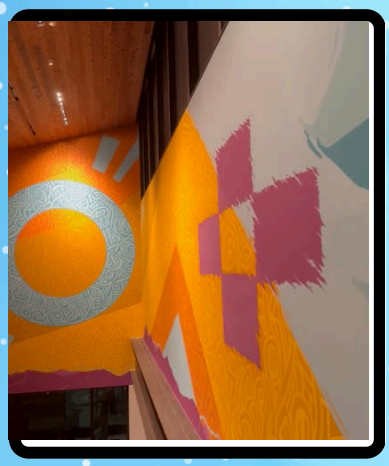




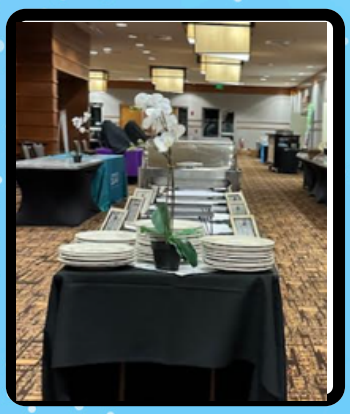
HAPPY 50TH AAEA!

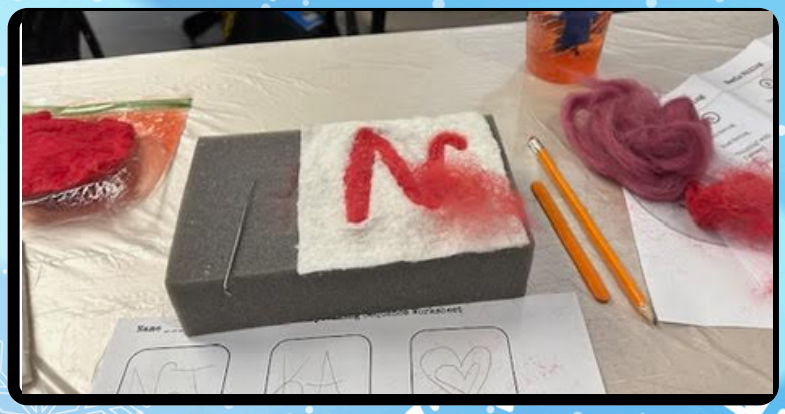




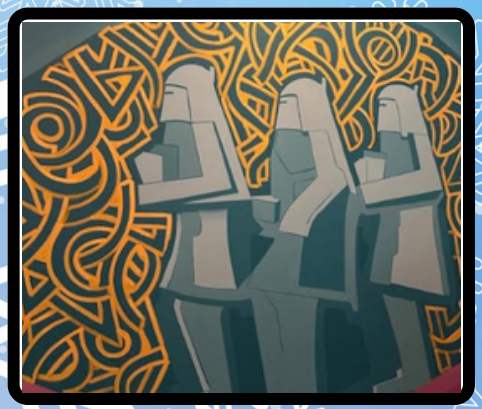




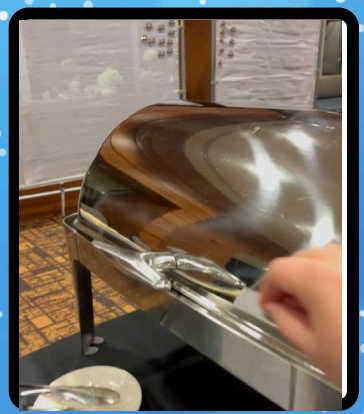












WORKSHOPS!







WORKSHOPS!



