

# Spring/Summer 2025 • Issue No. 99 • Free to MAEA Members

The Michigan Art Education Association's mission is to promote quality visual arts education through leadership, service, and professional development.

President's Message	
President-Elect's Message	2
Past President's Message	6
Vice President's Message	
NAEA Convention Moments	8
NAEA Delegate	10
Museum Educator's Message	12
Higher Education Co-Chair	13
Professor Letts	15
Did You Know?	16
2025 MAEA Council Members	18
Membership Application	20

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

#### Looavul.

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LouEville.

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Looeyville.

Louisville!

Our association showed up in force with over 60 members in attendance at the annual NAEA convention in Louisville, Kentucky, March 20 -22nd! Attending national conventions not only brings us together as an association, but also provides professional development, outstanding keynote speakers, and a chance to relax with our colleagues from all across the country. I was honored to attend events serving as the MAEA President and loved our Michigan meet-up at the Aloft Hotel.

Since the convention, I have continued to reflect upon the amazing words from the three keynotes - Nate Powell, the Guerrilla Girls, and Roberto Lugo. The current state of education in our country, and the need for advocacy, I found their speeches encouraging and supportive for all we do as art educators. We are definitely not alone, and in fact, our biggest asset is the community we have built and continue to support...and this is where advocacy comes into play.

"An overwhelming 92% of Americans believe every student should have access to a quality arts education. While 9-in-10 Americans agree arts education is important, only 52% think students have sufficient opportunities to take art classes." (2023, *Americans for the Arts*)

As we navigate our way into summer, I'm hopeful we can continue to build community and support for art education. What we do and what we teach is critical to developing students who are confident in their abilities to solve challenging problems in creative and innovative ways.

I am excited to head to our Western Region Leadership Conference in Wichita, Kansas, June 24 - 27. Representing MAEA is one of my greatest honors and I am so appreciative to serve you in this role.

Wishing you a joyous spring and summer, and I look forward to seeing you at our 76th Fall Conference in Traverse City, November 13 - 16, 2025!

## Cheers!



president@miarted.org



Jane Montero





References

https://www. americansforthearts.org/newsroom/press-releases/americansspeak-out-about-the-artsin-2023

# PRESIDENT-ELECT'S MESSAGE

presidentelect@miarted.org



Illya Tolbert

Why does the drive from Detroit to Louisville seem to take longer? Because Cincinnati traffic adds an extra hour - it's the Bermuda Triangle of I-75!

Attending the NAEA National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, we learned that there's more to Louisville than bourbon and horses. Although we missed most of the first day, we still made the most of our time and accomplished a lot! It was an exhilarating experience, filled with the energy and passion of art educators from across the country. Being surrounded by like-minded professionals who share a deep commitment to arts education was both inspiring and invigorating. The convention featured outstanding keynote speakers, along with a wide array of workshops and presentations that offered fresh ideas, innovative techniques, and meaningful discussions about the future of art education.

One of the most highly anticipated keynote speakers was a woman who came out wearing a gorilla mask—"Frida Kahlo," a member of the Guerrilla Girls, the anonymous collective of feminist artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism in the art world. A huge crowd gathered to hear her speak about the underrepresentation of women and people of color in major art museums. Her passionate and thought-provoking presentation energized the audience, reinforcing (at a time when we have an administration in Washington that is at war with diversity) the importance of advocating for equity and inclusion in the arts.

Another captivating keynote was Roberto Lugo, an American potter, social activist, spoken word poet, and educator. Before his presentation, I was unfamiliar with his work, but his powerful storytelling and dynamic presence left a lasting impression. Lugo shared his journey of growing up in Philadelphia, discovering pottery, and using his art to uplift and educate his community. He even incorporated rap into his talk, bringing his experiences to life in a way that deeply resonated with the audience. His commitment to making art accessible, particularly to underserved communities, was both inspiring and a call to action for educators everywhere.

After visiting the Louisville Slugger factory (where my wife was excited to

hold Willie Mays' bat), we walked to the KMAC Contemporary Art Museum, where we encountered the captivating work of Brazilian artist Chico Da Silva. This is the first time his work has been shown outside of Brazil. His exhibition featured striking graphic representations of mythological and enchanted creatures intertwined with the lush beauty of Brazilian flora. Each piece was brought to life through a surreal fusion of bold colors, intricate line work, and mesmerizing patterns, creating a dreamlike world that felt both otherworldly and deeply

rooted in nature. The dynamic energy of his art transformed the space into a vibrant, immersive experience that left a lasting impression.



