Creative Schools Fund
2016-17 Grant Review Committee
Grant Review Committee
16 Participants Total

2 CPS Teachers
1 CPS/ Community Eng.
1 Art Therapist

4 Arts Grant-makers
8 Arts Educators
3 Arts Consultants

3 Musicians
4 Visual Artists
3 Writers
2 in Theater
1 in Media Arts
Julie Adrianopoli
Julie is a consultant, educator, and advisor with more than 15 years of experience working with nonprofit organizations, corporate and private philanthropies, and government entities. For nearly a decade she has been working to expand arts learning opportunities for students throughout Illinois. Adrianopoli currently serves as the lead consultant for the Chicago Arts Education Collaborative (CAEC). While working with the CAEC, she managed the Chicago Arts Learning Initiative (CALI) and worked with a group of committed leaders to launch what is now Ingenuity Inc. Prior to her role as a consultant, she served as the Director of Advocacy and Strategic Initiatives for Arts Alliance Illinois. She has also served on a number of advisory roles, including as a member of the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Arts Planning committee, co-chair of the Creative Schools Initiative planning committee, chair of Ingenuity Inc.’s Advocacy panel, and a member of Arts Alliance Illinois’ Arts Education Policy Committee. In addition to her work in the arts education sector, Adrianopoli teaches part-time at DePaul University and serves as President of the Community Review Committee for Wilmette D39. Adrianopoli received a BS in Business Administration from John Carroll University and a MBA from Case Western Reserve University’s Weatherhead School of Management.

Sonya Anderson
As a global connector, communicator, and changemaker, Dr. Sonya Anderson has worked domestically and internationally to raise awareness, inspire action, and strengthen individual and collective outcomes. With her extensive background in education, philanthropy, the non-profit sector, and international development, Sonya has collaborated at all levels of government, industry, and society to leverage high-impact relationships, reputations, and resources to advance the social good. These efforts have taken her from the Ford Foundation where she supported education grantmaking in the US and abroad, to a range of private, non-profit, and international donor organizations where she worked to advance girls’ access to education in Africa and the Caribbean. This work culminated with her role as Education Program Director for the Oprah Winfrey Foundations where she oversaw the development of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in South Africa.

After more than a decade in the international arena, Sonya returned to domestic education issues as a strategist and advocate for early childhood development at the Ounce of Prevention Fund. There, she worked to advance policies and programs that provide high quality early education for children living in poverty. Sonya later returned to philanthropy, supporting local Chicago non-profits across a range of program areas, and she now consults and provides strategic guidance and technical assistance to mission-driven organizations in their efforts to build, learn, and grow.

Sonya holds an undergraduate degree in economics and political science from Yale University, a masters degree in international affairs from the University of Ghana, and a doctorate in education planning and policy from Harvard University.
Mirlene Dossous
Mirlene is the Family and Community Engagement Manager for Chicago Public Schools. She has 17 years’ experience in community engagement, education, program funding and arts education.

Mirlene began her career with a local community organization in Bronzeville to support school reform efforts at Phillips H.S. She worked with residents to develop and implement a plan to improve the quality of life for youth and their families. Mirlene then served as Community Investment Manager at United Way of Metropolitan Chicago (UWMC). Working with an Advisory Panel, Mirlene made recommendations to the UWMC board regarding investments of $2 million (kids’ portfolio), and $12 million (health portfolio). Mirlene also supported the UWMC Immunization Initiative, targeting kids ages 0-2, and the African-American Initiative, targeting boys ages 10-16. Prior to her work at UWMC, Mirlene was the Director of Youth and Community Organizing for the University of Minnesota, partnering with Chicago Public Schools to implement peer-to-peer leadership curriculum for middle school students. The curriculum used arts as a way for students to express how they view their community and what roles they play in making it a safe and fun place to live.

Mirlene has a tremendous love for the arts, and for 4 years was an instructor with After School Matters teaching youth both traditional hand quilting and poetry. Mirlene continues to support the arts as an active member of the Beverly Arts Center, where her 5-year old daughter and 6-year old son enjoy dance, music and visual arts.

