NEW YORK STATE TEACHING ARTIST MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

2024 Final Report

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | Council on the Arts

Arts in Education ROUNDTABLE NYC

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About the NYS Teaching Artist Mentorship Program

Established with funding from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), the New York State Teaching Artist Mentorship Program connects Teaching Artists (TAs) from across the state with mentors to develop the networks, skills, and increased capacities necessary to support their career advancement and sustainability. The 2024 Mentorship Program has four primary components and one bonus initiative*:

- 1:1 mentorship with a carefully selected mentor (or co-mentors) who is a leader in the field of arts, culture, and/or education
- Access to over 35 hours of professional development (PD) programming, including the Teaching Artist Tuesdays series, free admission to the annual Face to Face arts in education conference and the Day of Learning, and a one-year membership with Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts
- Exclusive Q&A sessions with experts on topics selected by each cohort, including grant writing, self-financing retirement, arts education program design, transitioning to higher education, nonprofit budgeting, and legal issues facing TAs
- Completion of 8 field hours intended to support continued learning that feeds artistic practice and/or teaching pedagogy
- * NEW IN 2024 - Application support and fiscal sponsorship for the NYSCA Support for Artists grant to support deepening their artistic practice in communities across NY State

Teaching Artists admitted to the cohort are awarded $2,200 to support their participation in the program, and mentors are given a $500 honorarium in recognition of their time. Since its inception, the cohort size for the Mentorship Program has increased from 14 TAs in 2022 to 20 TAs in 2024 (with the current 2025 cohort set to serve 26 participants).

"Both of my mentors helped me immensely to achieve my goals in practical and tangible ways. Calder gave me a space to publicly share my student's work and linked me with funding sources. I successfully applied to grants from ACS and DCLA with his support and raised $60k for Crossroads Art Club. Skip helped connect me to a wider network of teaching artists as well as resources to use in my teaching practice."

JACOB C., MENTEE

Jacob's exhibit at Artistic Noise, a result of his participation in the program with mentor Calder Zwicky, Executive Director of the space.

About the NYC Arts in Education Roundtable

Mission

The NYC Arts in Education Roundtable is a service organization working to advance the state of arts education in NYC schools and beyond. We are a community of organizations and practitioners that shares information, provides professional development, and communicates with the public to promote our work in schools and beyond.

Our History

The Roundtable began in 1992 as a cohort of young arts administrators, who sought to professionalize arts education, allied around the goal of making arts essential to New York City education. Built on a model of collective earned wisdom, these future leaders formed a new community of practice, laying the groundwork for pervasive arts education advocacy and a shift toward comprehensive field building. Since then, our primary function has been to ensure the sustainability of NYC's diverse arts education community, and promote a culture of continuous improvement from lessons learned in classrooms and through research.

Now in our 33rd year of operation, we are a community of cultural organizations and educators that: (1) shares resources, (2) provides professional development (PD), and (3) advocates for the needs of our constituents and the communities they serve. Our programs reach a diverse range of practitioners, better equipping them to do their best work, helping NYC students succeed in and through the arts. As the main convening body for NYC's arts in education community, we have become a critical resource for the field, and a model for community impact across the country. Now, at the peak of our membership and professionalization, we are soon to embark on a new five-year Strategic Plan to set an expanded roadmap for a sustainable, innovative, and equitable future. As a result of these efforts, instruction in and through the arts throughout New York has become more robust, thoughtful, rigorous, and responsive to learners' needs and capacities.

> ***"Jacob entered into this mentorship program with an amazing program under his belt: Crossroads Art Club. He knew what he wanted to accomplish, and the reasoning behind doing what he did in that carceral space. He definitely needed help with getting more funding, and raising the public profile of what he was working on. With that in mind, I was able to recommend CAC to some funders in my community, and also work with Jacob on putting together an art show at Artistic Noise. The show was a huge success, and the funding seems to be moving forwards as well. All great outcomes!"***
>
> ***CALDER Z., MENTOR***

Background: Why Mentorship for Teaching Artists?

Teaching Artists are direct service providers, working on the frontlines and often at the heart of schools and communities across New York. A successful and sustainable career for this highly specialized position requires TAs to wear many hats: artist, educator, administrator, cheerleader, organizer, advocate, collaborator, business owner, marketer, and more. As an organization that strives to improve and advance the field of arts education, the Roundtable believes advancing the field starts with the workforce — ensuring they have systems to support their own career advancement, self-preservation, and sustainability. Mentorship is a pathway forward to nurture these diverse skill sets and a road to sustainability in the arts and cultural sector.

100% of the 2024 cohort members were satisfied with their experiences in the program.

The pandemic took a tremendous toll on employment, contracting, and consulting in the arts education community, and amplified the ongoing conversation around career sustainability for teachers and creative workers, and especially TAs. Pre-Covid, 88% of our community said mentorship and networking were important. By March 2022, 78% of TAs surveyed as part of our Arts Educator Emergency Relief Fund had been laid off or furloughed during the pandemic. As we now collectively move beyond the pandemic, the federal retreat from cultural funding and uncertainty about the future of title funding for education continue to exacerbate the complex and often unstable employment landscape for Teaching Artists.

100% of mentees in 2024 were satisfied with their mentor pairings.

Prompted in part by insights from this Mentorship Program, the Roundtable conducted research and subsequently released P*aying for Professionalism 2025: A Report on NYC Teaching Artist Compensation & Employment* in July 2025. This report represents the culmination of a year-long study examining employment trends and compensation structures for Teaching Artists based in New York City. The findings highlight significant challenges in the field, including inconsistent employment, unclear career pathways, inadequate compensation, and limited access to benefits—all of which threaten the long-term sustainability of the profession. According to the report, NYC-based Teaching Artists

reported individual gross incomes in 2023 ranging from under $15,000 to $150,000, with a median income between $35,000 and $50,000.

Additionally, 65% of TAs reported a household income below $75,000—less than the city's median household income for that year ($76,577 per the US Census Bureau). While the data does not encompass the entire state of New York, it clearly illustrates the financial precarity that TAs navigate as they enrich New Yorkers through artistic and educational programming.

The report further underscores that TA work tends to be seasonal and inconsistent from year to year, with work volume often determined by a mix of external factors unrelated to the artist's skills or experience, such as contracting with government agencies or availability of funding. One of the few ways to navigate this unpredictability is by cultivating a robust network—one grounded in authentic, peer-to-peer, and intergenerational relationships that keep artists informed about shifts, opportunities, and resources in the field. Through mentorship, TAs can grow their networks and gain valuable insights from experienced leaders who have successfully navigated the very paths they aspire to follow.

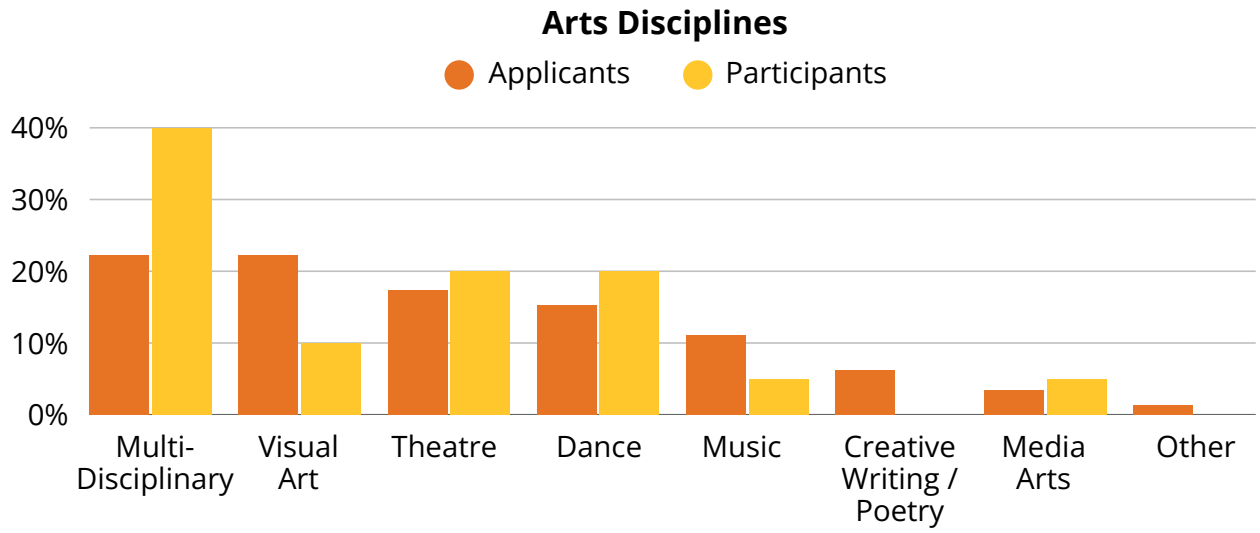
Overall, the report reinforces the importance of initiatives like the New York State Teaching Artist Mentorship Program. Through administering the Mentorship Program, the Roundtable aims to provide consistent networking opportunities, strategic interventions, pathways for advancement, and access to resources that enable TAs to build sustainable practices and careers delivering arts education in all New York schools and communities.

