



**CREATIVE FORCES**



NEA MILITARY HEALING ARTS NETWORK

Straz Center for the Performing Arts  
October 23 & 24, 2017

# WELCOME FROM FLORIDA GOVERNOR RICK SCOTT & SECRETARY OF STATE KEN DETZNER

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Creative Forces Arts and Military Summit in Tampa. Florida prides itself as being our country's most military-friendly state. As Governor and a veteran of the Navy, I, along with my wife Ann, recognize the importance of supporting our military and their families both during their time of service, as well as afterward.



The tremendous dedication and service of our active duty military members and veterans is invaluable to each of us as citizens, and we must continue to find new ways to offer support and healing when needed. I am pleased to see the start of a strong collaboration between arts and the military in Florida to create programs that best serve our military service members and veterans, and I am proud that the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital has been selected to participate in the Creative Forces initiative. I am confident there will be excellent outcomes for our veterans and service members in Florida through this partnership.

I applaud and thank each of you for your commitment to expanding arts and cultural programs for our military. These types of innovative collaborations continue to make Florida the best state to live, work and raise a family, especially for our military.

Rick Scott  
Governor

It is my honor to welcome you all to Tampa for the Creative Forces, NEA Arts and Military Summit. This event will bring many opportunities for collaboration, discussion and sharing ideas about ways that we can all work together to provide the best possible services and experiences for our active duty and veteran service members.



As Florida's Chief Cultural Officer, I have long been an advocate for the ways in which arts and cultural programming can connect with other areas such as health, education, tourism and our economy. The impact that arts and culture play in providing therapeutic services in both health and community settings is tremendous.

I am so pleased that Florida has been chosen as one of the sites for the Creative Forces initiative and know that the ideas and themes you will explore during these two days are only the beginning. I look forward to a lasting partnership between the arts and military communities so that we can provide meaningful programming for our veterans and service members.

Ken Detzner  
Secretary of State

## CREATIVE FORCES COMMITTEE:

This Summit is a collaborative effort led in planning by the Creative Forces Committee. Thanks to the following individuals for their contributions to this experience:

**Andrea Assaf**, Art2Action

**Martine Meredith Collier**, Arts Council of Hillsborough County

**Sheree Greer**, Kitchen Table Literary Arts Network

**Fred Johnson**, Jazz Artist

## WELCOME FROM NEA CHAIRMAN JANE CHU

By naming our military healing arts initiative “Creative Forces,” the National Endowment for the Arts and its partners are highlighting both the power of creative practices in healing and the distinct creative capacities of our military forces. Today at this summit, you are coming together in support of veteran and active duty military—particularly those with combat-induced trauma and psychological health conditions—to help them return to their homes and families and be more fully engaged in their communities. And, we’re doing it through the arts.



The discussions you will take part in today will focus on the best ways we can build a national network of care for these service members, whether they are in medical treatment or transitioning back home to their bases and communities. To all our veteran and active duty military: we are indebted to your service, and we are honored to express our appreciation by supporting you through the arts.

Jane Chu  
Chairman,  
National Endowment for the Arts

## ABOUT CREATIVE FORCES:

Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, plus state and local arts agencies. The network places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care at 11 military medical facilities across the country, as well as a telehealth program to reach patients in rural and remote areas, and increases access to therapeutic arts activities for military personnel and their families in local communities. Americans for the Arts is working with the NEA to provide administrative support for Creative Forces.

In 2017, James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital in Tampa was announced as one of the new Creative Forces clinical sites. In addition, the NEA announced it is working with the Center for Arts in Medicine at the University of Florida, in partnership with the Rural Veterans TeleRehabilitation Initiative, on creating a Creative Forces telehealth program. The Rural Veterans TeleRehabilitation Initiative is a program of the VA Office of Rural Health at the Malcom Randall Veterans Administration Medical Center in Gainesville.

This Summit will provide opportunities to learn and discuss strategies to increase access to therapeutic arts activities for military personnel and their families in their communities.

**Donna McBride**, Straz Center for the Performing Arts  
**Steve Murray**, Florida Department of Veterans Affairs  
**Michelle Pellito**, Music Therapist  
**Terri Simons**, Hillsborough County Arts Council  
**Jill Sonke**, University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine, UF Health Arts in Medicine  
**Christopher Stowe**, Veteran Artist  
**Tyler Tarrant**, Florida Humanities Council  
**Victoria Baatin**, Americans for the Arts  
**Nolen Bivens**, BGEN, USA, RET, Leader Six, Inc.  
**Kate Gibney**, Americans for the Arts

**Marete Wester**, Senior Director of Arts Policy, Americans for the Arts  
**Irene M. Mitchell**, TRICARE Ops  
**Christie Fitz-Patrick**, Deputy Secretary of State, Florida Department of State  
**Sandy Shaughnessy**, Director, Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs,  
**Morgan Lewis**, Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs  
**Suzanne D. Lucas**, Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs

# SCHEDULE

## Monday, October 23

All sessions from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. will take place in the Jaeb Theatre.

### 8:00 a.m.

Check in and refreshments

### 9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.

*Performance of our National Anthem*

Fred Johnson, Veteran Service Member

### OPENING REMARKS:

*Welcome, Introductions and Charge for the Day*

*Creative Forces program overview*

Sandy Shaughnessy, Marete Wester, Jane Chu

### 9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

*Treating the Wounds of War: Creative Arts Therapies and Arts Practices in Military Treatment Facilities*

Dr. Sara Kass, Merrilee Jorn, Christopher Stowe, Rebecca Vaudreuil, Natalie Quintana, Larry Miller, Kathy Williams

### 10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

BREAK

### 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

*Removing Barriers and Encouraging Greater Public/Private Arts and Military Community Collaborations*

Linda Paris Bailey, Sheree Greer, Saori Murphy, Tyler Tarrant

Moderated by: Andrea Assaf

### 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

LUNCH

PERFORMANCE BY VETERAN SERVICE MEMBER

FRED JOHNSON

Ferguson Hall Lobby

### 1:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

*Military 101 - Building Capacity: Getting from Clinical to Community*

This informative discussion explores the questions: *What does the arts community need to know about the military community and what does the military community need to know about the arts community?*

Welcome: Martine Meredith Collier

Andrea Assaf, Nolen Bivens, BGEN,USA, RET,

Dr. Charles Levy, Ann Marie O'Malley, Alene Tarter, Marete Wester

### 3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

BREAK

### 3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

*Building Bridges*

This discussion will review the keys to initiating and building successful partnerships between the military and arts communities.

Fred Johnson, Michael Killoren

Moderated by: Christopher Stowe

### 4:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

*Wrap Up & Summary of Next Steps*

*Outline of Day Two*

Nolen Bivens, BGEN,USA, RET, Sandy Shaughnessy, Marete Wester

### 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

WELCOME EVENT FEATURING A PERFORMANCE BY MICHAEL TROTTER, JR.