Chico Da Silva

We also met and spoke with the KMAC artist-in-residence, Licia Priest, who has family in Detroit and is creating incredible collage work. Using photos, paper, and Mod Podge, she crafts richly layered compositions that have a striking three-dimensional quality. Seeing her work in person was a completely different experience—her website and photos don't do justice to the depth and texture she achieves. Each piece is a mesmerizing blend of images, seamlessly woven together to form intricate, multi-layered narratives. You can explore her work at Layered Images. https://layeredimages.com/#section0

The workshops at the NAEA Convention were both engaging and enlightening, offering a wealth of new ideas to bring back to the classroom. One particularly fascinating session introduced the process of creating portraits through coding using Khan Academy,



Licia Priest

blending art and technology in an innovative way. I also attended a workshop that explored the contributions of African American art educators David Driskell, Fred Wilson and others deepening my understanding of their impact on the field. Another thought-provoking session examined the racial bias present in AI-generated images from DALL·E 2, sparking important discussions about representation in digital art. A lettering workshop provided a variety of creative lessons for students from kindergarten through eighth grade, and I'm especially excited to try these techniques with my kindergartners. The Digital Playground, always a convention highlight, showcased the latest advancements in art technology from Adobe and Wacom. I was particularly intrigued by "Glaze," a new digital painting app designed to imitate the rich textures and brushwork of oil painting. Each of these experiences expanded my artistic perspective and provided fresh inspiration for my teaching practice.

This year, I was excited to see a new vendor at the convention with a strong Detroit connection—the Pensole Lewis College. I first met and spoke with their representatives at the Michigan gathering on our first day in Louisville, where I was reminded about their unique focus on footwear design. As the only historically Black college in Michigan, their mission to provide innovative design education is both inspiring and impactful. I hope to collaborate with them in the future, connecting my students to their programs and introducing them to new creative career pathways.

On our last day in Louisville, we had the opportunity to visit the Speed Art Museum, which houses an excellent and diverse collection of modern art. The museum features works by renowned artists such as Jacob Lawrence, Henry Moore, and Roy Lichtenstein, showcasing a range of artistic styles and perspectives. A particularly special highlight was encountering the work of African American leather artist Winfred Rembert, who grew up in Georgia during the Jim Crow era, survived a nearlynching and years of imprisonment on a chain gang. I recommend you look him up—his work is incredible, and it's a fascinating story. Additionally, the museum's impressive collection of glass art was both intricate and breathtaking. Experiencing such a diverse array of artworks was a fitting way to conclude our trip, reinforcing the importance of bringing firsthand artistic experiences back to our classrooms.

Overall, the NAEA National Convention in Louisville was a fantastic experience filled with inspiration, learning, and connection. I returned home with fresh ideas, valuable resources, and a renewed enthusiasm for art education. On a lighter note, the trip also introduced my wife to Louisville's famous Modjeska candies—marshmallows dipped in caramel—and let's just say she's officially hooked! With next year's convention taking place in Chicago, a much shorter trip from Michigan, I hope to see even more local educators take advantage of this incredible opportunity to grow, collaborate, and celebrate the power of art education.

Remember the MAEA Fall Conference will be in Traverse City, November 13 - 16, 2025!

# PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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**Annie Howard** 

Hello Members,

I hope the end of the school year gives you a wonderful and restful summer. You certainly have earned it!

I wanted to remind everyone that if you have any news articles that you would like posted on our website, please email a link to me and I will add them right away. pastpresident@miarted.org

This is an election year and all positions on the Executive Board are positions that you could run for. If you would like to have your name placed on our ballot for a fall election, please let me know as soon as possible. pastpresident@miarted.org

Our final call will be at the Saturday Business Breakfast at the conference. Here are the ballot seats that you could run for:

• President-Elect (six-year term of President-Elect, President, Past President)

- Recording Secretary
- Treasurer

- Membership Secretary
- Vice President
- NAEA Delegate

Our council has several open seats if you are interested. Please email our President, Jane Montero, if you have interest in them. president@miarted.org

- Region 2 Liaison
- Student Division Chair (college student)
- K-12 Exhibits

- Summer Professional Development
- State Conference Student Sponsorship Awards

Thank you for everything you do to contribute to our volunteer organization! I have been a volunteer on the council and e-board for 1.5 decades and it has been an incredible rewarding experience.

