



FY27 General Operating Support Grant Panelist Biographies

Panel 1

Rebekah Tobar

*Executive Director
Milledgeville-Baldwin County Allied Arts
Baldwin County*

Executive Director Rebekah Tobar provides overall organizational management and artistic leadership for Milledgeville-Baldwin County Allied Arts. As a teacher and artist for more than 30 years, Tobar brings extensive experience in curriculum development, youth engagement, and program evaluation.

She has taught and worked in pottery, drawing, acrylic painting, murals, and fiber arts. Her background in education and community advocacy informs Allied Arts' inclusive approach to arts programming and partnerships.

Lyrika Holmes

*Executive Director
Artz for the Harp Corporation
Cobb County*

Lyrika Holmes is an internationally known contemporary harpist and vocalist, celebrated for her innovative fusion of R&B and hip-hop with contemporary music, making her a standout figure in the music industry. Originating from St. Louis, Missouri, her multifaceted career spans roles as a professional harpist, singer, songwriter, composer, actress, and dedicated educator. As the founder of the groundbreaking nonprofit arts school "Artz for the Harp," she has demonstrated a deep commitment to advancing non-profit musical arts. Lyrika's unique musical style, blending classical harp with genres like R&B, jazz, and pop, has garnered international acclaim. She has performed in over 600 prestigious events worldwide, from the "Beloved Benefit" to "Wine with the Wades", showcasing her versatility and appeal. Lyrika Holmes' international prestige soared as she took on the role of Soul Singer in Cirque Du Soleil's "Kooza," touring across Asia and establishing herself as a trailblazer in the music industry. Her influence extends beyond the stage to the media, where she has been featured on the cover of "Georgia Trend" magazine and in esteemed

publications like *Essence*, *The Atlantan*, *Modern Luxury Magazine* and the *AJC* to name a few. Lyrika's acting career, highlighted by roles in productions that address social issues, further showcases her diverse talents. In education, Lyrika's achievements are remarkable. She holds 3 degrees in Music Education with teaching certification and has over two decades of teaching experience. She initiated the first harp program in the state of Tennessee and continued her advocacy for music education in Georgia. Her nonprofit, "Artz for the Harp," is dedicated to providing music education and therapy in underprivileged communities. The creation of *The Contemporary Harp Method Books* reflects Lyrika's innovative approach to teaching, incorporating various music genres. Her significant contributions to the arts have earned her accolades such as the 2021 Georgia Governor's Awards in Arts & Humanities and a sponsorship from Harpsicle Harps. Lyrika is also 1 of the 5 recipients for the CNP (Certified Nonprofit Credential) grant for 2024, which is the only nonprofit certification in the country. This intensive program will equip Lyrika and AFTH with the necessary tools to continue thriving as a Georgia based arts nonprofit. To date, Lyrika and her team have raised over half a million in grants and contracts for AFTH to provide services in underserved communities throughout Georgia and the southeast. On stage, Lyrika enthralls audiences with her captivating blend of harp and vocal performance, creating a unique musical genre that transcends traditional boundaries. As an educator, she is shaping a new generation of harpists who blend the old with the new. Lyrika Holmes stands as a symbol of the unifying power of music, showcasing its role as a medium for innovation, education, and cultural connection.

Willow Goldstein

*Executive Director
The Bakery Atlanta
Fulton County*

Willow Goldstein, an Atlanta native, is an arts administrator, educator, and community organizer with over a decade of experience spanning Boston, Brooklyn, and Atlanta. She has built a dynamic career at the intersection of education, event coordination, and creative programming, always driven by a desire to merge underground culture with mainstream systems to foster equity and imagination. From early roles at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston to community-based work with Arts in Bushwick, Willow has consistently championed artist support and youth engagement. Her experience also includes working with small businesses, independent artists, and media outlets such as Blouin Media and The Invisible Dog Art Center. With roots in both Cabbagetown and Buckhead, Willow thrives in spaces that allow her to bridge diverse worlds—using art, activism, and storytelling to create more just and inspired communities.

Jon Witzky

*Exhibitions Director
Arts Southeast
Chatham County*

Jon is an artist and educator from Columbus, Ohio. He received his BFA in Painting from Ohio State University and an MFA in Painting from Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Jon is Director of Exhibitions and the On: View Artist Residency at Sulfur Studios, as well as co-founder and Editor of *IMPACT Arts & Culture Magazine*.

Kelly Meholic

Executive Director

Alpharetta Symphony Orchestra

Fulton County

Kelly Meholic was appointed as the first Executive Director of the Alpharetta Symphony in 2020, a role that complements her extensive experience as Principal Flutist and former President of the Board of Directors. Kelly is passionate about uniting the Alpharetta community through the arts, sharing in the Alpharetta Symphony's mission to inspire, connect, educate, and enrich the city of Alpharetta and North Fulton through the magic of classical music.

Her musical journey began under the guidance of Betsy Hudson-Traba, Principal Flutist of the Sarasota Orchestra. During her formative years, Kelly demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to her craft, achieving numerous accolades, including multiple first-place finishes in the Florida All-State program. Her passion for orchestral music flourished in the Sarasota Youth Orchestra programs, where she culminated her early achievements by winning their prestigious Young Artists Competition. Summers at the renowned Interlochen Arts Camp in Michigan further enriched her artistry, offering invaluable experiences with esteemed instructors such as Nancy Stagnitta and Katherine DeJongh, and the unforgettable opportunity to perform under the legendary Frederick Fennell.

Kelly pursued her Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance with a minor in Italian at Florida State University, studying under Eva Amsler. During her time there, she was also selected to perform in a masterclass with renowned flutist Elizabeth Buck. She further refined her skills at the Conservatorio della Svizzera italiana in Lugano, Switzerland, where she earned a Master of Arts in Flute Performance under the mentorship of Mario Ancillotti, Stefano Parrino, and Giovanni Crola.

Kelly has performed with the Lugano Chamber Orchestra, Sarasota Orchestra, Sarasota Ballet Orchestra, Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, Northeast Atlanta Ballet Orchestra, Gwinnett Symphony, Atlanta Festival Academy Orchestra, New Atlanta Philharmonic, and Atlanta International Symphony Orchestra. In addition to her orchestral roles, she currently performs with the Alpharetta Symphony Woodwind Quintet and as a soloist.

Dr. Phyllis Johnson-Porter

Teaching Artist

Transformative Music Education Consulting

Richmond County

Dr. Phyllis E. Johnson-Porter is a graduate of Bennett College, Greensboro, North Carolina, and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Education. She received her Master of Music degree and all three levels of certification in Orff-Schulwerk from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, Ohio. She received certification in Discipline-Based Music Education from Armstrong-Atlantic University in Savannah, Georgia, and the Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership from Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Porter has 34+ years of public-school teaching experience, and has taught in Cincinnati, Ohio, Hamilton, Ohio, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Jackson, Mississippi, Atlanta, Georgia, and Augusta, Georgia. Dr. Porter was selected as Richmond County (Augusta, Georgia) School

System's 2016 Teacher of the Year and was the recipient of the Perry Publishing and Broadcasting 2016 Educator of the Year Award.