Tampa Museum of Art

### 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

*Veterans Community Open Mic: Creative Forces Edition presented by Art2Action, Kitchen Table Literary Arts Network*

Hosted by Andrea Assaf and Sheree Greer with featured musical guest artists, The War & Treaty

## Tuesday, October 24

9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Jaeb Theatre

**Break Out Discussion Groups and Reports:**

*Challenges and opportunities to building a sustainable local Creative Forces community engagement network Making it Happen!*

Nolen Bivens, BGEN, USA, RET, Ann Marie O'Malley, Marete Wester

10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

**BREAK**

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

### **TRACK 1: Arts Community Programming**

Jaeb Theatre

*Designing Programs for Wounded Warriors and their families*

Panelists: Bill O'Brien, Fred Johnson, Ann Marie O'Malley

This panel discussion will identify needs for military and veteran families dealing with TBI and PTSD and will provide attendees insights into arts programming strategies that respond to these needs through programs and case studies.

### **TRACK 2: Creative & Military Family Community Programming**

Shimberg Playhouse

*From Clinical to Community Collaboration*

Panelists: Dr. Charles Levy, Jill Sonke, Christopher Stowe, Rebecca Vaudreuil

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**LUNCH**

Welcome and Remarks by Judith Lisi

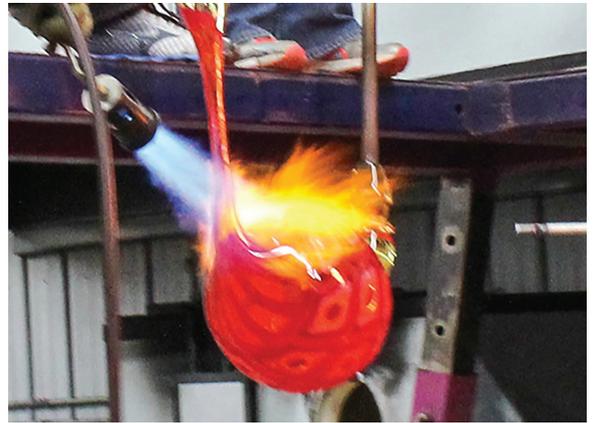
Guest Speaker, Karen Pence, Second Lady of the United States

Ferguson Hall Lobby

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Mobile Glass Lab featuring artists from the Duncan McClellan Gallery**

Artists: Mariel Bass, Josh Coccozza



The DMG Mobile glass lab provides educational experiences at varying locations including introductory talks illustrating examples of etched and slumped glass, glass demonstrations, and the opportunity for individuals to create their own etched glass pieces. The DMG Mobile Glass Lab is an outreach program of the Duncan McClellan Gallery, created by nationally-recognized St. Petersburg glass artist Duncan McClellan.

*Attendees may visit at their convenience.*

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

### **TRACK 1: Arts Community Programming**

*Supporting Community Programs - National, State, and Local Perspectives from Public and Private funding entities*

Panelists: Michael Killoren, Sandy Shaughnessy, Terri Simons, Neil Gobioff, Matt Spence

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

### **TRACK 2: Creative & Military Family Community Programming**

*Art & Music Therapy Workshop*

Panelists: Michelle Pellito, Sharon Graham, Joseph Scarce

# SCHEDULE

## Tuesday, October 24 (continued)

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### TRACK 2: Creative & Military Family Community Programming

#### Community Arts in the Continuum of Care

Panelists: Jill Sonke, Jenny Baxley Lee, Heather Spooner

2:30 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

### TRACK 1: Arts Community Programming

#### One-on-one Grant Meetings

Panelists: Michael Killoren, Sandy Shaughnessy, Terri Simons

Attendees may choose a time to meet with grant representatives from various funding organizations to brainstorm or discuss potential projects and proposal considerations.

3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

BREAK

3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

### *Measuring Success: Developing Community Impact Metrics*

This session will highlight the Veteran Arts Pilot Study with Art2Action Center for Innovation on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and the VA Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center and USF Psychology. Attendees will also learn insights into the new model for the Creative Forces Community Impact Metrics which is currently in development. This session will provide attendees with a method to develop standardized approaches to support understanding of program impact in both clinical and community programs.

Andrea Assaf, Karen Besterman-Dahan, Rachel Brink, Emily Choquette, Kiersten Downs, Renee Hangartner, Patricia Jones, Marete Wester

4:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### *Open Discussion and Farewells*

Nolen Bivens, BGEN, USA, RET

## Andrea Assaf

Andrea Assaf is the founding Artistic/Executive Director of Art2Action, Inc. A performer, writer, director and cultural organizer, she is currently Artist-in-Residence and guest faculty at the USF School of Theatre and Dance. Andrea is an acclaimed performer and director who tours nationally and internationally, including venues such as Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La MaMa, the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage and more. Directing credits include *Speed Killed My Cousin* by Linda Parris-Bailey and *The Carpetbag Theater*. Through Art2Action's Veteran Arts Program, she has been a volunteer at the VA Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center since 2013, and has collaborated with *The Carpetbag Theatre* on the Creative Arts Reintegration project since 2012. Andrea has a Masters degree in Performance Studies and a BFA in Acting both from NYU. Former positions include Artistic Director of New WORLD Theatre (2004-09), and Program Associate for Animating Democracy (2001-04). Awards include: 2017 Finalist for the Freedom Plow Award for Poetry & Activism, 2011 NPN Creation Fund commission, 2010 Princess Grace/Gant Gaither Theatre Award for Directing, 2007 Hedgebrook Residency for "women authoring change." Andrea serves on the Board of the Consortium of Asian American Theatres & Artists and Alternate ROOTS. She is a member of RAWI, the Radius of Arab American Writers.



Photo credit: Barb Campbell

## Mariel Bass

St. Petersburg Hot Glass Studio Manager Mariel Bass moved to St. Petersburg in 2012 after operating a recycled glass studio in an Eco Resort on St. John, USVI. She received her BFA from the Massachusetts College of Art, where she first discovered and fell in love with glassmaking. Over her professional career working with glass, Bass has studied at various craft schools throughout the U.S., as well as worked at glass studios in Vermont, Massachusetts, and Martha's Vineyard. She has had the privilege of working with many accomplished artists specializing in glass.



## Jenny Baxley Lee

Jenny Baxley Lee, MA, BC-DMT, is a Senior Lecturer and Board Certified Dance/Movement Therapist with the University of Florida's Center for Arts in Medicine in the College of the Arts. Jenny is affiliated faculty with the School of Theatre and Dance and the STEM Translational Communication Center. Jenny teaches graduate coursework in *Arts in Medicine* and directs an annual study abroad course, *Arts for Health, Peace and Community Engagement in Northern Ireland*. She maintains a clinical practice in dance/movement therapy with veterans and their families at the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center providing creative arts therapy using telehealth. She has also practiced dance/movement therapy with UF Health Shands Arts in Medicine working with children and adults with acute and chronic health issues. In community practice, Jenny facilitates theatre and dance for health education



# SPEAKER BIOS

and promotion among middle school and high school students in schools, juvenile justice and community settings.