# Visit MAEA's website

# miarted.org

for a full color version of the newsletters. Go to Resources and then Publications.

# VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Roger Drabant

"Bringing art and engagement to all of our children, to all of our societies; and that we are important, that art is important and it cannot be removed from our culture. Because we matter, our kids matter, and our communities matter."

- Robert Lugo, closing out his address to 3,500 art educators at the NAEA National Convention in Louisville, KY.

Too often, we sit in our rooms with our students and focus on what we are doing for and with them. With all the initiatives, commitments, standards, shows, policies, and changes, it is easy to fail to recognize the impact that you make on the community. Your work matters. Not only to your students, your school, and your district: it matters to the larger community. A community that you may never fully see. Art matters to the largest and most interconnected community: humanity. Art matters and what you do matters. What we know about cultures past and present, we know because of their arts: the neolithic paintings on cave walls, the ancient shards of pottery, the Greek, Roman, and Arabic mosaics buried over centuries of history. Art is community and community matters. Do not lose sight of all that you do and why you do it as the school year winds down: you build and create community because the arts matter, we matter, our kids matter, and our communities matter.





# NAEA CONVENTION MOMENTS

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We are so proud of our two MSU Art Education students, April Montoye and Erin Vollertsen, for presenting at their first NAEA! April and Erin both presented on the power of student choice in creating an inclusive and socially engaged art curriculum.

Andrea Allen

Sarah Griesinger Wanda B. Knight talked about the difference between community and proximity Saturday morning. My biggest takeaway from the convention in Kentucky is the sense of community I feel among my colleagues in art education! We often lack proximity to other art educators in our daily work life. The way we draw each other in and build each other up is restorative. Thank you

Attending and presenting at NAEA's annual convention is always such an amazing learning experience. We are part of a larger community of art and design educators from all over the country! There is no better time than NOW to come together to strengthen and promote our art education community.

Jane Montero

Erica Davis-Hernandez As I moved into my new position, I attended sessions that I would not have in the past, Museum Division sessions. The information, insight, and inspiration were, as always, appreciated. I left NAEA with as much knowledge as I would have hoped and the understanding that no matter how long I've been doing things, I can always gain more.

Roger Drabant

My big "moment" in Louisville was co-coordinating and presenting the first, to be annual, Interest Group Awards ceremony. Lark, Past President of Florida AEA, and I are the newly appointed IG Co-Leaders. That was the first time that all the IG's were invited to share their scholarships, grants, and awards as an entire group. While I was nervous to emcee the awards, it became a great experience as I learned about each award and each recipient along with all the work they do with and for their students from kindergarten to higher education. We have so many amazing art educators!

# Nature Mâché Mash-Up

Lesson Plan for Grades 3-12





**Create:** Smooth Blick's Mix Instant Papier Mâché on the surface of a slump or hump mold.



**Combine:** Press lengths of reed along the rim of the bowl to be used for weaving after it has dried.



**Decorate:** Embellish the bowl with natural elements such as dried flowers, paper, bark reed, and sticks.

# Explore texture and form in this fusion of papier mâché, natural elements, and weaving.

Students gather natural elements from the great outdoors and transform them into unique papier mâché bowls.

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# NAEA **DELEGATE**

naeadelegate@miarted.org



Erica **Davis-Hernandez** 



Illya, Erica, Emily & Jane at the Western & IG Awards



Milliner Jenny Pfanenstiel

Chic da Silva,

The four days in Louisville spent at the delegation and the convention were a whirlwind of activities. I am happy to report that we voted to recommend three new interest groups: Fiber Arts Makers (FAM), Developing Potential & Talent in Art (DPTA), and Data Visualization and Visual Literacy IG. Another recommendation to the NAEA Board was to change the First-Year Professional membership category to an Early Career Professional



Jane Montero & Erica at the Delegates Assembly

membership category, extending the membership length from one year to three years. This could bring great possibilities to both retain and support our newest art educators. I enjoyed representing Michigan as NAEA delegate, getting to know other state reps and voting on position statements. Thank you!