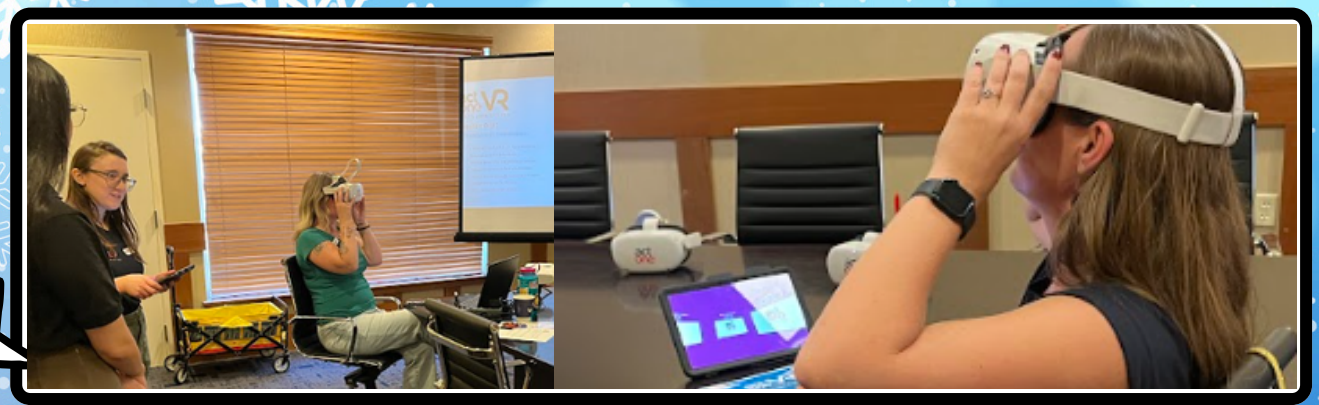




WORKSHOPS!







WORKSHOPS GALORE!



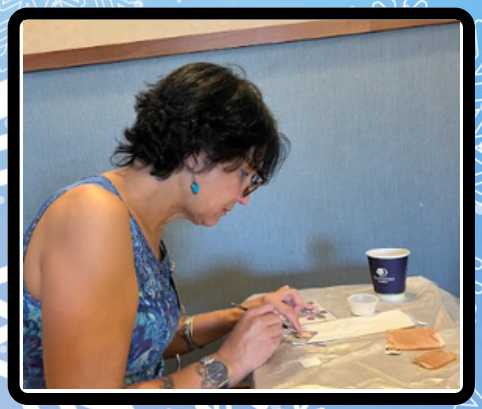












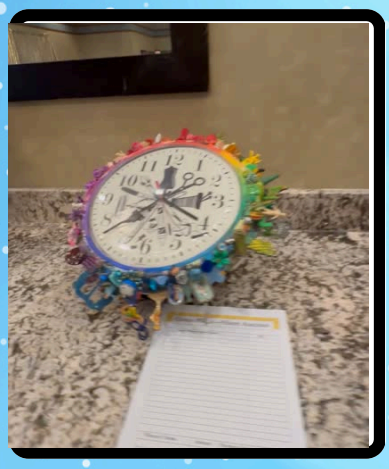




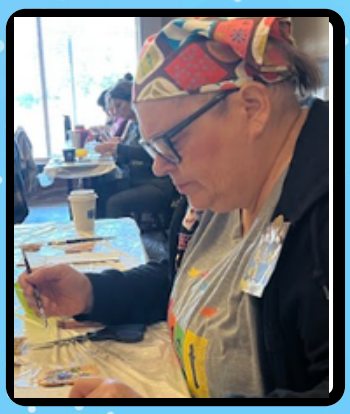
WORKSHOPS GALORE!