Jenny's current research includes evaluating the use of telehealth to deliver dance/movement therapy and creative arts therapies. In addition, she is considering the impact of theatre on health. She is dedicated to exploring the capacity of the performing and literary arts, and more broadly the creative process, to impact the health and well-being of people of all ages and abilities both to enhance quality of life and to enhance care at the end of life. With over 15 years of professional experience, her expertise includes multidisciplinary, socially-engaged arts practice, teaching, program implementation and administration in delivering the arts in clinical and community settings.

## Karen Besterman-Dahan

Dr. Besterman-Dahan is a qualitative researcher with a background in medical anthropology and nutrition. Currently, she has work underway to evaluate innovative approaches for reintegration via community settings. Her research interests include the impact of agriculture, gardening and creative arts on health and well-being, food security and community based research.



## Nolen Bivens

A former U.S. Army General, he serves as Chair of the National Leadership Advisory Council, the National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military (NIAHM); and senior Policy Fellow on Arts & Military, Americans for The Arts, and Board Corporate Advisor. Leader Six provides management consulting and professional services and products to commercial, nonprofit, and government customers to help increase leadership and organizational performance. He formerly served as VP of Business Development and Sales, General Dynamics, leading a business development team in support of five U.S. and two international P&L business units.



His military service included Chief of Staff, U.S. Southern Command; Chief Operations Officer, U.S. Third Army; Deputy Commanding General, 4th Infantry Division; U.S. Joint & Army Pentagon Staff; and U.S. Special Operations Command.

As NIAMH's Chair of the National Leadership Advisory Council, he works with government, private, and nonprofit sectors championing the benefits of the arts for service members suffering psychological wounds of war, specifically Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD). To that end, he has testified to the House Interior Subcommittees, served as military adviser to PBS's Crafts in America SERVICE episode, Smithsonian Institution - Haiti Cultural Recovery Project, and Creative Forces, National Endowment of the Arts' (NEA) Military Healing Arts Network.

He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from South Carolina State University, and MS in Management - Operations Research, Naval Postgraduate School; and MS in National Security and Strategic Studies from the National Defense University, Washington, D.C.

## Rachel Brink

Rachel Brink is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has been the Director of the Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center at Tampa VA since 2006. Prior to this assignment, Mrs. Brink provided psychotherapy services to individuals, families and groups in the Outpatient Mental Health Clinic for 10 years. Her specialties include treatment of anxiety disorders and other serious mental illnesses, hypnotherapy, and the recovery model of mental health treatment. Mrs. Brink has also served as the POW Coordinator for the hospital since 1996. She attended the University of South Florida where she obtained Masters Degrees in both Gerontology and Social Work.



Mrs. Brink believes the best way to deliver mental health treatment is through a holistic approach that makes the personal recovery goals of the client the focus of that treatment. By truly listening to what people need for their recovery, a wellness and recovery plan can be established that is based upon what they have found to be helpful to them. Through this listening approach, Mrs. Brink discovered that veterans were reporting a positive effect and symptom reduction while engaged in creative and expressive arts and this became the catalyst for her passion to incorporate creative arts into mental health treatment. She was able to secure federal grant funding in 2010, which provided veterans with musical instruments, video cameras, computer equipment and software, and sound equipment. Through this grant, veterans learned to play instruments, write music, and created a feature length documentary about their experience with creative arts as part of their mental health treatment.

## Emily Choquette

Emily Choquette is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at USF and currently serves as a Graduate Assistant for the Veteran Arts Pilot Study. She has extensive experience in quantitative data collection and analysis.

Her research interests focus on body image and disordered eating especially among men. Emily is also currently a practicum student at the PTSD clinic at the James A. Haley VA.



## Jane Chu

Jane Chu is the eleventh chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. With a background in arts administration and philanthropy, Chairman Chu is also an accomplished artist and musician. Chu received bachelor's degrees in piano performance and music education from Ouachita Baptist University, and master's degrees in music and piano pedagogy from Southern Methodist University. Additionally, Chu holds a master's degree in business administration from Rockhurst University and a PhD in philanthropic studies from Indiana University.

In addition to awarding more than \$377 million in grants during her tenure to-date, Chu has issued new research reports on arts participation and the impact of the arts and cultural industries on the nation's gross domestic product; made hundreds of trips to communities across the nation to see first-hand how the arts are impacting people and places; and launched the Tell Us Your Story project that demonstrates the importance of the arts in our lives.

Chu has a deep understanding of and commitment to the arts. From 2006 to 2014, Chu served as the president and CEO of the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City, Missouri, overseeing



# SPEAKER BIOS

a \$413-million campaign to build the center. She was a fund executive at the Kauffman Fund for Kansas City from 2004 to 2006, and vice president of external relations for Union Station Kansas City from 2002 to 2004. Previously, she was vice president of community investment for the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation from 1997 to 2002.

## Josh Coccozza

St. Petersburg Hot Glass' Shop Tech, Joshua Coccozza, moved to the area January 1, 2012, was introduced to Duncan McClellan and started his journey with glass.



The two began a mutually beneficial relationship where Josh traded labor and other skills for an education in hot glass from Duncan. Duncan then introduced Josh to Jacob Stout who has provided him with a deeper understanding of the equipment used for hot glass, and helped him hone his skills as a glass artist. Josh continues his education with intensive workshops, a constant drive to try new things, and utilizes the knowledge of the artists that Duncan represents and invites to work in the shop.

Josh sees himself as more of a “maker” rather than an “artist.” Mostly everything Josh has done in the past started with raw material which he would refine to a finished product.

## Martine Meredith Collier

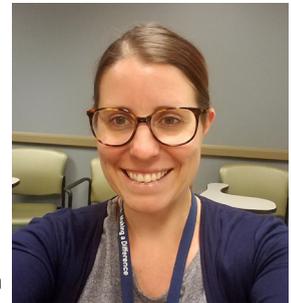
Martine Meredith Collier, Executive Director of the Arts Council of Hillsborough County has over 30 years of experience in arts administration, nonprofit management, marketing, and development. She has provided services for



performing and visual arts groups, educational institutions, municipalities, and professional consulting firms, as well as oversight for publicly funded grant programs at the local and state levels. Prior to joining the Arts Council in January 2017, she served 5 years as the President and CEO of Culture Works, a regional arts agency providing funding and services for the 8-county Dayton Ohio Region. Other experience includes serving as Director of Development for Grantmakers in the Arts, Executive Director of the Sarasota County Arts Council, and Community Arts Development Manager for the Georgia Council for the Arts. She holds a Master's Degree in Arts Administration from Goucher College, and is a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE).