In 2020, Dr. Porter acquired STEM Endorsement from Augusta University, and in 2022, facilitated the first-place win for Belair K-8 School in the Elementary Music Division of the STEAMIFY Competition, which was hosted by Augusta University. In 2024, Dr. Porter became a member of the Georgia Council for the Arts K12 Teaching Artists Registry as an Arts and Education Professional Learning Provider. She is the published author of *The Children's Church Choir: A Handbook for Children's Choir Directors and Those Desiring to Develop A Ministry of Music for Children*. Dr. Porter's educational growth and development has been nurtured by her loving and supportive family, phenomenal teachers, and amazing students. Dr. Porter is married to Reverend Dr. Donald Porter.

Panel 2

Linda Brill

Development Consultant

Fulton County

Linda Brill attended the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Ronald de Kant, and Miami University (Ohio), where she received her bachelor's degree in music as a student of Michèle Gingras. She completed her master's degree in clarinet performance at Florida State University, studying with Frank Kowalsky.

Ms. Brill has performed in a wide variety of orchestras in the Midwest, including the Northern Kentucky Symphony, Central Ohio Symphony Orchestra, Westerville Symphony Orchestra, Welsh Hills Symphony Orchestra, Southeastern Ohio Symphony Orchestra, and the New Albany Symphony Orchestra. Since relocating to the Atlanta area in 2013, she has also performed with the Atlanta Wind Symphony, Gwinnett Symphony Orchestra, Northeast Atlanta Ballet Orchestra, Johns Creek Symphony Orchestra, and as a freelance musician in local churches and events.

Internationally, she has performed with the Echternach Music Festival Orchestra in Echternach, Luxembourg, and toured eight European countries as an American Musical Ambassador. Her chamber music experience has included performing with the Camerata Wind Quintet at the Coleman Chamber Music Competition in Pasadena, California.

As a private teacher, Linda Brill has taught beginning through advanced clarinetists ranging in age from elementary school students to college seniors. She teaches clarinet lessons convenient to Alpharetta, Johns Creek, and Cumming, Georgia, in her studio. She has been a clinician within Fulton County, Forsyth County, and Gwinnett County Schools, having given demonstrations and master classes at Chattahoochee High School, Northview High School, Alpharetta High School, Shiloh Middle School, Otwell Middle School, Hillside Elementary School, and Ocee Elementary School.

Nichole Potzauf

*Director of Development and Outreach
CERF+ (Craft: Emergency Relief Fund)
Fannin County*

Nichole joined CERF+(Craft Emergency Relief Fund) as the Director of Development & Outreach in June 2023. Prior to joining CERF+, she served for 10 years as the Executive Director of the Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association (BRMAA) in Blue Ridge, Georgia. Her tenure at BRMAA highlighted her experience in advocating for arts accessibility, economic development through a creative economy, grant and development management, and the cultivation of community and artistic engagement and partnerships. Prior to BRMAA, she served as Assessment Manager for Dalton State College School of Education, and while living in Los Angeles, California, served as Production Manager and Coordinator for several television and film production companies such as E! Networks, NBC/Universal, and Paramount Pictures.

Ramatu Afegbua-Sabbatt

*Executive Director
Manga African Dance
Fulton County*

Dr. Afegbua-Sabbatt holds a BA, an MBA, and a PhD in business management, along with 37 years of experience in nonprofit arts leadership. She has been essential in training the MADI management team internally. Staff and volunteers in artistic leadership positions possess substantial expertise, guided by Dr. Afegbua-Sabbatt and guest master teachers and choreographers.

An accomplished master artist recognized nationally and internationally, Dr. Afegbua-Sabbatt is a member of CID in Paris and IABD. Her background spans African dance and music, including teaching diverse age groups. Rooted in African culture, she frequently travels to Africa and the Caribbean to further her studies and instruction. Her knowledge in African dance surpasses that of many instructors. Since 1990, she has provided exemplary leadership for MADI, driven by her passion for the arts—evidenced by authoring the organization’s business plan as her master's thesis and her dissertation on leadership and innovation in nonprofit arts organizations in Georgia and Tennessee. As the artistic director, she creates all school arts programs and launches various performances and conferences.

Julie Wilkerson

*Executive Director
Macon Arts Alliance
Bibb County*

Julie Wilkerson has been in non-profit management since she joined the Junior League of Macon in 1984. She served as Market Place Chairman, Placement Chairman, Treasurer and President in her 20 years volunteering with that organization. She was employed as the first Development Director for Macon Volunteer Clinic from 2003-2007, served as the first Executive Director of Cox Capitol Theatre from 2007-2010 and as Development Director of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Georgia, where she was responsible for managing fundraising efforts for their \$500,000+ operating budget. In April 2018, she accepted the

position of Executive Director at Macon Arts Alliance, bringing her professional career in line with her passion – fostering creativity, connection, and compassion in Macon-Bibb County.

Catherine MacGregor

Executive Director

DeKalb Symphony Orchestra

DeKalb County

Executive Director of DeKalb Symphony Orchestra, Catherine MacGregor has served in that role since 2024. She previously worked in development at the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and holds degrees in music and arts management from Emory University and the University of Wisconsin–Madison. A violinist, music educator, and arts management leader, MacGregor also teaches music history at Kennesaw State University.

Doug LaBrecque

Artistic Director

Oconee Performing Arts Society

Greene County

Doug LaBrecque thrilled theatre audiences as The Phantom and Raoul in the Harold Prince production of The Phantom of the Opera. In addition, Mr. LaBrecque has starred on Broadway as Ravenal in the Hal Prince revival of Showboat, a role he also performed in Canada and Chicago. One of the most prolific concert performers of his generation, Mr. LaBrecque has been a soloist with some of the world's finest symphony orchestras including The National Symphony, The Israel Philharmonic (Tel Aviv), The Chicago Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Atlanta Symphony, The San Francisco Symphony, among many others. In the last few years, Mr. LaBrecque's U.S. appearances have included Minnesota Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Houston Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Dallas Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, The Utah Symphony and with Marvin Hamlisch both at the Ravinia Festival with The Chicago Symphony, and with The Pittsburgh Symphony. As the Director of Broadway Pops Programming for Greenberg Artists, Doug maintains a busy schedule creating and co-producing original symphonic programs and directing numerous musicals in concert. Mr. LaBrecque is also the Artistic Director of the Oconee Performing Arts Society (OPAS), 80 miles east of Atlanta in Greensboro, GA.

Panel 3

Chris Davidson

Board Member

Rome Area Heritage Foundation

Floyd County

Chris Davidson is a nonprofit arts leader and coach with over 20 years of experience driving collaborative innovation across public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Hailing originally from the Midwest, Chris has lived in Rome, Georgia with her family since 2009. She has served on the boards of the Historic DeSoto Theatre Foundation, Rome Little Theatre, and the Rome Historic Preservation Commission, and she currently serves on the board of the Rome Area Heritage

Foundation, as the President of the Rome High Theatre Boosters, and as the Grant Program Director of The Chiaha Guild of Arts and Crafts. She's spent most of her career in community building and the arts, most recently as the executive director of Rome Little Theatre where she led the organization out of peril and into a period of unprecedented strength and growth. She's also been lucky enough to dabble in TV and film alongside some talented and famous folks, though she is neither. Chris completed her undergraduate work in urban studies and business at The University of Tennessee and her graduate work in nonprofit management at Harvard University. A self-proclaimed data-fiend, Chris has proven success in out-of-the-box problem-solving, strategic planning, project management, and stakeholder engagement, and a track record for building and strengthening organizations in startup, growth, and transitional stages. With a commitment to fostering inclusive teams and communities, Chris seeks to leverage her experience and skills to support nonprofit organizations and help them maximize their impact.

