2023 WESTAF Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Artist Fund Application Reviewers

Alabama
Patrice Johnson, Arts Huntsville
With an extensive background in arts advocacy, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), business administration, and public affairs, Patrice Johnson is the Arts Equity, Marketing, and Media Manager at Arts Huntsville. Experienced in integrated marketing communications, strategy, project and event management, public speaking, and design, Johnson has a bachelor's in business administration and a master's in integrated marketing communications.

In 2022, Johnson joined the distinguished ranks of South Arts' second Emerging Leaders of Color cohort. Alongside her role at Arts Huntsville, she has significantly contributed to the community by serving on the Cuyahoga Arts grant panel, participating in the Patchwork Symphony project, and selecting talent for the Blast Music selection panel. Additionally, she acted as a judge during the 2021 Huntsville Battle of the Bands. Passionate about the arts, Johnson is dedicated to promoting equity, visibility, and resources for her local arts community. She firmly believes that these elements are essential in nurturing and sustaining a vibrant artistic culture.

Alabama / Georgia
Jerald Crook, Higher Ground Society
Atlanta-based Jerald Crook boasts nearly a decade of public service and cultural curation experience across Alabama and Georgia. His community programming involvement spans both state government and nonprofit sectors, reaching statewide populations through organizations like the Alabama Humanities Alliance and his present role as grants manager at the Georgia Humanities Council. A graduate of Auburn University with a bachelor of arts degree in history and sustainability, Crook went on to obtain a master of public administration from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. He has since devoted himself to preserving history and building cultural connections within communities.

As the founder and executive director of Higher Ground Society, an Alabama nonprofit dedicated to fostering unity and understanding through the arts and humanities, Jerald has established a significant presence in the realm of cultural engagement. In addition to his work with Higher Ground Society, Crook is a founding board member of the Invisible Histories Project, a southern queer history archival organization, and a recently appointed board member for the Georgia Association of Museums. With a clear passion for unity, representation, and facilitating cultural connections, Crook's contributions to public service and cultural curation will continue to leave a lasting impact on the communities he serves.

Arizona
Nathania García, University of Arizona
Nathania Guadalupe García Brauer currently serves as an adjunct professor in the Department of Mexican American Studies at the University of Arizona. As a Spanish-English bilingual,
multicultural and queer-identified citizen who was raised in the U.S.-México Borderlands, Garcia identifies the diverse needs of varying communities and considers herself well-equipped to design and execute methods and strategies with the intent of alleviating social inequities wherever and whenever they may exist. Considerably well-read and experienced, she is an excellent delegator, very organized, a strong communicator, assertive, and always prepared for ever-changing situations. García learns quickly and moves about at a similar pace.

**California**

Bianca Garcia, Balboa Art Conservation Center

Bianca Garcia, associate conservator of paintings and programs manager at Balboa Art Conservation Center (BACC), plays a vital role in the nonprofit organization located in San Diego, California. BACC focuses on providing conservation, preservation and collections care services to the western U.S. region. García has taken on the additional responsibility of program manager for the Andrew W. Mellon Opportunity for Diversity in Conservation, an initiative by UCLA/Getty Program in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage, which offers funded opportunities for underrepresented students interested in pursuing conservation as a career.

García's commitment to diversifying the field of conservation is evident through her initiatives targeting equity and representation in both the field and the communities served. Her efforts include demystifying the conservation profession for historically underrepresented communities, developing culturally sensitive and inclusive collections care, broadening access to preservation services, and promoting professional development for museum workers and artists.

Garcia earned her master's in art conservation from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program and her bachelor's in art conservation with a minor in art history from the University of Delaware.

Laticia Holley, Yelloh Joy Magazine (self-employed)

Laticia Holley has spent over 15 years perfecting her design skills, especially hand-pulled prints. A designer and publisher native to the Bay area, Holley apprenticed and studied MEng for years then mid-level switched gears before pursuing a bachelor's in VisComm from the University of San Diego, where she trained in multiple structures of art. Holley takes additional joy in curating narratives in publishing form and the use of black is quite intentional in her artwork. To Holley, the color represents layers of positive references (+neg), both of which she leans into with industrial themes that anchor her technique.