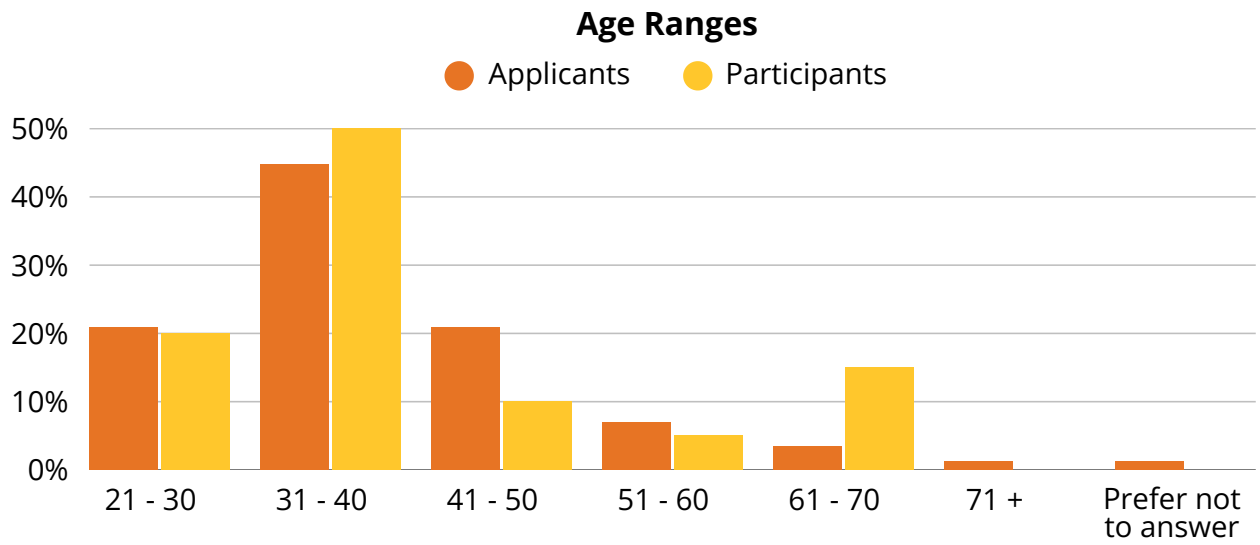
"I had to really use all the confidence I could muster to believe in myself and move forward with my teaching art business. My mentor was so supportive and also, seeing her successes as well as the successes of the Coffee Date speakers was so encouraging to me"

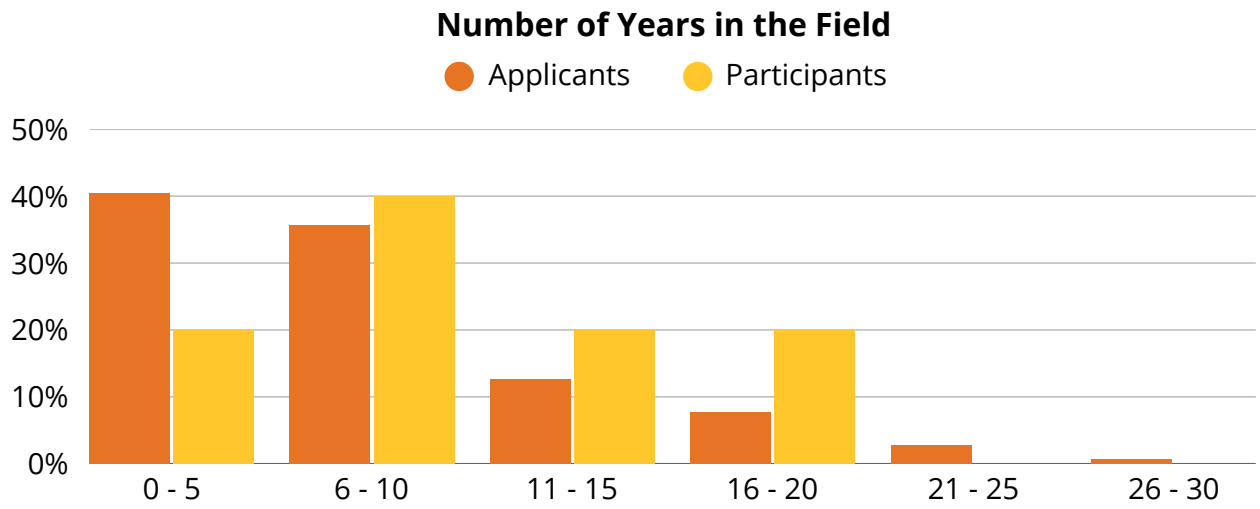
GAIL L., MENTEE

Applicant & Participant Overview

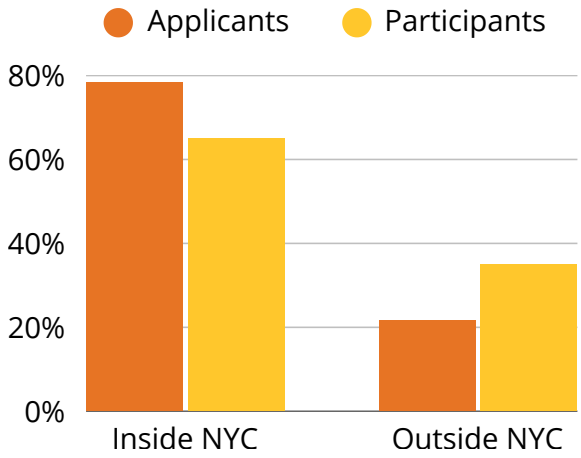
We received 143 applications from 17 counties and 123 unique zip codes in New York State. The 2024 program ultimately accepted 20 Teaching Artists, resulting in a 13.9% acceptance rate.



