

# THE CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS CHIARTS NEWS

Issue 4, Summer 2016

“So many Chicagoans, young and old, in all of our families, neighborhoods, and workplaces, are looking for a home for their artistic endeavors, a place where they are encouraged to grow and express themselves in an environment that will foster their growth. If you see them, tell them that ChiArts is their home. Their home is where the art is.”

More from Executive Director José Ochoa on page 7.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 *Board of Directors Updates*
- 3 *PSO News, Alumni Performance for Navy Pier 100th Anniversary*
- 4 *Summer Camp, Creative Writing*
- 5 *Dance, Music*
- 6 *Theatre, Visual Arts*
- 7 *A Letter from the Director*
- 8 *Alumnus Feature*

Photo by Damien Thompson



# Board of Directors Welcomes New Members

For the 2017 fiscal year, the ChiArts Board of Directors has embraced four new members to assist in the continued support and leadership of The Chicago High School for the Arts. Steven Collens, Tom Hurvis, Justine Jentes, and Dana Berkowitz come to the Board of Directors with their own unique connection to ChiArts and a desire to bring the organization to even greater heights.

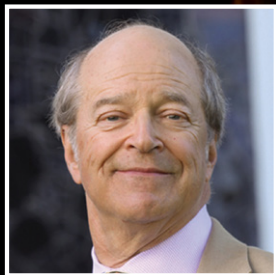
Board meetings are open to the public. Anyone wishing to attend should inquire at the school office (773-534-9710) for the time and location of the next meeting.



## Steven Collens

Steven Collens is CEO of MATTER, the healthcare technology startup center and community hub. Prior to assuming his current role, Steven was senior vice president at Pritzker Group, the investment firm led by Tony and J.B. Pritzker. In that capacity, he led the team that created 1871, Chicago's center for digital startups that now houses more than 300 early-stage companies. In 2005, Steven helped found ConstantWellness.com to give patients control over their health data and allow healthcare providers to coordinate care of their patients.

Steven holds an MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management and a BA from Washington University in St. Louis. He serves on the boards of the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center and the IMSA Fund. He is also a Leadership Greater Chicago fellow and a member of the Economic Club of Chicago and the Commercial Club of Chicago.



## Tom Hurvis

Tom and his late wife, Julie, a former member of the ChiArts Board of Directors, have been supporters of The Chicago High School for the Arts since the school's early years. In addition to his dedication to ChiArts, Tom has been involved in education through his work with several other institutions, including his service on the Board of Trustees at Lawrence University and Providence St. Mel.

Tom completed his undergraduate education at Lawrence University and earned his MBA at University of California-Berkeley. He has been the CEO of Old World Industries since the 1970's.



## Justine Jentes

A Chicago native with a passion for the city's neighborhoods and diverse cultural treasures, Justine has worked with collaborative teams to create vibrant, engaged communities and leverage the rich assets of the city.

During the 1990's, Justine founded and ran insideART, a contemporary gallery and art tours/programs business focused on "demystifying the art world," where she honed her entrepreneurial skills and formed creative collaborations across the city. From 2003 to 2013, as director of Illinois Institute of Technology's Mies van der Rohe Society, Justine set strategy, tone, and programming, raised more than \$14 million for restorations of a National Historic Landmark and other key buildings, curated exhibitions and managed a volunteer board. Most recently, Justine joined the Corporate Relations team at Exelon Corporation, the nation's leading competitive energy provider.

Justine currently serves as a trustee of her alma mater, Bryn Mawr College, as well as on the board of the Hyde Park Art Center and the Woman's Board of the Art Institute of Chicago. She is a past member of the boards of The Arts Club of Chicago and Blair Thomas and Company Theater, and the Education and Outreach Committee of the Ounce of Prevention.



## Dana Berkowitz

Dana became an active and eager volunteer in ChiArts' PSO last year when her daughter, Devyn, started her freshman year. Dana is looking forward to continuing her support of ChiArts by representing the PSO as the Parent Representative on the ChiArts Board of Directors. Her goal is to ensure great communication between the parent community and the Board so that our students, families, teachers and administration all feel their voices are heard and their experience is the best it can be.