As a newly appointed NAEA Interest Group Co-Leader, I helped organize the IG tables and the first, to be annual, NAEA IG Awards Ceremony. Our own Jane Montero received an award from DIG (Design Interest Group). IGs are a valuable member benefit; most of them also offer scholarships, awards and/ or grants every year to fellow members. It was so interesting to hear about the other IG's, their awardees and what they did to receive them. Feedback from the new convention event was very positive and I look forward to it again next year.

I really didn't know what to expect from a convention in Kentucky. Louisville surprised me, impressed me and it also embraced our educational community. With a vibrant downtown, historical architecture and public art all around, Louisville did not disappoint. We had a great Michigan meet-up at the Aloft hotel that included some freebies: fascinators, MAEA stickers, and 75th anniversary pins. I lost count after 25 Michiganders were in attendance plus the Michigan Meet-up! some NCTA friends from Ohio, spices and other guests. The fascinators paired nicely with the Disco Derby themed NAEA pARTy that evening!



Erica & Cindy Todd (NAEA President) at

There were so many fun activities at the convention and around town including an Artist Talk by award winning master milliner Jenny Pfanenstiel, a special exhibit of the Brazilian folk artist Chico da Silva at the KMAC Museum of Contemporary Art, and a swift visit through the Speed Art Museum. We made





sure to visit the Speed galleries with art from Kentucky that included beautiful folk art sculptures. At the Modern Fabric Linocuts hands-on workshop, I sat next to Berkley art

Martin Finn's Parrot, Speed Art teacher Sam Letvin. We hadn't met before and found out that we live a couple miles away from each other! I am always amazed by the people I meet thanks to the opportunities NAEA and MAEA offer. Other

highlights include the three amazing keynotes: cartoonist Nate Powell, arts activists Guerilla Girls, ceramic

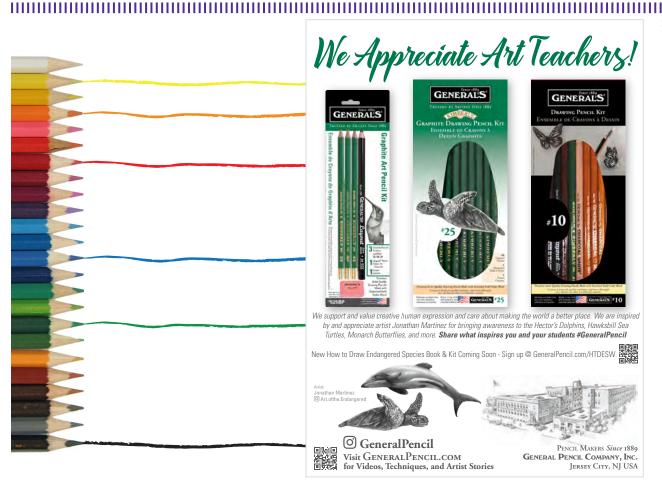
artist and educator Robert Lugo, and seeing our Michigan Cindy Todd become the NAEA President!

Coalition for Feminism in Art Education IG (CFAE) always holds an annual local artist talk - this year's convention session did not disappoint. Local Louisville artist Sarah Lyons, shared her inspiration and story behind her auto mechanic calendar that took her on a bike around the US. Between the keynotes, artist talks, sessions, Interest Group meetings, vendors and local art museums, there was too much to do and too little time to do everything. That's a nice dilemma to have. I ended my visit with a haunted ghost tour of the most haunted neighborhood in the US. Louisville is full of Victorian homes that have been preserved to showcase Old Louisville and the beautiful architecture.



Coalition on Feminism in Art Education board members and artist Sarah Lyons (spicy mustard shirt)

Consider joining your fellow colleagues at a NAEA convention in the future. The 2026 convention will be in Chicago, March 5th-7th. Now is the time to ask your district and admin for approval to attend. As you move forward into summer, look for PD opportunities that feed your soul and for the upcoming Traverse City MAEA conference in November 2025.



# MUSEUM EDUCATOR'S MESSAGE

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**Grace VanderVliet** 

# **Museum Habits: Learning from the World Around You**

Recently, 100 middle schoolers toured the U-M Museum of Art's collection of Korean ceramics. They connected historic objects with the themes in A Single Shard, a novel by Linda Sue Park. While transitioning from the museum tour to lunch (the best part of a field trip!), a teacher noticed many college students studying, listening to music, enjoying coffee, and talking in small groups. The teacher addressed his class and quoted a poor but wise mentor from the book: "Scholars read the great words of the world. But you and I must learn to read the world itself." He then asked, "What is this book of life teaching you? Take clues from your surroundings."