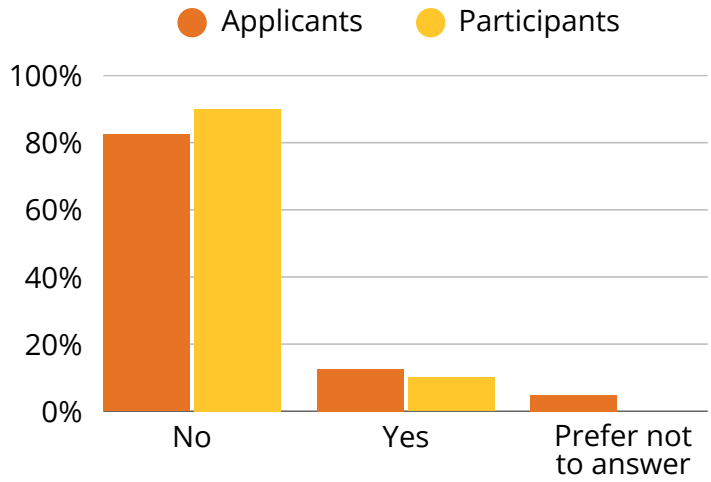




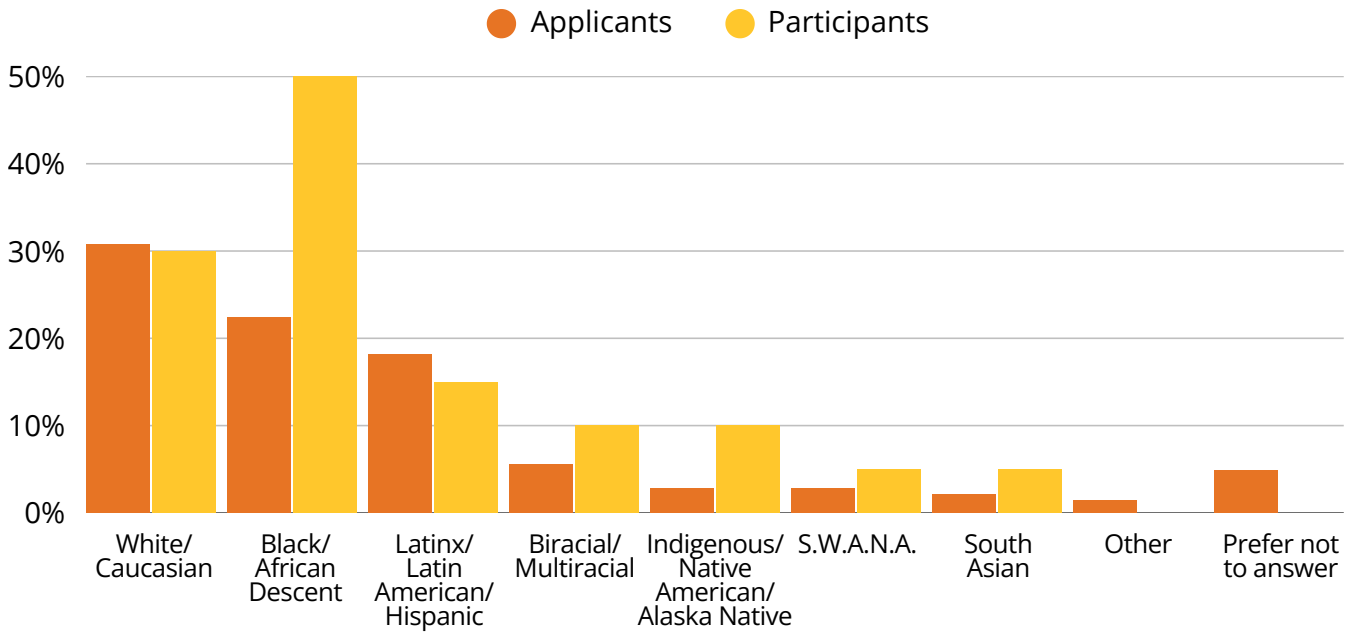
Location in NYS



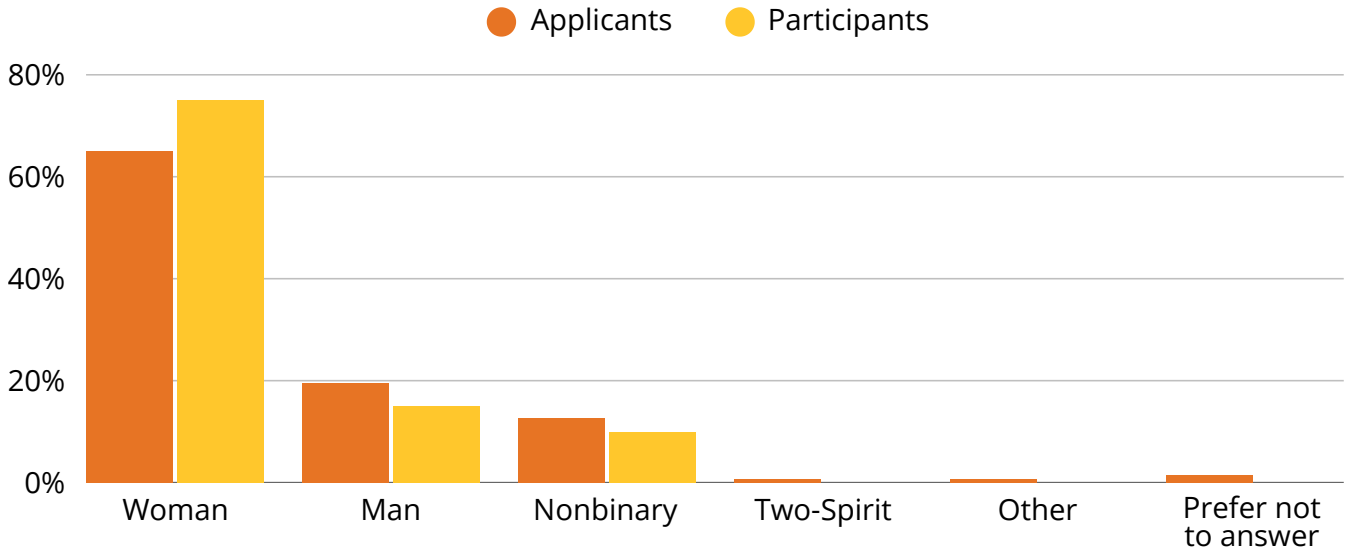
Disability Status



Racial Identities*



Gender Identity



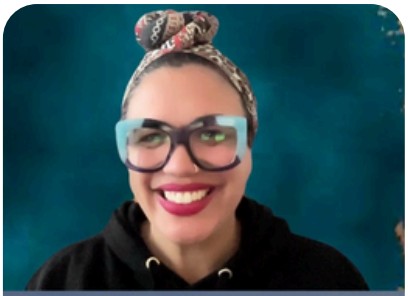
Trends in Applicant Goals

Applicants identified the following interests and goals for participation in the program:

- To find financial sustainability and work/life balance while engaged in TA work.
- To diversify their streams of income as artists and educators.
- To acquire administrative, legal, and accounting skills to set up and sustain their work through organized business structures (like an LLC or nonprofit).
- To strengthen grant writing skills and expand understanding of fundraising strategy.
- To better work with specific populations, such as multilingual learners, people with disabilities, senior citizens, and justice-involved communities.
- To learn about the work portfolios of different administrative roles/departments (operations, development, programming) within arts and arts education organizations.
- To build stronger partnerships with students and families and develop community-focused arts programs that serve local populations' needs and goals.

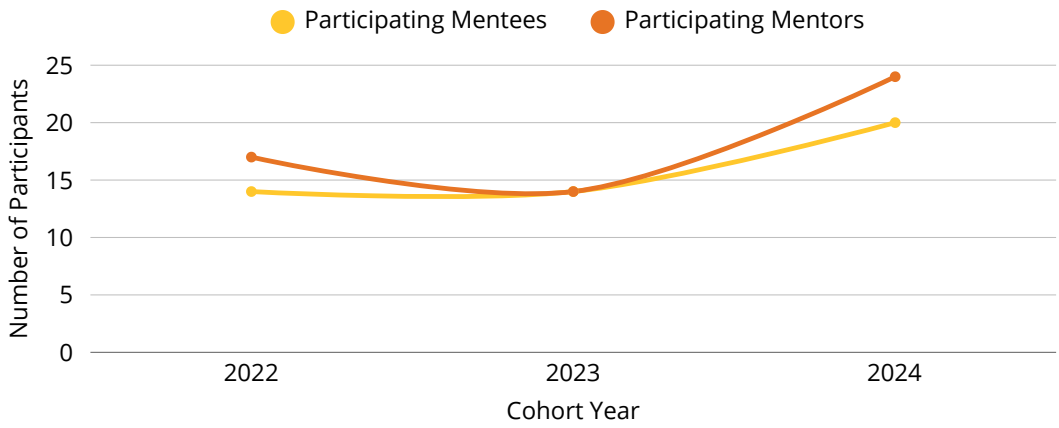
"The two most helpful aspects of the NYS Teaching Artist Mentorship Program for me were the Coffee Talks and the Mentor Coffee Chats. The Coffee Talks offered access to a diverse range of professionals with various expertise, providing valuable perspectives. The Mentor Coffee Chats, however, were particularly impactful. The one-on-one time allowed us to dive deeply into my artistic practice, focusing on practical, goal-oriented strategies. This personalized attention made a significant difference in refining my approach and pushing my work forward."

ANTONIA B., MENTEE



Program Outcomes & Impact

In line with demand, the New York State Teaching Artist Mentorship Program has dynamically grown its service capacity in its four years of operation. Over time, it has served a total of 48 artists across NY state through the Mentorship Program as mentees and engaged 55 mentors in the program.