Marcia Festen
Marcia is an independent consultant to philanthropy. In this capacity, she currently serves as Director for the Arts Work Fund for Organizational Development, a funding collaborative to strengthen small arts and cultural organizations in Chicago; interim program manager to the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation’s Arts Learning program; grant reviewer for the Artistic Vitality program at the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation; and as a qualitative researcher for MDRC’s evaluation of the MacArthur Foundation’s New Community’s Project.

Marcia has more than 25 years of experience in the nonprofit sector. Prior to starting her consulting practice in 1999, Marcia was a senior program officer at the John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, a founding board member of The Rainbow Endowment, and a board member of Girls Best Friend Foundation. She is co-author of Level Best: A Step-by-Step Guide to Evaluation for Grassroots Nonprofits and How Effective Nonprofits Work: A Guide for Donors, Board Members and Foundation Officers. Currently, she is vice chair of the board of directors for 3Arts.
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Carling Fitzsimmons
Carling FitzSimmons is a Chicago-based artist and arts educator. After graduating from Kenyon College with degrees in English and music, Carling returned home to Chicago to pursue a career in music, and has sung with ensembles including Bella Voce, The William Ferris Chorale, and the Decani of Rockefeller Chapel. She is a founding member and Artistic Director of La Caccina, a professional treble ensemble dedicated to musical excellence in a wide range of styles. Carling also serves as Associate Conductor for the Pro Musica Youth Chorus and as a faculty member at the Merit School of Music, where she conducts the Instrumental Music choirs. Carling teaches in several Chicago Public Schools through Merit’s Bridges: Partners in Music program. During the summer, Carling teaches playwriting, directing, improvisation, and sketch comedy at Northwestern University’s Center for Talent Development.

Sunny Jeanne Givens
Sunny Jeanne Givens is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Master of Arts in Art Therapy program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. As an art therapist, mother, teacher, traveler, and artist she writes stories that integrate both her personal and professional identities. Her research explores and acknowledges the multitude of roles art therapists maintain that support and challenge their sense of self and their art therapy practices—embracing personal histories, self-care, and artistic convictions.

Sunny is the author of “Home hospice art therapy: Re-storing the art therapist as an invited guest,” published in Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association. She is also the Co-Founder of the Black Art Therapists Collective. As an art therapist, Sunny has implemented art therapy services in inpatient psychiatric facilities, home-hospice care, domestic violence centers, and self-esteem groups with adolescent girls. She maintains an active art practice, which includes a jewelry design business, mixed media painting and found object art. She has exhibited in: One Woman Show, San Francisco, CA; ARC Gallery, Chicago, IL; Open Studio Project, Evanston, IL. She is also the recipient of a number of awards: Amsden Book Award, Hilgos Award, WGCI Am-Fm and Kraft Foods.
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Yolanda Knight
Yolanda is currently Program Officer at the Steans Family Foundation. She began her career as a teacher in East Garfield Park on Chicago’s West Side, and throughout her career, has worked in various capacities to improve educational opportunities for Chicago’s students. Yolanda has served as a Program Officer at the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation, where she advised its Board on strategic priorities and investments for a $2MM education portfolio and supported the Foundation’s High School Initiative—a five-year, $9 million effort to improve learning environments in five Chicago public high schools.

Prior to her work at the Fry Foundation, Yolanda was Assistant Director of the Chicago Public Schools’ Department of Postsecondary Education, where she developed the district’s framework for increasing college matriculation and success. Yolanda has more than 20 years of experience in education in Chicago, having also worked as a financial aid administrator, an adjunct professor, and a consultant. Most recently, as Director of Development and Evaluation at the University of Chicago’s Network for College Success, her work has focused on strengthening organizations that support students’ critical transitions into and beyond high school. In her spare time, Yolanda enjoys live music, theater, and dance performances with her two young daughters, Maya and Shani.

