



VERMONT ART EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION

# WINTER NEWSLETTER 2024



VERMONT ART EDUCATOR  
DEE CHRISTIE

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## GET READY FOR THE ARTISTIC JOURNEY OUR JANUARY YAM WORKSHOP

Join award-winning educators and artists Abigail Bartell and Dee Christie for a day of exploring visual journaling, book arts, and storytelling. We will start at the UVM Special Collections Library to view some of their extensive Artist Book collection, and then move to the Burlington City Arts Gallery for a hands-on workshop from 1:00-4:00. You will create and bind your own visual journal then learn numerous techniques with mixed media to fill it and record your own artistic journey. Materials will be provided for this free-for-VAEA-members workshop. Space is limited.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)





# 2023 FALL CONFERENCE

## EMPOWERING VOICES

## AMPLIFYING BELONGING

## THE ARTISTIC JOURNEY



We had a rainy but wonderful day at Lake Morey Resort on September 29th. Our keynote speaker, Paula Liz, was an inspiration as she took us through her journey to becoming an art educator and a leader in diversity and inclusion. We had over 90 participants and were so pleased to have the Vermont theater teachers join us. We had glowing feedback to our amazing presenters. Barbara Paulson lead puppet making and performance workshops while Lisa Bresler guided groups through the joy of Gelli prints. Paul Gambill showcased community engagement through artist residencies while Jonathan Silverman brought together art making, movement, and poetry. Meghan Doherty shared a variety of needle-felting techniques while we all enjoyed the rare time to gather together and create and network.

This year Cindy Camber brought “Ringo“, the fabulous flower truck from Peacham Lavender Farm. Participants built their own bouquets to support the new scholarship fund to help new teachers attend the state conference.

Finally, VAEA recognizes that everyone of you are “Rock Stars“ in arts education and we have created three additional awards to celebrate more of you and the work you do.







# 2023 FALL CONFERENCE

## EMPOWERING VOICES

## AMPLIFYING BELONGING

## THE ARTISTIC JOURNEY



On Saturday, September 30th, we had the second part to our amazing conference with a workshop led by Chief Don Stevens. Chief Don Stevens is a leader of the Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk - Abenaki Nation and Executive Director of the tribal non-profit AHA-Abenaki Helping Abenaki, Inc. Our host was the Stone Valley Arts At Fox Hill in Poultney, Vermont. Teachers learned the significance of Wampum to Native Communities, what it is used for, and traditional uses of Wampum. Teachers also learned how to use Wampum for teaching native history in their classrooms and the differences between appropriation and appreciation. Chief Don Stevens shared many personal stories of his families having to hide and change names to avoid the eugenics sterilization, the fight for tribal recognition, the triumph of the return of the buffalo and the internal strife within their tribal community. While at Stone Valley Arts we also enjoyed the art show *Art of the Creative Process* where five artists as well as Hubbardton Forge showcased the journey from brainstorming and sketching to completed artwork. Participants spoke of how much they learned about Abenaki culture and having the opportunity to network.





# VERMONT ART EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR DEE CHRISTIE IN HER OWN WORDS...

“Teaching art hasn't always been my passion, but being involved in the arts has. I remember the only classes that grabbed my attention were the art classes, and if it were not for one art teacher in my high school career, my life could have gone in a different path. She told me I should go on to art school, and with her prompting, I pursued a career in Commercial Art. I loved the creative process, but felt I was missing something significant, so I went back to post grad and received my teacher 7-12 Art Education Certification. Then my Master's at St. Mike's for Arts Education, and focusing on At-Risk kids in the art room. I have always been drawn to students that struggle being in school, feeling like I could help them succeed in high school. I have found this to be true throughout my career, although I love all kinds of students and love to see when they succeed, regardless of how they come in my room. I have been teaching at Bellows Free Academy for my whole career of 35 years. I started as a part time teacher, and it quickly grew into a full time teacher.