2024 Mentees Snapshot

According to survey results, **100% of 2024 program mentees:**

- Gained tools they plan on using in their professional practice
- Learned something new as a participant in the Mentorship Program
- Plan on keeping in touch with their mentor
- Increased their professional network

> ***"I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in the NYS Teaching Artist Program. The tools gained through this process have helped me to balance my work and professional life and work smarter — rather than harder — when setting and reaching my goals."***
>
> ***JO-ANN W., MENTEE***

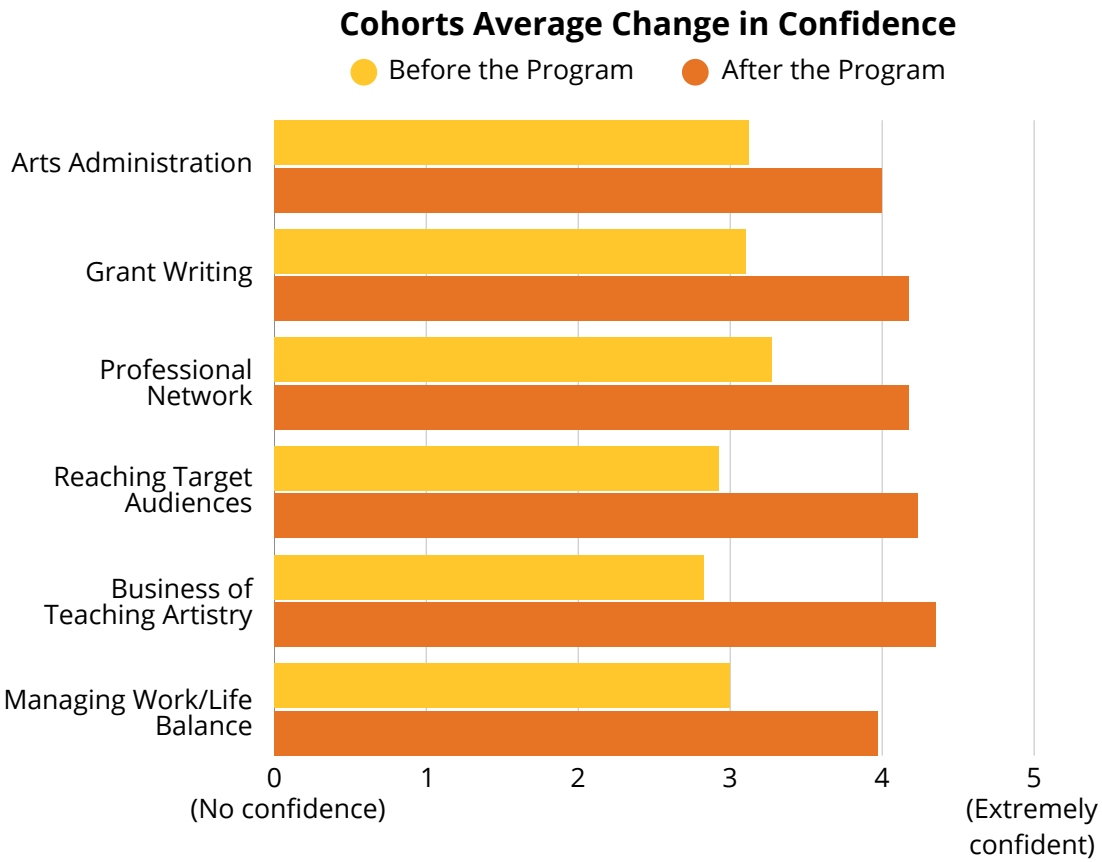
Mentee Growth in the Program

Teaching Artist Mentees reported the following overall changes as a result of their participation in the 2024 program:

- **50% increase** in having the skills and resources necessary to open their own business or non-profit
- **48.9% increase** in confidence in their understanding of the business side of Teaching Artistry

- **43.5% increase** in feeling supported to accomplish their career goals
- **29.3% increase** in their ability to navigate work/life balance following completion of the Mentorship Program

Additionally, the chart below shows the average increase in the cohort's confidence level in a selection of professional development areas.



2024 Mentors Snapshot

Mentors play an essential role in guiding mentees through their unique challenges and project goals while fostering an environment of collaboration, reflection, and growth. During the 2024 program cycle, **24 Teaching Artists, executives, and administrators served as mentors for participants.**

The mentor matching process aimed to pair TAs with mentors who could best meet their specific needs and aspirations, ensuring a personalized and meaningful mentorship experience. 16 mentors acted as sole mentors, and 8 mentors worked in pairs as co-mentors for a single mentee. The diversity in mentorship pairings,

"I was deeply inspired by Sherese and her time management, prioritization of self, her vision, and how motivated she is. She is also a great listener and open to hearing about other experiences and career trajectories. This in turn has helped me re-prioritize and recognize I need to maintain my own artistic praxis, and not let it fall by the wayside just because I am working in an office."

RAE D., MENTOR

ranging from one-on-one guidance to co-mentorship models, allowed for different styles of engagement and provided mentees with varied perspectives and resources to grow in their craft and work toward their identified goals for the program.

Mentor Highlighted Outcomes

Program Mentors reported the following in their program survey:

- 100% of mentors felt their mentees progressed towards their goals during the program
- 95.6% of mentors agree that they grew professionally from participating in the program
- 82.6% of mentors feel that participation in the program impacts their perspective on Teaching Artistry and how they interact with TAs
- 95.6% of mentors were satisfied with the administration of the program
- 95.7% of mentors felt they were well matched with their mentee
- 100% of mentors plan to stay in touch with their mentee after completion of the program

> ***"TAs have strong ideas about where they are developmentally, what they want to know, and get better at, and also where their strengths are. The mentorship program confirmed my POV that it is best to let mentees define their own goals, then respond honestly with suggestions. Even the way a mentee phrases a concern reveals what they may or may not be aware of in a given situation, and mentors can respond accordingly. It's a conversation."***
>
> ***DANIEL L., MENTOR***

Areas of Impact in 2024

Support for Artists Grant Opportunity

In addition to efforts to keep cohort members and program alumni informed on upcoming opportunities, the Roundtable implemented a new element for the 2024 program, offering participants application support and fiscal sponsorship for the NYSCA Support for Artists grant.

↳ As a result, **5 mentees** secured $10,000 NYSCA Support for Artist grants.

Entrepreneurship and Legal Support

An overwhelming trend among applicants was interest in launching their own arts organizations or businesses. In recognition of this, the program partnered with Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts (VLA) to provide mentees with a year-long membership to address various arts-related legal concerns. Mentees had access to resources including live and on-demand classes on a variety of topics and the opportunity to work with pro-bono legal counsel on their specific legal needs.

↳ Two mentees successfully filed for their organization's 501(c)(3) status, demonstrating the program's tangible impact in helping artists move from vision to execution.

Responsive PD on Career Sustainability

Professional Development (PD) is a key element of the Mentorship Program. Each year, PD session topics are curated based on the program cohort's expressed needs and interests.

A key throughline for 2024 applicants and participants highlighted challenges related to low compensation, lack of benefits, and the mental and emotional toll of managing multiple part-time jobs. To that end, the program PD opportunities focused on financial education, work/life balance, and career sustainability. We offered three distinct PD series in 2024:

- ↳ TA Tuesdays (Winter 2024) – Three-part virtual series open to the public focused on financial resilience and career strategy. Topics included: Managing Uneven Income, Negotiating Contracts, and Career Strategies for Veteran TAs.
    - Reach: 66 live attendees; 115 viewed recordings on YouTube
- ↳ Financing It: Sustainability Strategies for TAs (Fall 2024) – Three-part virtual series open to the public that provided practical tools and best practices for career sustainability. Topics included: Financing Artistic Labor, Financing Retirement, and Financing A Space of Your Own.
    - Reach: 97 attendees (series was not recorded)
- ↳ Coffee Dates (March–October 2024) – A cohort-exclusive, six-session virtual series on specialized topics of interest to program participants such as grant writing, budgeting, marketing, higher education transitions, and nonprofit strategy.

Continued Connection and Community

Mentees and mentors have consistently expressed the desire for increased networking and connection opportunities amongst the larger cohort outside of their formal mentorship pairing. In response, several initiatives were implemented in 2024, including:

- ↳ Establishment of shared cohort contact list and access to a shared Zoom account to encourage extended collaboration and connection.
- ↳ Launching of a weekly newsletter for program participants to keep them informed on internal updates and external opportunities such as calls for submissions and announcements from cohort members on upcoming work.