Dorinda Moreno, Retired

Dorinda Moreno, a Chicana-Apache elder and founder of Fuerza Mundial, Condor-Aguila, has dedicated her life to supporting indigenous and multicultural issues across the Americas and the globe. As a seasoned organizer, writer, and historian-archivist, she has created and maintained various networks and alliances between diverse grassroots causes, organizations, and nations for over 50 years. Her extensive body of work includes the founding of the Concilio Mujeres from the 1970s to the 1980s, La Raza Women's Class in 1972-73, and As Long As the Rivers Flow, a collaboration between Native American and Chicana women at DQU. She also served as a professor of Ethnic and Women's Studies during the 70s at San Francisco State University,
DQ University, Ohlone Junior College, and Napa Junior College. As the curator of Cenote Sagrado de Chichen Itza, Moreno has been involved with the elders of Four Colors Four Directions, contributing to their cultural preservation. She has also actively participated and supported the Peace & Dignity Journeys from 1987 to 1994, and again from 1994 to the present day.

Moreno’s work as the U.S. liaison for the International Tribunal of Conscience from 2005 to 2013 highlights her ongoing commitment to human rights. Furthermore, she commemorated Maria “Lrenchita” Guardado in a 2015 project entitled “Siempre Presente.” To continue her legacy of inspiring change, Moreno started Proyecto Sin Cuenta 50 Si Cuentan/Honoring the Maestras y Maestros — a curriculum development journey that bridges regions, projects, and themes over a 5-decade timespan. This project addresses various social issues of civil society relevance and promotes the integration of youth, elders, and community leaders in building humanitarian resolutions.

Gloria Ortega, Vincent Price Art Museum
Gloria Ortega, an art historian and emerging museum professional, has recently been appointed as the curatorial assistant at the Vincent Price Art Museum. As an alumna of East Los Angeles College, Ortega began her journey into academia as a studio artist, eventually transitioning into the field of art history. Ortega has accumulated an impressive array of experiences, including an internship at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). She also held a research assistant position at the Center for the Study of Political Graphics as part of the Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internship program. In addition, Ortega was a member of the first cohort of interns at the Association of Research Institutes in Art History (ARIAH).

Alongside her multiple accomplishments, Ortega participated in the ELAC Washington D.C. Internship Program, where she had the opportunity to work with the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery. During her time there, she served as a curatorial research assistant for the exhibition titled 1898: U.S. Imperial Visions and Revisions. As the new curatorial assistant at the Vincent Price Art Museum, Ortega is poised to contribute her knowledge and skills to the institution, further strengthening its commitment to engaging diverse audiences through art and culture.

Jasmine Rashid, Candide Group
Jasmine Rashid, a Bangladeshi-American writer and financial activist based in Oakland, California, focuses on leveraging money to create social change. Born and raised in New York, Rashid serves as the director of impact for candide group, where she contributes to directing millions of dollars in loans and equity investments in women and BIPOC-led social impact businesses and funds. Through her work, Rashid empowers her community by supporting initiatives that promote economic inclusion. In addition to her role at Candide Group, she is the co-founder of Real Money Moves, a campaign that played a significant part in convincing top banks to end their financial support of the private prison and immigrant detention industry. Rashid's passion for activism extends to her writing.
Her forthcoming book, "The Financial Activist Playbook: How Anyone Can Leverage Money for Social Change," serves as an accessible, actionable guide for individuals to implement strategies that foster a more inclusive economy. With a strong commitment to creating tangible change, Rashid continues to pave the way for a more equitable financial landscape through her work, writing, and advocacy.

**Colorado**
Danielle C. Brooks, Denver Public Library  
Danielle C. Brooks is an experienced marketing strategist who excels in complex project management and re-engineers processes via strategic planning and analytical skills, while communicating trends and opportunities to senior leadership and cross functional teams. Brooks possesses over 15 years of experience spanning multiple industries including furnished housing, food and beverage, information technology, entertainment, and retail.

Andre Carbonell, Slam Nuba  
Andre Carbonell, also known as Hakeem Furious, was born in Jacksonville, Florida and later found his home in the Rocky Mountains. As a theater major, Carbonell graduated from a Southern arts high school and further honed his skills for words through spoken word communities at Florida A&M University. This historically Black university shaped his appreciation for the Black culture and resilience. Now, Carbonell serves as the CEO of the #UltraTerrestrialTour, traveling nationwide to perform poetry, create shows, and write curriculum and grants.

