

Presenter Bios



Korbi Adams is in her seventh year at Childsplay, a professional theatre for young audiences and families in Tempe. As the Education Outreach Specialist, Korbi is involved with creating, managing, and assessing education programs with schools and community groups throughout the greater Phoenix Metropolitan area. During her time with Childsplay she has taught a variety of programs with students ages 3 – 18 as well as many professional development programs with teachers and educators at schools and community organizations.

Robert Benson is the Principal of Foothills Fine Arts Academy for the Peoria Unified School District. Robert's 23 year tenure as an art educator also includes serving as a visual arts teacher, curriculum and instructional specialist for the arts, and the Director of Arts Education. Robert earned his B.A in Art/Art Education at Cleveland State University, and both his M.Ed. and Ed.D in Educational Leadership from Arizona State University. He has served as President of Arizona Alliance for Arts Education, Chair of the City of Peoria Arts Commission and recently received the 2014 Governor's Arts Award for Arts in Education.

Kathryn Blake is the Gerry Grout Education Director at Phoenix Art Museum and a member of senior management. She is a 2013 Piper Fellow investigating definitions of "audience engagement," and leads the Education Division of the Museum in implementing diverse approaches for helping visitors to connect with artworks.

Janet Blum is the Fine Arts Academic Coach at Scottsdale Unified School District.

Joshua Borths currently serves as the Education Manager at Arizona Opera. Originally from Cincinnati, OH, Joshua has worked for many opera companies over the past few years as a director, writer, and administrator. Some of these companies include Wolf Trap Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Opera Memphis, The Atlanta Opera, and the Crested Butte Music Festival in Colorado. Joshua holds undergraduate degrees in musicology and voice from the University of Michigan and a master's degree in opera production from Florida State University.

Noel D'Avy is the founder of The Rag Collection, an arts non-profit in Phoenix that inspires youth by connecting art to the heart through the power of story. Noel has been connecting local artists with at-risk, low-income youth since 2005. The Rag Collection loves to build bridges between arts resources in our city and youth who don't have access to these resources for the purpose of creating safe spaces for youth to express their unique voice and story and realize its value in the community.

Paul Fisher is the Executive Director at Arts Integration Solutions. From the classroom to the board room, Paul has a host of satisfied clients in many differing venues, throughout the US, in Europe, Russia and Africa. He has consulted for Raytheon, INTUIT, Canyon Ranch, Arts For "Border" Children and many other organizations. Paul teaches creative thinking and gives lectures on a variety of topics, has published a variety of books and articles and has been recognized with two prestigious awards for his years of distinguished service in Arts and Education. He is a graduate of the University of Birmingham, Great Britain.

Jessica Flowers currently serves the Program Director for Free Arts for Abused Children of Arizona where she was previously a Program Manager for 7 years. At Free Arts Jessica connects with child welfare agencies and cultural community partners to bring the healing effects of the arts to over 7000 each year. She is a certified trainer in the Youth Quality Programs Assessment tool, Kids at Hope and Strong Communities Raise Strong Kids methods. She teaches and presents nationally on arts and creativity, youth development and leadership.

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Rome Hamner is the co-founder and co-director of Odaiko Sonora, Tucson's award-winning taiko group. Taiko is the artistic and powerful discipline of Japanese drumming. Odaiko Sonora is dedicated to increasing familiarity with and the understanding of taiko and its benefits. Founded in 2002, the group serves over 50,000 people each year. Rome has led school residencies in rural communities, urban environments, and in schools for special needs students. Her programs have introduced thousands of kids and adults to Japanese art, culture, and language and given them firsthand experience with the performing arts.

Thom Lewis' movement experience includes walking on fire, rappelling down buildings, and riding an elephant, as well as performing in France, Japan, Australia, and Las Vegas. The recipient of numerous choreographic awards and fellowships, he has conducted over 150 dance residencies for the Arizona Commission on the Arts from 1980 to 2006, and currently is a teaching artist and the program coordinator of Tucson Unified School District's Opening Minds through the Arts.

Lynn Monson completed Hartford Ballet's Teacher Training Program, and earned a BA in Dance at ASU. She taught dance to all ages, managed an arts-based charter school, and has worked on revising the Arizona Dance Standards. Lynn served as Secretary and President of the Arizona Dance Education Organization currently works as the organization's Executive Assistant, and as a conference planner for the National Dance Education Organization.

Guylene Ozlanski has worked for the City of Goodyear as the Arts and Culture Coordinator since 2013, where she oversees the design and construction of public art projects, plans special events, and uses the arts as a tool for community outreach. Previously, Guylene was an arts educator and spent over a decade teaching K-8th grade students visual art. Guylene holds a BFA in drawing and painting from Arizona State University and an MFA in media design from Full Sail University. Currently Guylene is working on her doctoral dissertation on arts integration implementation with arts learning partnerships and hopes to use her research to strengthen the approaches to teaching and learning in K-12 education.

Flora Perez has been an educator for 45 years. She began as a paraprofessional in a bilingual program while working on her teaching credential. Over a period of 25 years she has taught all grade levels from Kindergarten to high school and university level, then left the classroom to work in professional development for another 9 years. She moved to Arizona in 2004 and shortly after that became the Director of Academic Services for Avondale Elementary School District. The Academic Services Department is responsible for supporting district personnel in meeting the academic needs of all students.

Ya-Ting Tang received her PhD in Education from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2010. She currently serves as Director of Program Evaluation in the Research and Evaluation Division at the Arizona Department of Education. Her expertise is in program evaluation, as she has been the lead, as well as, an integral team member. Some of her projects include the ADE model for teacher and principal evaluations, ADE Migrant Education program evaluation, and as a consultant for the Strengthening Schools through Arts Partnerships grantees evaluations.

Kim Willey serves as a Program Manager for Free Arts for Abused Children of Arizona where she runs the Professional Artist Series. Previously she worked at the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies as the Arts Education Manager and at VSA as the Evaluation and Outcomes Coordinator where she developed online professional learning communities for VSA state affiliates and state partners. Kim began her career in arts education at the Arizona Commission on the Arts as the Arts Learning Coordinator.