

NEBRASKANS FOR THE ARTS

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023

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NebraskARTS Awards '22-'23

Nebraskans for the Arts enjoyed celebrating our two 2022-23 NebraskARTS Award winners.



We recognized St. Paul Public Schools and their outstanding visual arts teacher Mrs. Lemmerman on April 5th in a lovely ceremony at the library.



We celebrated Palmer Public Schools and their fantastic music teacher Mrs. Sake at the school's brilliant Spring Concert on April 17th.

We at NFTA were blown away by the talents we saw at both events.

Congratulations to St. Paul and Palmer Public Schools!

Nebraska Creatives... Activate!

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 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."

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

Poetry Out Loud

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

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

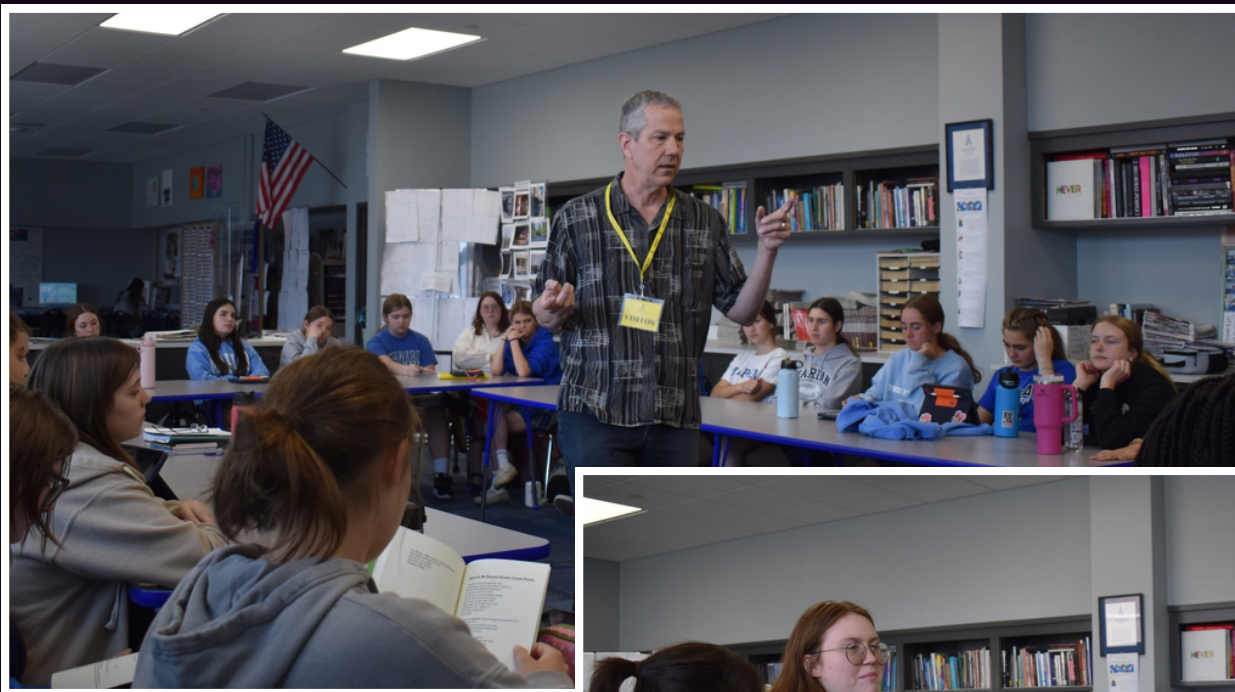
She performed in the National competition's Semi Finals for Region 2. Amelia placed 4th out of the 18 states in the region and received an honorable mention!

Congrats to
Amelia for
representing
Nebraska so well!



Poetry Write Now

Nebraskans for the Arts and Nebraska Arts Council were pleased to launch Poetry Write Now in 2022-23, supported by the Poetry Foundation. Nebraska's State Poet Matt Mason visited three schools across the state for day-long poetry writing workshops. These in-person sessions were incredibly valuable to students, and everyone had a great time. Schools visited included Marian High School, Summerland Public Schools and Milford High School.



Nebraska Legislative Session Summary

The 108th Legislature, First Session, has adjourned SINE DIE. Nebraskans for the Arts focused on the following key bills this session:

LB605 – NFTA supported LB605, which would provide protections and requirements for certified art therapists. The bill advanced to General File but was not heard on the floor. We are hoping it will be heard next session.

LB371 – Prohibits people under 19 or 21 to attend a drag show. NFTA opposed this bill due its negative effects on the arts. The bill did not move out of committee this session. NFTA is in close contact with national colleagues and are continuing to proactively monitor these types of legislations across the nation.

Nebraska Creative Districts

Communities around Nebraska are hard at work becoming certified Creative Districts!

Creative Districts are designated cultural and economic areas where innovation flourishes and neighborhoods come together in the name of art. They provide significant economic impact by creating purposeful spaces like art galleries, theatres, and music venues, attracting employees and businesses.

As more districts become certified, they will have their own page added to the Nebraska Arts Council Creative Districts webpage. Check out the current certified Creative Districts here:

<https://www.artsCouncil.nebraska.gov/explore/certified-creative-districts/>



Board Members

Our board represents a cross-section of our state and has a passion for the arts and their broad impact on communities, schools, and individuals.

President:

Rex Barker, Retired Music Educator | Omaha

President-Elect:

Steve Barth, Crane River Theater | Kearney

Secretary:

Suzanne Wise, Nebraska Arts Council | Omaha

Treasurer:

Jarod Ockander, David City Public Schools | David City

Vice President of Arts Education:

Danielle Laurion, Omaha South High School/UNO | Omaha

Vice President of Legislation:

Matthew Boring, Lied Center for Performing Arts | Lincoln

Vice President of Marketing:

Marty Skomal, Arts Administrator | Omaha

At-Large Members

- **Mike Markey**, Executive Director Nebraska Arts Council | Omaha
- **Francene Blythe-Lewis**, Vision Maker Media | Lincoln
- **Brent Comstock**, BCom Solutions | Auburn/Lincoln
- **Jerome Dubas**, Visual Art Educator | Hastings
- **Jason Fischer**, Surreal Media Lab | Omaha
- **Darrel Huenergardt**, Huenergardt Law Office | Lincoln
- **Patsy Koch-Johns**, Theatre Educator | Lincoln
- **Daniel Martinez**, Musician | Lincoln
- **Vijay Olander**, Dancer and Choreographer | Lincoln
- **Bart Vargas**, Studio Vargas | Omaha
- **Cody Talarico**, Fine Arts Education Specialist | Nebraska Department of Education
- **Barbara Zach Lee**, Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra | Lincoln

Executive Director: Petra Wahlqvist