Arts Integration has been intriguing to me as my teaching areer has continued, especially the past few years, when we have seen a higher drop out rate, higher needs, and our school moving toward flexible pathways, dual enrollment, and alternative options to reach competencies. My biggest attribute is getting students to see their talents, their worth and their future. I have made long lasting relationships with students that have carried on for my whole career. That is what makes my time teaching significant and worth every second. When I have a student reach out years after graduation and thank me means the most. Making a difference in someone's life that is remembered years later, whether I remember my gesture or not, it's the fact that they remember what is the big difference between being a good teacher and a great one.”

# ADDITIONAL ART AWARDS OUTSTANDING ART EDUCATORS

## LEGENDS BY LISA BRESLER

A legend is an individual who leaves an unforgettable impression on others. They positively impact lives, are remembered, and cherished. Many art teachers embody this role, yet often go unrecognized for the tireless efforts they invest in creating these lasting impacts. While some may possess a natural talent, others must work diligently to achieve the same result. However, one universal truth prevails, regardless of innate ability: the mere mention of a teacher's name to former students elicits smiles.

I have been privileged to witness this phenomenon numerous times in my life—the joy that washes over students upon hearing a former teacher's name. It's a brief moment of brilliance that offers profound insight into the vocation of teaching. Art teachers belong to a remarkable breed of individuals. Just look around this room; we are a collection of extraordinary individuals.

However, attaining legendary status in the realm of arts education goes beyond mere remembrance; it is about leaving an enduring, positive impact on the entire arts education community. Achieving this goal demands an investment of not only time but also unwavering dedication and visionary leadership. It means showing up and working hard towards a continued advancement of arts education in our public schools and communities.

To celebrate this exceptional group, the Vermont Art Educators Association has decided to establish a regular tradition of honoring outstanding art educators for their excellence. We will continue to bestow the Teacher of the Year award as national recognition. However, we are expanding our efforts by introducing three additional awards within our Vermont association. Each board member has chosen an individual who demonstrates what it means to be a legendary art teacher.

As we witness these well-deserved recognitions, some of you may be harboring the hope that one day you'll stand here too. I want you to know that we see you, we believe in you, and we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to honor more of the incredible art educators who exemplify why the arts are so profoundly important to our students. With the qualities that define a legendary art teacher in our minds, let's begin by introducing our inaugural recognition of truly legendary art educators.

**ABBY BARTELL**

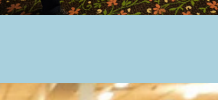
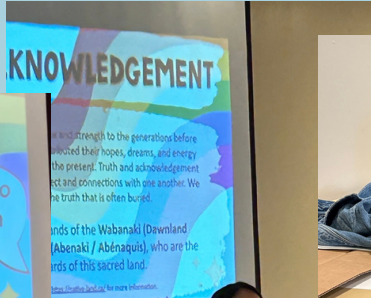
**BARBARA FOLLETT**