Sarah Laing
Sarah is a visual artist, teaching artist, and trained art therapist. Through a number of leadership roles in community, education, and healthcare settings, she is known as a proven catalyst for creative expression. She is passionate about social/emotional learning and the arts. Sarah currently teaches elementary and middle school studio-based style classes at Chiaravalle Montessori where she is developing a maker space in a new “DaVinci Studio”. She specializes in project based learning, student guided research, and curriculum integration. The "DaVinci Studio" is an extension of the classroom and embraces Montessori philosophy with 21st century learning. In addition Sarah is an active non-profit consultant and advisor. Currently she works with Ingenuity Inc. on the Creative Schools Fund and Government Affairs panels to support the expansion of arts education in Chicago Public Schools. She leads the Evanston Arts Education Coalition where she advocates for arts integration and strategic planning in the public schools. She is a former board member of Foundation 65 and the Chicago Public Art Group. Sarah was the Associate Director of Open Studio Project, an arts & social service organization, for over ten years, and currently serves on the advisory board. Sarah has curated a range of shows and events with artists and community organizations, as well as having exhibited her own mixed media work. A strong advocate of community arts, mental health awareness, and education she has piloted several arts outreach programs. Sarah has directed public art projects in Chicago and Evanston. Sarah excels in fostering creative talent in others, networking with cultural and non-profit leaders, and building capacity for community initiatives. Sarah has an MA in Art Therapy from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a BS in Studio Art from Skidmore College, NY, and completed a program in Public Art at the Chelsea College of Art, London.
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Ruth Lopez
Ruth is a Chicago-based arts specialist who has worked as a program consultant and project manager with organizations such as the Lannan Foundation and the Illinois Humanities Council. Lopez writes regularly about culture; her work has appeared in a range of media including *American Theatre*, *The Art Newspaper*, *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Interior Design*, *Art News*, *Chicago Reader*, *Chicago magazine*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Time Out Chicago* and WBEZ.

Lopez has served as a board member for the International Contemporary Ensemble, Neighborhood Writing Alliance, the Santa Fe Public Library and the Ann Arbor People’s Food Co-op. She is a graduate of Goddard College in Vermont and a former fellow of the National Arts Journalism Program at Columbia University, New York.

Janette Martinez
Janette Martinez is an artist, educator and administrator from the Bronx, New York. She holds a MS in Educational Theatre from City College of New York, and a BM in Vocal Performance from Boston University. Though she is currently living in New York working as the Assistant Manager of Education and Outreach with Disney Theatrical Group, she has had an extensive career working inside and outside of the classroom as a music, dance and theater Teaching Artist. Janette spent the last year as the Steppenwolf for Young Adults Multicultural Fellow, and while in Chicago also worked with organizations such as Raven Theatre, Adventure Stage, and Chicago Children's Theatre. She has a passion for creating sophisticated artistic and engagement experiences, and last fall toured an original Theatre for the Very Young production entitled “Taking Flight” to Ireland.
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Trevor Nicholas
Trevor Nicholas is a music educator who is passionate about encouraging others in their next steps in overcoming adversity and self-expression through music. In his role as Director of Choral Activities at Prosser Career Academy he advocates for both students and staff as they strive to grow and write positive, creative chapters in Chicago’s narrative. As a 2014-15 CSF Grant Recipient he created and led the Rooted Program, which partnered with Orbert Davis’ Chicago Jazz Philharmonic and other guest artists to help students understand their historical context and share their personal stories of growing up in Chicago.

Since graduating from North Park University with a BME in both instrumental and vocal music, Trevor has held K-12 choral, instrumental, general music, and Department Chair positions in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs. In addition to his Chicago Public Schools position he enjoys regular engagements as a church musician, freelance pianist, composer, piano instructor, guest speaker, average triathlete, and outdoors enthusiast.

