

Winter / Spring Newsletter 2014

Delaware Arts Alliance

Volume III, Issue I



LETTER FROM DAA'S BOARD PRESIDENT

By Carrie W. Gray

Dear DAA Members and Friends:

I am delighted and proud to be writing to you as the second President of Delaware Arts Alliance (DAA). First, my sincerest thanks and gratitude must go to Maxine Gaiber for her milestone tenure as DAA's first president along with Vice President Sheila Bravo, Secretary Mark Fields and Treasurer Henry Cox. Their leadership helped DAA chart its course as well as guide our institutional growth.

Joining me on the Executive Committee are Vice President George Meldrum, Secretary Sheila Bravo, and Treasurer Sue Early. With such a great executive leadership team, as well as new and returning board members who are extremely committed to our mission, I am confident we will continue to move DAA forward into a new era of arts advocacy in Delaware.

As President, I look forward to being a strong voice of advocacy for DAA's three strategic focus areas: arts and economic development; arts education; and arts sector sustainability. With the support of the DAA Staff and Board along with our Individual Members and Institutional Supporters, we will make a significant impact in these areas to benefit Delaware's vibrant arts community.

We kicked off the New Year in a big way with the launch of an exciting new initiative: the DAA Free Individual Membership Campaign. You'll read more about it in the newsletter, but I want to emphasize the importance of this plan. By eliminating the \$40 membership fee, and instead asking individuals to sign an Acts of Advocacy Pledge, DAA membership is now within everyone's reach. Please sign up today!

One of the Acts of Advocacy that DAA members can do is to join one of our very active committees. There are several to choose from (LEAD, Membership, Development, and Marketing), and I'm sure you will find interacting with arts administrators and artists from all three counties as a rewarding, educational and inspiring exchange, as I do. I look forward to working with you on arts advocacy in Delaware!

ARTS ADVOCACY AT YOUR FINGERTIPS: DELAWARE ARTS ALLIANCE'S NEW WEBSITE

DAA is thrilled to announce the unveiling of a new website! Our new site is filled with helpful information on arts advocacy, DAA's activities, Individual Free Membership, advocacy toolkits, Organizational supporters, Calendar of Events, activity reports, and more!

Be sure to bookmark our page and visit frequently for updates on all arts advocacy happenings and resources in Delaware.

Our URL is: www.delawareartsalliance.org



REFLECTIONS FROM DAA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Guillermina Gonzalez

Now, it is easier than ever to be an arts advocate in Delaware...

DAA begins 2014 full of energy and projects particularly on the membership and marketing side. On the membership front, DAA has made a bold decision. We concluded that the membership fee we were charging was an unintended dis-incentive for creative citizens to get involved. So, starting this year, the individual membership for the Delaware Arts Alliance will be completely FREE! Instead of asking for a membership fee, we are asking current members and those interested in becoming one, to pledge and make your support of the arts and of DAA with "Acts of Advocacy." The objective is to become faster the unified voice the arts need in the state. DAA intends to finish 2014 with at least 500 individual members. Organizations of course, will continue to be a pivotal part of our efforts. In fact, DAA is expanding the statewide organizational membership and is seeking to incorporate, alongside the most solid arts organizations already part of us, other type of institutions like businesses, non-profit and for-profit organizations. All these organizations see in the arts a natural ally in their efforts. Organizational members will continue contributing 0.1% of their operational budget to help DAA operate as the arts bridge builder in the state. The free individual pledge can be easily completed online by clicking the link below.

<https://signup82north.com/beventLive.aspx?EventID=NBI16541090>

On the marketing side, we also have great news. DAA is launching a NEW website! This more user friendly version will facilitate your navigation and promises to be more graphic in nature. DAA plans to become the image repository of artistic expressions, arts-education, and arts research in the state. We realized that the arts require of concrete examples to make easier to understand why the arts matter. We will need your help to accomplish the objective and will communicate details and guidelines for submissions later on. Please stay tuned on this front. Meanwhile, by becoming an individual member you will make easier for us to connect with you on this and other arts advocacy issues at a federal and state level. Suffice to say that DAA has quite interesting plans in the pipeline that you do not want to miss! Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome. I am an email or phone call away ggonzalez@DelawareArtsAlliance.org or (302) 425-5500 Ext. 107. Looking forward to hearing from you!



NATIONAL ARTS ADVOCACY DAY ON CAPITOL HILL!

One of the arts advocacy highlights of the year is DAA's leadership role in National Arts Advocacy Day. This year, DAA sent a delegation for Delaware to meet with Delaware's Legislators to make the case for continued investment in the arts nationally and within the state on Tuesday, March 25th. Americans for the Arts organized panels on Monday, March 24th for arts alliances and advocates across the nation.