A student paraphrased, "We should look at these students and think 'We could be here, too.' We could come with friends to look at art or hang out or study." The teacher added, "Absolutely. And also, they are whispering."

I love that interaction for many reasons: the teacher's ability to connect a direct quote to the final tour stop, the middle school student's future vision of himself in a museum, the university students' social use of the lobby, and the way it highlights our preconceived idea that we should be quiet.

Since that visit, I've noted how different visitors "do" art museums. There is not one right way! Here are a few museum habits I've observed as I've "read the world" around me; perhaps there's a fun approach that you'd like to try on your next visit!

- > Bite-Size it: only hit your favorites and leave wanting more
- > Take an actual bite: sit at the café and take in the people + a muffin
- > Bring a book: find a cozy corner and a comfy chair and read for 10 minutes
- > Buy a gift (for you or a friend): museum shops often support local artists
- > Instagram: whip out your phone and find the best angle
- > Move it: look from the ground, from around the back, from up on top
- > Quick sketch: grab a friend and stand back-to-back. One faces an artwork and describes it to the other who is looking away. That friend draws what they hear. Then they turn around and compare with the original how close were they?

# HIGHER EDUCATION CO-CHAIR

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# Reflections on Being at NAEA '25

Prior to attending the NAEA 2025 Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, I felt less than enthusiastic about attending the convention. I believe my feelings centered on having a general malaise about the current state of our national government and, with their continual attacks on education, the weight of what more is likely to come. I did not feel a good emotional state for this experience. However, once onsite and checked in, I started to see friendly faces, people like me who all care so deeply about education and especially for visual art education. I felt a shift in my disposition, away from malaise and toward belonging. I belong here. And Friday's general session featuring the Guerrilla Girls, reaffirmed my connection to our work as artist educators and it allowed for some emotional healing to take place – the permission granted by the speaker to 'primal scream' at the start of the session truly enhanced my mood!

On Friday evening, I co-presented a session with fellow colleagues, Dr. Flávia Bastos, University of Cincinnati, and Ray Yang, NAEA's Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Special Initiatives, featuring a talk entitled "Let's talk about "IT": Challenges and opportunities for sustaining ED&I work in art education." We desired our session to focus on attendee feedback and participation, asking two vital questions: 1. What does it mean to serve every student in your classrooms, and, 2. What does it look like to lead with an "equity mindset"? The table discussions produced valuable evidence of mindful considerations for continuing to engage in ED&I practices through a shift in our collective and individual mindsets. The session concluded by asking the attendees to share one action step for future equity mindset practice. Overall, we heard strong voices of resilience and persistence.

Another highlight was to be in the company of my classmates, representing the School for Art Leaders (SAL) Class of 2024. Thursday afternoon and evening showcased our capstone projects, while the culmination of our experiences happened at the Saturday morning General Session. It truly was an honor to receive my award from our new NAEA President, Dr. Cindy Todd. And in true art educator fashion, 13 of us found a moment to revisit DaVinci's *The Last Supper* in a playful tableau at a local restaurant. The SAL experience – focused on building leaders in NAEA's art education membership community – developed over a full year of engaging with peers toward leadership practices as a collective and also within individual, local interests and experiences. As it was an honor to be recognized at the conference as a SAL graduate, it was also an honor to be a part of the SAL family because I now have a cohort of amazing artist educators to call my friends and colleagues.

On the flight back to Detroit, I took time to reflect on my NAEA experience and sensed a completely different feeling than the one impacting my arrival. Now, I again felt wrapped within something meaningful and significant – a community of committed artist educators – who endeavor to persist, to stay our course, in spite of the odds, always.