## Kiersten Downs

Kiersten Downs served for over 8 years in the Air Force and New York Air National Guard where she was deployed three times overseas during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science, a Master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution with a focus in Organizational Conflict Management, and a graduate certificate in Women and Gender Studies. Currently, Kiersten is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Applied Anthropology at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Her dissertation research is a mixed methods study on women veterans and re-entry post military service. Her fieldwork is examining the impact of military masculinity on re-entry and the programmatic inclusion and exclusion of women with regards to veterans services. Kiersten's past work experience includes four years as a congressional staffer, and over five years of experience working in project management, data collection, and research analysis on military veteran centered projects dealing with veteran transition and reintegration, suicide prevention, military sexual trauma, and employment needs. She is currently working as a Health Science Research Assistant with the Center of Innovation on



Disability and Rehabilitation Research (CINDRR) at the James A. Haley VA in Tampa. She was selected as the 2013 national Student Veteran of the Year for Student Veterans of America for her advocacy and fundraising efforts on behalf of the organization and was elected to serve on the national Board of Directors for SVA.

### Neil Gobioff

Neil Gobioff is the president of the Gobioff Foundation. Founded in late 2007 by his brother Howard shortly before his death in early 2008, The Gobioff Foundation is a private family foundation which works to support human rights organizations and the arts community in Tampa. Last year the Gobioff Foundation launched the Treasure Tampa (T2) creative placemaking initiative that provides a grant of \$30,000 as a catalyst for creative placemaking in Tampa. Neil has been active in the arts since co-writing a play in 1999 for Jobsite Theater's first season. He received his B.A. in English from the University of South Florida in 1998. He recently served on the board for Jobsite Theater in Tampa.



### Sharon Graham

Sharon Graham received her master's degree in music therapy from Florida State University, is a certified NICU Music Therapist (credentialed NICU-MT), Neurologic Music Therapist (NMT), and has a variety of clinical experience.



She maintains a clinical internship training program and is a frequent presenter at regional and national music therapy conferences. Sharon is also an invited lecturer for medical conferences and colleges. She serves as

co-chair for the Florida Music Therapy Task Force and represents Florida music therapists with the Coalition for the Exceptional Education of Students (CEES).

Sharon and her team provide music therapy services to veterans with traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and/or PTSD, children and adults in inpatient psychiatric and detoxification units, children with developmental disabilities and older adults with and without dementia.

### Sheree Greer

A Milwaukee, Wisconsin native, Sheree L. Greer is a writer and educator living in Tampa. She founded The Kitchen Table Literary Arts Center to showcase and support the work of women writers of color and is the author of two novels, *Let the Lover Be* and *A Return to Arms*; a short story collection, *Once and Future Lover*, and a student writing guide, *Stop Writing Wack Essays*. Sheree is a VONA/VOICES alum, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice grantee, and Ragdale Artist House Rubin Fellow. She has completed Creative Capital Core Skills workshops and was awarded an NEA artist grant to support her current work in creative nonfiction. Sheree teaches composition, creative writing, fiction workshop and African American literature at St. Petersburg College in Florida.



# SPEAKER BIOS

## Renee Hangartner

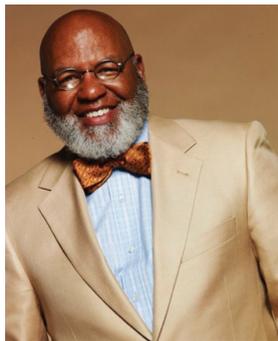
Renee Hangartner is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at USF. She has extensive experience in evaluation, teaching and training. Renee's previous evaluation experience has been in the area



of youth suicide prevention in the schools and in the community. She is also a Program Evaluation consultant for Art2Action, Inc., and previously served as the Research Fellow for the Building Bridges program at USF. Renee has helped in the writing of three federal grants for suicide prevention with Dr. Marc Karver. Her current research interests include women's issues and gender inequality and how that relates to non-suicidal self-injury.

## Frederick Johnson

Frederick Alan Robert Johnson is a celebrated thought leader, religious elder, author, vocalist and arts administrator. He is recognized internationally as one of the world's greatest vocal jazz improvisers and has been honored as one of the most passionate and versed chanters of sacred text.



Frederick serves as the Deputy Executive Director of Intersections International, the social justice ministry of the Collegiate Church of New York. He is the program founder of their global arts and humanities initiative.

He served as the Vice President of Education and Community Arts Outreach at The Straz Center for The Performing Arts in Tampa for ten years. Frederick also was the Director of the Arts and Cultural Enrichment programming for the Housing Authority for The City of Tampa. He is a contributing advisor and lecturer at Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem and Auburn Theological Seminary in

New York. Frederick is a United States Marine Corps Vietnam Veteran.

He has presented music and inspirational programs in association with Rabbi Reuben Firestone, Rabbi Naamah Kelman, Dr. Deepak Chopra, Dr. Wayne Dyer, Dr. Maya Angelou, Dr. Michael Beckwith, Jack Canfield, Marianne Williamson, Rev. Abhi Janamanchi and Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Lewis.

Frederick has written and directed 19 stage productions in New York, Boston, San Diego and Tampa. He is an inductee to the Clearwater Jazz Holiday Hall of Fame. Frederick is a graduate of The National Academy for the Performing Arts, New York, The Master Performance Program of The National Mime Theatre, Boston, and the Performance Academy of The National Center of African American Artists in Boston.

## Patricia Jones

Dr. Patricia Y. Jones (PhD) is a veteran who served 10 years in the United States Army. She is a formally incarcerated person who possesses a felony which is a direct result of her Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) diagnosis from her survival of Military Sexual Trauma (MST).



Through the sharing of her story and as a digital storytelling facilitator, she assists others in the reclaiming and reframing of their stories. She holds a doctorate in Higher Education Administration and a master's degree in Sports Psychology from the University of Tennessee. She has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from The Ohio State University. Patricia served as the Art2Action and Carpetbag Theatre, Veteran/Creative Arts Reintegration (CAR) Coordinator in Spring 2017, and supported the 4th National Summit on Arts & Health in the Military; she continues as an advisory member of the Veteran Arts Pilot Study team. She is also an active council member on the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital (JAHVH), Center of Innovation on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (CINDRR) Veteran Engagement.

