



## March 2023 Newsletter

Here is what we have included for you in this newsletter:

- Nebraska Creatives...Activate Report
- Nebraska Legislative Update
- Federal Legislative Update
- 50 Years of Nebraska Arts Council
- Poetry Out Loud State Finals Results
- NAC Interim Director Mike Markey chosen as new Executive Director
- Populus Fund - a re-granting initiative from the Union for Contemporary Art
- Announcing the Inaugural Willa Cather Residency Program



## Nebraska Creatives... Activate Report

On Friday, February 17th, arts advocates from around the state joined us in **Ashland's Flora Creative District** for an inclusive day that featured a mix of collaborative activities, workshops, moments of ideation, and time to mingle and develop strong connections with fellow creatives.

*"I learned how easy it is to get our thoughts heard by Senators! I had no idea it was that simple of a process."*

*"I got so much more clarity on legislative policy, how it relates to NE arts organizations, and how we can get involved to make a difference."*

Thank you for joining us!



### Nebraska Legislative Update

**LB605**, the Art Therapy bill which NFTA is **supporting**, had its committee hearing on February 23, 2023. There was no opposition to this bill, and we are hopeful it will advance to General File, either on its own or in combination with other bills.

**LB371**, the bill that prohibits an individual under 19 years of age from being present at a drag show and which NFTA is **opposing**, has not had its committee hearing set at this time. Once the hearing date and time is confirmed, NFTA will reach out to solicit testifiers from our arts advocate constituents to oppose this bill.

We will keep you posted on both of these bills!



**Federal Legislative Update from NASAA**

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (**NASAA**) reports that the Biden administration is proposing increasing the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) budget to **\$211 million in fiscal year 2024, an increase of \$4 million** over its current allocation. While not binding, the President's budget request is an important statement to Congress about where his priorities lie.

With the proposal now public, we expect the House of Representatives to release its own proposal in coming weeks, kicking off the formal appropriations process for FY2024.



## 50 Years of Nebraska Arts Council

The Nebraska Arts Council is celebrating **50 years** of serving the state through the arts! In celebration of this anniversary, they are unveiling this new (temporary) logo that will be used throughout the year!

Follow NAC on Facebook and check out their website throughout the year for more 50th anniversary announcements!



## Poetry Out Loud State Finals

Poetry Out Loud State Finals took place taking place on March 12th at the Sheldon Museum of Art in Lincoln.

Congratulations to Amelia Eschalante of Bellevue West High School who will represent our state on the national stage at the **Poetry Out Loud** National Finals in Washington D.C. this coming May!

We will keep you posted on how you can watch the POL National Finals at home.



## **NAC Interim Director Mike Markey chosen as new Executive Director**

During their latest meeting on March 7th, 2023, the Nebraska Arts Council chose Mike Markey to lead the agency as the new Executive Director. He will immediately take over the position that has been vacant since January, after the retirement of former executive director, Suzanne Wise.

Read more in the press release [here](#).



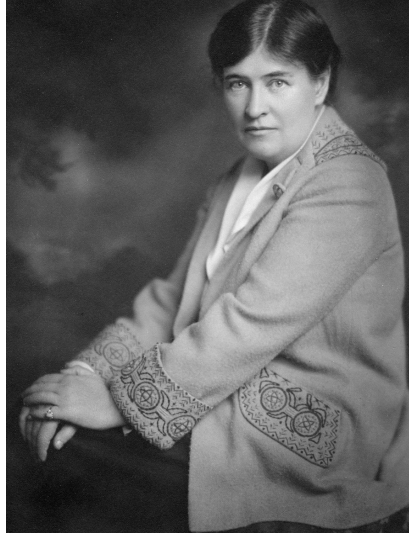
## **Populus Fund - \$10K grants available!**

An exciting funding opportunity has arisen for artists called the Populus Fund, a re-granting initiative organized by The Union, through the generous support of **The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts**.

Populus Fund will award a total of six \$10,000 grants for projects with a visual arts component proposed by artists or artist groups residing within **80-miles** of The Union.

Applications are now open and the deadline to apply is April 30, 2023, 11:59pm.

For more information, please visit [www.u-ca.org/populusfund](http://www.u-ca.org/populusfund) where you can find FAQs. For any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to [populusfund@u-ca.org](mailto:populusfund@u-ca.org).



## Announcing the Inaugural Willa Cather Residency Program

This new initiative provides a unique opportunity for a small cohort of writers—and eventually artists of all media—to reside and create in Red Cloud, Nebraska. Applications will be accepted online through April 15.

Selected writers will gather in Red Cloud October 15-29 and will be provided with comfortable housing, a separate quiet place to write, a meal allowance, and planned activities. Come write!

For more information and to apply, go [here](#).

## Join Nebraskans for the Arts Today! Memberships start at \$25/year!

If you are not yet a member of Nebraskans for the Arts, now is a great time to change that! Individual memberships start at \$25/year. Memberships support NFTA advocacy and activities.

To become a member, visit our website [here](#).



### Nebraskans for the Arts

1004 Farnam St., Plaza Level  
Omaha, NE 68102  
402.817.8176

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Us

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