Debra Cobia

*Board Member and Silver Instructor
William Holland Retreat
Towns County*

Debra Cobia retired from Auburn University in 2009 as a professor of Counselor Education. Following that retirement, she moved to Carrollton, Georgia to serve as director for a newly created doctoral program in Counselor Education and, subsequently, as the Associate Dean for Research and Evaluation. In this latter role, she oversaw the activities of the College of Education Evaluation Center and worked with faculty to develop research programs, support grant development, and evaluate preparation programs. Throughout each of these professional experiences she maintained a serious interest in the arts. She currently serves as a member of the board at the William Holland Lapidary School in Young Harris, Georgia and teaches a wide range of jewelry design and fabrication courses. When she isn't teaching, she enjoys hiking and kayaking in the beautiful North Alabama area in which she lives.

Christopher Brewer

*Development Director
Fly On A Wall
Fulton County*

With over twelve successful years in the grant writing and grant management realm, Chris has developed knowledge and experience necessary to help organizations thrive. Born in Youngstown, Ohio, Chris earned an Associates degree in Business Administration from Cuyahoga Community College, a BA in Public Management from Cleveland State University, and a BS in Accounting from Franklin University.

Chris quickly discovered his knack for working in the non-profit sector after graduating from college. His drive to succeed and his passion for helping others will ensure that your organization's needs are front and center. You can usually find Chris at a CrossFit gym or hiking in the north Georgia mountains when he's not working.

Chris is a member of the Grant Professionals Association and the Association of Fundraising Professionals. He is the founder and lead writer of Fund It Forward Grant Consulting.

Denise Tucker

Executive Director

Greater Augusta Arts Council

Richmond County

Denise Tucker, Executive Director of Greater Augusta Arts Council, is a singer with a background in musical theater and holds a BA in Business Administration from Wichita State University. She is a dynamic leader and natural collaborator with more than 20 years of experience in arts management, nonprofit administration, and community engagement. Denise has her finger on the pulse of the arts community, enriching the Augusta River Region through innovative programming, strategic partnerships, and impactful advocacy. Her track record includes increasing membership engagement by 10% in her first six months on the job and spearheading the Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 Project. Denise has the respect and trust of not just the arts community, but the Richmond County nonprofit community, County leadership and Departments, and corporate partners. Denise is host of an arts-focused radio show “Talk Artsy to Me”, which will transition to a podcast in 2026, where she interviews creators across Augusta. Denise's entrepreneurial spirit is demonstrated as co-owner of TreeHouse Juice Joint and Art Gallery, where she supports local artists through organized community events. Denise's goal is simple: elevating the arts to improve life in the community and strengthen Augusta's competitive edge.

Anne Dennington

Executive Director

Flux Projects

Fulton County

Anne Archer Dennington, founding executive director, leads Flux Projects' artistic vision and is responsible for all curatorial and commissioning decisions. Dennington has over two decades of experience producing public art and has worked across the nonprofit, government, and commercial sectors.

Under her leadership, Flux Projects has commissioned 152 projects, engaged more than 700 artists, and presented work throughout metro Atlanta. Dennington has collaborated with nationally recognized artists and curators, served on numerous civic and public art advisory committees, and built long-term partnerships with community, cultural, and municipal organizations.

Catherine Ledbetter

Chorus Manager

Lanier Chamber Singers

Hall County

Dr. Ledbetter is a Georgia native who has lived in Georgia her entire life and has been heavily involved in various Georgia musical ensembles for nearly half a century. In addition to holding a Bachelor of Music Education degree (B.M.) from Berry College, she also has earned a doctorate in pharmacy (Pharm.D.) from Mercer University. Dr. Ledbetter has been employed at CVS Pharmacy for over 31 years as a pharmacist, but has been working part-time for the last two decades in order to devote time to serving various Georgia non-profit arts organizations. Currently, Dr. Ledbetter is actively engaged in eight unique musical ensembles located in

Atlanta, Dunwoody, Roswell, and Gainesville. For the past four years, she has been serving as chorus manager, board member, grant writer, artistic consultant, and graphic designer for The Lanier Chamber Singers (LCS), an auditioned chamber vocal ensemble based in Gainesville, Georgia. Additionally, she is volunteering with the Atlanta Vocal Project (AVP) to assist with their financial and developmental growth as well as chairing their auxiliary group, Off the Risers. AVP is a metro Atlanta based all men's barbershop chorus that currently holds the International Silver Medal in barbershop. Previously, she served for eight years as the Production Manager for ActingUp, a Georgia based theater company.

Panel 4

Christan Carter

*Executive and Co-Artistic Director, Djoli Kelen
Fulton County*

Christan Carter, a New Orleans native, is the Executive and Co-Artistic Director of Djoli Kelen Inc., an Atlanta-based nonprofit dedicated to preserving and promoting African and African Diasporic cultural arts through dance, music, and education. With over two decades of experience in the arts sector, Christan has served in various leadership roles, including Assistant Artistic Director of Manga African Dance, Interim Artistic Director of Uhuru Dancers, and Board CFO for the Afrikan Djeli Cultural Institute. Her work emphasizes cultural preservation, community engagement, and youth empowerment, aiming to make running an arts business as enjoyable as a trip to an art supply store. Christan is also the founder of Djoli Kelen Fest, an inclusive festival celebrating African dance and drum traditions. She believes in leading with love and service, drawing inspiration from her mentors and ancestors. Outside of her professional endeavors, Christan enjoys sharing cultural experiences with family and community, reflecting her deep commitment to cultural education and unity.

Mandy Maloney

*Facilities Director and Administrative Assistant
Historic DeSoto Theatre Foundation
Floyd County*

Mandy Maloney is an arts and nonprofit leader with more than 15 years of experience managing complex projects, administering grants, and building strategic partnerships in support of historic preservation and cultural organizations. She has served the Historic DeSoto Theatre Foundation in multiple capacities—including facilities manager, board member, and project manager—developing exceptional institutional knowledge of the building and the operational demands of large-scale restoration initiatives. Mandy has served as Executive Director of both the Rome Area Council for the Arts and Rome Little Theatre, where she oversaw organizational development and managed public and private grant portfolios. Her acting, directing and production abilities make her an invaluable asset to the HDTF team as it brings in elaborate touring shows and concerts.

Athea King

*Executive Director
Suwanee Arts Center
Gwinnett County*

Athea King brings more than a decade of nonprofit, gallery, and leadership experience—along with a commitment to building an inclusive, accessible, and arts-centered community.