Alumni Engagement

As each cycle of the Mentorship Program concludes, the roster of program alumni grows. Many program alumni have continued to stay engaged with the Roundtable, often turn-keying their unique experiences in the program into opportunities for paid work and to support the Roundtable's mission:

- ↳ 3 mentees from the 2024 cohort served as Program Ambassadors to promote the 2025 cycle
- ↳ 10 program alumni were engaged as paid jury panelists for Roundtable programs in 2024

To strengthen alumni connection post-program, the Mentorship Coordinator also established a quarterly alumni newsletter, keeping former participants informed of opportunities and offering ongoing ways to stay involved and earn compensation.

Lessons Learned & Next Steps

Each year's administration of the New York State Teaching Artist Mentorship Program has brought valuable lessons, which are then applied to the subsequent year of the program and other facets of the Roundtable's programming.

Sustained Need for Mentorship Across the Field

The 2024 program applicant and program participant data highlights a sustained need for mentorship and growth opportunities across the spectrum. The 2024 cohort included participants ranging from early-career artists, many whose professional momentum was disrupted by COVID-19, to senior practitioners seeking to reinvent or sustain their established careers. **This affirmed the program's continued cross-generational value and the need to continue offering structured mentorship, community connection, and continued learning opportunities to the TA field.**

Acknowledging the desire and demonstrated demand for the Mentorship Program, the Roundtable seeks to expand the program's reach by accepting more applicants in future cycles.

Financial Stability & Systemic Challenges

The 2024 program cycle saw a sustained and expanded focus for applicants and participants on issues related to financial stability (including estate and retirement planning, budgeting, managing debt, etc.), with particular emphasis on higher pay and equitable labor contracting for TAs. Many TAs are employed part-time or operate as independent contractors (1099), and their employment status often leads to a lack of access to benefits such as paid sick leave, unemployment, retirement, and insurance.

The 2024 applicant pool's overwhelming alignment in needing resources to address financial sustainability highlights the importance of dynamic initiatives like the Mentorship Program, which creates spaces for continued professional development and peer learning that are responsive to the specific needs of the cohort and compensates them for their participation. In 2024, this translated into offering resources, tools, and opportunities related to finances and the business of being a TA.

With the shifting federal landscape, the Roundtable anticipates that these systemic and financial challenges will continue to appear as major concerns for program applicants and participants in future cycles. We plan to build upon 2024 efforts to continue to provide mentees and the broader Roundtable community with tailored, impactful programs and tools to support future career sustainability.

> *"Successes appear as clear outcomes in our mentorship... Jo-Ann reflected deeply, realigned her goals, and secured $10,000 in NYSCA funding for a project she had long envisioned."*
>
> *LAURA R., MENTOR*

Bolstering & Leveraging the Mentorship Program Network

As the numbers of program mentees and alumni have grown, so have the requests from current and former participants for opportunities to connect and build community within the Mentorship Program network. Although we have consistently maintained a database of mentors, mentees, and other arts education leaders who have participated in the program, and have made it practice to disseminate a mentee contact list to current participants so that they can make and deepen connections on their own, **the renewed call for further opportunities to leverage the Mentorship Program network illuminated the vital importance of community and connection for TAs on the path to career sustainability.**

The Roundtable sees opportunity to further expand these efforts in order to build a strong, self-sustaining network of artists who support and inspire each other well beyond the formal Mentorship Program period.

Looking Ahead

The Roundtable looks forward to continuing the New York State Teaching Artist Mentorship Program, and through its administration, contributing vital support and resources directly to TAs that help build sustainable practices delivering arts education in all New York schools and communities.

We are currently in the process of administering the 2025 cycle of the NYS Teaching Artist Mentorship Program. With increased support from NYSCA and first-time philanthropic support from the Cornelia T. Bailey Foundation and the William Talbott Hillman Foundation, the Roundtable has been able to increase the amount of TAs served by 23.1% — expanding our 2025 program cohort size from 20 to 26 mentees working with 31 mentors and co-mentors.

In addition, the Roundtable hosted the first ever Mentorship Program Meetup at Face to Face 2025, gathering alumni, current participants, and prospective mentees and mentors in one space to connect in an effort to strengthen ties between the growing Mentorship Program community.

The NY State Mentorship program is fully funded through the current 2025 cycle. We are seeking to ensure the NYS Teaching Artist Mentorship Program remains a signature Roundtable program in 2026 and beyond. Based on sustained demand we hope to continue to increase the number of Teaching Artists served each year alongside honorarium increases to keep pace with increased cost of living.

Mentee Spotlights

In addition to the big picture trends and learnings outlined above, each mentee experienced their own nuanced and singular growth points and milestones throughout their participation in the program. Below are two examples of the individual impact the 2024 Mentorship Program provided:

Antonia Badon

Mentee Antonia Badon used her time in the program to take steps toward expanding her digital presence and fundraising for her art education programs. Antonia's mentor, Yolande Clark-Jackson, acted as a sounding board and provided accountability for her to reach her goals. "Her guidance was instrumental in helping me shape and execute my overall project, especially in packaging my digital history storytime programs to effectively reach schools in Harlem, my target area," said Antonia. She also took advantage of a membership with Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts to take continuing education workshops around forming a nonprofit, copyright essentials, and contracting basics.

Antonia recently launched her portfolio website with the support of her mentor. With the support of the Roundtable, Antonia applied for and was awarded NYSCA's Support for Artist grant supporting the creation of new work by New York State creatives through artist-initiated projects across a wide range of areas. Congratulations, Antonia!

Kea Trevett

Mentee Kea Trevett worked with two co-mentors, Eve Wolff and Sarah Scaffi, to develop and grow Apocalyptic Artists Ensemble, the nonprofit theatre education organization she formed with three artist peers during the pandemic. During the Mentorship Program, Kea transitioned into her role as Development Director for Apocalyptic Artists Ensemble and received support in organizing the organization's most successful gala/benefit event to date.

Kea described the impact of having a mentor like this, "Eve and Sarah both saw me through a stressful season of benefit planning for my theater non-profit, both provided INVALUABLE advice and tips, and as a result, our 2024 benefit was the most financially successful to date. I am so grateful and I learned a ton." Kea also used her membership with Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts to consult with a lawyer to finalize the 501(c)(3) and other nonprofit formation paperwork for her organization. Congratulations, Kea!

List of 2024 Mentors

The Roundtable is grateful to the following arts and education leaders who served as mentors in the program:

Kimberly Bartosik, *Choreographer, Performer, Educator, and Writer*

Shirlene Blake, *Director of Dance, NYC Public Schools Arts Office*

Courtney J. Boddie, *Vice President, Education and School Engagement, The New Victory Theater*

Funmilayo Chesney, *Artistic Director, Fusha Dance Company*

Yolande Clark-Jackson, *Award-Winning Essayist and Children's Book Author*

Rae De Vine, *Interdisciplinary Artist, Educator, and Cultural worker*

Tatiana Desourdain, *Founder and Artistic Director, Passion Fruit Dance Company*

Dr. Christopher Emdin, *Maxine Greene Chair for Distinguished Contributions to Education and Professor of Science Education, Teachers College, Columbia University*

Jojo Gonzales, *Obie Award-Winning Actor and Janklow Award-Winning Teaching Artist*

Lisa Green, *Director of Professional Development, DreamYard Project*

Marissa Gutierrez-Vicario, *Founder and Artistic Director, Art and Resistance Through Education (ARTE)*

Sophia Harrison, *Executive Director, Art's House Schools of Music, Dance, and Fine Arts*

Filomena Jack, *Artist and Educator*

Molaundo Jones, *Director of Marketing, Flushing Town Hall*

Charlecia Joy, *Founder and Director, Stapledon Arts*

Madaha Kinsey-Lamb, *Founder, Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center*

Skip La Plante, *Educator*

Daniel Levy, *Composer, Musician, and Teaching Artist*

Alexandra López, *Associate Director of Education, Lincoln Center Theater*

Annette Ramos, *Community Connector, Cultural Advocate, Arts Educator, and Theatre Artist*