Grace Gutierrez, Longmont Public Library  
Longmont, Colorado-based artist Grace Gutierrez explores a range of mediums, such as painting, ceramics, sculpture, and video art. Gutierrez’s work highlights her mixed-race, Chicanx background, drawing inspiration from personal experiences, family tribulations, Mexican folk art, folklore, and literature. Her art encourages empathy, equity, and pride within the community. Gutierrez was born and raised in Longmont where she continues to promote local creative opportunities, currently a board member of the Longmont Creative District and a member of the Firehouse Art Center.

Alexandria Jimenez, VELA Education Fund  
Alexandria Jimenez, a Denver community advocate and artist, holds a bachelor's degree from Metropolitan State University Denver. With a focus on collaborations with youth and artists, she brings a decade of experience to her roles, including serving as the program director for PlatteForum and senior manager of youth programming at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver. Beyond her artistic contributions, Jimenez is an associate of programs at VELA Education Fund, a national organization providing support for innovative out-of-system learning spaces. As an entrepreneur, she owns and operates Runner Up, an online second-hand retail shop.

**Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)**
Patricia Mareham
Patricia Mareham boasts an extensive background in nonprofit work, having served as a lead caseworker and acting administrator for the CNMI Women's Association from 2015-17. She continued her work in women's affairs as part of the Governor's Office from 2017-19. Mareham is a proud alumnus of the 2022-23 National Leaders of Color Program.

In addition to her nonprofit career, Mareham has flourished as a self-employed artist for over two decades. As a registered artist with the CNMI Arts Council Office, she provides art instruction to various community groups, schools, and youth programs across CNMI. Mareham is dedicated to imparting her cultural artwork and promoting the rich cultural heritage of CNMI. Through sharing her craft, she empowers others to hone their skills and passion for art. “My creations today are others' vision tomorrow.”

Delaware
Leeann Wallett, Delaware Division of the Arts
Leeann Wallett is the program officer in community engagement for the Delaware Division of the Arts, a branch of the Delaware Department of State, dedicated to cultivating and supporting the arts to enhance the quality of life for all Delawareans. Working with Division staff and community partners, her role is to identify and/or develop grants, programs, and services that expand access to arts programming and resources aligning with the Division's strategic goals and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Wallett remains active in the community, serving as a co-chair of the creative impact committee for the #MILLSUMMIT, working as a freelance writer, and fiber and embroidery artist. She holds a master's degree from Southern Methodist University/HEC Montréal in international arts management and a bachelor's degree from American University in foreign language (Spanish) & communications media.

Georgia
Brandall C. Jones, Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company
Brandall C. Jones is passionate about sharing multicultural stories and history and serves as the Connectivity Director for Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company in Atlanta, Georgia and Partner of MJR Partners, Arts Management Services. An adamant belief that all, no matter what their ZIP code or background, deserve access to high quality arts has been the driving force of Jones’ career. He has previously held positions at The Serenbe Institute, Fulton County Arts and Culture (FCAC), and People Store (Atlanta talent agency). Currently pursuing a master’s in Arts Administration at Goucher College, Jones earned his bachelor's from the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) with a focus on performing arts and arts administration, following performance studies at Stella Adler Conservatory in Los Angeles. Jones has been named a Southern United States Fellow of the International Society of Performing Arts, an Arts Leader of Metro Atlanta by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), an Emerging Leader of Color by South Arts, and awarded the Distinguished Leader in the Arts Fellowship by the Hambidge Center for Creative Arts and Sciences. He is a highly sought-after panelist for regional and national arts grants and is known for using his platforms to uplift and acknowledge the historically overlooked.
Jacky Seguí, Aurora Theatre
Jacky Seguí was born and raised in Puerto Rico. Her passion for the arts started at a young age. After moving to the states to pursue a career in the arts, Seguí obtained a master's degree in presenting and live entertainment management from the University of Miami and a master’s degree in performing arts from Savannah College of Art and Design. She feels fortunate to be able to currently work as director of community impact at Aurora Theatre in Lawrenceville, Georgia, where she started as an apprentice in 2019. This position is very important to Seguí, as she has the opportunity to collaborate with different organizations, connect to new communities, and work to create programming that welcomes the beautiful diversity that surrounds us all.