She previously was with the Woodruff Arts Center, where she managed engagement for more than 130 Board of Trustees members, stewarded philanthropic partnerships, and co-developed fundraising events benefitting statewide arts education. Her work supported campus-wide collaborations between the High Museum of Art, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and Alliance Theatre, strengthening integrated community programming across disciplines.

Athea also served as Gallery associate of Visual Merchandising at the Spruill Gallery, in Atlanta, where she led merchandising strategy, strengthened artist relationships, and directed the annual Holiday Art Fair, the gallery's largest and most successful fundraising event, featuring more than 145 curated artisans.

Athea's background also includes roles at the High Museum of Art, ArtCloud, HomeStretch, and Alan Avery Art Company, experiences that have shaped her into a multifaceted arts leader skilled in strategic planning, donor and board relations, program development, operations management, and artist advocacy.

She plans to develop classes, exhibitions, and public programs that reflect the vibrancy of Suwanee and foster meaningful connections between artists, residents, and local organizations.

In addition to her administrative leadership, Athea is a practicing fine art photographer whose work has been exhibited throughout the Southeast and supported by two successful Kickstarter campaigns. She holds a BFA in Photographic Imaging from the Art Institute of Atlanta.

Stephanie Donaldson

*Executive Director
The Art Center formerly known as Johns Creek Art Center
Fulton County*

Executive Director since 2020, and multifaceted employee for many years prior, Stephanie is an integral part of the The Art Center in Johns Creek. A long-time member of both the North Fulton Rotary and the Johns Creek Chamber of Commerce, she plays an active role in the Johns Creek community. Always looking to elevate The Art Center and the city, Stephanie brings a level of sophistication to every project she is a part of.

Panel 5

Angela Harris

Executive Artistic Director

Dance Canvas

Fulton County

Angela Harris is the Executive Artistic Director of Dance Canvas, Inc., a career development organization for emerging professional choreographers and youth. Angela conceived and founded Dance Canvas after witnessing the difficult path and lack of professional opportunities for young choreographers. Additionally, Dance Canvas was envisioned to create relatable professional dance experiences and new dance patrons in the Atlanta area. Angela has developed youth dance/career development programs for the City of Atlanta's Office of Cultural Affairs (Culture Club and ArtsCool), recording artist, Usher's New Look Foundation, and the Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation. She has forged partnerships with the Atlanta Ballet, Atlantic Station, Rialto Center for the Arts, the French Consulate of Atlanta, National Black Arts Festival & Kennesaw State University. Through Dance Canvas, Angela has been a catalyst, consultant, and resource for numerous new dance organizations and artists throughout metro Atlanta. She received the 2011 Emerging Leader Award from Americans for the Arts and American Express, and was selected to be in the 2014 class of Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta (ALMA). Angela served on the national Emerging Leaders Council for Americans for the Arts from 2011 - 2014, and is a member of Dance USA.

Artistically, Angela Harris is originally from Baltimore, Maryland and is a choreographer, dancer, and a graduate of The Baltimore School for the Arts. She received her dance training at Dance Theater of Harlem, School of the Hartford Ballet, and The Eglevsky Ballet. She attended Mercyhurst College and City College of New York, earning a B.A. in Journalism, while on full ballet scholarship at Steps on Broadway. Angela has danced professionally with The Georgia Ballet, Columbia City Ballet, and Urban Ballet Theater in NYC. Angela's Atlanta theatre performance credits include *Sophisticated Ladies* and *Degas' Little Dancer* (u/s) at the Alliance Theatre, as well as numerous productions with the Aurora Theater, including *A Chorus Line*, where she starred as Kristine DeLuca. She was a principal in Jasmine Guy's production of *Daughters of Alpha*, in New Orleans, as well as a soloist dancer in the national tour of *The Thorn*, choreographed by Deanna McBrearty of New York City Ballet. Her choreography has been performed by The Georgia Ballet, Steps on Broadway Ensemble, Ballet Lubbock, Savannah Arts Academy, as well as other companies and schools across the country. She choreographed *Bridges of Madison County* (Aurora Theater), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Actor's Express), *Willy Wonka* and *West Side Story* (Fabrefaction Theater), *The First Noel* (True Colors Theatre Company) and most recently *Theatrical Outfit's 110 in the Shade*. Angela has been a master class instructor at colleges & universities across the country. She was the resident ballet instructor at the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute in 2015, 2016 and virtually in 2020. Angela was awarded the 2012 Emerging Artist Award in Dance from The City of Atlanta's Office of Cultural Affairs and received a proclamation from the Atlanta City Council. Angela was selected as one of five Inaugural National Visiting Fellows at the School of American Ballet in NYC. Angela received an SDCF Observership and worked with Susan Stroman on the new musical, *Little Dancer*, during its Development Lab for Broadway. Angela is on faculty at Emory University's Department of Dance and Movement Studies and Spelman College's Dance Performance and Choreography Department. She is also currently an instructor at Dekalb School for the Arts and Academy of Ballet.

Judi Bell

Board Member

Georgia Writers Museum

Putnam County

Judi Bell is a strategic business leader with more than 30 years of executive experience in human capital management, operational transformation, and technology integration. As COO of People 2.0, she led the company's evolution from startup to global private equity-backed enterprise, overseeing operations, client services, and a shift to a shared services model. She is known for driving growth, aligning people and technology strategies, and delivering measurable outcomes during times of change. A trusted adviser to boards and executives, she brings deep insight and practical expertise to consulting, speaking engagements, and leadership forums across the professional services and nonprofit sectors. She currently serves as an adviser for the Georgia Writers Museum and the Chester County Fund for Women and Girls, and she formerly was board chair for the Fund for Women and Girls. She also served as executive director for Women in Insurance and Financial Services.

Sherri Davis

Artistic Director/Founder

Georgia Dance Theatre

Fayette County

As the founder and director of the Georgia Academy of Dance & the Performing Arts, Sherri Davis embodies a deep passion for dance and the performing arts, inspiring aspiring artists to discover the joy of movement. With over 35 years of experience as a professional dancer, choreographer, and educator, Davis has cultivated a rich background in various artistic disciplines, including opera, theater, classical ballet, and contemporary dance.

Davis received a full, residential scholarship to the Tidewater Ballet Association of Virginia where she left home to study dance full time. Additionally, she trained with Mississippi Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet of New York, School of American Ballet of New York, and the Pennsylvania Ballet under full scholarship. Davis has also received a scholarship to the prestigious school of American Ballet Theatre of New York.

Davis has performed with such prestigious companies as Georgia Dance Theatre, Mississippi Ballet Theatre, Richmond Ballet, and Virginia Ballet Theatre and as a guest artist with various companies and venues throughout the Southeast. Additionally, Davis has been a guest artist with the Virginia Opera, the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, and the Atlanta Symphony.

As Artistic Director and choreographer, Davis has re-staged and choreographed full length ballets, contemporary works and created original works for the stage with critical acclaim. These works include her original full-length ballets such as Peter Pan, Alice in Wonderland, and The Three Musketeers. Davis has presented world premieres of her original full-length ballets of West Side Story, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, and Jane Eyre to sold out audiences. In the summer of 2024, Davis created the full-length ballet An American in Paris which further demonstrates her commitment to bringing both original and reimagined works to life.