### Merrilee Jorn

Merrilee K. Jorn, MS, ATR-BC, is a nationally registered and board certified Art Therapist with experience in the clinical applications of creative art experiences with military service members and families. Ms. Jorn studied Studio Art at the University of Tennessee before earning her Master's degree in Art Therapy at Florida State University. Since 2007, Ms. Jorn has professionally practiced art therapy in multiple hospital based programs serving those who are experiencing neurological, cognitive and behavioral health issues, including Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS). Ms. Jorn has been honored to serve as Director of Arts for Health Florida during its initial year as a state organization and also as a Board Member and elected President of the Florida Art Therapy Association. Since transferring to the Tampa Bay area in 2014 to teach Art Therapy at the University of Tampa, Ms. Jorn has been a strong advocate for the arts in health partnering with programs to offer art therapy outreach initiatives in the community. Her projects have focused on the use of art therapy with patients recovering from traumatic brain injury (TBI) at Tampa General Hospital's Rehabilitation Center, victims of domestic violence and human trafficking at Redefining Refuge, and with Cadets and transitioning veterans in the University of Tampa's ROTC program. In 2017, with the support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Ms. Jorn joined the Creative Forces, Military Healing Arts Network, to provide art therapy services at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital.



residency in Family Medicine at the Puget Sound Family Medicine Residency at Naval Hospital Bremerton. Sara is board certified in Family Medicine and is an Assistant Professor of Family Medicine at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. Prior to retiring at the rank of Captain in March of 2015, Sara served as Deputy Chief of Wounded, Ill and Injured (WII) at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) August, 2008 through December, 2011, and as Deputy Commander, National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE), Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) in Bethesda, Maryland, August 2011 to February 2015. Since retirement, Sara has remained committed to improving the lives of Wounded Warriors and their families. She consulted with the National Endowment for the Arts to expand the Military Healing Arts Partnership to 10 new locations. Sara also serves as the Chief of Staff for Warrior Canine Connection (WCC) and is instrumental in helping WCC serve and support 48,000 veterans through placement of service dogs and delivery of mission based trauma recovery therapy by 2025.

### Michael Killoren

Michael Killoren serves as the CEO / Executive Director of the Morean Arts Center. It is the oldest arts organization in Tampa Bay, offering classes and training in painting, drawing, jewelry making, sculpture, ceramics, glass blowing, sculpture, photography and printmaking in four facilities. Most recently, he served as Director for Local Arts Agencies and Challenge America at the National Endowment for the Arts, where he was responsible for the grant-making processes for Local Arts Agencies (LAA's), developing partnerships to advance the LAA field as a whole, and the Challenge America program. Mr. Killoren also served as director of Seattle's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs where he led the city department's funding and public art programs, developed



### Sara Kass

Born and raised in Ephrata, Washington, Dr. Sara Kass received her Bachelor's Degree in Biology from Pacific Lutheran University and her medical degree from George Washington University. She returned to Washington State to complete her internship and



# SPEAKER BIOS

policy initiatives to increase public access to arts and culture, and established a groundbreaking partnership to restore arts education in Seattle Public Schools. He was Seattle's first director of cultural tourism for Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau and served as an arts program coordinator and later Executive Director of the King County Arts Commission. He also served as managing director of the Alice B. Theatre, also in Seattle. For three and a half years prior to coming to Seattle in 1993, Mr. Killoren was part of the programming staff at the Sheldon Arts Foundation in St. Louis, Missouri. Mr. Killoren served as president and vice-president of the U.S. Urban Arts Federation of Americans for the Arts. He was awarded the Ray Hanley Award for Innovation from the USUAF at the AFTA annual conference in June 2017.

## Charles Levy

Dr. Levy's career is marked by dedication to innovation in rehabilitation and a passion for old-time music. Dr. Levy, of the North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health service, is the Chief of the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service, a Medical Director of the VA Center of Innovation on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, the Director of the Rural Veterans TeleRehabilitation Initiative (RVTRI), and co-Principal Investigator of the Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network Telehealth Design, Plan and Service Support initiative. The latter two projects use telehealth to deliver creative arts therapy to veterans and service members directly in their homes. At the University of Florida, Dr. Levy is an adjunct associate professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy, and a research scholar at Center for Arts in Medicine. Dr. Levy is also involved in research concerning the use of virtual reality to help Veterans with impairments in cognition and emotional control. Dr. Levy received the Paul B. Magnuson Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rehabilitation Research



and Development in 2015, "the highest honor for VA rehabilitation investigators." Dr. Levy is both a Florida's Old-Time Banjo Champion and Florida Old-Time Fiddle Champion. During visits to Senegal and Gambia to investigate the African roots of the banjo, Dr. Levy learned to play the akonting, a 3-string banjo ancestor, with Jola master musicians Remi Diatta and Ekona Diatta. Dr. Levy is a recipient of both the Thelma Boltin and the Ed Fleming Awards for his contributions to old-time music in Florida.

## Judith Lisi

Judith Lisi joined the Straz Center in 1992. Through her leadership, the Straz Center has significantly expanded its programming, established financial stability, retired an accumulated debt and has met the goals of three five-year long-range plans. Lisi's arts management philosophy includes a belief in, and a commitment to, the community and to ensuring outreach, accessibility and audience development for the entire community through multicultural and educational programming.



Lisi has directed more than 40 productions and has written six plays. She holds a Master's Degree in theater and communication arts from St. Louis University and has done doctoral work in theater at the University of Minnesota. She studied opera at the Juilliard School of Music and with the Metropolitan Opera. Previously, as Executive Director of the prestigious Shubert Performing Arts Center in New Haven, Connecticut, the Shubert enjoyed artistic and financial success.

In May 2002, the League of American Theatres and Producers honored Lisi with the Samuel J. L'Hommedieu Presenter of the Year Award for "bringing the magic of live theater to thousands of area residents through a variety of audience development and education programs." In January 2008, Lisi received the prestigious Patrick Hayes Award for Lifetime Achievement from ISPA, the International Society for the Performing Arts.

### Lawrence M. Miller

Commander Miller retired from the Navy in 2014 with over 34 years of service both Active Duty and Reserve. He is currently at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital in Tampa Florida and is a Physician Assistant working with Mild to Moderate Brain injury patients both inpatient and out.

He is a graduate of Stony Brook University Physician Assistant program and has a Master's Degree in General and Special Surgery from Albert Einstein college of Medicine, Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, NY and a Master's Degree in Emergency Medicine from University of Nebraska College of Medicine.

Prior to his employment at the Tampa VA, Commander Miller was the Acting Regimental Surgeon for The U. S. Marines Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment and retired from a 5 year tour as Deputy Force Surgeon, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command.

### Saori Murphy

Saori Murphy is an artist, teacher, and healer. A former Army Veteran who has suffered from PTSD, depression, and anxiety, Saori became an advocate for healing through art. She is Director/Facilitator of Veterans HeART Circles, a program for veterans in recovery and in the justice system. Saori currently serves as the Veteran Coordinator for Art2Action, Inc.'s Veteran Arts Program in Tampa. She also teaches at her jointly-owned studio Love + Prana, Indian Rocks Beach Art Center and Veteran Art Center of Tampa Bay. She volunteers at the Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, USF and Suncoast Center as an artist/teacher for local outreach programs. A graduate of Ringling, Saori has been creating artwork for 25 years which has been featured at the South Florida Museum, Morean Arts, Palladium Theater and the Straz Center for the Performing Arts. She is a certified Intuitive Painting and Expressive Arts



Facilitator and a member of Americans for the Arts, including the National Initiative for the Arts & Health in the Military and Arts Action Fund.

### Victoria Murray Baatin

Victoria Murray Baatin is the most recent member of the consulting team at Americans for the Arts, responsible for administering the expansion of the Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Project. She joins the team as the Creative Forces Community Engagement Manager, supporting the Creative Forces community engagement strategy designed to engage state, local and regional arts agencies, artists and other local partners with military and veteran leaders at each clinical expansion site.