Jessica Rodrigue
Jessica Rodrigue is a photographer, teaching artist and development professional based in Chicago, Illinois. She received her MFA in Photography from Columbia College Chicago, and a BFA in Photography from the Maine College of Art. Her work has been published in F-Stop, DNAinfo Chicago, Politico Magazine and has been featured on WYCC’s In the Loop. She has exhibited at the Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Hyde Park Art Center, and numerous galleries.

As a teaching artist for more than a decade, Jessica has taught continuing education courses, early college programs, and numerous in-school and after-school courses within Chicago Public Schools. She is also an alumna of the Teaching Artist Development Studio program at Columbia College. Currently she is a teaching artist for the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education in both their Veteran and SCALE programs. She has been a part of the development department at Marwen since 2012. Before Marwen, Jessica worked within higher education as an assistant in development and board relations.
Angela Tillges
Angie is the Neighborhood Arts Program Director with the Chicago Park District. She is also a public space artist and educator working with schools, universities, cultural, social and public institutions on the intersecting topics of education, public art, community creative development, social development, and project based learning. She holds a Masters in Education from Harvard Graduate School of Education, Arts in Education program. Angie currently serves as Senior Program Specialist for the Chicago Park District’s Department of Culture Arts and Nature. Formerly she served as Associate Artistic Director and lead Community Educator to Redmoon, a Chicago based public art and spectacle organization from 2007-2013.

Molly Trugia
Molly joined the Education Department at Chicago Shakespeare Theater in 2012, where she manages adult learning, including educator professional development, internships and audience enrichment. Prior to that, she led efforts to increase access to the arts for Chicago Public School students with Communities In Schools of Chicago, coordinated professional development forums for arts administrators with Chicago Arts Educator Forum, and implemented arts education programs with American Theater Company. As a teaching artist, she has worked with Montana Shakespeare in the Schools and Montana Shakespeare Company, developing and teaching Shakespeare workshops to students of all ages. Molly is an alumna of the University of Notre Dame, where she holds a BA in anthropology and theater. She has served on the Partnerships & Professional Learning Panel with Ingenuity and has been an advisory panelist for the Illinois Arts Council.
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Amy Vecchioni
Amy Vecchioni has been the visual arts teacher and fine arts lead educator at Waters Fine Arts School for twelve years. She is the current Arts Liaison and fine arts community outreach coordinator.

Her goal as an arts educator is to link student experience to the arts integration model in order to enhance core curriculum objectives, build global citizenry and create personal ownership of student learning. She has continually worked to create meaningful fine arts opportunities for her students---garnering support from external resources and reaching out to expand the cultural community for her students.

She has worked as a visual arts consultant and as a professional development leader for Changing Worlds, Family Matters Chicago, Global Explorers, World Relief Chicago, Chicago Arts Partnership in Education and Chicago Public Schools' Fine and Performing Arts Magnet Cluster schools.

She has created community fine arts partnerships with the Cambodian Association and Killing Fields Memorial Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, SMART Museum, the International House of Blues and Intuit Center for Intuitive and Outsider Artists. She and her students have created arts-in-action global outreach partnerships with the Dulaan Project in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia; the Uthando Project in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa; and Safe Passage School in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Additionally, Amy’s arts integrated visual arts projects have been featured in a variety of print media including Northwestern University’s Medill Reports, The Chicago Tribune, Teaching the Best Practice Way (Daniels and Bizar, 2005) and Best Practice: Today’s Standards for Teaching and Learning in America’s Schools (Zemelman et al., 2005). Amy has a Master’s degree in Curriculum and Design and is currently working on an additional degree in English as a Second Language. She lives in Albany Park with her husband, makes pottery and has one son who is a graduate of Chicago Public Schools.

Jenn Yoo
Jenn Yoo is a recent Masters in Art Education graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). Her thesis work is about integrating arts and academics in public schools, specially looking at CPS. Currently, she is working at the Chicago Architecture Foundation as an Education Programs Coordinator. With experiences in both teaching and educational administrative work, she focuses on analyzing collected data and trying to understand ways to better the programs and experiences of students, teachers, mentors, and parents.