Last year, the delegation presented the a strong advocacy agenda to our DC legislators asking for funding support of \$155 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA); the preservation of the current tax deduction structure for charitable giving; the dedication of \$30 million to arts education funding at the U.S. Department of Education and for increased equitable access to arts education through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); and for the full funding of \$38.6 million for the Office of Museums Services within the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

MAKING ARTS ADVOCACY ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL: DAA'S FREE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

The DAA board made a bold decision to further the second goal of our strategic plan, which is to "Engage a broad sector of the community as advocates and as ambassadors for the arts in Delaware." Individual membership to DAA is now completely FREE!

DAA Board Members Gail O'Donnell and Mark Fields.



With free individual membership to DAA comes an obligation to make "Acts of Advocacy." Whether your act of advocacy is tweeting about DAA; recruiting new members; attending arts events; purchasing artwork made by a local artist; or writing a letter in support of arts advocacy to your paper's editor—there is an arts advocacy activity for everyone.



DAA Board Member Lorraine Goodman Dion, Director of Kent County Tourism Special Events & Public Relations, and DAA Executive Director Guillermina Gonzalez.

First Lady Markell stressed how the arts in Delaware provide inspiration. She gave examples of how you can see the arts everyday—from taking a class at the Delaware Center for Contemporary Arts to seeing the children at Cab Calloway High School signing songs in the hallways. "I can't say enough how much the Governor and I support the arts."



The Travel Songs Project with DAA Executive Director Guillermina Gonzalez.

The Free Individual Membership Campaign launched on January 16th at Woodburn, the Governor's Residence, in Dover with First Lady Carla Markell and Liane Hansen, former Senior Host of NPR's Weekend Edition Sunday.

Liane Hansen spoke about her arts re-awakening upon relocating to Delaware. "Because of Clear Space Theatre in Rehoboth, I was able to fulfill a lifelong dream." She noted, "I love that an alliance is being formed with the many different arts we are blessed with in this state."



First Lady Carla Markell signing up as a DAA Free Individual Member.

DAA Executive Director Guillermina Gonzalez handed the First Lady the DAA Acts of Advocacy Pledge and she signed up as a member. Guests then enjoyed the sounds of local musicians The Travel Songs Project.

Please join DAA as a FREE Individual Member at:

Sign up by clicking the link below.

<https://signup82north.com/beventLive.aspx?EventID=NB116541090>

(Note: DAA's online pledge form was built with 82 North; the URL will include the text "signup82north.com").

Spread the word to your friends!



Former NPR Weekend Edition Sunday Senior Host Liane Hansen signs up to be a DAA Free Individual Member along with Delaware Division of the Arts Director Paul Weagraff and DAA Board Member Deb Hansen.

DAA IN ACTION: ADVOCATING FOR THE ARTS AND EDUCATION AT THE DELAWARE JFC HEARINGS

In February, DAA Member and Sussex County resident Liane Hansen, former Senior Host of NPR's Weekend Edition Sunday, testified before the Joint Finance Committee in Dover on the importance of the arts in Delaware's economy. She detailed how DAA is helping the Department of State, citing how the arts strengthens the fiscal health of Delaware and builds community in all three counties. She also stated that the arts are a \$142.3 million dollar industry in Delaware that supports close to 4,000 jobs and gives back nearly \$10 million in state and local revenue, as noted in the 2013 Arts & Economic Prosperity Report (Americans for the Arts, Washington DC). She reported that 79% of visitors to Delaware noted that their trip was arts-related.

DAA Board President Carrie Gray (Managing Director of the Wilmington Renaissance Corporation) and DAA Executive Director Guillermina Gonzalez gave testimony before the Joint Finance Committee's Department of Education hearings. They made the case for the impact of a strong arts curriculum in schools by presenting examples of the Southern Delaware School of Arts (Sussex County), Dover High School (Kent County), and Kuumba Academy (New Castle County).

DAA will continue advocating for the arts and arts education throughout 2014. Stay posted for our next advocacy activity!

DAA Member Liane Hansen getting ready to testify at the Department of State Joint Finance Committee on February 24.



DAA ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

Rehoboth Art League: Connecting Art, History, and Community in Sussex County

Nestled on a breathtaking 3.5-acre campus on Henlopen Acres, the Rehoboth Art League is an institution with many facets. Heading RAL since 2010 is Executive Director Sheila Bravo. She considers the role of RAL to the community, "The mission of the Rehoboth Art League is to teach preserve and inspire the arts through collaboration with the people of Delaware and its visitors. We provide arts education in a beautiful setting. Our campus has historic buildings, studios, galleries, and a vast wooded area. People come to RAL not only for the arts but to relax in our natural setting.



Artists create at RAL's Chambers Studio Painting class.



A student at the pottery wheel at a RAL class.

"When RAL opened in 1938, Rehoboth was still an area for summer visitors with few residents," Bravo notes. "The Art League became the center of culture hosting camera clubs, art clubs, and even bird watching groups. Arts and culture were intertwined."