Davis has also written and produced her original full-length ballet, The Growing Up of Annabell Potts, a poignant tale set in the South, capturing the bittersweet experience of a young girl as she navigates the transitions of childhood amidst the looming specter of war.

Davis's unwavering belief in the transformative power of dance has led her to create a nurturing and dynamic environment for young artists through Georgia Dance Theatre, which she founded in 1990. This non-profit organization serves as a platform for dedicated dancers to hone their skills and pursue their passion for the art form, embodying her commitment to fostering courage, perseverance, and self-esteem in children.

Under her leadership as Artistic Director, Georgia Dance Theatre has become a beacon of artistic excellence, earning accolades and support from prestigious organizations such as the Georgia Council of the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, and the Governor's Office of the state of Georgia. These commendations reflect not only the high artistic standards upheld by Davis and her team but also their commitment to serving the community through the arts.

In 1996, Davis established Georgia Dance Theatre Professional Company, for those continuing their dance careers on a professional level. And in 2006, Davis extended Georgia Academy of Dance into Georgia Academy of Dance & the Performing Arts as a way to include additional forms of arts education.

Davis served on the Board of Directors of the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce for 6 years and was selected for Chamber leadership due to her "influential leadership qualities as to foster growth and vibrancy of the arts within the local community". In addition, she served on the Government Affairs Committee and has served on the Board Member Selection Committee & Economic Development Committee of the Fayette Chamber. She has served on the Place Committee of Fayette Visioning of Fayette County. Davis is a partner with the Fayette and Coweta County Board of Education Mentorship Work Study Programs and had membership with the Coweta County Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Davis also serves as the Artistic Director of Georgia Dance Theatre and she is the CEO of The Dancer's Boutique and Managing Member of Davis Properties, LLC.

Anne Robinson

*Grants Director
Loop It Up Savannah
Chatham County*

Anne Robinson has 25 years of experience in the nonprofit and local municipal funding arenas. A winner of the Congressional Black Caucus Education Braintrust Award in 2003, Anne brings with her nine years of direct experience coordinating with and advocating for Loop it Up Savannah. Formerly, she was the founder of Momentum Development Solutions, which provided fundraising and grant-writing services for nonprofits, and the executive director of multi-agency resource center The Front Porch in Savannah. In her work at both of those agencies, Anne brought boundless expertise, energy, and creativity.

Laura Flusche

Executive Director

Museum of Design Atlanta

Fulton County

Laura Flusche serves as Executive Director of the Museum of Design Atlanta (MODA). She joined MODA in 2010 as Associate Director and became Executive Director in 2013. As Executive Director, she leads all of the museum's strategic initiatives and oversees the creation and implementation of exhibitions and programs that demonstrate the power of design to effect positive change in the world.

Prior to joining MODA, Laura lived for fifteen years in Rome, Italy, where she served as Assistant Academic Dean for an American academic program and was part of the Palatine East Excavation team, supervising excavations and contributing to the publication of archaeological findings.

In 2016, Laura received the Business Design and Arts Leadership Distinguished Alumni Award from the Savannah College of Art and Design where she earned a master's degree in Arts Administration. In 2014, she was selected to attend the Getty Leadership Institute's Executive Program for Museum Professionals.

Laura holds a Ph.D. in Ancient Roman and Etruscan Art and Archaeology and fiercely maintains that design is archaeology backwards. She also holds an M.A. in Italian Renaissance Art.

Laura serves on the Midtown Alliance Board of Directors and is a member of the steering committee for Atlanta's Arts Marketing Roundtable. She is also a member of the College Art Association's Museum Committee and the Council for Innovation at Mt. Vernon Presbyterian School in Sandy Springs, GA.

Panel 6

Dr. Fahamu Pecou

Executive Director

African Diaspora Art Museum of Atlanta

Fulton County

Dr. Fahamu Pecou, *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, is an interdisciplinary artist and scholar whose works combine observations on hip-hop, fine art, and popular culture to address concerns around contemporary representations of Black men. Through paintings, performance art, and academic work, Dr. Pecou confronts the social construct of Black masculinity and Black identity, challenging and expanding the reading, performance, and expressions of Blackness. Dr. Fahamu Pecou received his BFA at the Atlanta College of Art in 1997 and a M. A. and Ph.D. from Emory University in 2017 and 2018 respectively. Dr. Pecou exhibits his art worldwide in addition to lectures and speaking engagements at colleges and universities. As an educator, Dr. Pecou has developed (ad)Vantage Point, a narrative-based arts curriculum focused on Black male youth. Dr. Pecou is also Founder and Executive Director of the African Diaspora Art Museum of Atlanta (ADAMA). Pecou's work is featured in noted private and public national and international collections including; Smithsonian National Museum of African American Art and Culture, Societe Generale (Paris), Nasher Museum at Duke University, The High Museum of Art, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Seattle Art Museum, Paul R. Jones Collection, ROC

Nation, Clark Atlanta University Art Collection and Museum of Contemporary Art Georgia. Dr. Pecou is a recipient of the 2022 Louis Comfort Tiffany Award. In 2020, Pecou was one of 6 artists selected for Emory University's groundbreaking Arts & Social Justice Fellowship. Additionally, Pecou was the Georgia awardee for the 2020 South Arts Prize. In 2017 he was the subject of a retrospective exhibition "Miroirs de l'Homme" in Paris, France. A recipient of the 2016 Joan Mitchell Foundation "Painters and Sculptors" Award, his work also appears in several films and television shows including; HBO's *Between the World and Me*, *Black-ish*, and *The Chi*. Pecou's work has also been featured on numerous publications including Atlanta Magazine, Hanif Abdurraqib's poetry collection, "A Fortune for Your Disaster" and the award-winning collection of short stories by Rion Amilcar Scott, "The World Doesn't Require You."

Taylor Montalto

*Education & Grants Coordinator
Atlanta Film Society
Fulton County*

Taylor grew up obsessed with movies and was inspired to study film by my idol, Nora Ephron. She ended up graduating with honors from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington with a Bachelor's Degree in Film Studies and Journalism. Born and raised in Charlotte, North Carolina, my passion for all things film and photography-related has driven me to work on various projects in both documentary and narrative mediums.

She has worked on a variety of film projects, including narrative features, 'The Rack Pack' and 'Grace Point', starring Johnny Lowe and Andrew McCarthy. She also participated in the 2019 Charlotte 48 Hour Film Project as Assistant Director and Script Supervisor of 'The Job', which was recognized for its achievements in Directing, Cinematography, and Musical Score, as well as Audience Choice and Best Film overall for the year.

Her proudest accomplishment to date is having been part of the post-production phase of a documentary feature, 'Jewish American Soldiers: Stories from WWII'. Since its official premiere in Charlotte, it has aired on PBS stations nationwide, become available for rental and purchase on Amazon Prime Video, and been included for historical preservation in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It also received an Emmy nomination in the Musical Composition/ Arrangement category.