Victoria most recently served as the Interim Deputy Director and Legislative and Community Affairs Director for the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the official arts agency for the District of Columbia. Prior to this, Victoria was with Americans for the Arts Action Fund where she spearheaded the national ArtsVote2012 campaign.

Holding a Masters in Art and Public Policy from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and a BFA in Theatre Arts from Howard University, Victoria is an artist in her own right and has directed numerous productions throughout the Washington, DC, metropolitan area and is an associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. An avid traveler, Victoria has trained both nationally and internationally with New York City (Lincoln Center Theatre Director's Lab, Women's Project Producer's Lab); Ashland, Oregon (Oregon Shakespeare Festival FAIR Fellow); Washington, DC (Allen Lee Hughes Fellow, Arena Stage); Italy (LaMaMa, ETC. International Symposium for Directors); Brazil (Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed); and London (British Academy of Dramatic Arts Shakespeare Program).

# SPEAKER BIOS

## Bill O'Brien

Bill O'Brien co-organized three summits to identify emerging art-sci practices among the nation's leading artists, scientists and technologists in partnership with the National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. He also co-organized a complex-system working group investigation into *The Nature of Creativity in the Brain* in partnership with the Santa Fe Institute. Since 2011, Bill has served as the agency's Project Director for *Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network*. Previously, Bill served the agency as Deputy Chairman of Grants and Awards and as the Director of Theater and Musical Theatre. Prior to joining the Endowment, he produced numerous award winning theatrical productions, including the Tony-honored *Deaf West Theatre Production of Big River*. He has also acted in numerous theatrical and television productions, including performances in 48 states, and as an ensemble player on all seven seasons as Kenny (Marlee Matlin's sign language interpreter) on NBC's *The West Wing*.



Officer and lead engineer for the largest NATO construction program. During her honorable military service, AnnMarie served in four named conflicts and was awarded various decorations and medals highlighting her leadership, courage and work ethic. She specialized in advance team deployments and crises/risk management charged with initial set-up and site operations supporting military missions. Following her Air Force career, AnnMarie has worked with leading professional service firms in the public, nonprofit and private sectors. As founding president of Innovative Executions, LLC, (INX) AnnMarie offers tailored engineering, organizational and leadership services to government, not-for-profit and corporate clients. She spent five years as a Strategic Advisor for the DoD and has experience providing services to several other Federal Agencies. In addition to her undergraduate degrees, AnnMarie has a Master of Science in Engineering and Environmental Management, a Doctorate in Engineering Management, and a Doctorate (pending) in Management, Organizational Leadership. AnnMarie's spouse is still Active Duty Air Force. They have two children, along with AnnMarie's incredible service dog (Leigh Ann).

## AnnMarie O'Malley

AnnMarie is the Capacity and National Resource Center Director for *Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network*. As the creator of the *Creative Forces* strategic plan, she provides operational assistance to the Clinical and Community programs and orchestrates the capacity building initiatives to support expansion of Clinical therapy program and the development of the Therapeutic Community Engagement program. AnnMarie graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1996 with degrees in Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering. She served as the Deputy Program Management



## Linda Parris-Bailey

Linda Parris-Bailey is the Executive/Artistic Director of the Knoxville, Tennessee-based Carpetbag Theatre Inc., a professional, multigenerational ensemble company dedicated to the production of new works. She is the primary Playwright in Residence and the recipient of the 2015 Doris Duke Artist Award in Theater. Her story-based plays with music are focused on themes of transformation and empowerment. Her current work, *Speed Killed My Cousin* (2012), presents the story of a young, African-American female veteran of the Iraq War, and her struggle with Moral Injury, Post Traumatic Stress disorder and Military Sexual Trauma. "Speed" was awarded a NEFA National



Theater Project grant to support touring (2015-2016) and an NPN Creation Fund grant (2011). *Between a Ballad and a Blues* (2008), her ode to Appalachian renaissance man Howard “Louie Bluié” Armstrong, was developed with support from the NPN Creation Fund (2007) and the Arts Presenters Ensemble Theatre Collaborations (2006). What has been considered her signature work, *Dark Cowgirls and Prairie Queens*, continues to be performed. She is a founding member of Alternate ROOTS and Senior Advisor to the International Women Playwrights Conference. Her works have been published in *Alternate ROOTS: Plays From the Southern Theater, Ensemble Works!* and other anthologies of contemporary plays. She has presented at Americans for the Arts, Imagining America, Veterans in Society and APAP.

### Michelle Pellito

Michelle Pellito is a board certified music therapist (MT-BC) with a master’s degree in music therapy from Florida State University. She owns and operates Capital City Music Therapy, LLC, in Tallahassee, working with a wide variety of ages and abilities. As a mother of two young children, her practice has a special focus on work with children and families. Her experience in NICU music therapy, hospice care and behavioral health for children, adolescents and adults makes her uniquely qualified to serve all members of the family unit. She proudly serves her local community’s Family Engagement and Empowerment Task Force, part of the mayor’s Family First Initiative. She is a member and former co-chair of the Florida Music Therapy Task Force which seeks to expand music therapy services and increase access to families and individuals that need it most.



### Karen Pence

Karen Pence, wife of Vice President Mike Pence, is a mother, educator, and award-winning watercolor artist. As Second Lady of the United States, Mrs. Pence works to bring attention to art therapy and to the sacrifices made by military service members and their families.



Mrs. Pence dedicated 25 years in the classroom as an elementary school teacher before becoming the First Lady of Indiana in 2013.

As Second Lady of the United States, Mrs. Pence is committed to raising awareness and educating the public about the mental health profession of art therapy in the United States and around the world. Mrs. Pence is the honorary chair of the Art Therapy Initiative at Riley Hospital for Children at IU Health in Indianapolis and is a member of Riley Children’s Foundation. She also serves as a board member for Tracy’s Kids, an art therapy program for young cancer patients.

Mrs. Pence also serves as an encourager to military service members and their families. She has hosted and participated in numerous events to honor and recognize all of those in the Armed Forces.

Mrs. Pence earned a B.S. and M.S. in Elementary Education from Butler University in Indianapolis. She is a Blue Star mom with a son in the United States Marine Corps. Mrs. Pence and Vice President Mike Pence have been married since 1985 and are proud parents of their adult children, Michael and his wife Sarah, and daughters Charlotte and Audrey.

# SPEAKER BIOS

## Natalie Quintana

Natalie Quintana, MM, MT-BC is a music therapist and native of Tampa, Florida. She is currently developing the creative arts therapy practice at James A. Haley VA Medical Center as an employee of the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs. Her vision is to install the Creative Forces procedures with former and active service members in the Tampa Bay area, assist in their healing process, and to promote a confident return to their routines. Until recently, she was responsible for the establishment and expansion of Tallahassee Memorial Hospital's music therapy department into outpatient oncology, where she provided patients with tools to cope with chronic pain, stressors, and changes in lifestyle, support systems, and personal identity. In 2016, Natalie was awarded the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship Grant for spearheading the creation of innovative technology using music therapy principles. Her project implements at-home access of music therapy services to achieve greater reintegration of patients transitioning out of healthcare facilities and into daily living situations. Her educational background includes a Bachelors and Masters in Music Therapy from Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida and a physical medicine and neurological rehabilitation certification from the international Robert F. Unkefer Academy for Neurologic Music Therapy in Toronto, Canada.