Hawaii
Nawahine Lanzilotti, East-West Center
Nawahine Lanzilotti is a kanaka maoli (Native Hawaiian) mixed-race performing artist, educator, and equity professional. Her work seeks to sustain indigenous ways of knowing through place-based approaches. She was a 2021 WESTAF Emerging Leaders of Color cohort member and took part in WESTAF'S 2023 Arts Leadership and Advocacy Seminar (ALAS) in Washington D.C. with the Hawai‘i delegation. She currently works at the East-West Center in Honolulu, Hawai‘i as the diversity, equity, and inclusion coordinator supporting models of culturally resonant equity and leadership.

Idaho
Monique Michel, Ballet Folklorico Mexico Lindo
Monique N. Michel is a Mexican American born and raised in Los Angeles, California but now resides in Boise, Idaho. The director of her own dance company, the Ballet Folklorico Mexico Lindo, she was taught the art of Mexican folk dancing growing up in Los Angeles, and now carries on the name of the group originally started in Bellflower, California by the same name, under the direction of Barbara Delgado. A teacher, dancer, mother and staunch LGBTQ+ ally and supporter, she is also a former DEIA director for a school in Boise, Idaho. Michel has extensive work with marginalized communities in both California and Idaho, and has served on boards and community organizations in both Ada and Canyon Counties in Idaho. An Emerging Leaders of Color alumna and currently serving fellowship for WESTAF representing the Pacific Northwest Cohort and the state of Idaho.

Indiana
André Zhang Sonera, Indiana Arts Commission
André Zhang Sonera is the deputy director of operations & strategic partnerships for the Indiana Arts Commission. Originally from San Sebastián, Puerto Rico, he brings a diverse background to his role, with a strong focus on policy analysis and civic leadership. Zhang Sonera holds a master’s in public administration from the Paul H. O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), where he concentrated on policy analysis.

Iowa
A. Alanda Gregory, Self-Employed
Alanda Gregory’s creative vision is helping others (as well as herself) to thrive to become better versions of themselves. She incorporates emotional intelligence and life coaching education in her services to enhance client experiences to unlock their own potential, pulling from her past experience as a corporate professional to create services tailored to others in the art/culture, entertainment and small business circuit. Primarily, Gregory’s focus is BIPOC-owned businesses and BIPOC professionals; she believes the BIPOC population is the most underserved and under-appreciated in the U.S. Her desire is to encourage BIPOC communities through her mentorship, coaching, and businesses.

Kansas
Blanca Herrada, Lawrence Arts Center
Blanca Herrada is a Queer, Mexican American artist living and working in Lawrence, Kansas. She enjoys working within the intersections of art and activism and is passionate about their community. In 2022, Herrada was chosen as one of 52 Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) arts and culture leaders that were selected for the inaugural National Leaders of Color Fellowship. She enjoys working with diverse communities to spread her love for the arts and strives to make art spaces more accessible and welcoming to everyone.

Louisiana
Courtney Young, Self employed
Courtney Young, born and raised in Lafayette, Louisiana, is a writer of fiction, screenplays, popular culture criticism, and creative nonfiction. She is a recipient of residencies from Willapa Bay Air, Vermont Studio Center, Faber, Hambidge, Hedgebrook, Bainbridge and Chateau D’Orquevaux. Young is also the founder of the Mae Fellowship, an annual virtual program that provides financial and professional support to women and nonbinary writers seeking to publish her/their first book. Her current projects include completing both her first narrative feature entitled “This Savage Life Makes Us Hard to Kill” and her first collection of short stories entitled “Scar Tissue of the Extraordinary.” A graduate of Spelman College and New York University, she received her bachelor’s in English with a minor in management and her master’s from the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, completing an interdisciplinary program that combined entertainment B=business, performance, & Africana studies.

Leigha Porter, Self-Employed
A native of Lafayette, Louisiana, Leigha Porter M.Ed is the founder and artistic director of F.I.R.E. Expressions Performing Arts Conservatory, co-creator of The Creole Nutcracker, a southern reimagining of the classic Christmas tale and theater production, incubator and owner of PARC Village, a community art center and collective space that supplies resources for empowering creatives of color. For the past 8 years, Porter has served as an arts advocate, arts administrator, and movement artist and continues to serve the north side of Lafayette, a historically Black and economically and culturally underserved community.