Karen McGarry, PhD



ED&I Session:
"Let's talk about IT"
Co-presented with
Dr. Flávia Bastos,
University of Cincinnati,
and Ray Yang, NAEA



School for Art Leaders Award presentation with NAEA President, Cindy Todd



13 SAL Pals reenacting the Last Supper



The SAL 2024 Graduating Class



# DRAWING FIBERS CERAMICS PRINTMAKING SCULPTURE PAINTING













# **VISUAL ARTS PROGRAM**

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blue lake fine arts camp

# DISPATCH FROM THE UPPER PENINSULA: 2024 WAS A GREAT YEAR!

For seventeen years, I have brought my MAEA student chapter pre-service teachers to the MAEA annual conference. 2024 was a landmark year; eight students made the trip, and for the first time ever the students presented at the conference, giving two sessions that were well attended and fun. The students were enthusiastic about the opportunity to spend time in Lansing, to see the State Capitol building, enjoy some excellent restaurants, and mostly to attend so many amazing sessions at the conference. Having also attended NAEA 2024 in Minneapolis, they decided they needed to make a big splash in Lansing. So, they designed the iconic pink sweatshirts with the NMU Wildcat logo that they wore at the conference, which were a big hit; they sure got noticed and people were asking if they could buy one. This great group of students will no doubt continue to be active in the MAEA as they move into their teaching careers. NMU continues to support the student chapter by providing travel funding. A new group is on deck for 2025, with plans to begin their MAEA experience in Traverse City in the fall, and with a bit of luck, in Chicago for NAEA 2026. We will try to bring more sweatshirts!

The Art Education program at NMU also hosted ArtEdUP, the first annual professional development conference for Upper Peninsula art teachers, in December 2024. The conference idea was born during the general education professional development day for the school district in September 2024. Area art teachers came together in an ad hoc meeting and shared that the conference had no sessions that targeted visual arts. Out of that emerged the idea of holding our own conference. The one-day conference was organized by myself, Jake Fether, MSHS art teacher, and Linnea Gustafson, Negaunee Lakeview Elementary art teacher. It was held at the NMU School of Art and Design. University art professors agreed to present a number of excellent sessions. Twenty-two teachers from all across the UP attended, earning SCECHs and having a lot of fun learning in sessions on ceramics, computer art, graphic design, printmaking, and industrial design. The next ArtEdUP may be even bigger. All Michigan art teachers are welcome to attend, it is not limited to UP educators. A date is not yet set, but it is sure to be more fun with art in the UP.

Advocacy Chair miletts@nmu.edu



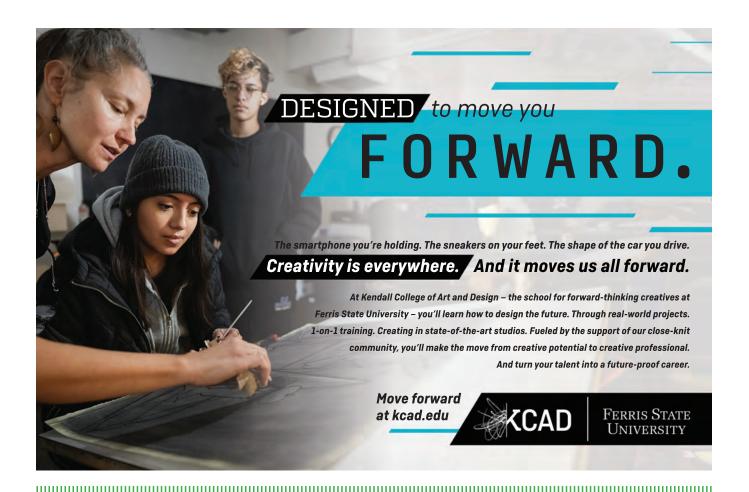
Michael Letts



Fig. 1: NMU students at their presentation for MAEA 2024 in Lansing. Front L-R: Ana Gargiulo, Shelby Scott, Sadie Shansky-Genovese. Back: Michael Letts, Simone Posey, Alex Tuttle.



Fig. 2: Upper Peninsula art teachers at ArtEdUP 2024



# Did You Know...

... The MAEA Board/Council members are a very dedicated group of volunteers?

... This year is an election year? Consider joining this group of volunteers!

... There are many ways to volunteer and get involved with MAEA? (see page two of this issue) Just check with any of our board members.

... The conference co-chairs are very hard at work preparing the fall conference?

... The fall newsletter's deadline for articles is July 1?

... Our president, Jane Montero will be co-editing the Media Arts issue of the School Arts magazine?

... This year's conference is in Traverse City at the Grand Traverse Resort November 13-16?

... The 2026 fall conference will be in Port Huron?



# 2025 MAEA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

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