## Board of Directors 2016-17

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Chair

Ronald B. Grais  
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Shruti Jayaraman  
Secretary

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Carlos Azcoitia  
Sarah Bader  
Blake Batterson\*  
Dana Berkowitz\*  
Joo Youn Boe  
Evette Cardona\*\*  
Warren Chapman  
Steven Collens

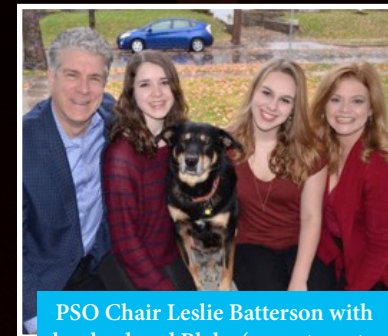
Elissa Hamid Efrogymson  
Sondra Berman Epstein  
Lori Gray Faversham  
Carol Friedman  
Sandra P. Guthman  
Mirja Haffner  
Francina Harrington  
John Hart  
Tom Hurvis  
Alan Jagiello  
Justine Jentes  
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Sylvia Neil  
Pamela B. Strobel  
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\*parent representative  
\*\*community representative  
<sup>P</sup>founding chair

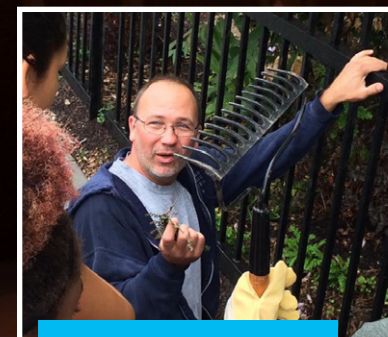
# Re-Structured Parent Support Organization Introduces Involvement Campaign

The ChiArts Parent Support Organization (PSO) has restructured its Executive Committee for the 2016-17 school year, with an emphasis on engaging a greater number of our families in the mission of the school. To facilitate this immense undertaking, Stephanie Cox-Batson (mother of Noa, Dance '19) has been elected to the new position of PSO Volunteer Coordinator, joining Leslie Batterson (Chair), Tom Soulsby (Vice Chair), and Janette Cortes-Duewel (Secretary) on the Executive Committee.

The new involvement campaign, called "Your Gift, Your Way," has set an ambitious goal of engaging 100% of families through giving and volunteer opportunities over



PSO Chair Leslie Batterson with her husband Blake (parent rep to the board) and their daughters



Vice Chair Tom Soulsby

the course of the year. It is no secret that ChiArts must raise more than \$3 million each year to underwrite the stellar arts programs that make it Chicago's home of the scholar-artist, but "Your Gift, Your Way" emphasizes that even if families are unable to contribute financially, their donations of time and talent are equally instrumental to the success of the school and to their child's education.

"Each conservatory has many needs," Cox-Batson says. "We have construction needs, we have needs for people to do shopping, we have baking needs. We have things that need to be washed, built, and fixed, chairs that need to be arranged, parties that need to be planned. Any skill that you have, we can use." Not only will "Your Gift, Your Way" make ChiArts a more productive and efficient organization, the PSO also hopes that it will foster a greater sense of togetherness and inclusivity for our families, uniting our community under the shared mantle of improving the futures of their children.



To get involved with "Your Gift, Your Way", contact Marlena Dzis at MDzis@chiarts.org.



Secretary  
Janette Cortes-Duewel



Volunteer Coordinator  
Stephanie Cox-Batson

## Alumni Jazz Band Performs at Navy Pier 100th Anniversary

Four ChiArts alums--Ryan Pienacha, Kurt Shelby, Joel Ross, and James Sims--performed as the ChiArts Alumni Jazz Band at the 100-year anniversary celebration of Navy Pier and the unveiling of Polk Bros. Park on July 23rd. Each of these young men are pursuing jazz performance as a career and are currently enrolled at SUNY-Purchase (Pienacha), The New School (Ross), and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Shelby, Sims).

The Polk Bros. Foundation is one of ChiArts' founding supporters, and they have recently renewed their 2-year, \$500 thousand pledge to underwrite the arts programs.

Several members of the ChiArts Board of Directors were in attendance and were able to see the quartet play, including Evette Cardona, Sandra Guthman, and Jim and Kay Mabie.

It brings our organization great joy to see these incredible musicians unite once again to represent The Chicago High School for the Arts.



Top row: (left to right) Ryan Pienacha, Joel Ross, James Sims. Bottom row: Evette Cardona, Sandra Guthman, Kurt Shelby, Kay Mabie, Jim Mabie. Photo by Sally Ryan Photography.