She currently works as Education & Grants Coordinator for the Atlanta Film Society, in which she is tasked with logistical, operational, and informational coordinating of 25+ year-round educational programs and events, including registration-based classes and workshops, ATLFS' Eat, Drink & B-Indie monthly networking event, ATLFF's Creative Conference, and ATLFS' youth filmmaking summer camp, CineCamp ATL, as well as developing educational outreach initiatives with past and new instructors. In addition, she works to research, identify, and cultivate prospective donors/grant partnerships (including foundations), assist the organization's development efforts to maintain current and grow from current levels with new grant sources, and correspond with prospective donors/grant funders. She previously worked as Production Assistant for Full Scale Productions in Charlotte and as a Floor Staff Member for Charlotte Film Society's The Independent Picture House, Charlotte's first and only independently-owned art house cinema.

William Murdock

Artistic Director

Colquitt Miller Arts Council

Miller County

Will Murdock is the Artistic Director and a resident playwright/director for the Colquitt/Miller Arts Council (CMAC) in Colquitt, Georgia. He is deeply involved with the council's signature folk-life play, Swamp Gravy, which is performed at the historic Cotton Hall Theater.

Alta Schwartz

Operations Director

The Arab-American Fund of Georgia dba Alif Institute

Fulton County

Alta Schwartz holds a Bachelor of Arts in Near Eastern Studies from Emory University and is completing a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in nonprofit management at Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. Alta has previously worked as Director of Outreach in the Middle East Institute for Georgia State University and has served as a Board Member on the Middle East Outreach Council. Currently, Alta is the Operations Director at the Alif Institute. Alif Institute is Atlanta's Arab American cultural center organization, whose mission is to foster the understanding and appreciation of Arab cultures.

Jordan Beck

Director of Development

Springer Opera House

Muscogee County

Jordan is an award-winning producer, studio executive, creative director, and performer with two decades of experience balancing storytelling and business development in the arts and entertainment industry.

He graduated with honors from UGA at age 19 (B.A., Film Studies) before building a career specializing in independent productions and business growth for studios, venues, educational institutions, and non-profits.

Previously, he headed development for Emmy-nominated studio Hero4Hire Creative, produced and co-starred in the animated feature "Sgt. Stubby," and oversaw entertainment booking and AV production for the THEA-winning National Infantry Museum.

In addition to his screen and stage work, Jordan continues to perform as a session musician. He is also a decorated Army National Guard officer and helps manage his wife's boutique cottage bakery, The Bongo Bakehouse.

Hope Reese

Board President

Monroe Walton Art Guild

Walton County

Hope Reese is the Board President and Marketing and Community Engagement Coordinator for Monroe-Walton Center for the Arts in Monroe, Georgia, where she previously served as Executive Director. She has been involved with the organization since 2015, helping guide its growth into an inclusive, community-focused arts center offering classes, exhibitions, outreach programs, healing arts initiatives, and opportunities for local artists. Hope is especially passionate about expanding access to the arts, strengthening community partnerships, and supporting arts organizations that enrich the lives of the people they serve.

Panel 7**Alice Lovelace**

Executive Director

Southeast Community Cultural Center dba The ArtsXchange

Fulton County

Alice Lovelace is a cultural worker, performance artist, teacher, poet, organizer, author, playwright, and arts administrator. She earned her Master's at Antioch University in Yellow Springs, Ohio. Since 1976 Atlanta has been her home of choice; a fertile ground for artistic growth and activism, and in 1978, she discovered the Neighborhood Arts Center and met Ebon Dooley (Leo Hale) and Toni Cade Bambara. Together, they organized poetry readings and classes while conducting meetings for the Southern Collective of African American Writers (SCAAW). In 1981, Ebon and Alice founded the nonprofit: Southeast Community Cultural Center located at the former Grant Park Elementary School and in 1984 opened the former school as The Arts Exchange – a studio space for artists, a theater, recording studio, two galleries, a dance studio, and home to the Atlanta Writers Resource Center. Between 1998 and 2000 Alice became executive director of Alternate ROOTS, an artists-led southern regional organization; and along with Dr. Lisa Delpit and actress Jane Fonda, she founded and stepped into the role of executive director of the Atlanta Partnership for Arts in Learning (APAL). Currently serving as the president of the board of ArtsXchange, Alice continues to serve the public need through programs implemented at the nonprofit's newly renovated facility in East Point, GA.

Natalie DeLancey

Executive Director

City Springs Theatre Company

Fulton County

Natalie DeLancey has been a driving force behind the growth and success of City Springs Theatre Company since its inception, first serving as Managing Director before being appointed Executive Director in 2021. Under her leadership, CSTC has emerged as a nationally recognized regional theatre, known for artistic excellence, community engagement, and organizational innovation.

Prior to CSTC, Natalie served as Director of Arts Education and Community Outreach for the ArtsBridge Foundation, the education and outreach arm of the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre. During her tenure at Cobb Energy Centre, she earned the program's first-ever Southeastern Emmy Award for directing the 2017 Georgia High School Musical Theatre Awards broadcast.

Earlier in her career, Natalie worked at the Woodruff Arts Center as Artist Partnerships Manager for Young Audiences, where she helped launch the Arts Center's first-ever collaborative teen program, ArtsVibe, developed in partnership with all four divisions of the Woodruff Arts Center. This groundbreaking initiative expanded access to arts education and fostered cross-disciplinary collaboration at an institutional level.

A highly respected arts leader, Natalie has been recognized through numerous competitive leadership and honor programs, including Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta (2014), the inaugural 30 Under 30 class of the International Association of Venue Managers (2015), and Leadership Cobb (Class of 2016). She received the Ernest Barrett Award from the Cobb Chamber in 2016 for her commitment to excellence and was selected for the 2024 class of Leadership Perimeter.

In 2024, Natalie received the BOLD Award—Businesswoman Dedicated to Doing Good—from the Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce and was inducted into the Georgia Theatre Conference Hall of Fame. In 2025, she was honored with the Next Generation Award from the Cobb Chamber of Commerce. Natalie currently serves as Chair of the Greater Perimeter Chamber, continuing her commitment to civic leadership and regional impact.

John Welker

Executive Director

Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre

Fulton County

John Welker is director of Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre. Before co-founding the company in 2017, he danced for many years with the Atlanta Ballet in lead roles such as Albrecht in Giselle, Romeo in Romeo and Juliet and Dracula in Michael Pink's ballet of the same name. He also founded and directed for seven years Atlanta Ballet's contemporary dance initiative, Wabi Sabi.