Laura Reeder, *Artist and Educator*

Sarah Scafidi, *Managing Director, Waterwell*

Sam Sellers, *Hip-Hop Artist, Writer, and Professor*

Gyasi Williams-Kirtley, *Social Media Strategist & Artist*

Eve Wolff, *Executive Director, Dancing Classrooms*

Calder Zwicky, *Executive Director, Artistic Noise*

Meet the 2024 Mentee Cohort

Antonia Badon

Antonia Badon is a former Co-segment Producer and Co-Celebrity Talent Coordinator for the late Great Chair-Emeritus, Percy E. Sutton's Inner City Broadcasting Co., TV show "It's Showtime At The Apollo," a NAACP AWARD WINNER for the play ZORA!, a BEST ACTRESS AWARD WINNER of the Strawberry One-Act Festival, a WBLS/WLIB, Circle of Sisters COMMUNITY HONORS RECIPIENT, and a FIRST FRUIT AWARD RECIPIENT for her radio show. The HBCU graduate of Dillard University New Orleans-actress is a force to be reckoned with. Antonia came to the consciousness of the New York populous with her critically acclaimed one-woman play of the Zora Neale Hurston in, ZORA! written by Multi-Award Winner Laurence Holder. Antonia is a trailblazer in digital media, audio, and film editing. As an Edu-Tech Creator, she envisions a world where urban America is seen through a new lens, blending history and culture seamlessly. Her mission seeks to inspire young minds through culturally diverse content, making history enjoyable and accessible.

Inspired by urban-born artists like Duke and Zora, Antonia's mission transcends conventional boundaries. Antonia harnessed her superpowers to build community awareness and appreciation for urban communities. Her transformative journey merges education seamlessly with inspiration. At the forefront of an edu-tech revolution, she builds bridges of awareness and combats violence by fostering community appreciation globally.

Antonia's dedication extends to inspiring the next generation through cultural awareness. Her book "Harlem: The Black Mecca," part of the "Harlem Renaissance Time Travel Girlz" landmark series for children aged 1 to 9, is featured on the shelf of the Schomburg Center Bookstore. This series blends historical exploration with storytelling to pave the way for a future devoid of violence.

Laura Brenneman

Laura Brenneman is a composer and educator based in Brooklyn, NY. Recent projects include music for Antipodes (Danspace, NYC) a commission from The Women's Project (NYC) for Gurley, a new musical based on the life of Helen Gurley Brown, as well as arrangements and accompaniment for Martha Clarke's The Threepenny Opera (Atlantic Theatre Company, NYC). As composer-lyricist and co-creator of the puppet theatre piece Fox vs the Kingdom, she is the recipient of two Jim Henson Foundation production grants.

As a teaching artist, Laura holds certification in Dalcroze Pedagogy from the Lucy Moses School (NYC). She has taught students in both public and private schools in NYC, including Berkeley Carroll, Talent Unlimited High School, and Packer Collegiate Institute. Laura is the recipient of a 2021 Knutson Grant for professional development in music education from the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music. She is also a 2021 recipient of the NYC Arts in Education

Roundtable's 'Empire State Creates' grant for her curriculum project, "The Classroom Album: Fostering Collaborative Behavior through Group Composition". She is currently writing a book entitled 'All Over the Map," about teaching music all over the world (remotely) during the Covid-19 pandemic. She garnered her undergraduate education in composition and piano at UCLA, and holds a Master of Arts in Music Education from Hunter College.

Cornell "Lord Judah" Carelock

Cornell "Lord Judah" Carelock is an accomplished Mindfulness Practitioner, Teaching Artist, and Creative Place Maker with over two decades of experience dedicated to educational and community settings. As the CEO of Judah Bless Ent and the Director of True He(ART) Academy, he has made significant strides in integrating arts into curricula, promoting community engagement, and leading innovative professional development initiatives.

Lord Judah's work is deeply rooted in social justice and arts integration, and he is renowned for developing creative strategies that translate proactive messaging into his art and workshops. His approach uniquely combines digital arts training, mindfulness instruction, and social justice education to empower individuals, particularly youth and those with special needs, fostering resilience, creativity, and personal growth.

A certified mindfulness instructor and Hip Hop cultural specialist, Lord Judah has developed "True He(ART) Academy," a self-healing instructional program that blends his extensive knowledge and skills to create transformative educational experiences. His work is guided by a mission to lead in the fields of mindfulness and arts integration, influencing others to understand how art, especially music, impacts mental health and well-being.

He has been honored with numerous awards and proclamations, including the prestigious recognition of "Cornell Carelock Day" in Westchester County, NY, and continues to be a vibrant leader and influencer in the arts community. His work not only enriches the lives of his students but also serves as a beacon of inspiration across generations.

Courtney Cochran

Courtney Renee Cochran is a NYC based freelance dancer, teacher, and choreographer. Born in Sacramento, CA, she received her training from Sacramento Ballet, Lines Ballet, Alvin Ailey, Ballet X, Dance Theatre of Harlem, and Crockett-Deane Ballet where she was selected as an emerging choreographer for Regional Dance America. Since moving to New York, Courtney's work has been featured in programs such as Brooklyn Ballet's First Look , Norte Maar's Counter Pointe, Dance Theatre of Harlem's Sunday Matinee, Thelma Hill's Dance Festival and Works & Process' Artists Virtual Commission Series where her piece entitled, From cage of teeth and jaw, was awarded "Best Solo Performance" in Earl Mosley's Dance is Activism Film Festival. In 2019 she was nominated for Dance Lab New York's first Female Choreographers of Color residency in

collaboration with The Joyce Theatre where the culmination of her work was presented at Works & Process at the Guggenheim.

Courtney has 10+ years of freelance experience dancing with companies including Eglevsky Ballet, Brooklyn Ballet, The Black Iris Project, Collage Dance Collective, Columbia City Ballet, and Dance Theatre of Harlem; and has performed in ballets such as Swan Lake, La Bayadere, Les Sylphides, The Nutcracker, and starred as Puck in Sierra Nevada Ballet's A Midsummer's Night Dream. Courtney has taught at Brooklyn Ballet, The Billie Holiday Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Límon Dance, Harlem School of the Arts, and after completing her ABT NTC certification, joined the JKO School in the fall of 2021.

Jacob Cohen

Jacob Cohen is a Brooklyn-based experimental cellist, instrument maker, visual artist, and educator. He began playing the cello in 1995 and over the years has developed a unique improvisational style that grew out of his days as a street performer in New York City. Cohen's music was featured in the 2014 film Foxcatcher which was nominated for 5 grammy awards. From 2014-2018 He ran a music program for youth incarcerated at Rikers Island Correctional Center. He brought his cello into the jail and played music with the youth, and also drew portraits of them. Over 500 of the portraits were exhibited at the Queens Museum in 2018 in a solo show titled "Dispatches from the Ghost Ship." In 2020 he and a group of activists founded the Free Prakash Alliance with the goal of getting murder charges against Prakash Churaman dropped. At the age of 15 Churaman had been accused of a murder in Queens he did not commit and interrogated for hours before making a false confession with no lawyer present. All chargers against Churaman were dropped on June 8, 2022. Jacob is now running a music and art program at Crossroads Juvenile Center, an ACS-run secure detention facility in Brooklyn.

Maya Dwyer

Maya June Dwyer is an emerging interdisciplinary artist based in Syracuse, N.Y.. She is a teaching artist, performer, director, choreographer, movement director and music and theatre creator specialized in site-specific immersive art. She has trained and worked with companies including PUSH Physical Theatre, The Hofesh Shechter Company, Punchdrunk, Meredith Monk, and Pilobolus. She recently completed Big Bang, a contemporary dance training program in Montréal at Espace Ouvert, and in 2023, she was one of 12 choreographers in New York State to be awarded the NY State Dance Force Choreographer's Initiative. Maya is a frequent guest artist at Le Moyne College, where she directs and choreographs movement-infused productions of plays and musicals and has taught courses since 2020. During COVID, she Previous directing and choreography credits include Orlando and Cabaret at Le Moyne College. At the heart of Maya's teaching career is the goal of demystifying movement and working to dissolve the barriers to entry which exist in movement and theatre.