## Joseph Scarce

Joseph Scarce is an art therapy instructor at the University of Tampa, where he teaches Art in Wellness and Art Therapy classes. Joseph holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from The University of Tampa and a Master of Arts degree in Art Therapy from Marywood University in Scranton, Pennsylvania and a Master of Arts Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Argosy University in Tampa. He is a Doctoral Candidate in the General Psychology Department at Capella University in Minnesota. His research focuses on art therapist's art making experience in clinical and studio settings. Joseph's experience includes art therapy with adults and children in inpatient psychiatric treatment hospitals and behavioral challenges with children in public and private schools. He implemented Art Time family events programming in communities across Pinellas County through Suncoast Center for Mental Health in St. Petersburg. Art Time, addressed the needs of families to communicate openly through art about mental illness and homelessness. Joseph currently provides art therapy through his private practice to in home trauma survivors, substance abuse groups and works with children at St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa to provide art therapy in the oncology and ICU crisis medical units. Joseph is the president of the Florida Art Therapy Association, a chapter of the American Art Therapy Association which serves the needs of Art Therapists across the State of Florida.



### Sandy Shaughnessy

Sandy Shaughnessy is the director of the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, and has been with the Department of State for twenty years, administering various programs, special events, and initiatives. Prior to her initial appointment with the Division of Cultural Affairs, Sandy served as Box Office Manager for Old School Square Cultural Arts Center in Delray Beach and as Director/Treasurer of Box Office Operations for the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center (now the Straz Center for the Performing Arts) in Tampa. Her extensive experience with performing arts venues, artists, producers and Broadway road shows helps her lead the state arts agency. A native New Yorker, Sandy has work experience at ABC's office of World News Tonight and 20/20 as well as at the Fashion Institute of Technology. She is a graduate of New York University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Dramatic Literature, Theatre History and the Cinema, with a minor in Political Science. Sandy has also completed graduate course work in arts administration and is trained in international protocol. Sandy is a member of the board of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, serving on the Nominating and Development Committees. She also serves on the board of South Arts where she co-chairs the Performing Arts Exchange and is on the Governance and Strategic Planning Committees. She has served as a grant panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and other state arts agencies. In her off hours, Sandy is a competitive rower and is President of the Tallahassee Rowing Club. She enjoys meeting people, international collaborations and serving the community.



### Terri Simons

Terri Simons is the Director of Programs and Communication at the Arts Council of Hillsborough County. She is responsible for its grant programs for artists and cultural organizations; digital communications, publications and website services; and events including workshops, professional networking and the annual FIVE by FIVE celebration. She led the year-long data collection and coordination of the Arts and Economic Prosperity 5 study for Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa in association with the Americans for the Arts national study. Terri has more than 25 years' experience in communications and marketing for corporations and nonprofits in Hillsborough County. She is a visual artist and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Studio Art and Art History from the University of South Florida.



### Jill Sonke

Jill Sonke is director of the Center for the Arts in Medicine at the University of Florida (UF) and Assistant Director of UF Health Shands Arts in Medicine. She serves on the faculty of the UF Center for Arts in Medicine, and is an affiliated faculty member in the School of Theatre & Dance, the Center for African Studies, the STEM Translational Communication Center, the One Health Center and the Center for Movement Disorders and Neurorestoration. Jill is an Entrepreneurship Faculty Fellow in the UF Warrington College of Business, and serves on the editorial board for *Arts & Health* journal and the board of Citizens for Florida Arts. With over 20 years of experience and leadership in arts in health, Jill is active in research, teaching and



## SPEAKER BIOS

international cultural exchange. She has developed arts programming for veterans in partnership with the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center since 1996, and currently serves as a member of the Rural Veterans Telerehabilitation Initiative's Creative Arts Therapies project team, as well as a part of the NEA Creative Forces Telehealth Expansion team at University of Florida. Her current research focuses on the arts and health communication and community health and the effects of music on cost and quality of care in emergency medicine. Jill is the recipient of numerous awards and over 125 grants for her programs and research at the University of Florida.

### **Matt Spence**

Matt Spence joined the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay as its Vice President of Community Impact in February 2016. He oversees the Foundation's grants program which has provided nearly \$200 million in funding to nonprofits since the organization's founding in 1990. In addition, Matt plays a key role in a variety of partnerships and community impact efforts throughout the Tampa Bay region including the Hunger Action Alliance, Thrive by 5 Pinellas and the Tampa Bay Disaster Relief and Recovery Fund. He was previously the Director of Planning and Development for the Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County and Special Projects Manager at the Juvenile Welfare Board.



Matt is a two-time graduate of Florida State University with a Master's Degree in Education Policy and a Bachelor's in Political Science. He also holds a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from the University of Texas. He serves on the board of the Social Enterprise Alliance -Tampa Bay chapter and Social Venture Partners Tampa Bay chapter, is a member of the National Catholic Education Association, the National Association for the

Education of Young Children, a Leadership Pinellas graduate and volunteers with the YMCA of the Suncoast, Clearwater Chargers Soccer Club and St. Cecelia Church and School.

Matt grew up in the Tampa Bay area and resides in Pinellas County with his wife and three sons.

### **Heather Spooner**

Heather Spooner is an artist, art therapist and arts in health advocate with over 15 years' experience in the field. Heather

has worked in a variety of settings including healthcare facilities, museums, community-based treatment programs and the VA. Prior to joining the Center, Heather taught undergraduate art therapy and was the founding director of



Arts for Health Florida. Heather joined the Center for Arts in Medicine in July 2014 as a research scholar and instructor in the Center's graduate programs. Heather works in a dual capacity with the Center for Arts in Medicine and the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center. Within the VA, Heather works as an art therapist and co-developed the Rural Veterans' Telerehabilitation Initiative Creative Arts Therapy Project providing telehealth-based creative arts therapy services to Veterans. In its third year, this program has recently partnered with Creative Forces: The NEA Military Healing Arts Partnership to integrate telehealth within the Creative Forces network, and serves as project director. Heather is a frequent speaker on topics related to art therapy and the arts in health.

## Chris Stowe

A recent addition to the Tampa/St. Pete area, Chris recently retired from the USMC after 23 years of service.

Chris has served with multiple conventional and special forces units as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician, deploying six times to Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as multiple locations in Africa, Kosovo, Macedonia, and other CENTCOM countries over the course of his career.



Multiple roadside bomb exposures as well as the rigors of multiple combat deployments left Chris with cognitive and physical impairments and severe depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and several other issues that left him seeking treatment during this active duty time.