## Summer Camp Hits Home for Young Artists

During the months of June and July, the first annual ChiArts Summer Camp premiered to rave reviews from campers and parents.

Younger students from kindergarten through fifth grade participated in the Exploratory Camp, providing kids with an opportunity to dive headfirst into a full day of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts in a fun and creative environment that fosters a curiosity and joy for the arts.

Aspiring artists in grades six through eight were eligible for “ChiArts Jr.,” an imitation of a ChiArts scholar-artist’s typical afternoon, in which students specialized in dance, theatre, or visual arts and received pre-professional training from our teaching artists for four hours each day. Tami Perry, a parent of an eighth grade Visual Arts camper, was “thrilled with the program” and spoke very highly of the mentorship her daughter, Sloane, received from her instructor, Moises Salazar (a Class of 2015 Visual Arts alumnus), saying that she “couldn’t wish for a better role model for [her] daughter” and that Sloane would be happily applying to ChiArts for the 2017-18 school year.

In addition to the reward of sharing the arts with a new generation of scholar-artists, ChiArts had the pleasure of catching up with a few alumni--Lamar Gayles (Visual Arts, ‘15), Greer Hutchison (Dance, ‘15), Salazar, and Caitlin Bratland (Dance, ‘13)--who took the lead as instructors and counselors for the full four weeks of camp.

In all, nearly 70 students enrolled in camp, surpassing ChiArts’ initial expectations and bringing an undeniable spark of energy and excitement to our campus during what can be a slow and quiet time of the year. Our counselors are already gearing up for next year’s sessions, overjoyed with the fruits this new program has born, and satisfied with the prospect of exercising ChiArts’ mission all year round.



Above: Kindergartners have fun with an acting exercise in an Exploratory Camp session. Below: A middle school camper sketches a live model in ChiArts Jr. Visual Arts camp.



## ChiArts Hosts Summer Dance Intensive for First Time

The Dance Conservatory was busy this summer, hosting the very first ChiArts Summer Dance Intensive.

For four weeks, dancers ages 13 and up from across the city converged on ChiArts to study a range of styles including Ballet, Contemporary, and African under the tutelage of nine of Chicago’s top dance instructors, including ChiArts faculty Sarah Ford Thompson, April C. Lewis, Brandon DiCriscio, Maliwan Diemer, Teanna Zarro, and Nicky Taylor Steward, in addition to visiting teaching artists who proudly sported the ChiArts name on a temporary basis.

A diverse group of more than 20 dancers studied with ChiArts, including several current students, alumni, and incoming freshmen looking to hone their skills and prepare for another intensive, rigorous year of formal training. One student, Charles Wilk, is a member of the Theatre Conservatory who enrolled seeking an opportunity to improve his dance and movement for the stage.

A culminating performance was held during the final week of the intensive, giving dancers a chance to show friends, family, and fans what they had learned from their immersive experience with ChiArts Dance.

Year one is in the books for Summer Dance Intensive. Thanks to all who assisted in making our first foray into summertime training an immensely positive program. We are looking forward to next summer’s sessions!



Flyer for Summer Dance Intensive's final performance

## Publishings Highlight Summer for Creative Writing Program

The Creative Writing program celebrated two publishing milestones this summer.

The program’s department head Tina Boyer Brown was published in the forthcoming September edition of *Poetry* magazine, the foremost publication for verse in America and the English-speaking world. *Poetry* has a readership in the tens of thousands and receives more than 100,000 submissions per year, publishing fewer than 1,000. Her poem, “I Have Waited for the Siren,” is printed alongside selections by poets like Juan Felipe Herrera, the poet laureate of the United States.

In addition, the ChiArts Creative Writing program published the second edition of its literary magazine, *ChiArts Writes*. This edition features dramatic writing, personal essays, short stories, and poems from 25 scholar-artists honing their craft under the instruction of ChiArts’ exceptional teaching writers.

Volume 2 of *ChiArts Writes* will be released to the public on the evening of September 16th at the program’s first reading of the year in the ChiArts Black Box Theatre.

Congratulations to Tina and the rest of the Creative Writing program for two very exciting achievements!



The September edition of *Poetry* magazine and Volume 2 of *ChiArts Writes*.