**AMANDA FELLER**





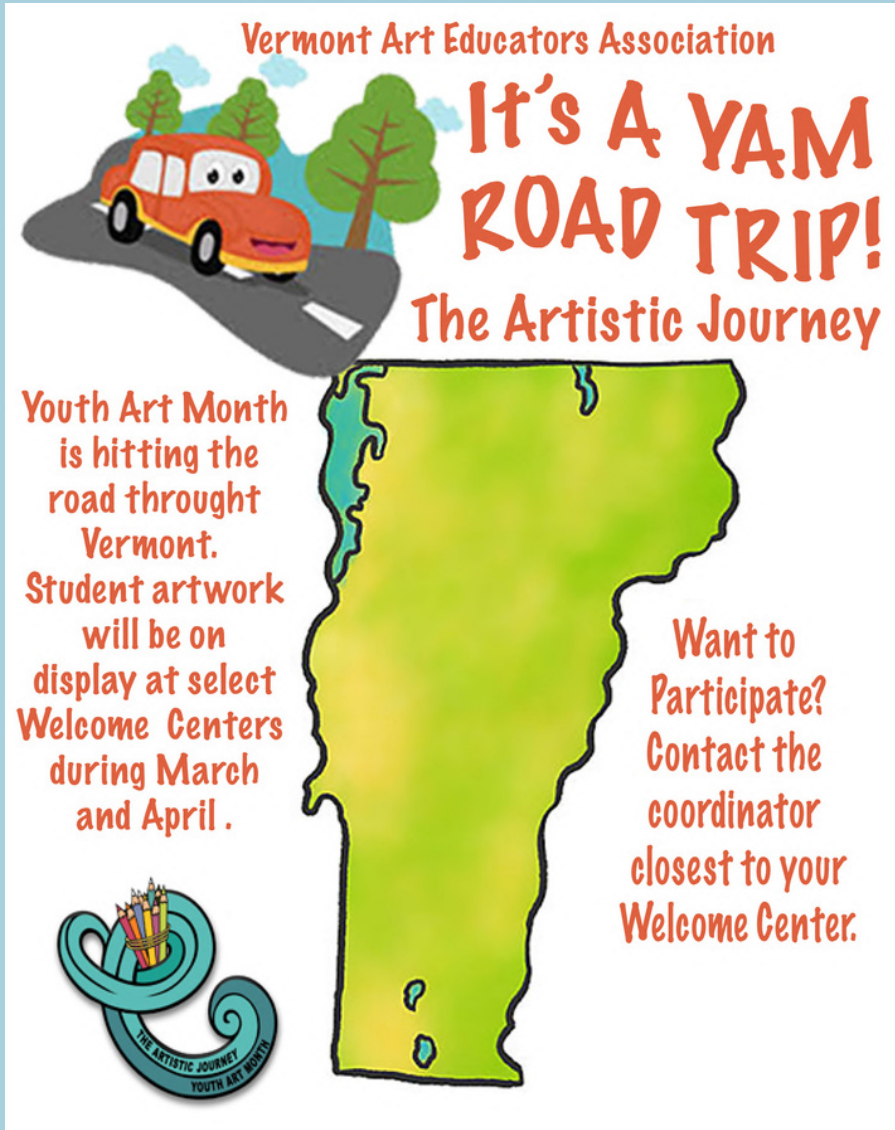
# MORE PHOTOS FROM THE CONFERENCE







# YOUTH ART MONTH STUDENT ART EXHIBITIONS



HARTFORD WELCOME CENTER  
YAM COORDINATOR REBECCA CARLETON  
[RCARLETON@ORANGESOUTHWEST.ORG](mailto:RCARLETON@ORANGESOUTHWEST.ORG)

BENNINGTON WELCOME CENTER  
YAM COORDINATOR MELISSA KRISTIANSEN  
[MELISSA.KRISTIANSEN@GRCSU.ORG](mailto:MELISSA.KRISTIANSEN@GRCSU.ORG)

GUILFORD WELCOME CENTER  
YAM COORDINATOR REBECCA CARLETON  
[RCARLETON@ORANGESOUTHWEST.ORG](mailto:RCARLETON@ORANGESOUTHWEST.ORG)

FAIR HAVEN WELCOME CENTER  
YAM COORDINATOR MELISSA KRISTIANSEN  
[MELISSA.KRISTIANSEN@GRCSU.ORG](mailto:MELISSA.KRISTIANSEN@GRCSU.ORG)

WILLISTON WELCOME CENTER  
YAM COORDINATOR- ABBIE BOWKER  
[ABOWKER@CVSDVT.ORG](mailto:ABOWKER@CVSDVT.ORG)

GEORGIA WELCOME CENTERS  
YAM COORDINATOR FRANNIE WILLARD  
(APRIL)  
[FRANNE.WILLARD@GMAIL.COM](mailto:FRANNE.WILLARD@GMAIL.COM)

BRADFORD WELCOME CENTER  
YAM COORDINATOR CINDY CAMBER  
[MISSHELMBRECK@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MISSHELMBRECK@GMAIL.COM)

SHARON WELCOME CENTER  
YAM COORDINATOR REBECCA CARLETON  
[RCARLETON@ORANGESOUTHWEST.ORG](mailto:RCARLETON@ORANGESOUTHWEST.ORG)

CHANDLER GALLERY - RANDOLPH  
YAM COORDINATOR REBECCA CARLETON  
[RCARLETON@ORANGESOUTHWEST.ORG](mailto:RCARLETON@ORANGESOUTHWEST.ORG)

Artwork for Youth Art Month will be showcased in multiple Welcome centers throughout Vermont. If you would like your student's artwork to be displayed please contact the YAM coordinator for the Welcome center closest to you. The coordinators will collect the artwork and set up the displays. Please make contact by February 16 to be included.