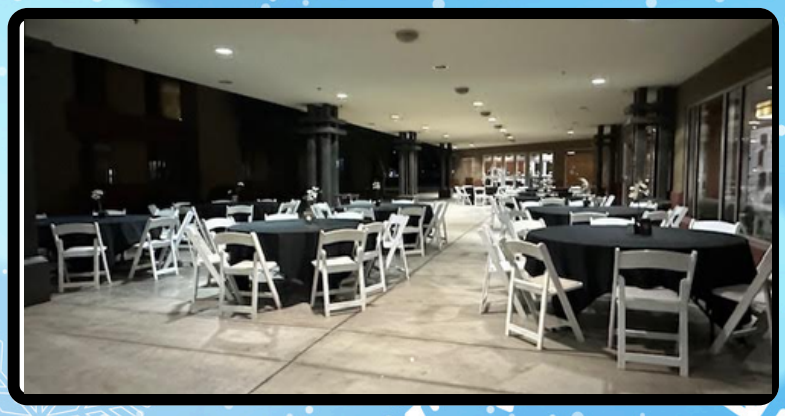




















VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

OCTOBER 16-18

NON-COUNCIL POSITIONS FOR CONFERENCE

SIGN UP NOW!!

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR- OPEN

We ♡ our Volunteers

SHOUT OUT!

Thank you Ellen Merchant, Michelle Lindsey, Hailey Hatch & Jon Willyerd for being the 1st volunteers for our 2026 conference!

SHOW & TELL:

Have an idea for our next conference? email Jenni Feidler-Aguilar at aaea.president@gmail.com & Aaron Abbott at aaea.presedentelect@gmail.com



LOOK @ US!

CONTACT:

Interested in Volunteering? message our Secretary, Ellen Merchant

aaea.secretary@gmail.com

ARIZONA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

ED&I ARIZONA REPRESENTATIVE
Megan Driving Hawk
edichair@gmail.com

WHAT WE ARE

"Since 1985 nearly half of the Poet Laureates have taken on a signature project to increase appreciation for poetry. Inspired by 2020 Poet Laureate, Joy Harjo's Living Nations, Living Worlds signature project, I have decided to collect and compile ED&I resources from art educators across the state of Arizona into a working document. This cited and curated selection of resources will be shared with Arizona Art Education Association members and with the other ED&I Liaisons at the NAEA level."

-Megan Driving Hawk



The Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Hub

Resources for this year's Election Season



For more information about the National ED&I Commission visit the following toolkit:
Getting Started with Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION COMMISSION

Interested in learning more or joining the committee?

Please fill out this interest form to be notified about the upcoming meeting:
ED&I Interest Form

Have Questions?
Contact Megan Driving Hawk
ED&I Arizona Representative
edichair@gmail.com

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Mark Hodge
Title IV-A and Arts Education Director



Kelly Montaño
Title IV-A Arts Education Specialist

2026 YOUTH ARTS MONTH FESTIVAL

ADE YAM Fest
at the Capitol

Tuesday, Mar. 31, 2026
Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza

Student Art Gallery (gr. 7-12)
Max 5 Submissions per Teacher
Due Feb. 5, 2026

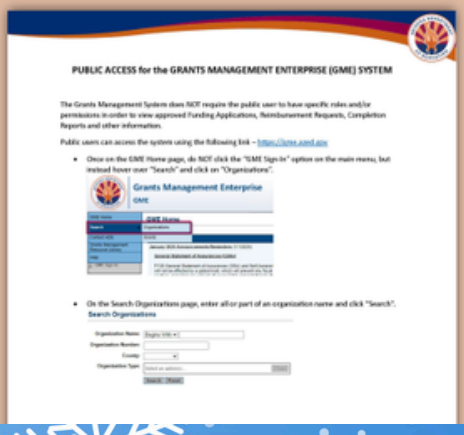
www.azed.gov/titleiv-a/arizona-youth-arts-month-festival

Title IV-A Information in GME

gme.azed.gov

Public Information Available

- LEA/District Planning Teams and Goals
- School Planning Teams and Goals
- Allocations and Transfers
- Budgets
- Program Narratives



NAEA 2026

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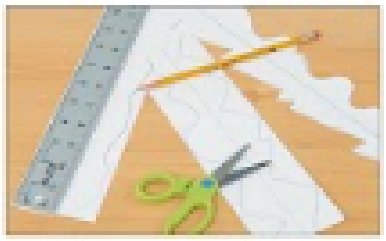

Step 1: Create a stencil by drawing lines and cutting edges.



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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