## Junior Percussionist Named Two-Year Andrew Bird Scholarship Awardee

Justin Petrovych, a junior percussionist in the Music Conservatory, has been awarded this year’s Andrew Bird Scholarship, an annual gift to fund private lessons and instruction to a deserving ChiArts musician. The scholarship is given by Foundations of Music in collaboration with multi-instrumentalist and recording artist Andrew Bird.

Because Justin is entering his junior year, he will be the beneficiary of the award for two years, making him the first recipient to hold the honor for more than one year.

Justin is a star in the Music Conservatory, displaying remarkable talent on the vibraphone and marimba in tandem with impressive charm, grace, and confidence, despite having emigrated from his native Ukraine only four years ago, stopping first in California before settling in Chicago. Last year, Justin received the highest possible marks for his individual playing at the IHSA Solo and Ensemble Festival, and was considered by the judges to be among the very best performers at the festival.

Congratulations, Justin! You deserve it.



Andrew Bird Scholarship winner Justin Petrovych

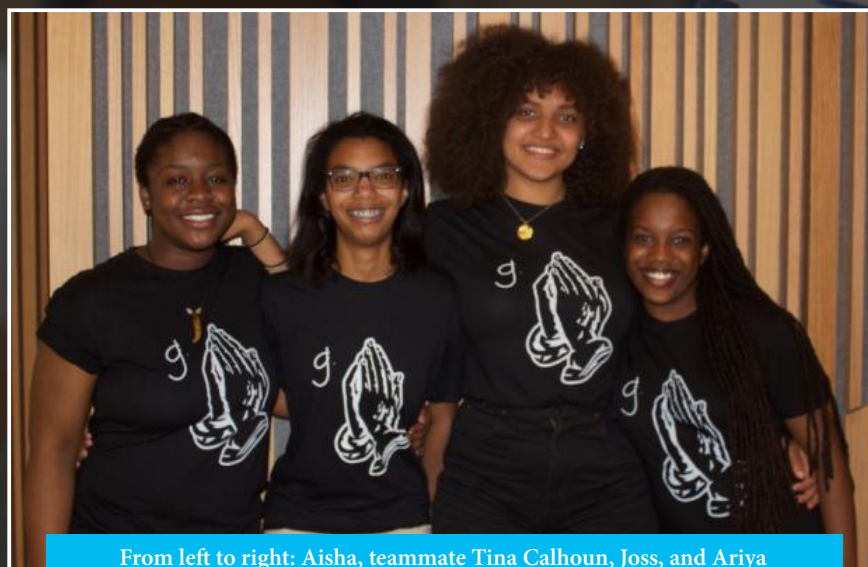


## Theatre Students Perform Slam Poetry for Goodman Theatre Benefit

Aisha June ('18), Joss Green ('17), and Ariya Hawkins ('16) opened the Goodman Theatre Scenemakers Board's 2016 *Scene Soirée* this July with a performance of original slam poetry they devised as members of Goodman's Youth Poetry Ensemble.

Each member of the team, originally organized for competition in *Louder Than A Bomb*, produced individual pieces reflecting on their personal identity which were then edited and combined to create a team piece, which they call "Black Girl Magic". "It's a celebration piece," says Ariya. "It's a piece that demonstrates the power and strength that black women have in all sorts of different outlets."

Having begun their relationship with Goodman as students in the theatre's PlayBuild Youth Intensive summer program, the ensemble was selected to perform at



From left to right: Aisha, teammate Tina Calhoun, Joss, and Ariya

*Soirée* as representatives of the program's success, demonstrating what is artistically possible when youth are empowered to create.

"It doesn't make you put a filter on it," says Aisha, referring to the freedom the Goodman gives them to express themselves. "It doesn't make you put a cap on it. The only expectation is to be the best that you can."

*This write-up includes excerpts reported by DNAInfo.*

## Senior Visual Artists Receive Full Scholarships for Ox-Bow Summer Residency

Six senior members of the Visual Arts Conservatory enjoyed a week-long residency at Ox-Bow School of Art, an artist's retreat in Saugatuck, Michigan that offers one and two-week courses for credit or non-credit through its affiliation with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Through the generosity of its donors, Ox-Bow was able to offer six week-long scholarships for ChiArts students to get out of the city and experience artmaking in a new environment. Kaelyn Andrade, Jordon Eason, Tyler Jackson, Nefertari Loudon, Andrea Reyes, and Ricardo Rivera took a landscape painting and drawing course from Ox-Bow's exceptional instructors and enjoyed access to explore additional courses and workshops in their free time--everything from photography and graphic design to carpentry and metal works.