Danaya Esperanza

Danaya Esperanza (she/they // ella/elle) is a queer Afro-Cuban immigrant who spent much of her childhood in the Deep South. Based in the Bronx, they've performed on several of the most renowned stages in the country, including The Public Theater, New York Theatre Workshop, Theatre for a New Audience, The Signature Theatre, National Black Theatre, Soho Rep, Playwrights Horizons, Shakespeare Theatre Company (DC), Folger Theatre (DC), and the Goodman Theatre (Chicago). She recently played an artistic ancestor, Haydée Portuondo in BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB at Atlantic Theater Company, and this summer she revised her role as Adriana in THE COMEDY OF ERRORS/LA COMEDIA DE ERRORES at The Public. Danaya often works as a teaching artist with The Classical Theatre of Harlem and volunteers with The 52nd Street Project. As a writer, they are developing two plays honoring their two grandmothers. Danaya is a graduate of The Juilliard School where she adapted and directed KASSANDRA AND THE WOLF, based on the novel by Margarita Karapanou; and Columbia University where they completed a Thesis in Directing with Sarah Kane's 4.48 PSYCHOSIS. Her callings are new works and adaptations, or a reimagining of classics, where they can bring something of their intersecting identities. Danaya is also a poet and songwriter, and collaborated with the Latin band, Última Nota on the song ESPUMAS as the lyricist and vocalist, which is available on all streaming platforms.

Bakary Fall

Bakary Fall is a dancer and choreographer of traditional and contemporary West African, Capoeira, and urban dances from Dakar, Senegal. Bakary launched his career at the Third World Festival of Black Arts in Dakar, originally established by Senegalese poet and president Leopold Sedar Senghor.

Bakary notably studied with Bessie award winning dancer Germaine Acogny.His dancing and choreography have been featured in several documentaries and music videos, including with Grammy award winning artists. He founded the annual Nun ak Yeen festival in Dakar in 2014 that is recognized throughout West Africa for uniting artists experimenting with the fusion of contemporary and traditional dance. He also founded a dance group, Sunu Percu Dance, in Senegal that works with traditional and contemporary West African cultures. In 2023 he took 20 members from Kofago Dance Ensemble, for whom he is a Choreographer, to Senegal for the Nun Ak Yeen Festival.

Since arriving to the United States in 2018, Bakary has danced in festivals and performances, including in New York: INSITU Dance Festival, a Youssou N'dour's performance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the International African Arts Festival: West Africa Dance Masters. He teaches classes and workshops at Alvin Ailey Extension currently weekly, Ripley Grier, Piel Canela Center for Latin Arts, Peridance Capezio Center, CUMBE: Center for African and Diaspora Dance, Queensborough Community College and NYC public/charter schools to all ages. He has also taught at schools and universities across the United States and has performed throughout Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, and Senegal.

Rosemarie Fiore

Rosemarie Fiore lives and works in Bronx, NY. She is a pyrotechnic painter, sculptor and performance artist that typically creates her own tools to harness Firework smoke using Fumage to create work.Fiore has received awards through National Endowment for the Arts, NYFA Artist Fellowship, Avery Foundation, NYC DCLA and Dieu Donne Paper Mill. The Bronx Council for the Arts has supported Fiore's work with BRIO, AIE and Arts Fund Grants. She has attended residencies at Millay, Kohler A/I, Art Omi, Yaddo, Skowhegan, MacDowell, Walentas-Sharpe Studios, Wavehill, Roswell AIR, VCCA, Sculpture Space and Bronx Museum.

Her exhibitions and performances include: MOCA, Jacksonville, FL., Weatherspoon Museum, NC, The Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, NY, SCAD Museum, GA, Von Lintel Gallery, LA, VCUarts, Richmond, Grand Arts, Kansas City, Bronx Museum, Queens Museum, Socrates Sculpture Park, NYC, and Franklin Institute, Philadelphia.Her exhibitions have been reviewed by The New York Times, New York Magazine, Art in America, Artforum, Village Voice, NY Arts Magazine, FLAUNT Magazine, Art Papers Magazine, Art on Paper, Art and Cake and Art Ltd. Magazine.Fiore's work is included in the following collections: Kohler Co., John Michael Kohler Art Center, US Art in Embassies, Colombo, Sri Lanka, UBS Art Collection, Fidelity Corporate Art Collection, Weatherspoon Museum, Cosmopolitan Hotel Las Vegas, Neuberger Berman, Aspen Collection, Texas A & M University, and The Franklin Institute of Science. She has served as a mentor in NYFA's Immigrant Artist Program since 2010, is a teaching artist at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and MacDowell trustee.

Sherese Francis

Sherese Francis (she/they) describes themselves as an AlkyMist of the I-Magination, finding expression through poetry, interdisciplinary arts (collage, book and paper arts, sound and performance art, text art), workshop facilitation, editing, and literary curation. Her(e) work takes inspiration from her(e) Afro-Caribbean heritage (Barbados and Dominica), and studies in Afrofuturism and Black Speculative Arts, mythology and etymology. Some of their work has been published in Furious Flower, Obsidian, Rootwork Journal, The Caribbean Writer, The Operating System, Cosmonauts Avenue, No Dear, Apex Magazine, Bone Bouquet, African Voices, Newtown Literary, and Free Verse. Additionally, Sherese has published four chapbooks, Lucy's Bone Scrolls (Three Legged Elephant, 2017), Variations on Sett/ling Seed/ling (Harlequin Creature, 2018),

Recycling a Why That Rules Over My Sacred Sight (DoubleCross Press, 2021) and Lady Liberty Smashing Stones (THRASH Press, 2022), and edited a poetry anthology/guided journal, Baby Suggs and a Purple Butterfly (Get Fresh Books, 2024). Sherese has received grant awards from Queens Council on the Arts, NYFA and NYSCA, residencies from WorksonWater, LMCC, Akademie Schloss Solitude and SeaSalted Honey in Senegal, and fellowships from Voodoonauts and Baldwin for the Arts. Besides publications, Sherese has had her(e) work featured in various exhibitions and showcases from NY Live Arts, Queens Public Library, York College Arts Gallery, King Manor Museum, WorksOnWater, Flushing Town Hall, Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning, Bliss On Bliss, Maleza Proyectos, The Rubenstein Art Center, The Loomis Chaffee School Mercy Gallery, Flux Factory, and Ely Center for Contemporary Art.

Miranda Gescheit

Miranda (Randi) Gescheit, a true Brooklyn native, found their artistic calling meandering through Manhattan's art scene after a day at Edward R Murrow High School. There they participated in any after school program they could find, including Theater Performances, workshops and talkbacks. These experiences lead them to study Theater Production/Hospitality and Tourism from Buffalo State University. Randi's journey took a meaningful turn towards community engagement and arts education. From Theatre of Youth to Ujima Company Inc where they are a company member. Randi immersed themself in local theater, managing community partnerships and ensuring the show's heartbeat as a Stage Manager. Randi's passion spreads far and wide; they have been a Teaching Artist in Arlington, Virginia to Central New York, as a Road Manager at The Rev where they bring theater to rural corners of New York State. Randi has been inspired by Stacy Wolf's book Beyond Broadway... to work with the next generation of theater goers and makers all over the US but most importantly in their home state of New York. Randi is thankful for their Public Education and the Teachers, Professors and Friends that got them to where they are today along with their hard work and passion.

Devin Joyner

Devin is an arts educator, choreographer and creative director from VA who performed and taught in Chicago five years before moving to NYS. She premiered in Sharon Cooks' Black Girl Magic in Winter 2022 and Verbatim Performance Labs', Whatever you are be a Good One Fall 2023. She/Her work has premiered on stages for companies such as the Black Ensemble Theater, Theater 47 and Steppenwolf Theater.

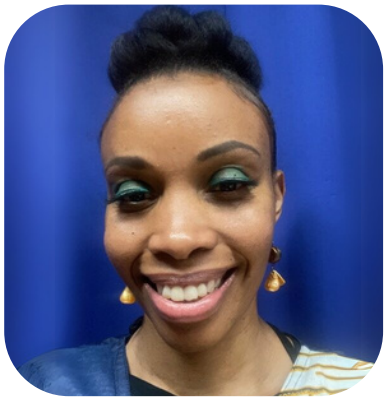
Though she is just getting started her most prized moments are when she gets to teach in detention centers and schools teaching youth how to express themselves through writing and dancing. Storytelling is the heart of her work so each piece she creates shares a piece of her with the audience. She believes there is a healing in expression through arts and wants to share it with whoever will watch/listen. She is honored to be apart of NYU Dance

Education Program and grateful her leaders and professors who have done such an amazing job of continuing to mold her into the arts educator she is today. She is beyond excited to embark on this new journey with NYS Mentorship Program and can't wait to connect with the cohort and her new mentor.