Pamela Kohn

Executive Director

Athens Film Arts Institute, Inc. dba Ciné

Clarke County

Pamela has been involved in the marketing of motion pictures at film festivals around the world, including Cannes, Toronto, and the American Film Market. As a producer, Kohn has worked on a number of films including *Somebodies*, which premiered at Sundance as an "official selection" film in the narrative feature competition. *Somebodies* won the Special "Grand Jury" prize for Screenwriting at the Sarasota Film Festival and garnered critical recognition at Roger Ebert's film festival and was subsequently bought by Black Entertainment Television (Viacom). *Somebodies* was then developed into a television series, based on the movie and was picked up by BET. Kohn produced *Rain*, which was picked up by Showtime and Showtime on Demand and subsequently picked up by Image for DVD release in the US. *Rain* is the first indigenous Bahamian feature film of its kind to be filmed in country. The film premiered at the Toronto

Film Festival, screened at and won the "Audience Choice Award" at the Bahamas International Film Festival. Screened at the Pan African Film Festival and won "Best Director-First Feature. Additional Awards: Special Mention, New Visions Competition - Palm Springs International Film Festival – Graine Cinephage Award - Creteil International Women's Film Festival, France, Best Teen Movie Award - Women's International Film Festival Seoul Korea, Runner Up for the Audience Award Bermuda International Film Festival, Bermuda, Runner Up for the Audience Award Women's Film Festival Brattleboro Vermont. She also produced *Bottleworld*, a feature film starring Maya and Scott Wilson, which has now entered the festival circuit, debuting in Philadelphia and going onto screen in Ireland. More recently Kohn produced the feature length documentary *The Wizard of Odd*. Kohn has also been the Co-Founder, Festival Director, and Producer of Robert Osborne's Classic Film Festival, and worked as a Director of Development and Fundraiser for the University of Georgia for over 10 years. Besides working at Ciné as ED, Kohn has a number of film and television projects in varying stages of development as Writer, Producer, and Executive Producer.

Landy Cartledge

*Grants and Sponsorships Officer
The Columbus Museum
Muscogee County*

A natural and perceptive creative, Landy's passion for the sensory and thought-provoking nature of art has been at the forefront of her life since before she can remember. First starting as a creative outlet, Landy's love of art developed into an educational path, receiving her BA in Studio Art & Art History from University of Georgia. After spending time working in the gallery world of New York City and receiving her Curatorial Certificate from Sotheby's Institute of Art, Landy returned South where she received her Master's in Nonprofit Management from Georgia State University. Similar to her sister, Landy also has a deep love for her home, Columbus, and worked as a curator for the Columbus Museum before embarking on this entrepreneurial venture that is Highland Galerie. She brings both her acute eye for talent as well as her industry expertise to managing works, organizing exhibitions and overseeing the day to day logistics of life at the Galerie.

Amanda Claire Michaels Brown

*Executive Director
Creative Arts Guild
Whitfield County*

Amanda CM Brown, serves as the Executive Director of the Creative Arts Guild, in Dalton, Georgia. Founded in 1963 by a group of community artists and visionaries, the Creative Arts Guild is the state's oldest multidisciplinary community arts organization. Amanda holds a bachelor's degree in Theatre Arts, from the Sewanee: University of the South, a master's degree in Arts Administration and Program Management, from the University of Denver, and a master's degree in Arts in Medicine, from the University of Florida. Prior to her role at the Guild, Amanda worked professionally as an arts educator in the areas of theatre, dance, and visual arts and as a theatre director and choreographer. Utilizing her diverse life experiences in the arts in her role as the Guild's Executive Director, Amanda offers strategic guidance and provides artistic and administrative support for the organization to launch and sustain high quality arts offerings and facilitate growth and new artistic ventures. Amanda has been with the Creative Arts Guild since November 2014 and in that time has enjoyed creating and supporting

many new opportunities for arts engagement and using the lens of the arts to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of all community members.

Panel 8

Jo-ann Lawrence

Grants Manager

Hammonds House Museum

Fulton County

Jo-ann Lawrence is a non-profit professional with experience in the theatre, ballet, and museums, as well as healthcare, child-welfare, early education, and disability services. Her expertise lies in operating non-profits, and specifically, program creation/management, strategic planning, board management, grant writing, grants training, grant making, and annual funds. A few examples of Jo-ann's past hands-on work are managing two historic theatres, running a city-wide arts education program in Chicago, managing a health system grant making program, and creating programming for youth in foster care. Lawrence graduated from Butler University with a B.S. in Arts Administration and from Columbia College Chicago with a M.A. in Performing Arts Management. Jo-ann recently formed Ascension Nonprofit Development, LLC to bring all of her interests and efforts under one umbrella.

Mel Whitehead

Executive Director

Sautee Nacoochee Community Association

White County

Before coming to SNCA, Executive Director Mel Whitehead spent thirty-five years as a professional musician and educator. He was trained as a professional singer, and earned his BM in Vocal Performance at the University of Southern California. After fifteen years as a professional singer, he turned his focus to music education. He earned a Masters of Education in Curriculum through the Arts at Lesley University in Boston, and his Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership at Georgia College and State University, Milledgeville. From 2012-2022, he was the Performing Arts Administrator for the Savannah Chatham County School system, and the conductor of the Savannah Philharmonic Chorus.

Dawn Watkins

Donor Relations Manager

Atlanta Jewish Film Society

DeKalb County

Dawn Watkins is a nonprofit advancement professional known for building lasting donor relationships, strengthening organizational continuity, and providing steady leadership during periods of institutional transition and growth. She currently serves as the Donor Relations Manager at Atlanta Jewish Film Society. Previously, she spent more than a decade in development roles with The Alfred and Adele Davis Academy. Prior to that, she served as Development Associate at Families First.

Collins Desselle

*Associate Director, Strategic Institutional Advancement
Alliance Theatre
Fulton County*

Collins Desselle is a fundraiser with a communications background who loves telling stories to do some good in the world. She has worked more than 10 years with increasing leadership responsibilities across every aspect of fundraising – Board of Director management, major gifts, special events, corporate sponsorships, foundation and government fundraising, and direct mail and digital campaigns. She has worked in development roles with Alliance Theatre for more than a decade. She has also worked as a grant consultant with Purpose Possible and as Development Manager for Horizon Theatre Company

Nairika Cornett

*Executive Director
Quinlan Arts Center
Hall County*

Nairika Cornett brings a dynamic blend of artistic expertise, business leadership, and community vision to her role as Executive Director of the Quinlan Visual Arts Center.

With a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Arts in Arts Management and Dance Pedagogy from Brenau University, Nairika combines creative insight with strategic perception. Her artistic foundation includes earning her Advanced Performer Ballet Certification from London’s prestigious Royal Academy of Dance, reflecting both discipline and international perspective.

Prior to joining the Quinlan, Nairika spent ten years with The Arts Council in Gainesville, Georgia, where she led marketing initiatives and championed Arts in Schools programming. Her work strengthened community partnerships and expanded access to arts education throughout the region.

Born in Bombay, India, Nairika’s global background informs her deep belief that culture builds bridges between people. She is passionate about the power of the arts to unite communities, elevate diverse voices, and inspire collective progress. She describes people and culture as her twin passions—recognizing that creativity flourishes when diverse perspectives and shared purpose come together.

After completing her undergraduate degree, Nairika briefly considered returning to India, drawn by the vibrancy of big-city life. Instead, she took a year to travel, then returned to Brenau to pursue her MBA. During that time, she met her husband, Tom Cornett—a turning point that anchored her personal and professional life in Gainesville.

A longtime Gainesville resident, devoted mother of two sons, and advocate for women, Nairika serves as both strategic planner and community ambassador for the Quinlan. She is committed to fostering relationships with artists, supporters, members, collectors, and civic partners, ensuring the Quinlan continues to grow through collaboration, innovation, and outreach.

Under her leadership, the future of the Quinlan promises continued vibrancy—rooted in artistic excellence, thoughtful stewardship, and a belief that through art, we are stronger together.