"Getting out of the city was a breath of fresh air," Tyler said. "Being somewhere with little Internet or social access outside of those around you definitely helped me reflect on who I am and what I want to be as an artist."



Nefertari Loudon works in the landscape class at Ox-Bow School of Art this past summer.

The opportunity to earn a week of instruction and practice at Ox-Bow has become a staple experience for ChiArts Visual Arts seniors, and we are proud to call Ox-Bow a new arts partner.

## A Letter from the Director

The eighth year of The Chicago High School for the Arts is underway, and this year--as every year--we must approach our work with new, unmatched energy to match the incredible progress that our organization has made over the past 12 months.

This year, we will be graduating our fifth class of scholar-artists. Many members of our first graduating class, the Class of 2013, who took a risk on a brand new and unproven school in the fall of 2009, will be graduating from college next spring, beginning a new chapter in the history of ChiArts.

A host of artists and leaders, equipped with comprehensive training, a catalog of learned experiences, and entire programs of study impressed on their hearts and minds, will enter the world as full-time professionals guided by the core values of ChiArts. They are the children of this city who are impacting its present and will map its future in the arts, sciences, technology, social progress, and much more. This was the dream of a few in 2004 when the idea of our school was born, and it became the goal of many eight years ago when our doors first opened. In just a few short months, it will be realized for the first time.

This milestone brings us indescribable joy and a greater responsibility than ever before, because with precedent comes expectation. As proud as we are of the members of the Class of 2013 and their upcoming explorations of new frontiers, there are three more classes of ChiArts graduates and four classes of current scholar-artists who will use that precedent as a target, and it is our job to help them reach it. There are thousands of Chicago students, still too young for ChiArts, who will someday seek a home for their art and use the successes of these students as fuel for their own dream. It is our job to help them reach that. There are working artists in this city, too old now for ChiArts, who seek a place to share their knowledge, practice their discipline, or stage their work. We are here to help them achieve that.

As our reach grows, it is our duty to share our mission with an even greater audience. This year, we are expanding our youth outreach, starting with the first ChiArts Summer Camp this past July and continuing in the fall with our touring production of *Schoolhouse Rock Live!*, which will visit several elementary schools in the area to perform for future scholar-artists. We will also share our space with a greater number of artists and organizations seeking a home for their exhibition, concert, or festival, serving as a safe, welcoming place for all members of our community.

So many Chicagoans, young and old, in all of our families, neighborhoods, and workplaces, are looking for a home for their artistic endeavors, a place where they are encouraged to grow and express themselves in an environment that will foster their growth.

If you see them, tell them that ChiArts is their home. Their home is where the art is.

Sincerely,

José Ochoa  
Executive & Artistic Director  
The Chicago High School for the Arts



José Ochoa  
Executive & Artistic Director,  
The Chicago High School for the Arts



# Alumna Spotlight

## Madison Smith, Visual Arts '13

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Visual Arts recently received a message from 2013 alumna Madison Smith with exciting news that served as a reminder of why ChiArts invests in young artists like Madison:

“I received a letter yesterday from my college, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, about accepting a Siragusa [Foundation] scholarship from ChiArts. I graciously accepted the offer and I wanted to reach out and express how honored I am to receive this scholarship as a member of the first graduating class.

In the past three years I have had the privilege to work with many non-profit art organizations from interning at the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in Fine Arts to the Evanston Art Center. This year I was chosen to write an original piece for an exhibition publication and have one of my essays taught in an Art History class at Harold Washington College. Although I have always been an ambitious person, I owe a lot of my experience in the field of Art History to the teachers and administrators at ChiArts. I am incredibly grateful that our department chose to hire teachers like Keith Brown and Catarina Araujo to teach the history of art in such an insightful and challenging way. Without your support I do not think I would be graduating with a degree in Art History, Theory & Criticism and pursuing graduate school. I remember feeling utterly charmed by the work of artists like Jenny Holzer, Kerry James Marshall, and Yves Klein as an enthusiastic 15 year old-- I still have those feelings when walking through a museum at 21.

Thank you for providing us with the resources and opportunities to grow as individuals and as artists, thank you for giving us the confidence to follow our passions.

Best,  
Madison Smith”

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