New Mexico
Jadira Gurulé, National Hispanic Cultural Center Art Museum
Jadira Gurulé is the head curator and visual arts program manager for the art museum at the National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Gurulé finished her bachelor’s in art history at the University of New Mexico (UNM) in 2010 and received her master’s in American studies from UNM in 2015. Her curatorial work engages themes of race, gender, pop culture, social justice, and the role of museums in building community and shaping national discourse. Gurulé is an alumni of WESTAF’s Emerging Leaders of Color 2013 cohort and the NALAC Leadership Institute’s 2017 cohort. In 2022, she traveled to Spain as part of the United States – Spain Council Young Leaders Program.

**North Carolina**
Antonio Renteria, Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County
Antonio is the director of operations for the Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County – serving more than 500,000 individuals annually through arts education, grants, festivals and special events. As one of Fayetteville’s “40 under 40,” Renteria is actively involved in volunteerism and community service; he serves as a board member to many cultural nonprofits in the area. Renteria graduated from Montana State University-Bozeman with a bachelor’s of arts. He is committed to building relationships with local artists, nonprofit organizations, and other community partners who make Fayetteville a vibrant and welcoming community for artists and other creatives.

**Rhode Island**
Moy (Adam) Chuong, The Steel Yard
Moy (Adam) Chuong (they/them) is a queer Teochew American artist and educator whose work explores domestic objects as containers for identity, grief and care. Their practice draws upon personal, familial and cultural archives, using domestic objects such as vessels and chairs as stand-ins for a lived experience within everyday life. Through reproduction of and disidentification with the veneration of ancestors, including Buddhist, Taoist, and animistic ritual practices, their practice seeks new meaning for trans, queer and disabled bodies that are so often denied physical and emotional shelter. Working within artistic media like Chinese ceramics and iconography, their work seeks to reconsider the regimented and often gendered conventions of these traditional forms. Chuong uses these vessels as a means to locate community, find collective power in trans and queer alienation, and map out the possibilities for a freer and more unruly future.

**South Carolina**
Davelyn Hill, Speaking Down Barriers / MMFT, Black Creative
Davelyn Hill is the executive director for Speaking Down Barriers (SDB). SDB is an organization whose mission is equity for all. SDB seeks to build community across all that seeks to divide us by ending oppression and valuing everyone. Hill has a master’s in marriage and family therapy and a master’s in creative writing with an emphasis in poetry both from Converse College. She also has two years of studio art study experience from Kansas State University. Through her study and life experience, Hill has seen the arts both shift and reflect culture. She believes creativity is a path of community and individual healing and is working to that end. Hill, also known as Davelyn Athena, is also an author, poet and intuitive painter. She has appeared at
“Say it with Slay” in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Her art has been displayed through Spark and Echo, where she is also a curator, the National Equity in Medicine Online Gallery, and Neue South SPACE Walk. Hill is the two-time Haiku Champion at Say What Haiku slam through Wits End Poetry. She recently held an online auction of her art to raise funds and awareness for a campaign called R.E.S.I.S.T to provide healing and resources to Black women who have been previously incarcerated.

Tennessee
Leila Hamdan, Stax Museum of American Soul Music
Leila Hamdan is an artist and art historian with more than 15 years of experience in archiving, curating, preserving works and serving as a vital channel in educating the public about those works. Her knowledge and curiosity have helped nationally recognized cultural institutions, such as the National Civil Rights Museum and Penland School of Craft, to preserve priceless American artifacts. A lifelong steward of art and material culture, Hamdan's dedication to its research, record and care has been rewarded with a breadth of opportunity to share the stories told by both visual and audio pieces and their creators.

Utah
Fiona Marcelino, Utah Museum of Fine Arts
Fiona Marcelino is an emerging museum professional having worked in events, guest services, operations, and development.

Virginia
P. Muzi Branch, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Health
A native of Richmond, Virginia, Philip Muzi Branch attended VCU, where he received both his bachelor's of fine arts and his master's of art education degrees. While there, he studied under Murry Depillars and William T. Williams. Branch is a painter and graphic designer who conveys African American culture in his award-winning paintings. Though his paintings are jazzy and geometric, he considers himself a colorist most of all. Some of Branch's past exhibitions include PANAFEST Festival in Ghana, West Africa, the African American Museum of Dallas Texas, the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia, the Ohio History Connection Museum, the Banneker Douglass Museum in Annapolis, Maryland and the Harrison Museum of African American Culture in Roanoke, Virginia. His work is a part of the permanent collection of Suntrust Bank, Richmond Community Hospital, Lynchburg College, the African American Museum of Dallas Texas, First Market Bank, the Medical College of Virginia and many private collectors.