Bravo discusses RAL's connections with local artists and the community, "We introduce artists to residents and visitors. Many art patrons started collecting from artists they met at RAL." RAL engages the community through monthly art salons, art fairs, and exhibitions. It also holds a rich collection of Delaware artists.

Creative space is another aspect of RAL. "We offer open studios in a very organic studio setting. Artists can work on our kilns, easels, and learn from each other in a community environment."



A beautiful springtime view of RAL's Paynter Studio.

RAL engages youth through collaborations with Sussex schools and health and human services agencies. Its current exhibition "Young at Art" showcases the works of students K-12. This followed its "Hot off the Press" exhibit featuring college students. Bravo explains, "Hot off the Press" provided these emerging artists with a hands-on learning about how to install a show and price their work."

An exciting development is the opening of the Annex Gallery on Rehoboth Avenue. "This new location will bring our programs to a very populated area." With public transportation challenges to its campus, the new Annex and outside programming will engage more Sussex residents and visitors.

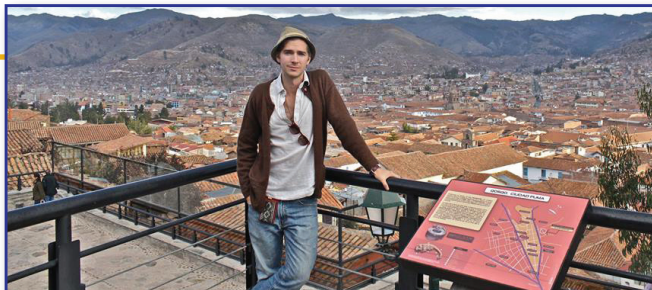
An Organizational Supporter of DAA, Rehoboth Art League is committed to arts advocacy. Bravo, a DAA Board member, notes, "The initial vision in forming DAA was for the arts community to have a voice in strategic issues on the economy and art education. With DAA, Sussex County arts organizations and artists can now collaborate, discuss important issues, and holistically look across the state." She continues, "I find working with other arts leaders very rewarding. "DAA makes us all stronger and better through sharing ideas and collaborating."

All photos courtesy of the Rehoboth Art League

DAA MEMBER PROFILE:

Zachery Humenik: Mapping Culture and Music

At 28 years old, Zachery Humenik is a student of anthropology, musicology, and an artist who has created an ethnographic project encompassing these disciplines. As founder and Executive Director of The Travel Songs Project, Humenik is making cultural connections through music.



Zachary Humenik, DAA Member and Founder of The Travel Songs Project

Upon graduating from the University of Delaware, Humenik found himself at a loss for his next steps. A backpacking adventure in South America followed, which would impact his life course.

Humenik was next in Tunisia during the Arab Spring of 2011. "I was a photojournalist, chronicling the revolution and daily life." On visits home, he was troubled by the misperceptions of the Arab World. "People I respected had a close-minded view." He continues, "I wanted to show Americans that other cultures are interesting. As a practicing musician, I felt I could use music to make those cultural connections." The Travel Song Projects was born.



The Travel Songs Project with the Q'eros of Peru (Photo by Samuel Nobles for Travel Songs)

The goal of The Travel Songs Project is to document, preserve, and conserve various art forms from around the world by bridging gaps between cultures. The project creates a capsule of art and people for further generations.

Humenik gathered a team of musicians and videographers. Peru was chosen as their destination. He launched a Kickstarter campaign, asking for donations as little as \$5. They raised \$16,000—just enough to go to Peru.

In Peru they met a variety of musicians and talked music—from having beers with rap band Ukhupacha; to learning how to craft a Charango, a Peruvian instrument; to a spiritual meeting with the Andean polytheistic peoples the Q'eros, the closest remaining group to the Incas. The Travel Songs Project documents these exchanges on its website (<http://www.travelsongs.org/>). Their next destination is Tunisia. In the meantime, Humenik is applying to graduate school to study Anthropology and is a working musician with The Travel Songs Project performing across the state.

As a member of DAA and its Membership Committee, arts advocacy is important to Humenik, "By advocating you can help people tap into the arts. Delaware is a small state, but we have so much to offer." Humenik considers DAA's free individual membership an opportunity to be engaged in Delaware's arts scene. "One of my obligations is to help artistic life in the community. Being part of DAA is a reminder to do so."

DAA WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2014!

DAA is pleased to welcome four new board members, who are leaders in arts, civic life, and education. They are:

Daniel J. Cruce, Esq., Vice President of Education, Hope Street Group

Lorraine Goodman Dion, Director of Public Relations & Special Events, Kent County Tourism

David W. Fleming, Senior Vice President for Development, Delaware Community Foundation

Molly Giordano, Director of Development and Marketing, Delaware Art Museum

Connect with DAA!

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Delaware Arts Alliance Mission

The Delaware Arts Alliance is the unifying voice for the arts and arts education throughout the state, advocating for the central role of the arts in advancing dynamic communities and a creative citizenry.

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