His involvement in finding complementary and alternative therapeutic modalities as an adjunct to traditional pharmaceutical approaches for his own conditions created his need to help others, as well as his previous posting with USSOCOM Care Coalition after serving as a Congressional Fellow with the House Committee for Veterans Affairs in 2014. Through his own experience with alternative therapies, Chris has become a budding glass blowing artist, oil painting artist and author. Through the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE), Chris learned the therapeutic benefits of art therapy as a viable adjunct therapy to traditional mental health modals. These therapeutic outlets have significantly helped with his PTSD and depression.

Chris is currently working with several local glassblowing studios to create military and veterans' programs designed to help our community learn the art of glassblowing as a means of art therapy and continues to paint, write, and blow glass as a positive creative outlet for himself as well.

## Tyler Tarrant

Tyler Tarrant is a program coordinator at the Florida Humanities Council (FHC) located in St. Petersburg. At FHC, Tyler is currently the administrator of the Council's reading and discussion program, including the "Standing Down" discussion program tailored to veterans. Tyler



also was the coordinator for the *Telling: Southwest Florida* production in Naples this past spring. *Telling: Southwest Florida* brought 4 local veterans together to tell their unique and powerful stories on stage to three separate live audiences. Prior to joining FHC, Tyler spent some time in the real estate business sector and worked as an attorney at the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., for five years enforcing the federal environmental laws. Tyler has spent considerable personal time delving into various healing modalities associated with meditation and self-inquiry. He taught various meditation techniques for two years to incarcerated individuals in the Arlington, Virginia jail and is an enthusiastic advocate of using aspects of eastern philosophy to help with trauma.

## Alene Tarter

Ethel A. ("Alene") Tarter is Director of Benefits and Assistance for the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs in Bay Pines.



The retired Air Force Master Sergeant has served in a myriad of leadership roles both in the military and with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Prior to assuming her current role, she served as a Veterans' Claims Examiner in the department from 1999 - 2002 and later as Claims Bureau Supervisor from 2002 - 2006. In 2006, she was selected

# SPEAKER BIOS

as the Bureau Chief for the Claims Bureau before being promoted to her current position in 2009.

Ms. Tarter is a member of the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 8 Veterans' OEF/OIF Reintegration and Suicide Prevention panel, the Florida Council on Homelessness, the State Advisory Council for Jail Diversion and Trauma Recovery/Reintegration, State Advisory Council of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Policy Academy for Returning Veterans and Their Families, and the Supreme Court Substance Abuse and Mental Health Task Force.

Ms. Tarter holds both an Undergraduate Degree and Master of Business Administration degree with specialization in Health Care Administration from Wayland Baptist University.

## Michael Trotter, Jr. The War and Treaty

Noted for his works in the United States Armed Forces as an Army War Veteran (Iraq), Michael Trotter, Jr. is both humbled and thankful to be alive, yet the music doesn't stop there. With his eager approach to any stage, he reels all emotion in when it comes to relating to the world he both served and protected. In addition to being a prolific artist, Mike is also a songwriter. Trotter, his wife Tanya, and Thillman Benham are The War and Treaty, an R&B trio whose name represents the pull between trauma and tranquility- music inspired by darkness and despair that ultimately finds a higher spiritual purpose. It's a sound manifested on the group's



*Photo credit: James Geiger, Courtesy of Art2Action, Inc.*

upcoming studio debut, Dear Martha. The album's first single "Hi Ho," is a WMNF hit that is now being heard on radio stations throughout the country. Still, for all their optimism and intent, The War and Treaty, knows that as their name suggests, perseverance is key to success. They continue to tour, hoping to share songs of reconciliation and humanity.

## Rebecca Vaudreuil

Rebecca is a board-certified music therapist who earned her Bachelors in music therapy at Berklee College of Music and her Masters of Education at Harvard Graduate School of Education with a concentration in educational neuroscience.



She founded a program model for military music therapy programming through Resounding Joy in 2010, which provided the first sustainable music therapy programming to be implemented on military bases in support of active duty service members, veterans, and family engagement. Rebecca is the Music Therapy Program Lead for Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network providing music therapy services for patients at the Concussion Care Clinic at Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton. In addition to clinical work, Rebecca frequently trains music therapists at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in support of Creative Forces national expansion efforts. She develops military music therapy best practices, supports increased access to creative arts therapies across military and veteran healthcare systems and promotes arts-based partnerships in clinical and community settings. Rebecca's music therapy work with military populations has been featured by CNN, highlighted on ABC's World News Tonight with David Muir, and most recently nationally recognized by PBS as part of the 2017 Memorial Day Capital Concerts. Rebecca is a featured lecturer at various national and international symposiums, conferences,

and universities and she travels annually to Jamaica with the Jamaica Field Service Project to supervise music therapy in special education Schools of Hope, hospitals, infirmaries and homeless shelters.

### Marete Wester

Marete A. Wester, M.S., joined the staff of Americans for the Arts in April of 2006. As Senior Director of Arts Policy, she is responsible for the development of cross-sector policy issues and related strategic alliances nationally and internationally. She helped initiate and now facilitates and manages the National Initiative for Arts and Health in the Military—an effort that brings all branches of the U.S. military in collaboration with civilian agencies to advance the policy, practice and quality use of arts and creativity as tools for health for all active duty military, staff, family members, veterans and their caregivers. She is responsible for managing major strategic alliance relationships including stewarding formal Memorandums of Agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Veterans Health Administration and collaborations with diverse national service organizations and public agencies including the American Legion Auxiliary, Corporation for National Service, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health/National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense Office of Warrior Care Policy. She represents Americans for the Arts on the U.S. Department of State's National Council for UNESCO. She holds a bachelor's of music performance degree from Wilkes University, PA and a master's degree in Arts Administration from Drexel University in Philadelphia. Americans for the Arts was awarded a cooperative agreement in July 2016, to administer the expansion of the Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network. Ms. Wester serves as Americans for the Arts Project Director for Creative Forces.



### Cathy Chiovitti Williams

Cathy Chiovitti Williams has been a full-time Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital for the past 26 years. She worked with spinal cord injuries for 15 years prior to taking over as the Supervisor of Recreation Therapy. Her life-long dream of working with patients began because of her older brother suffering a spinal cord injury in 1973. Since that time, she wanted to help people with this type of injury reach their goals and continue to have a good quality of life. Ms. Williams took over the position as Team Coordinator for the Tampa VA Wheelchair Sport Team in 1994. Since that time she has involved 100 newly injured athletes and her teams have won over 400 medals in disabled sports. She completed her education with a Degree in Therapeutic Recreation from the University of Florida in 1989 and has further developed in her field through training, seminars, and hands-on experience in Rehabilitation. She has developed one of the largest Recreation Therapy programs in the country with a staff of 24.





Governor, Rick Scott  
Secretary of State, Ken Detzner

Art2Action Inc.