This year's Youth Art month flag will be created by Jenn Hart and her students at BFA Fairfax. The flag will be displayed at the national conference in April.

Stay tuned for an additional professional development opportunity in march at the Southern Vermont Art Center with award-winning artist and educator Dorsey Hogg. The date and time will be announced soon.



# MEET YOUR VAEA BOARD



**PRESIDENT**  
**KIM**  
**DESJARDINS**



**TREASURER**  
**REBECCA**  
**GOVE**



**TREASURER-**  
**ELECT**  
**APRIL**  
**HALLOCK**



**SECRETARY**  
**CINDY**  
**CAMBER**



**SECRETARY-**  
**ELECT**  
**FRANNIE**  
**WILLARD**

“Many hands make light work” is so very true. And there is something that always happens when you get art teachers together; we have fun. Art teachers are pretty amazing. And this organization is for you. I had an art teacher come up to me recently and tell me she let her membership lapse because “you don’t do anything for me.” I have really reflected on this discussion. First, if you are not a VAEA member we do not know you exist. We have been brainstorming how to reach all the art educators in the state of Vermont however, we are not allowed to get a list from the Department of Education. Mailings to schools seem to never get to the art teachers. So the only way we can know you exist is to become a member. And membership gives you a voice. Barack Obama said “Nothing can stand in the way of the power of millions of voices calling for change.” Well, we may not be a million voices but art teachers are powerful and we want your voices. We want your ideas and suggestions. We want to be relevant to you. We want to be the association for all the art teachers throughout Vermont. And to do that, we need you. If you are a member, Go back to your fellow art educators and talk about your VAEA and what you might like your organization to do for you. Ask if they are members, and if not, ask them to join us and add their voice to strengthen this association. You are all rock stars and we can do great things together.

- Melissa Kristiansen, President Elect

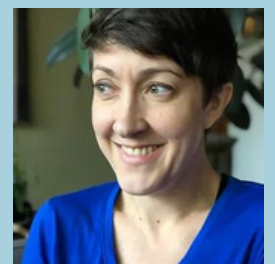
[CLICK HERE TO RENEW OR BEGIN YOUR MEMBERSHIP](#)



**PRESIDENT-ELECT**  
**MELISSA**  
**KRISTIANSEN**



**YAM CHAIR**  
**REBBIE**  
**CARLTON**



**MEDIA MASTER**  
**LORIEN**  
**LEYDEN**



# ARE YOU READY FOR THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE?

NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



**Hundreds of options for professional learning, connectivity, and creativity!**

**[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)**

Become part of the largest professional organization established by visual arts educators for visual arts educators! When you join or renew your NAEA membership you also become a VAEA member. Your dues give you professional benefits and support Art Education in Vermont.

The National Art Education Association (NAEA) and their State affiliates like VAEA (The Vermont Art Educators Association) advance visual arts education to fulfill human potential and promote global understanding. NAEA supports visual arts educators to bolster your teaching, your career, and your creativity. NAEA resources, benefits, and opportunities are continuously created in direct response to the timely needs of art educators and your students.

## UPCOMING CONTESTS

In March, there are three noteworthy art contests celebrating the natural world:

- Growing Works of Art, a contest with the theme **The ABCs of Trees**:  
<https://vtcommunityforestry.org/arbor-day/growing-works-art-contest>
- **Winged Wonders** from the Vermont Wildlife Education Fund:  
<https://www.vtwildlifeeducationfund.org/>
- Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program:  
<https://www.fws.gov/birds/education/junior-duck-stamp-conservation-program.php>

Consider showcasing your student work!