Gail Lewis

Gail Lewis is a retired preschool teacher and Day Care Provider of 45+ years. Art has always been a part of her practice but in recent years, she has become a Certified Zentangle Teacher. Gail has taken her passion for art as a form of relaxation and made it into a small business by teaching through grants or privately through local libraries. She has collaborated with the ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes to bring different forms of arts and crafts to rural areas in the region. Gail has also been seen on stage in local theater groups and sings with two choral groups. Gail has two daughters, a son-in-law, and two grandchildren who are the loves of her life. She loves warm weather and likes to keep busy and active, which includes jumping on trampolines with her granddaughter!

Fatima Logan-Alston



Fatima Logan-Alston, a native of Durham, NC is an interdisciplinary artist committed to engaging communities in culturally and historically thematic workshops, residencies, concerts, performances, and events connecting dance, live music, and visual arts into theatrically enriching experiences. Logan-Alston received her BFA in Dance and Choreography from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Masters in Liberal Studies from SUNY Old Westbury. She danced as a company member of the African-American Dance Ensemble and Forces of Nature Dance Theater. Her collaborators have included artists such as Bobby Sanabria, Valerie Capers, and Ntozake Shange, and she has performed at the Curtain Up Broadway Festival, Lincoln Center Outdoors, and in Adam Pendleton's film, So We Moved: A Portrait of Jack Halberstam. Logan-Alston is currently the Artistic Director of Threads of Truth (formerly VashtiDance Theater), which she founded in 2011. Since that time, she has performed with Threads of Truth, at national and international venues including the Brooklyn Academy of Music (NY) The Sheen Center for Thought and Culture (NY), Durham Arts Council (NC), Powhatan Arts Council (VA), the International Association of Blacks in Dance (Ontario, Canada), and the International African Diaspora Dance Traditions Conference (Salvador, Brazil). Her residencies have included Hunter College (NY), Long Island University Post (NY), and Hostos Community College (NY) through the CUNY Dance

Initiative. She has been a Guest Instructor at Queens College (NY), University of Iowa, Barnard College (NY), and is currently an Adjunct Instructor at SUNY Old Westbury and a Teaching Artist with Alvin Ailey Arts in Education and Community Programs. Logan-Alston is a recipient of the Disability. Dance. Artistry. Dance and Social Justice Fellowship from the Ford Foundation and was selected as a 2024 SU CASA artist by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

Lorena Marin

Lorena is an interdisciplinary artist based in Brooklyn, NY, originally from Bogotá, Colombia. She has been involved in numerous theater and dance projects across Manhattan and Jersey City. Her credits include notable Shakespearean roles such as Isabella in “Measure for Measure” and Banquo in “Macbeth.”

Lorena has been an integral part of the Dance Company Katherine Pettit Creative as a principal dancer and the Something From Abroad Theater Company as an Actress, Director, and Producer. Among her recent works is her bilingual play based on Shakespearean monologues titled “Unspoken Garden/El jardín que calla.” Additionally, she orchestrates the Artistic Laboratory, a live performance where, as a dancer and director, she collaborates with other artists to explore their craft and create original works through improvisation.

She is also the Founder and artistic director of the Robus Dance Theater Ensemble, which has showcased commissioned works for the New York Foundation for the Arts, Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition, and the Queens Council on the Arts.

Kevin Toledo

Kevin Toledo aka Advice is a Bronx born and bred artist of Puerto Rican & Dominican descent. He is an independent hip hop artist, teacher, mental health advocate, and creative entrepreneur. Throughout his career Advice has provided mental health services across New York City and now works as a teaching artist and program manager for Thrive Collective’s R.H.Y.M.E. mentoring youth through hip-hop across NYC.

Kea Trevett

Kea Trevett (she/her) is a theater practitioner, filmmaker, and educator. As an actor, her NY stage credits include Roundabout, Classic Stage Company, Lincoln Center, Ars Nova, Ensemble Studio Theatre, The Sheen Center, New Georges, The Lark, Page 73, and Cherry Lane. Kea teaches playwriting and Shakespeare in performance for Theatre For A New Audience and Lincoln Center, and is a founding member and co-artistic director of Apocalyptic Artists, a theater company which provides free theater programming and professional productions to NYC schools. MFA: Columbia University. www.keatrevett.com

Jo-Ann Wilson

Jo-Ann Wilson earned a bachelor's degree from New York University with a double major in Music and Journalism. She is a Licensed Master Social Worker, author, singer/songwriter, instrumentalist, playwright, actor, motivational speaker, and educator. Jo-Ann has written Black History Month coloring books on various topics including Traditions from Africa, Famous African-American Writers, and 101 Things Everyone Should Know About African American History. As a motivational speaker, she has performed at national conventions, mental health organizations, juvenile detention facilities, and nonprofit organizations. As the Founder of INSPIRED, her mission is to use the arts to improve individuals' self-worth, confront misconceptions on a community level, and provide safe spaces for people from different cultures to have important conversations. Her programs are multi-generational/cultural and include a variety of artistic genres. Performers include professional artists and community members.

Miyabi Wright

Miyabi's journey is deeply rooted in underground street dance and club culture. Born amidst the pioneers of Hip Hop and House dance, Miyabi's formative years were steeped in rhythm, grooves, and soul. From her upbringing emerged a passion for artistic exploration, innovation, and community-building through Street dance. As a Black and Japanese street dance teaching artist, she empowers her students drawing upon her rich experiences. In an effort to educate the Japanese street dance community, her family opened Next Generation NYC Studios in Okayama, Japan. NXGN is a school that focuses on understanding the history and origins of street dance styles as well as their core foundations and grooves. Miyabi spent her early years learning how to build hip hop based programs curriculums, teaching methods and material, with the help of her street dance pioneer father, Terry (Cebo) Carr. In 2010, Miyabi joined the Ladies Of Hip Hop collective in New York where she continued to not only educate the youth and women all across the U.S. nation, but grow artistically as a street dance artist and performer.

Kangnan Zheng

Kangnan Zheng (Nan) is a drama teacher and member of Beijing "Trust" Playback Theatre. She led a startup education company and cooperated with 10+ organizations and schools in China, such as The China Soong Ching Ling Science & Culture Centre For Young People, and Beijing Chaoyang Foreign Language School, etc.

She received the "Excellence Award for Program Design" from Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences and "Excellent Teacher" in the Third Golden Thrush Children Drama in Education Showcase. With 10 years of acting and teaching experience, she worked internationally in China, Nepal, British, New Zealand, and the United States.

Nan graduated from The Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute and holds an MA in Educational Theatre from New York University. She believes that the power of drama transcends the stage. Her goal is to popularize drama education and integrate drama with personal growth and community development.

Arts in Education ROUNDTABLE NYC

The 2024 NYS Teaching Artist Mentorship Program is made possible with the New York State Council on the Arts with the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

The Roundtable is thrilled to build on NYSCA's fundamental support with additional funding sources for 2025, namely the Cornelia T. Bailey Foundation and the William Talbott Hillman Foundation.

In addition, the Roundtable is deeply grateful to receive support from Jody and John Arnhold | Arnhold Foundation; Altman Foundation; Arthur Miller Foundation; Creatives Rebuild NY (CRNY), a project of The Tides Center; Emily Davie and Joseph S. Kornfeld Foundation; New York Community Trust; The Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation; Valentine Perry Snyder Fund; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; and Roundtable individual donors. We are also proud to support the implementation of the "Support for Arts Instruction" Citywide Initative in partnership with the New York City Council and the New York City Public SChools.

The New York City Arts in Education Roundtable is a service organization and a community of arts education practitioners sharing information, providing professional development, and communicating with the public to promote our work in schools and beyond.

For more information, please visit us online at NYCAIEROUNDTABLE.ORG or find us on social media:

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"The overall administrative aspect of the program is so professional and everyone was so communicative... I wish the program lasted even longer than it did!"

LAURA B., MENTEE