Alexander Acosta

Executive Director

Soul Food Cypher

Fulton County

Alexander "Cost" Acosta is the Executive Director of Soul Food Cypher (SFC). He believes in Hip Hop's aptitude in breaking down racial, cultural, and communicative barriers. A disciple of this culture, Acosta knows it is the most effective means of bridging generational and socio-economic gaps. With a background in the arts and management, Acosta has the perfect balance to make sure Soul Food Cypher maximizes its overall potential. As Executive Director, he takes on many hats such as managing the staff and the budget, overseeing the operation of the events, multimedia, working with the staff to create workshops, and maintains relationship with the staff, members, volunteers and clients through meetings. Outside of the cypher, he is Director of Managed Services at Acosta Technologies and teaches weekly photography classes at the Showcase Photography school in Atlanta, Ga. In his spare time, he volunteers at the Whiteford Community center where he teaches teens various media applications to prepare them to compete in a global economy. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Photography from Florida A&M University in 2008 and has been featured many publications and exhibitions across the country as a photojournalist and photographer.

Panel 9

Chandra Stephens-Albright

Managing Director

True Colors Theatre Company

Fulton County

Chandra Stephens-Albright is the Managing Director of True Colors Theatre Company, where she co-leads the theatre with Artistic Director Jamil Jude. She brings an incredible depth of collaborative leadership and a successful track record of innovative fund development to her role as financial ambassador for the theatre. She is known for her acumen in defining strategy, executing priorities, converting insights into initiatives, and managing diverse groups of stakeholders.

Chandra comes to True Colors Theatre Company from C5 Georgia, where she served as Executive Director from 2014 to 2017. There, Ms. Stephens-Albright led efforts to achieve financial sustainability, raise community awareness, optimize operational effectiveness and increase alumni engagement.

Previously, Chandra led customer marketing and innovation efforts at The Coca-Cola Company. Over her 22-year career there – from 1991 until 2013 – she built a reputation for directing productive teams, tackling tough challenges, and leading strategic initiatives. Specifically, she guided the development of the Coca-Cola Freestyle® brand name, user interface design and visual identity. Before joining Coca-Cola, she was a Product Manager at Clairol. Her career began at Bristol-Myers Squibb in the Bristol Myers International Group.

As a dynamic and seasoned leader, Chandra models and inspires high levels of integrity, collaboration and transparency with colleagues, donors, corporate partners, community groups and leaders. Deeply passionate about her community, Ms. Stephens-Albright currently serves on the boards of the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership and The Alliance Theatre. She is a past board

member of the Emory Alumni Board, the Emory Annual Giving Board, the Emory College Alumni Board, Girls Inc. of Greater Atlanta, and the Multi-Cultural Foodservice and Hospitality Alliance.

Chandra is a member of the Leadership Atlanta Class of 2005. A native Atlantan, Chandra graduated from Emory University with a Chemistry degree. She was a Consortium for Graduate Studies in Management Fellow at the The Olin School of Business in St. Louis, Missouri, where she earned her MBA. She is married to Warren Albright.

Chloe Hinton

*Director of Development and Membership
Albany Museum of Art
Dougherty County*

As Development and Membership Director of The Albany Museum of Art, Chloe is responsible for direct fundraising, including memberships, grants, capital programs and special fundraising events for the non-profit. Chloe studied Art History at the College of Charleston and is a member of the Southeastern Museum Conference, the National Art Educators Association and the Emerging Museum Professionals organizations. Additionally, she is active in numerous civic and community groups, including the Kiwanis Club of Dougherty and the Charity League of Albany.

Erin Dreiling

*Director
Coxe Curry & Associates
Fulton County*

At Coxe Curry, Erin partners with clients to develop and direct strategic marketing and communications that move their work forward. She brings decades of experience shaping strategy, messaging, and relationships for Atlanta-area nonprofits, helping organizations tell their stories with clarity and purpose.

Before joining Coxe Curry, Erin served as Executive Director of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library Foundation, where she focused on advocacy, building partnerships, and developing lasting support for our libraries. Previously, Erin directed marketing and communications strategy and managed community impact initiatives at the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. Earlier in her career, she served in nonprofit operational and fundraising roles with several Atlanta arts organizations, including the Alliance Theatre, the Center for Puppetry Arts, and Actor's Express.

In the community, Erin serves on the Junior League of Atlanta Community Advisory Board and the Board of Directors of the Fred A. Toomer Elementary School Foundation. She is a certified project management professional through the Project Management Institute and was named to Georgia Trend's list of the 500 Most Influential Georgians in 2025.

Erin holds a BA in fine and performing arts from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. She lives in Kirkwood with her husband, two sons, two dogs, a bearded dragon, and five fish.

Barbara Kreamer

*Development Operations Manager
Thomasville Cultural Center, Inc.
Thomas County*

Barbara brings more than 15 years of experience in fundraising, grant writing, administrative management, and financial reconciliation. She holds certificates in nonprofit management, volunteer management, grant writing, and nonprofit accounting and finance operations. Originally from the Chicago area, Barbara earned a Bachelor of Arts with a focus on history and political science from Columbia College. She spent ten years working for The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International managing several grant programs, developing and conducting training sessions for volunteers, and overseeing the Foundation's contribution allocation system. After the birth of her son, when she felt extended international travel was no longer feasible, Barbara returned to school, earning a Master's in Teaching from National Louis University. She spent the next fifteen years teaching both upper elementary and middle school, first in Illinois, then in Florida. In 2021, Barbara sold her Florida home and bought a small farm outside of Thomasville, Georgia. Today she works for Thomasville Center for the Arts, assisting with development, memberships, and volunteers. She enjoys the quiet life in the country, spending quality time with her six dogs.

Abigail Morgan Coggin

*Executive Officer
Community Arts Association in Newton County
Newton County*

Abigail Coggin was elected in November of 2010 to serve as the District 5 representative on the Newton County School Board. She is a lifelong resident of Newton County and graduated from Newton County High School in 1992. She continued her education by graduating from Oxford College and Emory University with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science.

Throughout her college career, Abigail was employed as a staffer on many successful state-wide political campaigns and also served in the Georgia State Senate's Public Information Office. After graduation, she continued her career in government working in the Lieutenant Governor's Office and the Department of Corrections.

After marrying Newton County native Derek Coggin (physical education coach and teacher), they moved back home to Covington to begin a family. Abigail began working with the Arts Association in Newton County soon after her first child was born. She currently serves as Executive Officer for the Arts Association. In 2020, Abigail was appointed by Governor Brian Kemp to serve on the Professional Standards Commission. She was reappointed to the position in 2023.

Angela Nichols

Executive Director

Atlanta Printmakers Studio

Fulton County

Angela Nichols is a Founding Member and the current Executive Director of the Atlanta Printmakers Studio. Nichols handles the administration and the day-to-day operations of APS. She is an arts administrator and printmaker with a B.F.A. from the University of Georgia and an M.F.A from Louisiana State University, both in Printmaking. She previously served as the Director of Exhibitions & Public Programs at the Gwinnett-based non-profit Hudgens Center for Art & Learning and as the Visual Arts Curator at The Madison-Morgan Cultural Center in Madison, Georgia.